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Meetings Next Week on Elmcrest Proposal

by Elizabeth Regan

People in Portland are talking.

Now that a new zoning application has been submitted by the Danbury-based developer hoping to build about 240 apartments and a neighborhood shopping center on the vacant Elmcrest property, those on all sides of the issue are clamoring to be heard.

Supporters and foes of the current developer's proposal, as well as those who have not yet decided where they stand, will be able to express their opinions and ask questions next Tuesday at a meeting of the Economic Development Commission.

Project developer Dan Bertram, of BRT Corporation, will be at the EDC meeting as well as at next Thursday's public hearing in front of the Planning and Zoning Commission.

EDC Chairman Elwin Guild described his commission's meeting as a chance for members to ask questions of Bertram. The chairman will then open up the meeting to the public.

"If you have something to contribute as an idea or an improvement, we heartily encourage it," Guild said. "If you have a question, that's fine too. But if you're here to criticize, you're in the wrong place.

"It's my hope that at the end of the evening we will have replaced fear with fact," Guild added. "I'd like an opportunity for the public to once again learn and listen and question the

specifics of this development proposal, but not get caught up in this fear-driven, low-income housing stream of consciousness."

Bruce Morrison, a local developer involved in a campaign to "stop the inappropriate development of the Elmcrest property," said his newly-formed group is working to educate residents about the current zoning proposal and its ramifications.

Identified in a paid *RiverEast* advertisement as the "Concerned Citizens of Portland" and on an online crowdsourcing page as the "Portland Preservation Committee," the group is seeking to raise money for publicity and possible legal action.

Morrison described it as an "impromptu group" with membership he "really can't put a number on." He declined to name any of the other organizers or members.

Morrison said the loose coalition of concerned citizens has not yet initiated legal action, but they reserve the right to do so if they feel the letter of the law is not being followed.

If the town changed zoning regulations to benefit one particular property, according to Morrison, that might be a reason to bring in legal counsel.

"At this point it hasn't come up, but if it does, we are prepared to do that," he said.

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Military Family... Private First Class James Planeta of Portland, a member of the Portland High School Class of 2015, graduated basic training from Parris Island Marine Corps Recruit Depot on May 20. He is shown with his brothers, at left, 2nd Lt. Jon Planeta of the U.S. Army (PHS Class of 2012) and, at right, 1st Lt. George Planeta IV (PHS Class of 2009) of the US Marine Corps, who just returned from deployment in Iraq. During his 10-day leave, James returned home to Portland and participated in the Portland Memorial Day Parade. He is currently attending the School of Infantry in Camp Geiger, N.C.

Top Two Sachems Ready for Life After High School



This year's top learners, valedictorian Patricia Brosseau and salutatorian Cassandra Michaud, had positive things to say about their time at RHAM this week. But for both girls, graduation was welcome, and they expressed excitement at all that's yet to come.

by Geeta S. Sandberg

They may have enjoyed their time at RHAM, but Class of 2016 valedictorian Patricia Brosseau, and salutatorian Cassandra Michaud said they're ready for all that's next.

"I'm definitely, definitely ready," Michaud said this week. "I'm very excited."

Brosseau added, "It's been a good time" at RHAM "but I'm ready to move on to more independence."

But along with that excitement, both girls – who live in Hebron and have been friends since fifth grade – shared there's a couple things they're nervous about too.

"I'm definitely ready for college and for the workforce, but I don't know if I'm ready for the little adult things like taxes and balancing a checkbook," Brosseau stated. "But we'll figure it out."

For Michaud, it was more about networking.

"I feel like the big thing is going to be figuring out how to – like Patty said – do the adult things, but also go about networking," she said. "At RHAM, there's a set group of people but in Boston there's tons of colleges and I'm going to have to make new friends – it's crazy."

Michaud will be attending Wellesley College in Wellesley, Mass. in the fall, starting off with an undeclared major.

Speaking to that decision, Michaud said there were so majors at the college in fields she en-

joys that she couldn't quite make up her mind. "I basically was like, I like all of these things – I don't know which I like the best so I think I'm going to take classes to see which one I like," she said.

As for Brosseau, she's heading to Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, Pa., where she plans to study chemistry and biomedical engineering.

"We'll see how that works out, then after that I haven't decided; I'll either go into research or grad school," Brosseau explained.

But before that, the two will be finishing up their high school career with graduation Friday, during which they each stand in front of their peers and give a speech, reflecting on their time at RHAM.

And for these two at least, that time has been packed with academic rigor and a number of activities.

Brosseau participated in the school's Gay Straight Alliance, Future Problem Solvers, the National Honor Society and the school's math team; Michaud was also part of Model UN and the National Honor Society, as well as participating in varsity track and cross-country and as a member of the senior class cabinet.

Both said they'd like to continue at least some of those activities in college.

"I may want to run a group – Model UN or some sort of model government. I think those

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Elmcrest Proposal cont. from Front Page

Zoning regulations are designed to separate the town into different zones, such as those for mixed-use development, with reasonably uniform guidelines for the use of property within each zone.

Some opponents say changes to zoning regulations cannot – and should not – be made with one property in mind since doing so could have much wider consequences in the future. It is a viewpoint expressed repeatedly by selectman Ben Srb at various public meetings over the past few months.

Tom Clausi, who owns Opticom, Inc. and is a business partner with Srb through their TCBS Properties development venture, placed the advertisement in the *Rivereast* for the Concerned Citizens of Portland.

Srb said Wednesday that he knows nothing about the advertisement or the fundraising website.

“I’m on the Board of Selectmen,” he said. “I wouldn’t get involved in that stuff.”

The text amendment proposal by Bertram, who is working in partnership with the Rochester, N.Y.-based DiMarco Group, would allow the developers to build up to 16 housing units for each 5,000 square feet of commercial space as long as they “incorporate the preservation of significant historic resources identified in the town’s Plan of Conservation and Development.”

Those historic resources include homes on the Elmcrest property that fall into the nationally-recognized Marlborough Street Historic District: the 1851-52 Brainerd House, the 1830 Hart-Jarvis House and the 1884 Sage House.

Bertram said Wednesday that the Brainerd House, which is the namesake for his development, is “far and away the most architecturally significant and most likely to be restored to its former glory and enjoyed by a lot of people.”

He also said he has committed publicly to exterior renovations of the Sage House.

As for the Hart-Jarvis House, he said he has offered to donate it to the town for placement elsewhere.

“We can knock everybody’s socks off with

the Brainerd House and we think we can do a decent job on the Sage House, and we’re looking forward to the opportunity to work with the town to progress our development plan,” he said.

Bertram’s application would also change the town’s zoning regulations to specify that the number of housing units in a mixed-use development cannot exceed 240. It would consist of studio, one- or two-bedroom apartments only, with the two-bedroom units accounting for no more than 55 percent of the offerings.

Current zoning regulations put the maximum ratio at three housing units for every 5,000 square feet devoted to business. That would mean no more than 45 residential units for the amount of commercial space specified by Bertram, which the developer said is not a viable proposition from a money-making standpoint.

The 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 under a different developer due to the economic downturn and, according to Bertram and other proponents of the current proposal, residential construction replaced commercial as the more lucrative option.

The fundraising website by the Concerned Citizens of Portland had brought in \$325 of its \$10,000 goal to fight the proposal by Wednesday evening. Morrison said the group has also received donations outside of the website, but could not specify an amount.

According to Clausi, the group has been trying to keep itself anonymous because “it’s a small town and people fire back.”

A spokesman for the State Election Enforcement Commission said such a group would not qualify as a political action committee because it is not opposing a particular referendum or election; thus, it does not fall under state regulation.

On Tuesday, Bransfield expressed dismay that the ad was put in the *Rivereast* anonymously.

“They’re asking people to donate money and not telling people who they are,” she said. “There’s always going to be competitors and other people who may be looking at what they’re doing and trying to legitimately poke holes in their plan. There’s nothing wrong with that. But put your name to it.”

While a similar text amendment to the zoning regulations was brought forward by the zoning commission itself at an April public hearing, the proposal did not include language to tie the request for a change in the mixed-use ratio to the preservation of the three historic homes on site. The commission ended up withdrawing its application.

Guild called Bertram’s new version of the text amendment “a dealmaker.”

Both Guild and Bransfield detailed a recent visit to a housing development being completed by Bertram in Brookfield. Bertram said the project is similar to what he’s proposing for Portland and that pricing is “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.

Guild said he spent a half-day at the Brookfield site, most of it in discussion. “I looked at what he’s done and it’s awe inspiring. It’s humongous. The scope and scale is staggering. It convinced me these people are seri-

ous,” Guild said.

Bransfield said the Brookfield project incorporated fieldstone into the exterior design of the apartment buildings to keep with a neighboring farm; it also included restoration of a historic barn.

“I would hope whatever he does here would include brownstone,” she said, as well as the preservation of the three houses.

In a phone interview Wednesday, Srb questioned whether it was appropriate for town officials to visit Bertram’s Brookfield site while the developer’s zoning application is pending before the town’s Planning and Zoning Commission.

Srb said he was invited to attend, but declined.

“It’s extremely inappropriate to be hanging out with a developer,” he said.

But Bransfield said she considers it her job to be as informed as possible.

“I think I should be going there and, as first selectman, I think it’s my duty to speak with prospective business people as well as those who are going to live in the town,” Bransfield said.

The EDC meeting will be held Tuesday at 7 p.m. in the Buck-Foreman Room of the old town hall on 265 Main St. The Planning and Zoning Commission’s public hearing on the proposed text amendment will be held Thursday at 7 p.m. in the Portland High School auditorium at 95 High St.

Ready for Life cont. from Front Page

are pretty fun,” Brosseau stated.

Michaud added, “I definitely think I want to continue with Model UN, which I only joined this year, but I really enjoy it; and continue running... even just running with friends would be fun.”

As far as classes, both dubbed physics the toughest this year, but Brosseau added freshman honors global studies was the hardest in all four years, and Michaud said “besides physics, the hardest was probably chemistry.”

In order to balance their commitments, each had their own method for reining in the madness. Brosseau said it helped that she combined her social life and extracurricular activities by having friends in Model UN and on her Future Problem Solvers team. She added it was key to also take time to relax.

“I really tried to relax these past few years and not focus so hard on studying for tests,” she explained. “I thought that really helped with not being constantly stressed and on edge. ... The secret was to do all the work, but not focus only on the work, and relax just as much as possible.”

For Michaud, breaks were vital.

“I felt like I was focused on work really intensely for small periods, but I’d take breaks, go to practice and blow off stress and steam that way. I tried to alternate rather than do work all at once.”

In addition, helping the girls along their journey were their teachers, and both had several that stood out in their minds.

“I loved AP English with Ms. Anger,” said Brosseau. “She’s a great teacher and a really awesome person. I also really like algebra with Ms. Dorman and calculus with Mr. Kane.”

Michaud said she agreed with Brosseau’s picks, but added “I really liked AP European history with Mr. Paluso – he was hilarious –

and also Latin with Mrs. Brower and Mr. Pingree. I think I just had a lot of great teachers in general and a lot of great classes so it’s hard to choose one.”

And just as Brosseau and Michaud were quick to praise their teachers, their teachers were quick to praise them in return.

Angela Brower said of Michaud this week, “Cass is an incredibly hard worker, whom I have had the distinct pleasure of teaching since she was in the eighth grade. Even at that point, she set herself apart from her peers and showed distinct leadership in the classroom. This year, in particular, she was instrumental in leading discussions that delved into the writing styles of ancient authors. I am thrilled that she continued the often-challenging task of studying advanced Latin, and wish her well as she continues her scholarly pursuits.”

Patricia Dorman called Brosseau “naturally mathematically-gifted and highly intuitive. She commented to me once that she ‘loves the elegance of taking on an incredibly complicated equation and then making it quite simple.’ At times, Patty would assist students in class and might use a different approach to explain a particular problem solving process which sometimes made more sense to a particular student. This enhanced the learning experience for the entire class as her alternative explanation may have made the light bulb go off for other students in the class.

“Patty is a natural problem-solver,” Dorman added, “and has a promising career in engineering.”

* * *

The RHAM High School graduation takes place tonight at 6 p.m. at the softball field. In the event of inclement weather, graduation will occur at 6:30 p.m. in the high school gymnasium.

Top Two PHS Seniors Reminisce

by Elizabeth Regan

The comfortable bond between Portland High School's top two seniors was evident when they sat down last week with the *Rivereast* to talk about their academic success.

Erica DeBarge, class valedictorian, and Karen Kelly, the salutatorian, said they've been friends since their high school schedules first put them together in ninth grade.

They've stuck it out through numerous college-preparatory and college-level courses in the ensuing years, with some presenting more of a challenge than others.

DeBarge pointed to physics as their latest and greatest shared obstacle. She said they'd regularly trade side comments, groans and other acknowledgements about just how difficult the subject could be.

"It's probably my hardest class this year," DeBarge said.

"It's the death of me," Kelly agreed.

That's not to say they're opposed to other elements of the science, technology, engineering and math framework. DeBarge cited math as her favorite subject, while Kelly expressed a fondness for anatomy and physiology.

DeBarge said it's easy to wrap her mind around math. "I've always liked it because it has one answer; you can figure it out and you can check your work and see if you're right," she said.

For Kelly, it was anatomy class that helped her realize she wanted to pursue a degree in occupational therapy when she starts college at the University of New Hampshire in the fall. She will be enrolled in a program to earn a bachelor's degree and a master's degree in five and a half years.

Kelly sees occupational therapy as a combination of two fields she's interested in: teaching and medicine.

"I like the teaching aspect of helping people do things they couldn't necessarily do before," Kelly said. "I think it's gratifying work."

DeBarge has settled on a five-year program of a different sort at Tufts University. The Bridge-Year Service Learning program provides scholars with a chance to spend a year in service to the community through a full-time internship. She said she will be working in Madrid, Spain, with a focus on social entrepre-

neurship and nonprofit management.

"I'm excited to sort of take a breather before I dive into school work again," she said of the gap-year experience. She'll start her college coursework on campus in the fall of 2017.

The school's highest-ranking graduate said she's thinking of majoring in math – "but that will probably change." She said she will be looking toward a career with a global focus as she decides exactly what course of study to pursue.

Both DeBarge and Kelly attributed much of their success to their parents and the teachers they've had throughout the years.

DeBarge, the daughter of a lawyer and an engineer, has a twin brother and an older sister. Kelly's mother is a schoolteacher and her father is a local police officer. She has a younger brother.

"My parents always told me it's important to do well in school," Kelly said. It's a work ethic she said is passed down in part from her grandmother, who came over from Italy and worked hard to help her children succeed in the United States.

DeBarge cited teachers, such as Math League advisor Bill Varas and English teacher Beth McCormick, as being integral parts of her academic journey.

"My teachers have always been supportive of me," she said. "There isn't one teacher in this school that is trying to fail you because they want to see you suffer. Everyone tries to lift you up and wants to see you do your best. They really try to bring out the best in all of us."

Both students said they possessed internal motivation as well.

"For as long as I can remember, school has always been important to me," DeBarge said. "I've always tried my best. It's always been one of my top priorities to maintain good grades and to work hard."

Kelly described herself as lacking in the areas of athleticism and coordination, which left her free to pursue academic pursuits. She said she still remembers the satisfaction she'd get from receiving an 'A' and a little sticker on her papers back in her elementary days.

"That was my favorite part of school. Just maintaining it through high school was one of



Erica DeBarge, the Portland High School valedictorian, and Karen Kelly, its salutatorian, have shared a high school journey marked by challenges – like senior physics – as they worked to become the Class of 2016's highest-ranking graduates.

the goals I wanted to achieve," she said.

Kelly is also a member of the Color Guard.

Outside of school, she's played the piano since she was 7 years old. She began taking lessons through the University of Hartford in 2011.

DeBarge and Kelly share membership in groups including the National Honor Society, the Tri-M Music Honor Society, the Student Senate and Key Club.

DeBarge has also been involved in the Math League for the past three years. She said joining the Math League gave her the chance not only to eat doughnuts at each meet, but also to think about math differently.

"At first I was scared to join it because it's not the cool group to join at all. People here are athletic and that's the thing to do. But I thought it was really fun," she said.

DeBarge is also a co-captain of the varsity

soccer team.

Both girls said Portland education has taught them the importance of testing their own boundaries.

DeBarge said her class is an example of breaking out of "comfort zones" to achieve great things.

Kelly described it this way: "I was super, super shy when I was younger. I didn't really have many friends; I just talked to myself. But then in high school – I don't know necessarily why – I got a lot more comfortable. I talked in class more, made more jokes. It's just weird how people change. Obviously if my second-grade self looked at me now, I know we wouldn't even think we were the same person."

Portland High School Class of 2016 graduated yesterday, June 9. A full story about the commencement ceremony will appear in next week's Rivereast.

Hebron Selectmen Make \$75K in Budget Reductions

by Geeta S. Sandberg

The Board of Selectmen has determined where to reduce the 2016-17 budget so that it meets the number approved by voters May 3.

In response to a revised version of Gov. Dannel P. Malloy's budget proposal released in April that contained a reduction to Education Cost Sharing funds for municipalities, the Hebron Board of Finance voted to reduce the town budget by \$75,000 and the Board of Education budget by \$38,500.

Prior to the budget's passing, the selectmen had decided not to determine where to make the requested \$75,000 in cuts in case the proposal, which amounted to \$36,177,949 for a decrease of \$203,852 or .56 percent from the current year, failed, prompting the finance board to make further reductions.

However, after it passed by a vote of 764 to 657, the Board of Selectmen was presented at its May 5 meeting with three scenarios by Town Manager Andrew Tierney as to where the cuts could come from.

The first, Tierney explained, would take \$25,000 from the Open Space and Land Acquisition account, another \$24,000 from the

contribution to debt management, and removes a new part-time position proposed for the senior center for a reduction of \$26,590, for a total reduction of \$75,590.

The second scenario Tierney presented also removes money from open space as well as debt management, with another \$23,000 coming from monies included for a pavement management system, and the remainder coming from funds included for exterior improvements to the town office building.

Finally, the third scenario Tierney shared removes the aforementioned amounts from open space and debt management, as well as \$15,500 included for a new mower for the Parks and Recreation Department, and \$10,000 for building security cameras.

The selectmen didn't immediately decide which route to take, and took up discussion again at their meeting two weeks later, on May 19. At that time, Tierney said he recommended the board move forward with his first scenario; however, some expressed opposition to taking money from Open Space.

Selectman Brian O'Connell said the Open

Space fund is a "go-to" each year when reductions were needed, and said he wasn't in favor of removing funds from that account.

Ultimately, the board decided to approve a combination of reductions different from the three presented by Tierney. These were: \$34,000 from debt management contribution, \$23,000 for pavement management, and \$18,000 from the winter road materials account.

Tierney noted this week that there were only so many options for the Board of Selectmen to consider to find those \$75,000 in cuts. Since the Capital Improvement Plan budget passed as a separate vote at that May 5 referendum, he said, the selectmen couldn't consider scrapping or postponing a road or building project, for example.

On another note, Tierney pointed out that further revisions were made to the state budget proposal after the finance board voted to cut \$75,000 from the town budget and \$38,500 from the school one – and the anticipated Education Cost Sharing reduction wound up being less than what was anticipated.

"So that amount got put into revenues, and

we're anticipating a good surplus return from the elementary schools," he said. "So now that the Board of Finance knows that, we're hoping once the audit is done and we receive that money from the schools, and because funding was restored by the state, that they could do a supplemental appropriation to some of those cuts."

At the Board of Education meeting May 12, the school board's bookkeeper shared its surplus for the 2015-16 fiscal year stood at \$686,963 so far (the fiscal year doesn't end until June 30). Typically, the school board returns its surplus to the town at the end of each fiscal year – although the board voted at that May 12 meeting to use \$106,264 of that anticipated surplus to address a number of items at the schools, including windows for the 1970 wing at Gilead Hill School as well as construction/property services and electrical plumbing at the school.

Also at that May 12 meeting – as the *Rivereast* has previously reported – the school board voted to make its \$38,500 reduction by reducing a kindergarten section.

East Hampton Valedictorian, Salutatorian Look Back

by Elizabeth Regan

This year's top two students from East Hampton High School will head off to college in two very different directions: one to study the liberal arts in Virginia and another to focus on aerospace engineering in Massachusetts.

Valedictorian Kate Taylor will attend the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Va., to major in English.

"I'm hoping to eventually become an editor," she said. She expressed a preference for book publishing, but is interested in magazine and newspaper publishing as well.

Taylor said the university, with a student population of about 6,500 undergraduates, has a well-defined sense of community.

"Just visiting, you could tell how much the students really loved being there," she said. "They were enthusiastic about the school and learning and each other. It felt like a good fit for me."

And while she admitted to being nervous about leaving home, she was quick to point out the train that runs straight through from Williamsburg to New Haven: "So hopefully I'll be able to come home every once in a while."

Taylor said her mother and father – who work as an autism interventionist and an insurance professional, respectively – have always been a motivating factor in her academic success. She has one older brother.

"If I'm struggling, they'll be there to support me," she said. "It makes it a little bit easier on me to have that motivation and to give back for what they've given me."

She's also grateful for the teachers who encouraged her to participate in class even though her natural inclination is to keep quiet.

"It has actually been pretty good for me, to draw me out of my comfort zone," she said.

Taylor has learned to balance academics with extracurriculars like varsity tennis and community service through the Interact and Spanish clubs.

According to the Class of 2016's top student, academics aren't the only thing that matters.

"My advice would be to do your best and keep working hard – but also be yourself. If

you want to focus on music or arts or athletics a little more, you should do that. Try to be yourself, but still work hard," Taylor said.

Salutatorian Nicole Burns will be majoring in aerospace engineering at Worcester Polytechnic Institute in Massachusetts.

"I've always enjoyed sci-fi movies and sci-fi novels. That has always made me really interested in space exploration and trying to explore concepts in advanced science and faster space travel," she said. "I just would love to explore the outer reaches of the universe."

Burns credited educators like math teacher Jared Demick and science teacher Joe Ochterski, popularly known as "Doc Oc," with helping her through challenging classes. She said her friends have been a valuable resource not only to lean on at school, but also to relax with outside the classroom.

She also pointed to her father, a project manager at a printing company, and her stepmother, a music teacher, as supportive influences who push her to be the best she can be.

"My dad is always on me about homework," she said.

As the president of the Tri-M Music Society, which is in its first year at East Hampton High School, Burns said music is one of her main interests.

"Percussion, drum set – basically anything you can hit, I'll play it," she said.

Burns is currently a member of the percussion ensemble and jazz band and hopes to pursue those kinds of outlets in college as well.

"I'm already looking at joining the pep band and concert band, because music is definitely a passion of mine that I don't want to let [it] go to waste," she said.

Taylor and Burns recalled 11th-grade UConn chemistry as one of their biggest high school challenges. They said they earned their college credits – but barely.

"That was a really difficult course," Burns explained. "I worked a lot with Dr. Ochterski to get through the class."

Taylor, too, said she needed extra help. That, combined with the course's online component, helped her squeak by with a passing grade.



East Hampton High School valedictorian Kate Taylor, left, and salutatorian Nicole Burns are being recognized for proven excellence in all areas of their academic studies, but they will be heading to college with two very different areas of focus. Taylor plans to major in English, while Burns will be pursuing a degree in aerospace engineering.

"We did a lot of online homework for chemistry, which also helped: being able to do so many practice problems online and just keep going with it until it starts to make more sense to me," she said.

Both girls also mentioned the challenge of working through construction noise as they finished out their high school education in the middle of a \$52 million renovation project.

"It's kind of interesting when you're writing essays and suddenly there's drilling a foot away," Taylor said. "But it's not that bad. You

get through it."

Burns acknowledged the pounding can make it harder to concentrate, but said it's been nice to see the beginnings of the finished project in areas like the new gym and auditorium.

"It's worth it," they agreed.

"It'll be great when it's done," Taylor added. "We're going to have to come back and just take a look around."

The East Hampton High School Class of 2016 will graduate Sunday, June 12, at 6 p.m., at Memorial School, 20 Smith St.

\$42.79 Million Budget Sent to Referendum in East Hampton

by Elizabeth Regan

East Hampton voters at Monday's town meeting unanimously approved a \$42.79 million budget, sending the spending plan to referendum after an already protracted budget season.

Voters will go to the polls Tuesday, June 14, to cast their ballots on a spending package that has gone through multiple revisions, stall tactics in the face of uncertain state funding, and two town budget meetings.

The budget proposal failed to make it to referendum at the first town meeting last month on a technicality.

The proposed Board of Education budget now comes in at \$29.06 million, or 0.98 percent higher than the current budget. The town operating budget is \$10.27 million, an increase of 2.94 percent.

Previous versions of the budget would have cut several teaching positions and programs from the school budget and several staffing positions on the town side, but most of those cuts were restored. The positions that have been saved so far include at least four teachers, the program coordinator with the Parks and Recreation Department, and part-time positions at the senior center and library.

Superintendent of Schools Paul Smith said he's still enthusiastic about the education proposal.

"We're going to have to find ways to deal with less classroom supplies, but it doesn't hurt classroom size and keeps middle school sports and golf and volleyball at the high school intact," he said.

The Board of Education's initial spending plan, approved in January, already eliminated

two middle school teaching positions in language arts and science as well as a paraprofessional.

If the budget fails at referendum and further cuts are made, the school system could be looking at the loss of four teaching positions – two at Memorial School, one at Center School through attrition, and one at the high school – which could result in class sizes in excess of union-approved levels. All middle school sports would likely be eliminated, along with volleyball and golf at the high school.

Councilwoman Melissa Engel, a Republican, is not so enthusiastic about the proposed budget. While she voted with the council majority late last month to send the budget proposal to town meeting and referendum, she said Wednesday that she personally thinks it's too high.

The council vote was 5-2 in favor of the budget, with Republican council members Ted Hintz Jr. and Mark Philhower against it.

The combined general government and Board of Education budget proposal represents an increase of 4.25 percent over the current year's budget. The mill rate will rise to 29.44 if the latest spending plan is approved. That's an increase of 1.66 mills over the current year.

"I'm all about letting people decide if they think that's too much money," Engel said. "The only way to do that is send it out at the 1.66 [mill increase] and see what it does."

A mill is \$1 per \$1,000 of assessed property value. Under the proposed mill rate, a taxpayer with a house assessed at \$200,000 would owe

\$5,888 in property taxes on the home. That's \$332 more than such a homeowner pays now, though the recently completed town-wide revaluation has changed the assessed value of homes since last year.

The debt for the \$52 million high school renovation project alone accounts for 1.44 mills of the 1.66 mill increase. A drop in the Grand List due to the revaluation accounts for 0.41 mills of the mill rate increase.

Council members at their last meeting rejected a proposal by Hintz to reduce the finance board's proposal by about \$191,000, which would have brought the proposed mill rate increase to 1.49 mills. It included cuts to several town departments, the Board of Education and the capital reserve fund.

Engel said she liked the lower mill rate recommended by Hintz, but she could not support where the cuts were coming from.

So she's going to vote against the budget, she said, with hope that it will come back to town officials for more cuts. That's when she will advocate for combining some resources and eliminating at least one position she considers unnecessary.

Engel suggested sharing one finance director and one facilities director between the town and the school system. Currently, there's a finance director for the town and a business manager for the school district, while only the schools have a facilities manager.

She also pointed to a public communications/information specialist position within the school system as a waste of taxpayer dollars. The po-

sition was created last year, and implemented in the current year's budget.

"Don't tell me we have to cut volleyball, but we have to have a PR person," she said of the role, which is filled by former *Rivereast* reporter John Tyczkowski.

The job, which business manager Karen Asetta said falls under the technology department, comes with a salary of \$35,000. It is slated for a 4 percent increase under the proposed budget, but the raise would have to be approved by the Board of Education.

According to Smith, job responsibilities include serving as the webmaster for the new website the district is developing and managing communication on social technology platforms like Facebook and Twitter.

"It's a part-time position, and it's important for an undermanned technology department," he said.

Smith reiterated that the budget is available in its entirety on the district website, where anyone can see exactly how much money is in there and where it's going.

But Smith cautioned there are a lot of moving parts to a budget that rely on each other to function.

"I guess anybody could pick through and say, 'gee, I don't want you to have this or have that.' I think you need to know the entire budget rather than say 'take out that position and put volleyball in,' or 'put middle school sports in.'"

The 2016-17 budget referendum will be held Tuesday, June 14, from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. at East Hampton Middle School.

Bacon Academy Valedictorian, Salutatorian Reflect

by Julianna Roche

With finals week behind them and the school year ending, Bacon Academy's senior class tonight will graduate and move on to new beginnings.

Graduation also marks the end of four years of hard work for two seniors – Megan Stevens and Colin Hiscox, who were named the Class of 2016's valedictorian and salutatorian, respectively.

Stevens is heading to the University of Connecticut in the fall to study engineering and management, while Hiscox has decided on biomedical engineering at Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI).

"I'm probably most excited for the independence," Stevens said. "I feel like, up until this point, so much has been controlled for us, and I'm excited to really get to do what I want and explore my interests."

Hiscox agreed. "I'm looking forward to going deeper. We've touched on engineering through JETS club [the Junior Engineering Technical Society], but to actually be able to start looking more in depth at what I'm interested in and specifying into things I find interesting, not just 'you have to take an English class.'"

Both students' schedules were packed full, with everything from Model UN and math club, to PAL [the Peer Advocate League] and Unified Sports, so when asked what some of their favorite subjects or activities were, the two had a difficult time choosing.

"If I could, I would just say all of it... but I'll probably mostly remember the sciences, partly because I was in the AP science classes and

enjoyed it," Hiscox said. "I'll also remember the little things here and there, like playing Bananagrams after the AP chemistry exam. It's just the good times with friends that I'll probably remember most."

Stevens, however, who played lacrosse and ran cross country and indoor track, said athletics stand out in her mind.

"I think sports made me learn to manage my time," she said, "because freshman year I played soccer and I was on varsity and JV, so I had games every day. So at that point, I kind of got my study habits down, but there were definitely some late nights."

While their academic accolades can speak for themselves, both Hiscox and Stevens said a lot of their success came from support from their classmates and friends, who kept them motivated and also laughing when things got stressful.

"I learned how important it is to surround yourself with people who really care about you and want you to do well," Stevens said. "I know for myself, I definitely wouldn't be here without my friends because they're the ones in class with me to help and support me, or make me laugh."

Hiscox agreed, saying despite the fact he was home-schooled during middle school, high school taught him the importance of having a community to support you.

"I learned coming in that the people you surround yourself with make a big difference. I've seen people who have such great potential and they surround themselves with friends who don't care, so they don't do well," he said. "But I've also seen the opposite. ... I would spend a

half hour every morning studying AP biology with one of my friends, and it showed me that being in good company can have a really good effect on your grades."

According to both students, the teachers at Bacon also had a huge influence not just on their academic success, but on a personal level as well.

"I'm lucky because I've had so many teachers I do like," Stevens said. "The teachers here are really amazing and they want you to succeed. ... The same way we were talking about our friends being there for us and that sense of community, I think that goes for the teachers too."

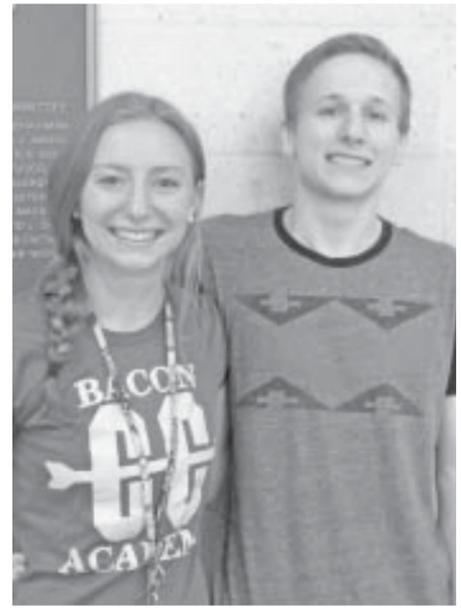
Stevens mentioned that while she plans to major in engineering, she hated any type of science coming into high school. That changed when she took AP biology with Christopher Juhl, one of Bacon's science teachers.

"He really didn't cut us slack, but he was a really good teacher and I learned a lot from him not even just in the sense of biology, but just how to stay focused and what your values in school should be," she said. "Before high school, it was always just 'focus on your grades, if you get an A that means you know it,' but no, Juhl taught me actually learn the information and don't worry about grades all the time."

Reflecting on their high school experience, both students agreed while they have countless good memories, they're ready for change.

"We've been here for four years," Hiscox said. "It's time for change. I used to not like change, but stagnation is bad every now and then. I'm ready for something new."

The Bacon Academy graduation is tonight,



Megan Stevens, left, and Colin Hiscox are the Bacon Academy Class of 2016's valedictorian and salutatorian, respectively. The two have known each other since first grade.

June 10, at 6 p.m., outside at the school's John D. "Jack" Long Track and Field Complex. In case of inclement weather, graduation will move indoors, to the Dave Shea Gymnasium. Also, there will be shuttle service to Bacon from Jack Jackter Intermediate School, starting at 5 p.m.

Colchester Education Budget Passes at Second Referendum

by Julianna Roche

The second time was the charm for the Colchester schools this year, as voters June 2 passed a \$39.71 million 2016-17 Board of Education budget.

The spending package passed by a 1,439-857 tally. The newly-approved budget represents a .23 percent decrease from current year spending.

This was the second time before the voters for the school budget; a \$39.90 million budget was rejected by a 1,408-1,270 vote at a May 10 referendum.

Following that defeat, the Board of Finance asked the school board to trim \$176,000 from its budget. The Board of Education did just that and more – cutting a little over \$190,000 and bringing the approved budget to \$39.71 million.

Of the town's 10,368 registered voters, 22.15 percent turned out for last week's referendum.

Board of Education Chairman Ron Goldstein said he was gratified, but not surprised, by the voter support this time around.

"I'm very grateful for the community's support and I'm very glad the budget passed. ... I'm not surprised by the results because you

can never predict how a vote will turn out, so I try not to theorize the reasons behind it," he said. "What I do know is that between the first and second referendum, we made a very significant reduction in the budget. [The Board of Finance] asked us to cut \$176,000 and we cut \$190,000."

Superintendent of Schools Jeff Mathieu called the budget's passing a very positive sign for the community and Colchester schools.

"I'm very pleased at the voter turnout, and I think it sent a strong message of how important education is to our community," Mathieu said. "They want to see our district move forward and be able to compete with the more affluent towns," he says.

According to Mathieu, the approved budget is actually a .23 percent decrease from current year spending, which is a significant improvement.

"Our Board of Finance chair Rob Tarlov actually did some research and found that over the last three years, we have also had the lowest percent increase [in education expenditure] in the state," he added.

The bulk of the budget cut came from a re-

structuring plan that will mainly impact the town's middle schoolers, beginning this fall. Rather than have two blocks of English per day, William J. Johnston Middle School students will have just one, which means less English instruction, but more in other subjects. They will also shift from an eight-period day to a seven-period one, which will add an additional 24-25 hours of instruction in other subjects each year.

The restructuring resulted in the elimination of three paraprofessional positions (two full-time and one part-time) and three certified English teaching positions. Mathieu noted that the certified teachers are not losing their jobs, but instead are being transferred to other open teaching positions in the school district.

"[After] the first vote, we had to lay off some staff, so for the second referendum, it was important the budget passed to prevent that from happening again," says Mathieu.

Board of Finance Vice Chairman Rob Esteve also was pleased with the budget passage.

"I'm very happy it passed," he said. "I actually thought the first budget should have passed because it was a very responsible budget, but I

think it will give the school system what it needs.

"In general," he added, "I think this means we can move forward as a community and focus on filling our education needs."

Fellow Board of Finance member Andreas Bisbikos said he wasn't surprised the budget passed, and noted he supported the \$39.71 million spending package.

"As far as the impact on the town goes, this was what the people voted for," he said. "They supported the cuts [made to the school budget after the first referendum failed] and came out to the polls to show that support. We must, however, continue to balance the needs of the community with a fiscal sustainability that reflects the tough Connecticut economic climate with any future budgets and keep the lesson of this budget process in mind."

Bisbikos added, "The passing of the budget will allow for the town to now focus on other important needs like making progress on our senior center plans. With [First Selectman] Art Shilosky's leadership and the commitment of other elected leaders, I see a bright future for our town."

Andover BOE Balks at Gas Infusion Station Proposal

by Geeta S. Sandberg

Expressing several safety concerns, the Board of Education Wednesday voted unanimously to have schools superintendent Sally Doyen send a letter of opposition to the Planning and Zoning Commission regarding a proposal that would see a natural gas infusion station installed off of Route 6.

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

The letter drafted by Doyen and shared at the meeting mentioned a number of concerns with the project. These were: that the proximity of the proposed site to Andover Elementary School is less than one mile, meaning "a hazardous leak from the facility could cause a complete evacuation of the school building" and that

traffic on Route 6, as well as local roads, would increase dramatically, "impacting the safe routes, the school buses and students on foot or on bicycles."

At the meeting, school board members expressed their support of the letter, elaborated on the mentioned concerns, and discussed others to include as well.

Board member Jay Linddy stated, "I encourage the board to vote on this. ... I have big concerns about the volume of 240 vehicles coming on and off of Route 6 per day."

He added the trucks could potentially end up on other roads as well, as in the case of a detour, or an unknowing driver who tries to get around traffic and ends up on a much smaller road such as Lake Road or West Street.

Board member Christina Tamburro said she echoed Linddy's sentiments, and added the proposal was also a concern from the perspective of a parent of young drivers.

"We all know the accidents that have oc-

curred in and around this town involving some of our young people, and it's a fear every time those kids get on the road. Not that they're the only ones driving, but I think we all know it's frightening," she said.

Board chair Shannon Loudon expressed concerns about the proposed station's location approximate to the school – and added it was also a concern due to its proximity to a number of evacuation locations in town.

"All of them are still within a one mile radius of where this station will be," she said.

"This is a FEMA [Federal Emergency Management Agency] evacuation site," added member Whitney Covell. "So that's a problem."

Meanwhile, board member Mike Russo mentioned the number of kids who play soccer in the fields behind the school – bringing them even closer to the site – and the new fields planned for Long Hill Road.

"We need economic development, but this is not the economic development," he stated, also

commenting on some of the material that had been sent to residents by Global CNG Holdings, in favor of the proposal.

"In the propaganda material they're pushing out; they talk about cost savings for us and we're not talking about [converting to] natural gas right now," he explained. "They're trying to present that in their material... and that's not a fact."

Along with expressing support for the letter, Loudon also encouraged residents to attend the public hearing on the proposal set by the Planning and Zoning Commission for Monday, June 20, at 7 p.m. in the Andover Elementary School gym. Another public hearing, set by the Inland Wetlands Commission, is scheduled for Monday, June 13, at 7 p.m., in the community room at Town Hall.

The next Andover Board of Education meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, July 13 at 7 p.m. in the Andover Elementary School library, 35 School Rd.

From the Editor's Desk

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

I hope you all enjoyed a nice first day of summer last Wednesday.

Don't worry, I'm quite aware it's June 10, and the official start of summer is still more than a week away. But, in the "you learn something new every day" department, I happened to discover last week that meteorologists have their own seasons. And for them, the first day of summer was June 1.

When seasons change, they officially change on a day that ends in a 20 or 21. Not so with meteorological seasons. Those have a simpler calendar: winter runs from Dec. 1 to Feb. 28 (or 29); spring from March 1 to May 31; summer from June 1 to Aug. 31; and autumn from Sept. 1 to Nov. 30.

It's cleaner, easier to remember and, in my opinion, a more accurate representation of the weather, especially for up here. Granted, it was somewhat of an oddball winter this year – a "65 degrees on Christmas Eve" kind of oddball – but most years, by the time Dec. 21 rolls around it's already been pretty freakin' cold for a few weeks, and indeed it's only going to be getting colder.

The same goes for summer; generally by the time we hit June 21 we've seen many 80-degree days already, perhaps (as was the case this year) even a few 90-degree ones. There's a reason why Memorial Day is often referred to as "the unofficial start of summer" – at that point usually the weather's starting to get pretty summerly. So why wait another three weeks to ring the season in?

On the other end, when Sept. 21 arrives the weather's usually been in a decisive cool-down mode for some time. School has been in session for a few weeks, leaves are starting to fall, and the football season is well underway. It almost seems cruel at that point to still be calling the season "summer." Start autumn Sept. 1, send summer off with a farewell bash Labor Day weekend, and away we go.

The only thing that doesn't quite fit is starting spring March 1. Now, I'd love it if spring started March 1. Every year, I am very much done with winter by the end of February, and would love for the weather to start warming up as soon as the calendar flipped. And I guess, in small ways, it does, but those first couple weeks of March tend to very much still be winter around here. It's considered a nice day if the high temperature hovers around 40, you still often need a hat and gloves at night, and snowstorms aren't at all unusual. It'd feel a little strange to be calling that weather "spring."

But three out of four ain't bad. The meteorological seasons seem to make sense.

And while I'm on the subject of seasons, I was reminded recently of a quote I've seen attributed to comedian Jeff Foxworthy. It sprang to mind as I left the office one afternoon to go get lunch, only to be rudely greeted by a torn-up New London Turnpike.

In New England, Foxworthy said, there are four seasons: almost winter, winter, still winter, and road construction.

* * *

Speaking of the weather, as I write this column it's a little too soon to tell weather this Saturday will feature beach weather. But the Andover Lake Property Owners Association (ALPOA) sure hopes it will. The association will host an Open Beach day at Andover Lake Beach tomorrow, Saturday, June 11, from 10 a.m.-8 p.m. All are welcome; association membership is not required on this day.

Swim lesson sign-ups will be held from 10 a.m.-noon, free hot dogs served from noon-2 p.m., and lemonade will be available for donations which will go to Alex's Lemonade Stand to benefit childhood cancer research.

People are invited to bring their own picnic sides, blankets and anything else they want. (Keep in mind, though, alcohol is not allowed.)

The day of fun will end with ALPOA's first movie night of the season; the film will be shown at dusk.

ALPOA is a non-profit, civic and environmental organization whose principal mission is the conservation and preservation of Andover Lake, its beach and surrounding areas. Visit andoverlake.com for further details.

* * *

State Police Cadet Post 028 is looking for a few good teens.

The post – which meets at the state police Troop K barracks in Colchester but is open to anyone in the Troop K area (which includes the *Rivereast* towns of Colchester, Marlborough, Hebron and Andover) – is seeking new members interested in careers in criminal justice or law enforcement.

The cadet program is a leadership organization which emphasizes the development of responsibility and discipline. Cadets also receive limited training in basic law enforcement skills. Past cadets have continued to pursue their interest in criminal justice or law enforcement by attending college (including military college) or enlisting in the military.

Any male or female age 14-20 is invited to join the post. Cadets help to serve the community by assisting state and local police with parking and security at local events. Meetings are held every Tuesday from 7-9 p.m. at the barracks, which are located at 15 Old Hartford Rd. in Colchester.

There will be an informational Open House Tuesday, June 14, at 7 p.m., at Troop K. If you can't make that and want more information about the cadet program, call Tabitha at 860-578-6724, or call 860-465-5400 ext. 4099 and leave a message.

* * *

Lastly, from the "sir, do you have no shame?" department: I couldn't help but shake my head a little when I read Marco Rubio recently lent his support to Donald Trump. Yes, Little Marco decided to let bygones be bygones, telling CNN May 26 that he'd back Trump at the Republican Convention, and even give a speech on his behalf if asked.

This from a man who once ended his tweets with a #NeverTrump hashtag, and publicly called Trump "a good con man."

I realize that, every election season, those who have been defeated in the primaries typically wind up lending their support to the very candidate who had squashed them earlier. But this has been unlike any election season I've ever seen. Trump's attacks on Rubio were so vicious and personal that it's amazing the senator would choose to endorse him – especially since, by the end, he was down in the mud and getting just as dirty as Trump was. (Don't forget, it was Rubio who first brought up the size of Trump's.....well, nevermind.)

How bad were the insults? Well, in March *Time* magazine helpfully compiled a few of Trump's "best" insults hurled at Rubio:

"I have never seen a human being sweat like this man sweats. ... It looked like he had just jumped into a swimming pool with his clothes on." (Trump then splashed water onstage, and yelled, "It's Rubio!")

"He has really large ears, the biggest ears I've ever seen."

"The Rubios of the world could not get into that school [the Wharton School at University of Pennsylvania, which Trump attended]. Oy. They don't have the capacity."

During the campaign, Trump really seemed to focus on Rubio's sweat, calling it "disgusting," and saying, "We need somebody that doesn't have whatever it is he's got."

Now, after all these sophomoric insults, you opt to endorse the guy for president?

Like I said, Rubio wasn't exactly a babe in the woods during this campaign. Towards the end, he crawled onto the same grade-school playground Trump lives on, criticizing Trump's "small hands," and even on multiple occasions suggesting Trump had wet his pants.

Those attacks by Rubio just made it even more surprising, actually, that he'd turn around and essentially say, "Donald Trump! He's my man!" This goes beyond swallowing pride; it's swallowing your self-respect.

You'll never hear me say many good things about Ted Cruz – one of the few presidential candidates to get it even worse from Trump than Rubio did – but at least he hasn't endorsed Trump.

At least, not yet. This political season, nothing would surprise me.

* * *

See you next week.

Marlborough Crashes Send Two to Hospital

A pair of crashes on separate days last week sent two to the hospital, according to state police.

On May 31, a Nissan Maxima driven by Kyle Tuchay, 23, of 50 Old West High St., East Hampton, drove across the westbound lane of traffic at the intersection of Route 66 and Flood Road, before striking a guardrail and launching his vehicle over an embankment and down a hill.

Tuchay was transported to Marlborough Clinic for minor injuries and subsequently placed under arrest for DUI and restricted use of left-hand lane on divided or limited-access highway, police said.

Three days later, on June 3, another crash occurred, this one on North Main Street, police said. A Dodge Grand Caravan, driven by Enrique Najera-Hernandez, 35, of 13 Pearl St., Willimantic, was traveling northbound on North Main when a GMC Sierra K, traveling eastbound on Chapman Road, attempted a left turn onto the street, and the two vehicles collided.

Najera-Hernandez was transported to Middlesex Medical Center with minor injuries. The GMC was driven by Justin Jerry Reilly, 21, of 14 Florence St., Moosup, who was issued a written warning for failure to obey stop sign, police said.

Marlborough Police News

5/31: State police said Brian Byrne, 36, of 32 Wall St., Middletown, was arrested and charged with disorderly conduct, second-degree assault and second-degree strangulation.

6/2: State police said Jonathan Anderson, 28, of 150 Glenwood St., Manchester, who had an active warrant for his arrest, turned himself in and was charged for disorderly conduct and first-degree unlawful restraint.

Colchester Police News

6/2: Colchester police said Mark Litwinko, 32, of 14 Diane Ln., Colchester, was arrested and charged with DUI and failing to drive at a reasonable distance.

6/3: Colchester police said Aaron Baker, 22, of 248 Chestnut Hill Rd., Colchester, was arrested and charged with traveling at an unreasonable speed, possession of drug paraphernalia, illegal sale of a controlled substance, and possession of a controlled substance.

6/4 Colchester police said Jonathan Leblanc, 32, of 12 Summer St., Apt. 2, Enfield, was arrested and charged with failure to respond to infraction.

6/2: State police said Hassan Assiri, 26, of 633 Prospect Ave. A1, West Hartford, was arrested and charged with reckless driving and DUI.

6/3: State police said Geoffrey Byrd, 33, of 207 Burgundy Hill Lane, Middletown, was arrested and charged with burglary in the third-degree and second-degree larceny.

Andover Police News

6/3: State police said Devin Bishop, 18, of 98 Columbus St., Manchester, was arrested and charged with first-degree criminal mischief, breach of peace: threatening, and third-degree assault, police said.

Marlborough Police News

5/31: According to state police, a Nissan Maxima driven by Kyle Tuchay, 23, of 50 Old West High St., East Hampton, drove across the westbound lane of traffic at the intersection of Route 66 and Flood Road, before striking a guardrail and launching his vehicle over an embankment and down a hill. Tuchay was transported to Marlborough Clinic for minor injuries and subsequently placed under arrest for DUI and restricted use of left-hand lane on divided or limited-access highway, police said.

6/3: According to police, a Dodge Grand Caravan, driven by Enrique Najera-Hernandez, 35, of 13 Pearl St., Willimantic, was traveling northbound on North Main St. in Marlborough, when a GMC Sierra K traveling eastbound on Chapman Road, driven by Justin Jerry Reilly, 21, of 14 Florence St., Moosup, attempted a left turn onto N. Main St., where the two vehicles collided. Najera-Hernandez was transported to Middlesex Medical Center with minor injuries. Riley was issued a written warning for failure to obey stop sign.

East Hampton Police News

5/29: Kristina M. Cannata, 44, of 1165 Saybrook Rd., Haddam, was arrested and charged with driving under the influence, possession of marijuana less than 1/2 ounce, and operating an unregistered and uninsured motor vehicle, East Hampton Police said.

Obituaries

Colchester

Donald Rossi Sr.

Donald Salvatore Rossi Sr., 78, of Colchester, passed away Wednesday, June 1. Born April 18, 1938, in New London, he was the son of the late Agostino and Elvera (Giquinto) Rossi.

He leaves his loving wife of 47 years, Christine (Scognamiglio) Rossi; four children, Joseph Rossi and wife, Sharon of Westerly, R.I., Donald Rossi Jr. of Colchester, Christine Rossi Pepitone and husband, Joseph Jr. of Ellington and Jennifer Rossi Perri and husband, David of Glastonbury; three grandchildren, Julia and Victoria Pepitone and Carmine Rossi; two siblings, Mary Hoffa of Waterford and Joseph Rossi of Jupiter, Fla.; and numerous extended family members and friends.

In addition to his parents, he was predeceased by a sister, Betty Robbins.

Mr. Rossi retired from Electric Boat in 1996 as the Chief of Material Planning after 35 years of service. While at EB, he had been active with the Management Association (EBMA). In years past, he had been an active member of the Colchester Lions Club. Don also was an avid golfer in his spare time.

The family received guests from Monday, June 6, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. The funeral liturgy was celebrated Tuesday, June 7, directly at St. Andrew Church, 128 Norwich Ave., Colchester. Burial was private.

In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory may be made to the National Parkinson Foundation, National Parkinson Foundation, 200 SE 1st St., Ste. 800, Miami, FL 33131 (parkinson.org).

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Colchester

Gary Lee Forrest

Gary Lee Forrest, 69, of Colchester, passed away Wednesday, June 1, at the VA Hospital in West Haven, with his loving wife, Cynthia (Feola) Forrest, by his side. Born Dec. 17, 1946, in New Britain, he was the son of the late Burdette and Alice (Hull) Forrest.



Gary served proudly with the U.S. Air Force during the Vietnam War and went on to work as an inspector and lead man for Pratt & Whitney for 45 years before his retirement in 2009.

Most importantly he was a devoted family man who, in addition to his wife of 35 years, leaves two children and their spouses, Brandon and Amanda Forrest of Oakdale and Erin and Mike Szewczyk of Colchester; three grandchildren, Logan, Anthony and Cameron; a brother, Robert; and numerous nieces, nephews, extended family members and friends.

The family received guests Tuesday, June 7, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester, concluding with the rendering of military honors. Burial was private in Linwood Cemetery, Colchester.

Donations in his memory may be made to the Colchester Hayward Vol. Fire Co., 18-54 Old Hartford Road, Colchester, CT 06415.

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Portland

Edward F. Long Sr.

Edward F. Long Sr., 80, of Portland, husband of Shirley (Hale) Long, passed away Thursday, June 2, at home. He was the son of the late William E. and Louise (Schmid) Long.

Born Sept. 27, 1935, in Portland, and a lifelong resident, he worked for Atlantic Cement/ Blue Circle for 36 years until his retirement. He was a 60-year member of the Portland Fire Company No. 2 and of the Church of St. Mary in Portland.

Besides his wife, he leaves a son, Edward Jr.; daughters, Deborah, Nancy, Mary and Karen; a sister, Louise; and 20 grandchildren.

He was predeceased by a son, Gary, and brothers, William and Henry.

Funeral services will be held today, June 10, at 10 a.m., directly at the Church of St. Mary, 51 Freestone Ave., Portland. Burial will be in St. Mary Cemetery, Portland. Relatives and friends called Thursday, June 9, at Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Portland Fire Company No. 2, P.O. Box 70, Portland, CT 06480, or to the Church of St. Mary 45 Freestone Ave Portland, CT 06480.

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

East Hampton

Earl Guy Allen

Earl Guy Allen, 86, of Edgewater, Fla., formerly of East Hampton, passed away Monday, May 30, Memorial Day, at the Halifax Health Hospice Care Center. He was born in Enosburg Falls, Vt., to Guy and Gladys (Curtiss) Allen.

He proudly served in the Navy during the Korean War. After his military, service he moved to Connecticut to work and raise his family.

Earl, also known as "Gopher" was an OTR truck driver since he was 17 years old and also owned and operated Gopher Excavating Company for over 30 years in East Hampton and surrounding towns. He was a Master Mason originally with the Columbia Lodge No. 26 that then merged with the Granite Lodge No. 119.

He is survived by his loving, devoted wife of 53 years, Helene "Vicki" (Wachtel); son Guy "Chip" Allen (Lorraine) of East Hampton; daughters Cathy Sue (Allen) Moebius (Joe) of Middletown, and Susan (Dougherty) Baroni-Schaeffer (Hank) of Colchester; brother Roger Allen (Deanna) of Mount Pleasant, Mich.; sister, Darlene (Allen) Deuso (Steve); grandchildren, Sean McKinney, Kate (Baroni) Salathé, Cathleen (McKinney) Rock, Genna Baroni, Marshall Allen; six great-grandchildren; numerous nieces and nephews; and many dear friends.

He was predeceased by his parents, and sisters Pauline (Allen) Marston and Nancy (Allen) Baker, both of Vermont.

Calling hours will be today, June 10, from 6-8 p.m., at the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, CT 06424. The funeral will be Saturday, June 11, at 10 a.m., at Spencer's, with burial following at Lake View Cemetery.

Donations in Earl's honor may be sent to either The American Cancer Society, or a hospice or a pet shelter of your choice.

For online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

East Hampton

John Leonard Barnard

John Leonard Barnard, 73, of East Hampton, widower of the late Audrey (Doyle) Barnard, passed away Tuesday, May 31, at the Marlborough Health Care Center. Born July 5, 1942, in Manchester, he was the son of the late John Franklin and Gertrude (Bousquet) Barnard.

Mr. Barnard served proudly with the U.S. Army and went on to work as a pilot and machinist for Pratt & Whitney. He was a longtime communicant of St. Patrick Church in East Hampton. In his spare time, he loved to spend time outdoors; hiking, camping and canoeing.

Survivors include two daughters and their spouses, Amy and Joseph Bayse of Charlotte, N.C., and Emily and Eric Kelly of Marlborough; four grandchildren, Connor and Megan Bayse and Sean and Colleen Kelly; his stepmother, Ruth Barnard of Georgia; two brothers, Jay of Massachusetts and Matthew of Georgia; four stepsiblings, Sharon, Sandy, Billy and Butch; and numerous extended family members and friends.

In addition to his parents, he was predeceased by his sister, Kathleen.

The memorial liturgy will be celebrated at 10 a.m. Saturday, June 18, directly at St. John Fisher Church, 30 Jones Hollow Rd., Marlborough. Graveside services with military honors will be observed at 2:30 p.m. that afternoon at Oak Ridge Cemetery, Oak Ridge Avenue, Southbridge, MA.

In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory may be made to The Sturge-Weber Foundation, P.O. Box 418, Mt. Freedom, NJ 07970, or The National Wildlife Federation by calling 1-800-822-9919.

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

Colchester

Jennie H. Snarski

It is with deep sadness that the family of Jennie H. Snarski, 91, of Salem, formerly of Colchester, share that Jennie died peacefully at home on May 26. She was able to live in her home surrounded with the full-time care and support of her daughters and their families and friends.

Jennie was born March 30, 1925, on the family farm in Colchester. She was the daughter of Martin and Anna Popek. Jennie grew up on the farm with her older brothers, John, Jack, Frank, Michael, cousin Alex, and her beloved sister, Phyllis (Sefchik), who all predeceased her.

After graduating from Bacon Academy, she married the love of her life, Edward Snarski. They lived on the family farm in Salem where they raised their two daughters. Their home was always full of many friends and good times. Family often came to visit from New York to enjoy the country life and fresh air.

Jennie worked on the farm and also at the Norwich State Hospital. She owned and operated the Gardner Lake Package Store until her retirement. She and her family also owned and managed SNA-Z Spot Campground in Salem.

Jennie was involved in many community organizations. She was involved in her daughters' activities and was a charter member of the Gardner Lake Auxiliary, where she spent much time and energy working behind the scenes. Throughout her life, Jennie was always someone you could count on for help and support. She was there for her family, nieces, nephews, friends, and neighbors. She could never say no when someone was in need.

After her husband Ed passed away in 1973, Jennie filled her life with her many friends and family. She loved having people around and welcomed them into her home. Jennie had many true and loyal friends. Her home was full of laughter, good food, and cheer. After her retirement, she and her lady friends often took trips and fun excursions. She knew how to enjoy life to the fullest.

Jennie is survived by her two daughters, Edwina Callaghan and her husband, George and Joyce Schultz and her husband Robert. She leaves behind her grandchildren, Shawn Callaghan and his wife Jaime, Kevin Callaghan and his fiancée Meggan Shafer, Jason and Janet Schultz as well as her great-granddaughter, Grace Edele Callaghan. Jennie was so proud of her grandchildren. Numerous nieces and nephews will also miss her presence.

Our lives revolved around our beloved "Maggie" for so many years that it is hard to imagine she is no longer here. She was an extraordinary woman who enjoyed the simple pleasures of life and lived her life with great passion, humor, and love. We will never forget any of her wonderful ways. We know the world is a better place for her having lived in it. Her legacy will never fade, her spirit will always be with us, and her love will be forever kept in our hearts.

A calling hour and Mass of Christian burial was celebrated June 2 at Our Lady of The Lakes Church. She was laid to rest at St. Joseph Cemetery in Colchester. Belmont Funeral Home was entrusted with these arrangements.

In lieu of flowers, Jennie always said, "No money, no flowers, no hullabaloo; buy something special for someone dear to you." As usual, she was always thinking of others.

Hebron

Bernice Hibbard Memorial Services

Memorial services for the late Bernice S. Hibbard, who passed away Friday, April 22, at the age of 81, will be observed at 2 p.m. Sunday, June 12, directly at Gilead Congregational Church, 672 Gilead St. (Route 85), Hebron.

Donations may be made to the church or to the charity of one's choice.

Arrangements were entrusted to the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester. For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Portland

Frederick Anthony Rossitto

Frederick Anthony Rossitto, 32, of Portland passed away unexpectedly and too soon on Monday, June 6. He is the son of Fred and Joann Rossitto. Born on May 26, 1984 in Middletown, he lived in Portland all of his life. He was a 2002 graduate of Vinal Tech in Middletown. He was born and raised a showman at Brownstone Amusements.



Besides his parents, he leaves his sisters, Jessica Rossitto, Katie Rossitto, Sarah Kalinowski and husband Peter Kalinowski, Samantha Rossitto and Rachel Oaks. He also leaves behind his loving grandma, Elsie Rossitto, and his niece Kaylee, nephews Carmelo and Colby, aunts, uncles, cousins, his girlfriend Amber Calvo, and his faithful hunting dog Max.

He was predeceased by his grandfather, Fred C. Rossitto.

Funeral services will be held Saturday, June 11, at 9 a.m., at Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland, with a Mass at 10 a.m., at the Church of St. Mary, Portland. Burial will be in St. Mary Cemetery, Portland. Relatives and friends may call today, June 10, from 4-7 p.m., at the funeral home.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Connecticut Children's Medical Center, 282 Washington St., Hartford, CT 06106.

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

East Hampton

Jane Elizabeth Christopher

Jane Elizabeth Christopher, 83, of East Hampton, beloved wife of Ronald Christopher, died Tuesday, June 7, at Middlesex Hospital. Born Sept. 4, 1932, in Middletown she was the daughter of the late Howard and Hazel (Anderson) Selden.

Jane was a lifelong resident of East Hampton and Middle Haddam. She was a 1950 graduate of East Hampton High School, a past president and member for over 35 years of the VFW Woman's Auxiliary in East Hampton. Jane was the former Republican registrar of voters in East Hampton and a former Republican State Committee member for many years.

Besides her husband Ron, she is survived by her son Gary R. and Beverly Christopher of East Haddam; two daughters Lorrie Bell of North Carolina, Linda DeFrancesco of Cromwell; three grandchildren, Kevin and Justin Christopher and Sarah Wentworth; and three great-grandchildren, Krystal, Joseph and Peyton.

She was predeceased by her sister, Geraldine Grant.

Friends may call at Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, Sunday, June 12, from 4-6 p.m. A memorial service will be held Monday, June 13, at 11 a.m., at Spencer Funeral Home, followed by burial in Connecticut State Veterans' Cemetery in Middletown.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Protectors of Animals, P.O. Box 24, South Glastonbury, CT 06073.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.