



RIVEREAST

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Gardening Group... The Senior Friends of Hebron Air Line Trail Garden Group cleaned up the two gardens at the trail in cooperation with Hebron Parks and Recreation. From left are Bob LaMay; Barbara Soderberg; Elaine Massa, master gardener consultant; and Dan Goslicki. Photo by Bob LaMay.

Selectmen Bristle at Elmcrest Tax Break

by Elizabeth Regan

The developer behind a \$30 million project to resurrect the former Elmcrest Hospital property as an apartment complex and shopping center met with resistance from several members of the Portland Board of Selectmen when he stood before them Wednesday night to ask for a seven-year tax abatement.

Three hours into the presentation, selectmen agreed to carry over discussion to another meeting.

Dan Bertram of Danbury-based BRT Corporation said shovels could be in the ground by next spring on up to 240 apartments and 94,000 square feet of commercial space if a tax abatement is approved by the Board of Selectmen and a special permit is granted by the Planning and Zoning Commission this fall.

The construction of Brainerd Place is expected to take between 3.5 and five years, according to Bertram.

A previous version of the proposal called for about 75,000 square feet of commercial space, but Bertram said he is hoping to lure even more business tenants to help subsidize the historical preservation element of his plan. He has committed to restoring the 1852 Brainerd House and 1884 Sage House where they stand now and to moving the 1830 Hart-Jarvis House from the center of the property to the southwest corner.

Prospective business tenants include a pharmacy in one freestanding building and a coffee shop in another, while a larger building will include space for multiple retail shops on the first floor with office space above. The 1884 Sage House will be restored to attract business tenants as well.

Bertram told selectmen, who were concerned about how quickly the historic but deteriorating homes would be preserved, that part of the tax abatement negotiations could include language to require the restoration of each home before a certificate of occupancy may be issued for a neighboring commercial property. For example, the town could insist that the Sage House be restored before the coffee shop next door can open up.

But he confirmed for selectmen what he's said before: He is not willing to compromise on his request for a seven-year break on 100 percent of property taxes on all new construction once completed.

"If I come away tonight and it's very clear that there's no way in creation that we're going to be able to move forward, then I have to move on," he said.

A tax break would help mitigate the risk he's taking by going after a niche market in a soft economy, according to Bertram. He said the freeze would lower his operating costs once he

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Officials Back Plan for Belltown Hub Study

by Elizabeth Regan

The East Hampton Town Council and Board of Finance have officially endorsed a plan to set aside \$250,000 for services that will be used to come up with a solid dollar figure for turning Center School into a municipal hub.

The question of appropriating a quarter of a million dollars from the general fund will go to voters on Sept. 12 at a town meeting set by the Town Council last Tuesday, Aug. 11.

If approved by taxpayers, the money will be used for architectural, engineering, environmental and project management fees that must be authorized by the Town Council through the established bid process. The resulting "feasibility study" would provide the estimated project cost that would be sent to voters at referendum in the spring of next year.

Preliminary cost estimates from project management firm Colliers International range from \$36.22 million to \$44.40 million to retrofit the 1914 Center School facility to accommodate town hall offices and the police department and to renovate Memorial School to accommodate the displaced students.

Councilors approved the appropriation and set a town meeting, with a provision to hold off on public notice until after the finance board had a chance to make its recommendation on the proposal.

Town charter specifies the finance board "shall review and make recommendations re-

garding all requests for additional appropriations to be submitted to the council."

The finance board this past Monday, Aug. 15, approved a resolution recommending the appropriation, but not without objection from some members. Democrats Dean Markham and Alan Hurst voted against the resolution.

Markham said town charter language means the finance board should make its recommendation first and then the council should set the town meeting.

He said the way the council voted was "backwards and has never been done before. Never." He asked Town Manager Michael Maniscalco to get a legal opinion to see if the council was following an appropriate process.

But Maniscalco said the opinion wasn't necessary since the council had not yet approved its own resolution on the appropriation — despite having set a town meeting date.

In a phone interview Wednesday, Town Council Chairwoman Patience Anderson said the council will meet Tuesday, Aug. 30, to approve a resolution.

"This is kind of messy because the way in which the motion was made, quite frankly, would have been cleaner if we asked the Board of Finance to give their recommendation first," she said.

At the Aug. 12 meeting, the motion to approve the appropriation was made by councilor

Ted Hintz Jr. and seconded by councilor Melissa Engel. The exact language was to "appropriate \$250,000 from the General Fund for the Center School project pre-referendum services subject to recommendation from the Board of Finance."

The vote followed a motion, also raised and seconded by Hintz and Engel, to waive the council's second reading policy so that the council could move forward without delay.

Both motions were approved 5-2, with Democrat Kevin Reich and Republican Josh Piteo voting against them.

A separate motion to set the town meeting date was approved unanimously.

Markham, reached Wednesday by phone, said Maniscalco's explanation for not asking the town attorney for a legal opinion as requested was not sufficient.

"It really doesn't satisfy me, but the Town Council chooses to do its own thing regardless of what the Board of Finance asks or says. So I suspect I'm not going to have any satisfaction from the town manager or Town Council concerning that."

He said it's time the council faces up to the fact that they are in violation of the charter by consistently overlooking the board's advice.

In December, the council voted to pay for a fire truck outright despite the recommendation of Finance Director Jeff Jylkka and a unani-

mous Board of Finance to spread out the cost over a 10-year period through a lease-purchase agreement. Voters approved the purchase at a December town meeting.

Hurst, the other vote against the resolution supporting the appropriation, spoke at Monday's finance board meeting to suggest making a recommendation that the council put the question to a day-long machine vote instead of a town meeting.

"Rather than doing this in a town meeting in which four people show up, can we request the council do this as a referendum?" he asked. "Let's get the town's feeling on the stomach for another large project."

Hurst said he didn't think people would support the \$250,000 appropriation, let alone a total project that could cost around \$44 million.

According to Republican Marc Lambert, who was acting as chairman in the absence of Allison Tokarz, holding a referendum is costly and time-consuming.

It takes about \$3,000 to put on a referendum, according to the "Citizen's Guide to the Budget" published this year by the finance board.

While Lambert said he didn't want to minimize the significant appropriation being requested to move the municipal hub idea forward, he explained that he views it as the responsibility of elected officials to do what's best

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Belltown Hub Study cont. from Front Page

for the town – not necessarily what they think voters will support.

“Should they not like what we do as boards, then they have the ability to say ‘you know what, Lambert supported this. I disagree. I’m not going to vote for him next time he runs,’” he said.

A review of town charter and state statute shows 10 percent of the town’s eligible taxpayers can petition the town clerk at least 24 hours prior to a town meeting to change the method of voting to a referendum.

A motion by a majority of the Town Council at least five days before the town meeting could also change it to a referendum.

Markham disputed Lambert’s idea that promoting Center School was a wise use of resources or an example of good leadership by the town’s elected officials.

“True, we need leadership,” Markham said. “But do you follow a leader if they’re jumping into an abyss? I doubt it.”

When Markham asked what the effect of a new municipal hub would be on the town’s mill rate, Finance Director Jeff Jylkka said it was hard to arrive at a number without solid cost

estimates or construction schedules.

“But it’s at least, if not more, than what the impact of the high school was,” Markham prodded.

“It’s going to be around that, I would say,” Jylkka agreed.

With loans for the \$52 million high school renovation project coming due this fiscal year, the mill rate went up 1.66 mills. That’s \$332 more than a resident would pay in property taxes on an average-priced home compared to last year.

“I don’t think the townspeople will vote for any of those plans we now have and I think it’s a waste of money to do a \$250,000 study,” Markham said. “I think it would be better to go back to the drawing board and come up with a plan that’s really workable for the town.”

But Republican Steve Ritchie disagreed.

Ritchie said the issue of what to do with the town’s aging, undersized police department and town hall has been studied for over a decade with no results.

“This rock has been turned over a thousand times,” he said. “I don’t think it’s a waste of

money to move forward and get something solid going here,” he said. “I personally like the idea of a central location. Eliminate the annex and sell [the town hall] building off. It would be good for the next few generations.”

While he said he understood the cost concerns, he described it as an issue of “pay now or pay later.”

According to Hurst, a member of the past three volunteer committees dedicated to coming up with a plan for the town’s aging infrastructure, Center School has never been the first choice as a replacement for the town hall or police department.

“I don’t know why it keeps rising to the top. It’s not the best idea. It’s never been the best idea,” Hurst said.

In January 2015, then-schools superintendent Diane Dugas and the Board of Education’s then-chairman Ken Barber spoke at a public information meeting on town facilities to beg for support in downsizing the school district.

Dugas stressed at the time that Center School has severe issues with aging infrastructure, including several components of the school that

require immediate and expensive replacement, such as the boiler, air handler and plumbing system.

“Right now we have inefficiencies in our budget due to the high-maintenance costs that we have,” Dugas said. “We need to be proactive and not reactive. It’s about spending wisely and reducing waste, and keeping budgets in balance over time.”

On Monday, Lambert told his fellow finance board members the key now is to move forward.

“We as a town have been sitting on our hands for far too long. I’m not going to sit here and tell you this is the best idea,” he said.

He reiterated that Center School needs significant upgrades whether they happen as part of the transition to a municipal hub or as part of ongoing maintenance in the continued life of the school. And the fact remains that the town hall and police departments have far outlived their usefulness, he said.

“If we’ve looked at [the options] in those different building committees and there was a better idea, frankly we should have done something then,” he said.

Elmcrest Tax Break cont. from Front Page

has a finished building but doesn’t yet have the cash flow from a full roster of tenants, thus enabling the preservation of the three historic homes he said the town would be hard-pressed to save on its own in the state’s struggling economy.

But selectmen Brian Flood and Ben Srb said it’s not the town’s job to incentivize Bertram’s private endeavor.

“Philosophically, I have problems with this because what you’re asking the town to do is interfere with the market,” Flood said.

Granting a tax subsidy to Bertram isn’t fair to other businesses in town who haven’t received the same benefit, according to Flood.

“If the town is changing the dynamics of this and we’re putting our thumb on the scale to make it easier for you to make a living, it makes it harder for someone else to make a living and then the next thing you know, that business is getting boarded up,” he said.

On a practical level, he said he doesn’t have enough details about the proposed development to decide if the benefits to the town are enough to merit such special consideration.

Srb’s advice to Bertram was to come back with his tax abatement request only after a special permit from the Planning and Zoning Commission has been issued based on an approved site plan.

Srb disclosed at the beginning of the meeting that he is a “minority owner” of the limited liability corporation behind Chris Cote’s Golf Shop, which received a tax abatement in 2013.

“It didn’t affect me in any way,” he said of the tax abatement. “It’s a pass-through scenario.”

Srb, a former chairman of the Zoning Board of Appeals, has been a vocal opponent of the project since Bertram came on board over a year ago. Srb spoke numerous times at meetings and public hearings of the Planning and Zoning Commission and, at the commission’s July 14 regular meeting, injected himself into deliberations to the point of being reprimanded by the town attorney.

Despite the objections of Srb and dozens of residents echoing his concerns, the commission approved a change to mixed-use zoning regulations allowing a developer to apply for a special permit increasing the allowable number of apartments based on a ratio of 16 housing units for each 5,000 square feet of commercial space – but only if the proposal incorporates “the preservation of significant historic resources identified in the town’s Plan of Conservation and Development.”

Bertram has said in many public forums that the zoning regulation change, known as a text amendment, was the first requirement for a successful project; the second necessary component is a tax abatement.

According to Srb, the town’s already done

enough by changing the regulations to allow 240 apartments on one site.

“I would say we have brought a lot to the table,” Srb said.

Bertram disagreed with Srb’s use of the word “we.”

“I would say you had nothing to do with it in any positive way, because you were out there fighting it at every turn,” Bertram said.

Srb, in turn, disputed Bertram’s word choice.

“For the record, I wasn’t fighting it,” he said.

Srb explained he had been pointing out the text amendment is useless as far as historic preservation is concerned because it does not include enough specifics to ensure the historic homes are restored as part of the development. If the language in the revised regulation were sufficient, there would be no need for Bertram to include a promise to save the Hart-Jarvis house as part of his tax abatement application, Srb said.

However, Srb’s concerns about historic preservation are relatively new in terms of the various arguments he has posed at meetings of the Planning and Zoning Commission so far this year. Previous arguments have changed with each new meeting and have covered such topics as spot zoning, the high number of proposed apartments, and the lack of a fiscal impact study on the zoning change.

Flood, on the other hand, told Bertram he purposely stayed away from meetings of the Planning and Zoning Commission when the topic was discussed.

“I didn’t get involved at all as a member of this Board of Selectmen,” Flood said. “My role really relates to this tax subsidy that you’re talking about. And that’s it.”

Also weighing in Wednesday night with reservations about the tax abatement was selectwoman Kitch Breen Czernicki, who said she’s skeptical of the project in its entirety and is especially concerned with the idea of giving a tax incentive for a heavily-residential development.

Bertram told Czernicki the abatement is an “enabling mechanism” for historic preservation as well as specific improvements in keeping with the community’s village-center vision, such as hidden parking for 250 cars and new entrances on Marlborough Street and Main Street.

Selectman Fred Knous expressed concern for the deteriorating site now that Elmcrest Hospital has been gone for more than 10 years. He said property owner Fred Hassan has paid property taxes faithfully, but other than that “we’ve got a whole lot of nothing.”

“So when there’s a viable project, I feel committed to looking at it very carefully,” Knous added.

Selectmen Kathy Richards and Michael Pelton were absent from the meeting.

Opponent Files SEEC Complaint Against Linares

by Elizabeth Regan

The challenger for Republican Art Linares’ 33rd District Senate seat has accused the incumbent of violating Connecticut law by using state resources to solicit donations for his re-election campaign.



Linares

Norm Needleman, first selectman of Essex and a Democrat, filed complaints with the State Elections Enforcement Commission, the Office of State Ethics, and the Office of the Auditors of Public Accounts on Aug. 12.

The 33rd District covers the *Rivereast* towns of Colchester, East Hampton and Portland as well as Chester, Clinton, Deep River, East Haddam, Essex, Haddam, Lyme, Old Saybrook and Westbrook.

The complaint stemmed from information that appeared in a story by Jon Lender of the *Hartford Courant* on Aug. 6 describing how a consultant for the Linares’ campaign received 3,459 email addresses from the senator’s own official email list through a Freedom of Information request. The request was submitted to the state General Assembly’s Senate Republican Caucus, the article said.

“Those constituents who communicated with Linares’ office are now receiving fundraising solicitations and other campaign related communications,” Needleman wrote in a press release the same day he filed the complaints.

Needleman told the Office of State Ethics

Linares appears to be abusing the Freedom of Information Act for his personal gain by using information obtained from his public duties for his re-election campaign.

Linares, in response to a request for comment, said “citizens are free to unsubscribe at any time.”

The state senate’s youngest member characterized Needleman’s complaints as a “desperate attempt to distract people from Hartford’s disheartening news on companies leaving Connecticut, mileage tax proposals, and the ongoing federal investigation into the Democratic party.”

While Linares said constituents on his email list appreciate how his outreach keeps them informed, Needleman described the use of that list for campaign communications as a violation of public trust.

“With data breaches and hacking in the news almost every day, it’s beyond comprehension that a state senator would knowingly hand over private data of his own constituents without their knowledge or consent,” Needleman said.

Needleman called on the state agencies to investigate the misuse of public funds based on alleged violations of the state Code of Ethics as well as statutes and regulations governing public financing and clean elections.

According to Linares, the people of the 33rd District have more pressing concerns than his methods of campaign outreach.

“Given the amount of residents dissatisfied with my opponent’s good friend, Governor Malloy, my opponent’s desire to shift focus from the real issues that concern and touch residents of our district is unsurprising,” Linares said.

Colchester's New Bacon Football Coach a Familiar Face

by Julianna Roche

Dave Mason has a bright white, wide-set smile and eyes that fully exude his enthusiasm for football when he speaks. Sitting behind his new office desk, dressed in a Bacon Academy Bobcats hat and work-out wear, he plays the part perfectly – as Bacon's new head football coach.

The 26-year-old Rhode Island native grew up in East Greenwich, soaking up sports from childhood until college, where he then spent four years playing defensive end for the Ohio Northern University Polar Bears. While Mason said he's played everything from hockey to basketball (and one year of college lacrosse), it wasn't until high school that he became interested in playing football.

"I went to the first captain's practice [for soccer] and kids were running circles around me," Mason laughed. "The coach pulled me aside and said, 'You should just go play football'... Honestly, that's how I got started. If it wasn't for those people pushing me, maybe I'd be a soccer coach, I don't know."

After his first football practice, though, Mason said he was hooked. "I love the fact that it's a very team oriented game. In other sports, you can be a sole standout, but [with football] if you mess up, you feel bad because you let everyone else down."

After graduating with a degree in technology education and construction management, Mason worked as a teacher and assistant football coach for Crooksville High School in Ohio. In 2014, he was hired as one of Bacon's technology education teachers and as assistant football coach.

This season, however, Mason – who has played a critical role in improving the program over the last two years – will replace former head coach Erik Larka, who left in February to take the head coach position at Jonathan Law

High School in Milford.

"When he took over, Larka started this change of culture, which we needed," Mason said. "He brought a lot of fun back to the program," through such things as playing music at practices.

"We were able to get a lot more kids back [each season] because he was a nice, easy going guy and he had great relationships with the kids," he added.

For the players, the transition from Larka will be an easy one, considering Mason has already spent the last two years developing strong relationships with the returning kids. "It's an easy transition," said Larka. "I'm very confident he was the right man for the job and that he will take what we did and do even better things this season."

The team "came off last season with a great year," Mason said. "I understand expectations are high, but it's also very exciting because although we did lose a very good senior class, kids are stepping up to fill their roles. I don't have to really motivate them as much as I thought I would; their excitement and enthusiasm alone for the season is enough. I just have to take care of the x's and o's."

The Bobcats did in fact have the best season in their history last year, making a playoff appearance and finishing with an 8-2 record – quite the turnaround from the 2-9 record the team had notched just two years before. This year, Mason said that while the main goal is to make a return to the playoffs, he also wants to keep everyone healthy and happy.

Alongside Mason coaching this season will be offensive coordinator Nick SanGiacomo, defensive coordinator Mike Murray, and a new addition, assistant defensive coordinator John Rutger.

"They're phenomenal and it makes my job a heck of a lot easier," he said of his new col-



Bacon Academy's former assistant football coach Dave Mason will serve as head coach this season for the Bobcats.

leagues. "They're really good to rely on, they know the game well and they have a great relationship with the kids."

As far as his coaching style goes, Mason laughed and said he's definitely easy-going, but can "get fired up pretty good" if it's called for.

"I like to be very enthusiastic and I think the kids can attest to that. ... I want to be a positive role model," he added. "I'm more interested in building up these guys into becoming men, and football is just a tool for that."

But most importantly?

"There's something about being out there on Friday nights or Saturday afternoons, and you're just out there with 50 of your best friends having fun," Mason said. "It's like how it felt playing backyard football when you were a kid for the fun of it... and if you're not having fun doing it, why play? That's why I try to maintain that with these guys."

The Bacon Bobcats will kick off their 2016 season at Killingly High School Friday, Sept. 9, at 6:30 p.m. Their home opener is Saturday, Sept. 17, at noon, against Windham.

East Hampton's Maniscalco Gets New Contract – Or Not

by Elizabeth Regan

The Town Council's protracted and sometimes baffling performance evaluation of Town Manager Michael Maniscalco – which shows no signs of ending – has led town attorneys to recommend training in parliamentary procedure following the contentious approval of an employment contract last week.

The recommendation was part of a legal opinion requested by Republican councilman Ted Hintz Jr. questioning the legality of the council's 4-3 vote in favor of the contract.

Parliamentary procedure, outlined in the authoritative book *Robert's Rules of Order*, ensures meetings are conducted fairly and effectively.

In the legal opinion issued Aug. 15, attorneys Duncan J. Forsyth and Richard P. Roberts of Halloran & Sage said "we have found nothing to indicate that the Town Council operates in accordance with *Robert's Rules*."

The attorneys said they would be providing the council with a copy of the most recent revision of *Robert's Rules of Order* as "a convenient resource for everyone to review in an effort to gain more familiarity with recognized procedure."

Despite Hintz's concerns, the legal opinion said the vote was valid.

The approved contract includes a 1.5 percent raise that brings Maniscalco's salary to \$125,081, retroactive to July 1.

Hintz said he believed the vote was illegal because there was not adequate time for review and discussion in accordance with council policy.

However, Hintz is the one who closed debate on the motion by calling for a vote.

Councilor Kevin Reich, a Democrat, made the motion to approve the revised contract prepared by the town labor attorney based on recommendations from Maniscalco. He also specified the 1.5 percent raise and a \$500 car allowance.

But discussion among councilors revealed Hintz, along with Republicans Melissa Engel and Mark Philhower, had more changes in mind for the draft document.

"I would either rescind [the motion] or call it and let it fail – I'm assuming it would fail – and then move forward with the discussion of the contract," Hintz told his fellow council members.

Reich and Republican Josh Piteo, who seconded the motion, did not immediately rescind

it per Hintz's suggestion. That's when Hintz asked that the motion be brought to a vote.

Republican Chairwoman Patience Anderson and Democrat James "Pete" Brown joined Reich and Piteo in voting for the contract. Engel, Hintz and Philhower voted against it.

Hintz's complaint hinges on an addendum to the council's bylaws, which includes a "second reading" policy for all new business. The policy requires councilors to discuss emergent issues and then carry them over to the next meeting for further discussion or action.

The contract was included on last week's agenda as "continued business" – not new business – following the council's July 26 authorization to submit proposed contract revisions to the town's labor attorney.

According to the legal opinion, Hintz's concerns about the second reading policy should have been raised before any debate on the motion, as outlined in *Robert's Rules of Order*, so the council chairman could decide if the second reading policy could be invoked.

If the council had followed that rule, it would have opened the opportunity for any two members to appeal Anderson's decision to the entire council if there was disagreement, the lawyers wrote. Any of the members also could have made a motion to postpone the issue to the next meeting or another specified time.

But Hintz called for a vote and that's what he got, according to the legal opinion.

Hintz said later during the same meeting that he was disgusted by the failure of "certain members" to hear out their fellow councilors.

"I can't say I'm absolutely surprised, but I am pretty appalled by it," Hintz said.

Reich then posed this rhetorical question: "Who called the motion?"

"I did," Hintz replied. "Because we were going to discuss [the contract] outside the motion. And that was pretty clear, Kevin."

This Tuesday, Engel said the vote caught her off guard. She reiterated Hintz's contention that all members were fully aware the plan was to discuss the contract outside of the motion.

She said she didn't understand the motivation behind the majority's decision to accept the contract without debate, but wondered if it might have to do with reluctance to discuss job performance details in public when such reviews so often happen behind closed doors.

If that's the case, Engel said, it's not a fair rationale.

"There's lots of issues that get sticky and they might even get uncomfortable, but that doesn't mean they don't get discussed," she said.

Councilors have seemed ill prepared for a public debate on Maniscalco's performance since the item first appeared on their agenda in July. Discussion during that first meeting was focused on disagreements among councilors about the review process, while a second meeting included more talk about another town employee than about Maniscalco.

While evaluations of town employees may be held in executive session, Maniscalco invoked his right to open the job review discussion to the public as he did last year. Prior to that, he had allowed councilors to discuss his review privately.

The legal opinion from Forsyth and Roberts said there is one way to bring the contract back up for consideration: councilors may rescind their vote at their next meeting if a simple majority agrees more thorough discussion should take place before a contract is approved.

Councilors could then add a new contract to the agenda under continued business.

The vote cannot be rescinded once the contract is signed, the opinion noted.

Anderson said Tuesday that the contract has not been signed.

She said she received requests from Hintz and Engel to revisit the issue at the next council meeting, which is a special meeting slated for Tuesday, Aug. 30. But Anderson emphasized discussion on the contract can only occur after a motion to rescind last week's vote has been approved.

While she said it is "only fair and right" to discuss rescinding the vote, Anderson also said the rules of parliamentary procedure must be strictly followed. Guidelines include posting the topic as an item on the agenda and making sure conversation on the motion is purely about rescinding the previous vote, not about the contract itself.

"We have to be very careful about rescinding something that was a perfectly legal vote," Anderson said.

Anderson said she appreciates the advice of town attorneys to study up on parliamentary procedure.

"I think not only myself, but all council members, could benefit from a revisiting of *Robert's Rules* and then adherence to it," she said. "I know we've been very relaxed about that and I

think I need to be a little more firm with adherence to those rules."

She expressed interest in attending a seminar on parliamentary procedure, which is regularly offered by the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM).

"Any one of us council members can avail ourselves to that sort of thing and, should there be one that comes up, I'd certainly be happy to go and learn more," she said.

CCM's next scheduled workshop on parliamentary procedure will be held Thursday, Oct. 13, in Milford, according to the organization's website.

Maniscalco said Tuesday he's concerned rescinding the motion would set a precedent that could reduce the efficiency of town operations.

"Once the council majority has made a vote and directs for something to happen, usually town staff immediately are working on trying to get that done. Now we have to sit back and wait to see if there's going to be a rescinding action," he said.

Maniscalco had asked for a 2.5 percent raise, which is the same amount received by the town's non-union employees for the current fiscal year. He pointed out to councilors that he is underpaid compared to town managers in similar towns and makes less money than seven administrators in the East Hampton school district.

Maniscalco provided data from the Connecticut Town Manager's Association in May showing and average salary of \$134,841 for town managers in municipalities with populations of 11,000 to 15,000. The median salary came in at \$138,273. He said his salary is the second lowest out of the five comparable towns, a trend that's held steady since he took his position in 2012.

He also asked for an increase of \$150 to his vehicle stipend to defray increased travel costs in his capacity as the vice chairman of the Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments and as an appointed member of the state's Commission on Municipal Opportunities and Regional Efficiencies. He said his regular presence at fire calls, which is dictated by the council, comes with increased car insurance costs.

However, the council kept the vehicle stipend at its current \$500 amount.

When asked for his thoughts on the new contract, Maniscalco declined to comment.

Andover School Board Approves Salary Increase for Superintendent

by Geeta S. Sandberg

The Board of Education last week, the board voted unanimously to approve a 2.5 percent increase for salary and health insurance for schools' superintendent Sally Doyen, who will be starting in her second year with the district.

The increase brings her salary up to \$64,830 from \$63,249 and her insurance compensation up to \$13,325 from \$13,000.

The Andover schools superintendent is a part-time position. Doyen, who joined the district in June 2015, said this week of the board's approval, "Obviously, I was very pleased. It's been a very good year; I've thoroughly enjoyed it."

But, she added, "It's nice getting through your first year anywhere because then, this year, I hope to know more about what's going on; being able to project ahead of time is always a very good thing so I'm very pleased."

Board of Education Chairwoman Shannon Loudon added this week, "The board appreciated Sally's work and believed that she was deserving of the raise."

* * *

Also at the Aug. 10 meeting, the board voted to approve a number of budget transfers. The

transfers totaled \$67,000 and will cover overages in various accounts, including \$30,000 from the property/repairs accounts. Those overages include items such as \$11,000 for painting; air conditioning for the computer lab for \$6,000; repairs to playground equipment for \$4,500; repairs to the kitchen freezer for \$2,200; classroom rugs for \$3,000; and \$2,000 for repairs to the elevator/furnace.

There were also overages in the supplies/computers account in the amount of \$22,000. These overages included \$13,000 for teacher laptops; \$3,500 for development for the school website; and \$2,500 for the rest of the cost of an iPad cart that will bring 20 iPads to the school. The rest of the cost is covered by a state technology grant the school received in the amount of \$10,000.

Finally, there was also \$15,000 in overages in the furniture, fixtures and equipment account including \$7,000 for new choral risers and stands, \$5,500 for band instruments and \$1,500 for a washer and dryer.

Business manager Laura Webb said in a memo to the superintendent the \$67,000 transfer was being requested from the benefits ac-

count, as there had been savings from "a change of staff with lesser or no health insurance needs."

Doyen said of the overages, "They were not included in the budget, that's really what the explanation is [for the overages]."

She added they were "things that came up during the course of the year in terms of needs, so we were able to just purchase them although they had not been specifically pinpointed in the budget."

The choral risers, for example, "had been on a wish list for quite some time" Doyen stated, "because everyone sort of knew they needed to be updated, so we were just able to do it this past year."

In addition, Doyen explained it was hard to budget for repairs.

"Some of the overages were repairs and it's very difficult to be able to predict repairs to certain items," she said, "and we obviously have to repair them if something breaks during the year."

* * *

The board also voted to approve a partial payment of \$282,625 to Imperial Roofing for

work that's currently being done to replace the six sections of the school roof that are over 20 years old.

Doyen said this was the "first major invoice" received for the project; the state is expected to reimburse 58.93 percent of the project's cost, "which is a very healthy reimbursement so that's obviously extremely helpful."

She added of the roofwork, which began this summer, "We're in very good shape in terms of our timeline and we're in the final stages" of the project. "It's not yet 100 percent completed but we are very optimistic, depending of course on rain, that we'll be finished before school gets started," she said.

She continued, "There may still be a few different things going on: clean-up, things that need to be done last-minute, but we don't anticipate any large amount of crews working on the roof at that point."

School begins Aug. 31.

* * *

The next Board of Education meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, Sept. 14, at 7 p.m. in the Andover Elementary School library, 17 School Rd.

Traffic Improvements Proposed for North Main Street in Marlborough

by Julianna Roche

On Wednesday evening, First Selectwoman Amy Traversa held a lakeside meeting at Hall Park Beach Club to present improvements to be made on North Main Street regarding recent vehicle speeding concerns by the community.

About 30 Marlborough residents were present, along with Public Works Department Superintendent of Operations Chris Corsa, Town Planner Peter Hughes, State Trooper Jeff Dunshee and Town Constable Randy Ransom.

"Marlborough is not unusual in any shape or form, and like anybody that has a beach community, there are issues when you have narrower roads and distractions of the beach," Traversa began. "What I can tell you is in the five times I've walked with experts, I've seen people crossing in between crosswalks, carrying canoes across streets, people walking on the side of the street. ... A lot of this is a matter of pedestrians taking responsibility, but there is a need for improvement to be made down here."

Back in mid-July, Traversa and Corsa met with traffic experts from University of Connecticut's Technology Transfer (T2) Center and the Capitol Region Council of Government (CRCOG)'s Transportation Planning Office in response to residents' concerns regarding speeding vehicles in the center of town. The group walked North Main Street to examine the

street's current conditions and discuss possible solutions to lessen the risks to pedestrians in such a heavily populated area. The group also used a radar gun to measure the speeds of passing vehicles.

As a result, traffic authorities provided Traversa with a final report of recommendations to be made. At the meeting, the first selectwoman presented a general rendering of North Main Street, outlining locations of new signage and proposed improvements to made, which she said included making signs much more "conspicuous," with either herring bone patterns or chevrons on the outer edges of a yield sign, for example.

Traversa also said crosswalks, triangles, stop signs and yield signs down North Main Street would be refreshed with new paint. Several signs are currently not at regulation height, she added, so those would be fixed. Making speed limits more evident to drivers was also addressed.

"From Town Hall down to where we are now, there's no speed limit sign," she said for example. "But the state has designated coming from Main [Street] to Exit 12 is 30 m.p.h."

To solve this issue, Traversa said two speed limit signs would be posted on both ends of North Main Street, in a highlighted color with solar power flashing lights that will run 24/7.

Traversa said Thursday morning that all of this work is in the early, planning stages, and there are no cost estimates yet.

While the majority of residents at the meeting seemed agreeable to the improvements presented, several residents proposed other possibilities, such as establishing new ordinances, more police enforcement or putting cameras in place to catch speeders.

To those suggestions, Traversa said that while she appreciated their ideas, the proposed plan was the least expensive and least invasive.

"We have limited amount of police and police are incredibly expensive," explained Traversa. "People are already complaining about taxes; something has to give... at some point, we have to stop discussing it."

Marlborough resident Chris Callaway, who was also recently promoted to sergeant for the Norwich Police Department (after 17 years of being a department veteran), acknowledged the town's hard work and effort, but said he didn't believe extra signage was the best solution to stop speeding, nor the least expensive. He also expressed frustration that residents' suggestions weren't being considered at the meeting.

"So it wasn't about the community?" he said. "It wasn't about the neighbors? You just came down here with an iron fist and didn't take advice from anybody?"

"I've taken it seriously. I've pulled in people who have far more experience than I do and I'm going to abide by the recommendations they've made," said Traversa, who added that she has spent the last three months working with traffic experts. "It doesn't mean that anything else won't be considered. ... We're focusing on these areas because we've heard the most about it."

Resident Rich Baker, who said he'd originally approached Traversa and Hughes regarding the issue in May, backed the plan, saying that since his meeting with the two officials, "they have been working on it."

"Now, the answer may not be what everybody wants, but they have been in contact with me and communicating with me on this," he continued. "In terms of effort, in my own point of view, it's not a simple solution. You can't just throw lights and stop signs everywhere. ... Let's not confuse the effort and why we're here tonight for what we all personally want."

Towards the end of the meeting, Dunshee added he was impressed by the Marlborough community and the number of people who showed up for the meeting.

"I've never seen a community meeting like this," he said. "We share your frustration, but this, I feel, is a really good start. It's a road to a better place, not to a worse place."

Marlborough School Board Votes to Keep Three Kindergarten Classes

by Julianna Roche

By a 5-3 vote – board member Susan Rapelye was absent – the Board of Education Monday opted to maintain three kindergarten classes for the 2016-17 year rather than add a fourth section and teacher, despite enrollment numbers being slightly above established guidelines.

The special meeting was a result of concerns over the current enrollment for the incoming kindergarten class. The New England School Development Council (NESDEC) had projected 39 students, so Superintendent of Schools David Sklarz, when crafting the 2016-17 spending plan earlier this year, had budgeted for three teachers.

However, enrollment is currently at 61 students, meaning that each of the three kindergarten sections would have 20 or 21 students, along with one teacher and one para-professional. The school board's class-size guidelines recommend the number of kindergarteners in each class should be somewhere between 16 to 20 students.

Several members of the public spoke about their concerns with the large class sizes, including Lyndsay Mark, who provided the board with some research on smaller classes.

"The benefits are not just for students, but for teachers too," she said, adding that, for example, teachers in smaller classes spend more time on classroom instruction than classroom management, while children have higher test scores in math and reading in smaller classes. "Marlborough is a fantastic school. ... Whatever happens, I know our children are taken care of, but I hope you take this information into consideration when you make a decision."

Erin Hatziaostas agreed on the benefits – saying, "I think, in general, everyone knows the benefits" – and noted that administration had previously promised that if the number of children enrolled surpassed 60, school administration would add another teacher. "So I'm here making sure we stay on our promises."

Fellow resident Karina Ramos added, "I'm a high school teacher and smaller classes make a huge difference in how much interaction I can have with my students."

Following public comments, several board members, including vice chair Wes Skorski and board member Betty O'Brien, expressed their contentment at the meeting turnout, which happened to fill out the school's library.

But, some board members said that, with the school year starting in less than two weeks, it may be too late for them to do anything even if they did vote in favor of adding a fourth class and teacher.

"It's great that everyone came out today, but really you guys should have come out around April 1 and talked to the Board of Finance when they were deciding to make budget cuts ... and made your thoughts felt then, because that was the time possibly to have made an impact," Skorski said referencing the Board of Finance's vote this past spring to cut \$200,000 from the school budget.

After citing a laundry list of reductions the board already had to make to satisfy that finance board mandate, Skorski said adding a fourth teacher may also require cutting from somewhere else.

"What other teacher should we get rid of?"

Or should we get rid of all our technology, all the library books?" he asked. "There's only so much room, so where else should we cut? We've already cut down to the bare bones."

Still, Skorski voted to add the teacher, along with board members Mimi LaPoint and Theresa Brysgel. Brysgel stressed the importance of the board sticking to the established recommended class sizes, saying, "Why set guidelines if we don't follow them?"

LaPoint suggested putting the teacher in, and then going to the finance board for the money to fund it.

"We need to have the best school possible for the kids of this town and we need to be able to have our decisions respected," she said. "I think we need to put our teacher back and go to the Board of Finance now and say hey, we need the money back to pay for this teacher."

However, Board of Finance Vice Chair Cliff Denniss was in attendance at the meeting, and said he believed that, according to the town charter, in order for the education board to even get the funds necessary for a fourth teacher, it would have to go through an approval process that could take months.

"The only way I can see it being done is go through the Board of Selectmen for special appropriations," he said. According to Denniss, both the selectmen and the Board of Finance would have to approve additional funds, and it would also have to go to a public hearing as well as a town meeting. "That's the way I read the charter, so you're talking months."

O'Brien was one of the five board members

who voted to keep the number of teachers at three. But, before casting her vote, she told those in attendance that, no matter what the board decided, the children would not be harmed. In fact, since the school's recent move to a full-day kindergarten program, "your children are getting twice as much time in this school than they were two years ago," she added. "We have support for reading, support for math. ... There's so much support in there, you cannot imagine."

Sklarz, also seemingly supportive of maintaining three classes, said he had confidence the staff could handle an additional child, even if it went slightly above enrollment guidelines.

"I firmly believe that what we're talking about is one student in one class ... I have spent countless hours in kindergarten classes here, and I couldn't be more proud of the incredible teachers we have here," he said. "I cannot believe that the teachers I know and I've grown to enjoy and respect deeply, could not handle one more kid in a classroom. Those aren't the teachers that I know and I've been there firsthand."

During public comments following the vote, resident Dave Porteous echoed board members' sentiments, and encouraged everyone to attend more meetings in the future if they want to have an impact.

"Those of you that are here need to pay attention over the next few years to the fact that these kinds of issues will continue to come up," he said. "Your voices are very important if you want to see us maintain the quality of the school we have right now."

Marlborough Fire Department Syncs up with New Dispatch Service

by Julianna Roche

After providing emergency dispatch services for the last 40 years, Colchester Emergency Communications (KX) dissolved at the end of June, forcing its member towns – including Marlborough – to find new dispatch homes.

Marlborough wound up joining Tolland County Mutual Aid Fire Service, Inc. (TN). The transition, which took effect July 1, has been "entirely seamless," according to First Selectwoman Amy Traversa.

Including Marlborough, TN provides dispatch services to 17 towns encompassing 24 emergency service organizations within Tolland, Windham and Hartford counties. Marlborough is paying \$12,860 per year for its services, with no additional capital costs.

The collapse of KX wasn't unexpected. The organization had been on shaky financial footing for a while, and after a possible merger with Montville fell through in June 2015, member towns began departing.

This prompted Marlborough officials to begin looking for dispatch services, and, Traversa said, when she took office last November, the previous administration had already been negotiating for several months with the towns of

East Hampton and Glastonbury to create a new three-town dispatch service.

"The negotiations were nearly complete when I was elected," Traversa said, adding that she felt pressure to "sign a memorandum of understanding that would have committed Marlborough to joining and partially funding the [newly-consolidated] dispatch center."

Traversa said the cost for the town was estimated to be between \$330,000 and \$450,000 for the first year in capital costs and an estimated \$125,000 per year for operations.

"I put together a small group of people to pull together a request for proposals to see if there were any other options," she added.

Within three weeks, the town received three alternate proposals. Traversa said TN was selected "based on both quality and service factors." For example, TN has a brand new mobile communication center housing \$45,000 state-of-the-art communications equipment.

Not only is the new dispatch service \$42,140 less per year than what Marlborough had paid for its last year with KX, it's substantially less than what it would have cost had the town gone

through with the three-town partnership with East Hampton and Glastonbury. Traversa said the estimated cost to Marlborough over the initial five-year deal was more than \$955,000.

In addition to the transition to a new dispatch service, another major change was introduced at last week's Board of Finance meeting, where chairman Doug Knowlton – who was also on the KX board of directors – announced the Marlborough Volunteer Fire Department would be upgrading its database system to become compatible with TN, something which was previously unattainable with KX.

"Our existing software at the firehouse is not compatible with linking up to the TN database ... so at least with this, they'll be compatible," Knowlton said at the meeting. "The new technology came recommended from the fire department ... because right now, the system that tracks our calls requires a lot more manual input."

The new technology, called Firehouse Software, is a comprehensive fire and EMS records management system that would essentially make inputting data a much more expedient and

easy process.

"The technology is software for documenting incidents that the fire department is called to," said Marlborough's Fire Commissioner Mike Schadtle.

The software uses an integrated database and graphical user interface, so data only has to be entered one time, even when used in different areas of the system. Its modules are also integrated for one complete solution with a flexible design, meaning it can be used at both fire departments and EMS agencies, regardless of size.

"The fire department inputs this information into the system after each call," Schadtle explained. "The fire marshal also inputs the information from his investigation and his inspections. This information is then transmitted to the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS)."

Knowlton says the fire department has already acquired the software and is currently working on getting it "up and running," which he expects will be sometime in mid-to-late September.

East Hampton Police News

8/1: Thomas Planeta III, 30, of 56 Barton Hill Rd., was issued a summons for illegal burning, East Hampton Police said.

8/2: Dominick Joseph Santamaria, 48, of 41 East High St., East Hampton was arrested and charged with second-degree assault and disorderly conduct, police said.

8/4: Nicholas O'Brien, 26, of 82 Falls Ave, Oakville was issued a summons for operating a motor vehicle while using a cellphone and driving while suspended, police said.

8/8: Scott Herman, 40, of 36 Royal Oaks Ave., was arrested and charged with DUI, police said.

8/9: Rosalind M. Vecchitto, 69, of 165 Champion Hill Rd., was arrested pursuant to an active warrant and charged with shoplifting (sixth-degree larceny), police said.

Colchester Police News

8/10: State Police said Brian Dominski, 44, of 5 Sherry Dr., East Hampton, was arrested and charged with offering to make home improvements without a current certificate of registration.

8/13: State Police said David W. Laflamme, 51, of 73 Wildwood Rd., was arrested on an active arrest warrant and charged with violation of probation.

Hebron Police News

8/13: State Police said at approximately 11:40 p.m., the rear window of a vehicle was smashed on Mohegan Lane. The case is currently still under investigation.

Portland Police News

8/10: Heather Lee, 32, of 392 Main St., was charged with operating an unregistered motor vehicle, Portland Police said.

8/14: Sheryl Johnson, 45, of 19 Courtney Ln., was charged with third-degree assault, disorderly conduct and risk of injury to a minor, police said.

Obituaries

Colchester

Florence Veronica Lefebvre

Florence Veronica Lefebvre, 96, of Colchester, widow of the late Alfred "Lefty" Lefebvre, passed away peacefully Thursday morning, Aug. 11. Born May 9, 1920 in New Britain, she was the last surviving child of the late Alexander and Koncek Krulikowski.

During World War II, she had worked for Cheney Bros. and Pioneer Parachute.

On Jan. 12, 1942, she and Alfred wed in Manchester and shared 54 years of marriage before he predeceased her on Dec. 10, 1996.

She was a communicant of St. Andrew Church in Colchester and was a member of the Ladies Guild. Mrs. Lefebvre had also been active with Adler-Boluck VFW Auxiliary as well as the Colchester, Salem and East Haddam Seniors.

She will be remembered for her love and devotion to her family and leaves two daughters, Dorothy "Dottie" Gorreck and Linda Mrowka, both of Colchester; three grandchildren, Christopher, Suzanne and Michael Gorreck; four great grandchildren; as well as her self-proclaimed "third daughter," Arlene "Bunny" Probus of Colchester.

There are no services and she will be laid to rest privately alongside her husband and son-in-law, Ronald R. Mrowka, in the New St. Andrew Cemetery, Colchester.

In lieu of flowers, donations in her memory may be made to the Colchester Senior Center, 95 Norwich Ave., Colchester, CT 06415 or to the Connecticut Humane Society, 701 Russell Rd., Newington, CT 06111.

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

Colchester

Helena Hovan

Helena (Drazkiewicz) Hovan, formerly of Colchester passed away peacefully on the Feast of the Assumption of Our Lady (Monday, Aug. 15) at Manchester Memorial Hospital at the age of 73. Born Dec. 29, 1942 in New London, she was the beloved daughter of Stanley and Jane (Jurach) Drazkiewicz, late of Colchester.

She attended Central Connecticut State University and was employed at Pratt & Whitney in East Hartford, where she met her beloved husband, Edward Hovan, Sr. Helene was a lovely woman with a generous heart who loved spending time at the lake with her family. She enjoyed sewing for her family and friends, cooking, gardening, and watching the Red Sox games, bird watching and hiking. She will be forever remembered and missed dearly by both her friends and family.

In addition to her loving husband of 51 years, she is survived by her three children, Edward Hovan Jr. of Bolton, Lisa Grabowski of West Brookfield, Mass., and Kurt Hovan of Belvedere, Calif.; six grandchildren; her brother, Stanley Drazkiewicz Jr. of Key West, Fla.; and numerous extended family and friends.

She was predeceased by her eldest brother, Thaddeus "Tad" Drazkiewicz in 1944.

The family received guests Thursday, Aug. 18, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. The funeral liturgy will be celebrated at 10:30 a.m. today, Aug. 19, directly at St. Andrew Church, 128 Norwich Ave., Colchester. Burial will follow in the Drazkiewicz family plot in the New St. Andrew Cemetery, Colchester.

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.



Portland

J. Elmer Swanson

Elmer Swanson, of Portland, passed away Friday, Aug. 12, after a brief illness. He was surrounded by the love and warmth of family and friends in the preceding days.

Elmer was born to the late Nettie Mae (Freeman) and John Elmer Swanson Oct. 2, 1923. He grew up in Detroit, where he began his double sport scholar athlete career hurdling at Northeastern High School. He continued his education at the University of Michigan, where he competed as a catcher and first baseman for the baseball team and as a hurdler on the track team. He won major titles for the Wolverines, including the 1944 Big Ten hurdles and Purdue Relays. His collegiate career was interrupted by a stint with the Marine Corps. Upon his honorable discharge, he finished his degree and earned a Master of Arts.

Elmer was drafted in 1946 to play professional baseball with the Detroit Tigers, competing in Williamsport and Hagerstown for three seasons. He then began his illustrious coaching career as assistant track and field and cross-country coach at Michigan, helping garner nine Big Ten Championships.

In 1963, he was named head coach of the track and cross-country teams at Wesleyan University, and he and his family moved to Connecticut. Known for his laidback coaching style, Elmer guided the men's and women's teams to Little Three, NESCAC and New England championships. He coached several All-Americans, Olympians, and nationally prominent runners.

Elmer was named 1993 NCAA District I Division III Cross Country Coach of the Year, president of the New England Division III Track and Field Coaches Association, and CT Intercollegiate Conference. He was a field judge, referee, meet director and member of executive committees for NCAA Division III.

In July of 1993, Elmer was conferred as a professor emeritus of physical education. He was subsequently recognized for 50 years of continuous coaching and was inducted into the Portland, Wesleyan, and Middletown Sports Hall of Fames. He spent fun-filled summers working at Camp Michigama and was a loyal member of Zion Lutheran Church. Elmer loved to golf and was a fixture of the senior golf league until he was over 90. He enjoyed over 40 years of friendship with the "Friday Night Group," and had an active social life with Wesleyan and local friends. Elmer's quick wit and sharp sense of humor, as well as his effervescent smile, were prominent through his final days.

Elmer was predeceased by his loving wife, Patricia Ann Swanson. They met in college and remained loyal Michigan alums for life. Pat and Elmer celebrated 61 years of marriage before her passing, and he is undoubtedly smiling as they are reunited.

Elmer's memory will be cherished by his family: his daughter, Kristen, and husband, Andy Cohen, of Oak Hills, Calif.; his son, Jay, and wife, Martha, of Portland; his grandson, Dr. Chris Swanson, and wife, Maggie, of Jacksonville, Fla.; his granddaughter, Ingrid, and husband, William Moss, of Glastonbury; his great-grandson, Callum Elmer Moss; his sister-in-law, Emma Jane Shaner of Bellevue, Neb.; two nieces, Leslie and husband Bryan Slone of Omaha, Neb., Kim and husband Dennis Briggs of Trinity, Fla.

Funeral services were Tuesday, Aug. 16, at Zion Lutheran Church, 183 Williams St., Portland. Burial followed in the Swedish Cemetery. Friends called Monday, Aug. 15, at Doolittle Funeral Home, 14 Old Church St., Middletown.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to Zion Lutheran Church Memorial Fund, P.O. Box 202, Portland, CT 06480, or Wesleyan University Cardinal Fund for Athletics, give2athletics.wesleyan.edu.

Messages of condolence may be sent to the family at doolittlefuneralservice.com.

Portland

Charles W. Nedley Jr.

Charles W. Nedley Jr. of Portland, born July 14, 1942, passed away Friday, July 15.

He is survived by his wife Donna (Wilson) Nedley, daughter Lori (Nedley) Sirois and husband Allan, and Charles Nedley III and his wife Lisa. He also leaves behind three grandchildren and three great-grandchildren, and many family and friends.

There will be a memorial service Saturday, Sept. 17, from 1-5 p.m., at St. Francis Club on Freestone Avenue and Cross Street in Portland.



Portland

John M. Dillon

John M. "Jack" Dillon, 78, beloved husband of Bernadette (Soboleski) Dillon, passed away Tuesday, Aug. 16, surrounded by his loving family.

A lifelong Portland resident, Jack was born March 28, 1938, to John R. and Mildred (Healy) Dillon in the front bedroom of the family home at 23 East Main St. He attended St. Mary's Parochial School and Portland High School, graduating in the class of 1955.

It was in his senior year at PHS that he met the love of his life, Bernadette. Jack and Bernie were married on February 20, 1960 and enjoyed 56+ wonderful years together raising three children and enjoying their seven beautiful grandchildren.

Jack worked for the Connecticut Department of Transportation for 34 years as a highway testing engineer. Following his retirement, he enjoyed seven years working at Portland True Value Hardware, providing home improvement advice, making door to door deliveries, and even an occasional on-site repair.

Jack was a true homebody who was most comfortable puttering in and around his home. He was independent and self-reliant, able to rebuild and repair just about anything. He passed on his self-taught knowledge of carpentry, plumbing and electrical repair to his children at an early age while they helped him restore the family home.

Above all, Jack was 100 percent dedicated to his wife and children. Whether tearing up the dance floor with Bernie while dancing a good polka, pheasant hunting with his sons on a crisp autumn morning, attending dance recitals for his daughter or attending endless PHS baseball games and band concerts, he was always there. As grandchildren arrived, his role changed but his dedication to family remained steadfast. No matter the event or the project, Papa was always there for them too.

A devoted Catholic, lifelong communicant of the Church of Saint Mary, and an usher at weekend masses for over 55 years, Jack would greet everyone with a wink, a smile, and perfectly delivered joke. He was tremendously proud of his affiliation with the Knights of Columbus, joining Portland Council No. 7 as a young man following in the footsteps of his great grandfather, grandfather and father. His pride grew in recent years when his two sons and his son-in-law carried on the Dillon tradition with membership in K of C Council No. 7.

Jack had fond childhood memories of days spent with neighborhood friends exploring and camping in the woodlands of Portland. During the summers, many such adventures included a cannonball (or two) into the clear, deep water of Portland's brownstone quarries. It was these early days in and around the quarries that sparked his lifelong interest in its history and the people who worked there, including three generations of the Dillon men.

Jack was known locally and beyond as a foremost authority on the Portland brownstone quarries. He often presented his artifacts and recollections to school children, local civic organizations and others with an interest in the quarries. One such presentation and interview was published in 2009 by "WesScholar" at Wesleyan University. His recorded interview along with many of his photographic archives is available online at http://wesscholar.wesleyan.edu/eng_274_2009/4/.

Throughout his life, Jack remained committed to the betterment of his hometown as a founding member of the Portland Historical Society, member of the Portland Planning and Zoning Commission, Portland Exchange Club, a volunteer at the Portland Fair, and participant with many town youth organizations including Little League and Boy Scouts.

He is survived by three children, John and his wife Maura (Bransfield), Mary (Dillon) Dickerson and her husband Timothy, and Joseph and his wife Alison (Kavanaugh) Dillon, all of Portland. He is also survived by seven beloved grandchildren, John M. and his wife Kristin (Moran) Dillon of Portland, Katie (Dillon) Churchill and her husband Eric of Wahiawa, Hawaii, and Emily Dillon of Portland; Suzanne Dickerson and Elizabeth Dickerson, both of Portland; Abigail and Michael Dillon, both of Portland.



Jack was predeceased by his older brother, Richard Dillon of Portland, and an infant brother.

He leaves his sister-in-law, Dolores Dillon of Portland, and two brothers-in-law, Louis Soboleski and his wife Sara (Walsh) Soboleski of Old Saybrook, John Soboleski and wife Karen (Jordt) Soboleski of Portland, and many nieces, nephews, cousins and close friends.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be held Saturday, Aug. 20, at 11 a.m., at the Church of Saint Mary, 51 Freestone Ave., Portland. Burial will follow at Saint Mary's Cemetery in Portland. Family and friends may call this evening, Aug. 19, from 4-7 p.m., at Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland.

In lieu of flowers, donations in Jack's memory may be made to Middlesex Hospital Hospice, 28 Crescent Street, Middletown, CT 06457, or the Brownstone Quorum, PO Box 402, Portland, CT 06480.

For online condolences, visit portlandmemorialfh.net.

Andover

Martin J. Hogan Jr.

Martin J. Hogan Jr. was born in Hartford Dec. 21, 1952. He left this world Wednesday, Aug. 10.

Joe was extremely talented on acoustic and electric guitar, blues harp, mandolin and vocals. He worked as a skilled machinist/toolmaker at Pratt & Whitney in Hartford, and the Wiremold Company, while living on Andover Lake.

Joe then moved to Westhampton, Mass., with his wife, Ellen Bartos. They enjoyed visiting the mountains of California, where Joe enticed many a Sierra trout with his hand-tied flies. Joe enjoyed trail riding with his wife on their horses, cross-country-skiing, and playing blues mandolin in a string band. He spent time self-employed as a handyman.

Joe leaves his son Tom, his daughter Shannon, and their mother Sandra Bailey of Manchester. He also leaves his sister Maureen O'Brien, his brother Kevin, his sister and brother-in-law, Kathleen and Michael Kenney, and his sister and brother-in-law, Eileen and Joe Gorman, as well as many nieces and nephews.

His beloved wife Ellen will miss him and his whimsical and inventive humor every day.

Joe also had a deep love of his horses, dogs and cats. In lieu of flowers, donations to the American Eskimo Dog Rescue organization heartbandits.com are appreciated.

Services will be private, with a public celebration of Joe's life planned for early fall in Westhampton, Mass.

Colchester

Alma M. Boucher

Alma M. Boucher, 79, of Colchester, beloved mother, died Thursday, Aug. 11, at Water's Edge in Middletown. She was born Alma Mary Levesque Nov. 6, 1937 in Conner, Maine.

She married Raymond Alfred Boucher June 23, 1957, in Hartford. They had two daughters, Venus and Daphne. She was a homemaker who enjoyed cooking, talking and puttering about the house.

Alma is survived by her daughters and grandson Kyle Bessette; her sister Edwina Van Ness and brother Adde Levesque.

She was predeceased by her husband, Raymond.

A memorial graveside service will be held Saturday, Aug. 27, at St. Andrew Cemetery in Colchester, CT 06415.

Rose Hill Funeral Home, 580 Elm St., Rocky Hill, has care of arrangements. For an online guestbook, visit rosehillfuneralhomes.com.

Colchester

Madeline S. Pankiewicz

Madeline S. Pankiewicz, 96, of Norwich, passed away at Harrington Court in Colchester Friday, Aug. 12. She was born in Norwich Oct. 3, 1919, to the late Ignacy and Mary (Albozek) Stasiewski.

She is survived by a son, Philip Pankiewicz of Vinyard Haven, Mass.; grandchildren Philip Pankiewicz Jr. and Robert Maxx Holiday; great-granddaughter Pia Pankiewicz; and several nieces and nephews.

She is predeceased by a daughter, Judy Smead; a grandson, Blake Pankiewicz; a sister, Stacia "Pat" Kramarewicz; and a brother, Edward Stacey. Family and friends visited Labenski Funeral Home, 107 Boswell Ave., Norwich, on Tuesday, Aug. 16, before the funeral home service that afternoon. Burial immediately followed at St. Joseph Cemetery.

Visit labenskiFuneralHome.com to leave an online condolence for the Pankiewicz family.

Hebron

Patricia Ann Hauserman

Patricia Ann (Seling) Hauserman died Sunday, Aug. 7, with her devoted son, Jeffrey, by her side. Patty was born in Hartford Nov. 28, 1947, to Joseph L. Seling and Rose (Brienzi) Seling.

After graduating from Bulkeley High School, Patty worked for a prestigious law firm in Hartford. In the early '70s, she moved to Hebron, where she lived the rural life and raised chickens and goats. Later, with her two young sons, she moved to Manchester and worked in the insurance industry. She also taught CCD classes at St. Bridget Catholic Church.

Patty liked the outdoors, and was accomplished at archery, gardening, crafts, landscaping and more. She loved chopping wood and cooking on her wood stove. Her sisters dubbed her 'pioneer woman.'

She leaves behind to honor her memory her sons Jeffrey and Daniel; granddaughter Lily; aunt Florence Lundy of Florida; sisters Joanne Peltier and her husband Robert of Wethersfield, Shirley Urgo of Glastonbury, and Catherine Silverio and her husband James of Bristol. Patty was also an attentive, loving, and generous aunt and great-aunt to her nieces and nephews and their children, all of whom returned her affection.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated Wednesday, Aug. 17, at 10:30 a.m., at St. Bridget Church, 80 Main St., Manchester. Burial followed in St. James Cemetery Manchester. Family and friends called Tuesday, Aug. 16, at Holmes Funeral Home, 400 Main St., Manchester.

To leave a message of condolence, visit holmes-watkinsfuneralhomes.com.

Portland

Gilda S. Bellobuono

Gilda S. Bellobuono, 86, of Cromwell, formerly of Portland, beloved mother, grandmother and great-grandmother, died Friday, Aug. 12, at Middlesex Hospital, after a short illness.

Gilda was born Oct. 27, 1929, in Hartford, daughter of the late Marco and Francesca (Andreana) Schiavone. She was a member of Saint Mary's Church, Portland. She retired as a Corporate Secretary from Liberty Bank in Middletown. Gilda will be remembered for her loving ways, poise, articulation and her remarkable memory.

She is survived by her two loving children, Nancy and her husband James Emmet McBrien of Portland, Michael and his wife Theresa Bellobuono of Portland; her two beloved grandchildren, Matthew and his wife Amy McBrien of Portland, Christine and her husband Peter Filanda of Portland, and great-grandson Lucas Filanda, whom she adored. She is also survived by sisters Nina and her husband James Orsini of West Hartford, Angie and her husband Michael Cichon of East Hartford; sisters-in-law Dolores Fiorella of Cromwell, Gloria Maynard of Higganum, Gerrie Bellobuono of Wethersfield; and also several nieces and nephews.

Gilda was predeceased by her husband, John Bellobuono; sisters and brothers-in-law Carmela and Anthony Riccio, Theodora and Aldo Barbadoro, Eleanor and Henry Tomaszewski, Salvatore Fiorella, William Maynard, Michael Bellobuono; and niece Jean Marie Fiorella.

A funeral Mass will be held today, Aug. 19, at 10 a.m., at St. Mary's Church, Portland. Relatives and friends may call at the church prior to the Mass, from 9-10 a.m. Burial will be private at the convenience of the family.

In lieu of flowers, donations in Gilda's memory may be made to Middlesex Hospital Hospice, 28 Crescent St., Middletown, CT 06457, or St. Mary's Church, 45 Freestone Ave., Portland, CT 06480.

Dennis R. Burr

Dennis R. Burr, 75, a lifelong resident of Portland, died at home Sunday, July 31. Dennis, born July 14, 1941, was the son of the late Harold Burr and Norma Adams.

He was a longtime volunteer for the Portland Fire Department and he faithfully served his country as a member of the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War. Upon returning from his tour, he worked at the Smurfit Company as an assemblyman.

Dennis was an animal lover and a great conversationalist. He was an avid amateur historian always willing to share his knowledge of local events and happenings both past and present. He also had an amazing sense of humor. Dennis was also a member of St. Mary Church in Portland.

Dennis is survived by several nieces and nephews and numerous friends. He was predeceased by four brothers, Robert, David, Donald and Neil Burr; one sister, Mary Burr O'Neal; and one nephew.

The funeral Mass will be held Thursday, Aug. 25, at 11 a.m., at St. Mary's Church, 51 Freestone Ave., Portland. Burial will be in the family plot in St. Mary's Cemetery. The family will hold a calling hour prior to the service at St. Mary's Church at 10 a.m.

Those who wish to make a donation in memory of Dennis R. Burr may do so to the Connecticut Humane Society, 701 Russell Rd, Newington, CT 06111.

Portland

Ethel Puglisi

Ethel (Csere) Puglisi, 95, of Portland, beloved wife of the late Salvatore J. Puglisi, passed away peacefully, surrounded by family, Saturday, Aug. 13, at Middlesex Hospital. She was born on March 29, 1921, to the late Julius and Julia (Ronay) Csere in Portland.

Ethel graduated from Portland High School in 1939 and worked as an assistant postmaster for 32 years. She was a member of St. Mary's Guild, AARP and the National Association of Retired Federal Employees.

Ethel is survived by her sister, Jean Newson of Portland, as well as three generations of nieces and nephews. Other than her parents she was predeceased by her husband Salvatore and dear friend, John Carta; her siblings, Marguerite Long, James Csere, Grace Benoit, William Csere, Catherine Luckhardt, Helen Foley, Eleanor Milardo, Dorothy Parker and Richard Csere.

Funeral services were Wednesday, Aug. 17, from Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland, followed by a Mass of Christian Burial that morning in St. Mary Church, 51 Freestone Ave., Portland. Burial in Saint Mary Cemetery immediately followed.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to MARC Community Resources, 124 Washington St., Middletown, CT 06457.

For online condolences, visit portlandmemorialfh.net.

From the Editor's Desk

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

I recently marked nine years as editor of the *Rivereast*. In that time, I've seen a lot of obituaries come across my desk. Some have told amazing stories of a long, well-lived life; some share details of a life cut far too short due to accident or illness; and many have tugged at my heartstrings a little.

But I've never seen any obituary quite like what the New Orleans *Times-Picayune* recently published. William Ziegler, a former New Orleans firefighter, passed away July 29, at the age of 69. Rather than writing a conventional obituary, Ziegler's survivors instead wrote a humorous, and very entertaining, one.

They meant it with no disrespect. In fact, Ziegler's daughter, Sarah Currier, predicted her father would have been a big fan, as he often passed along unusual obituaries he'd found. "He would have loved this," she told the *Times-Picayune*. "He probably would have forwarded this obituary to us."

Here, in full, is Ziegler's obituary:

William Ziegler escaped this mortal realm on Friday, July 29, at the age of 69. We think he did it on purpose to avoid having to make a decision in the pending presidential election.

He leaves behind four children, five grandchildren, and the potted meat industry, for which he was an unofficial spokesman until dietary restrictions forced him to eat real food.

William volunteered for service in the United States Navy at the ripe old age of 17 and immediately realized he didn't much enjoy being bossed around. He only stuck it out for one war. Before his discharge, however, the government exchanged numerous ribbons and medals for various honorable acts.

Upon his return to the City of New Orleans in 1971, thinking it best to keep an eye on him, government officials hired William as a fireman. After 25 years, he suddenly realized that running away from burning buildings made more sense than running toward them. He promptly retired. Looking back, William stated that there was no better group of morons and mental patients than those he had the privilege of serving with (except Bob; he never liked you, Bob).

Following his wishes, there will not be a service, but well-wishers are encouraged to write a note of farewell on a Schaefer Light beer can and drink it in his honor. He was never one for sentiment or religiosity, but he wanted you to know that if he owes you a beer, and if you can find him in Heaven, he will gladly allow you to buy him another. He can likely be found forwarding tasteless internet

jokes (check your spam folder, but don't open these at work). Expect to find an alcoholic dog named Judge passed out at his feet.

Unlike previous times, this is not a ploy to avoid creditors or old girlfriends. He assures us that he is gone. He will be greatly missed.

* * *

Speaking of those that have recently passed away, some of you may have read about the death of TV producer, and later movie director, Garry Marshall. Marshall was writer in the 1960s for such sitcoms as *The Dick Van Dyke Show*, and went on to co-develop the TV version of *The Odd Couple*.

Later, in the 1990s and 2000s, Marshall became a prolific, well-regarded movie director, helming such hits as *Pretty Woman*, *Runaway Bride*, *The Princess Diaries*, *Valentine's Day* and *New Year's Eve*. His most recent movie, *Mother's Day*, came out just this past spring.

But Marshall will probably be best remembered for his family-friendly sitcoms of the 1970s. In fact, at one point he produced the three most popular television shows on the air: *Happy Days*, *Laverne & Shirley* (starring his sister Penny) and *Mork & Mindy*.

Growing up, I gleaned a lot of laughs from watching reruns of his shows – particularly *Happy Days*. And since then, in interviews I'd seen and stories I'd read, he always seemed like a great guy. So I was sad to hear of his passing, and read a lot about him online in the days that followed.

One of the tributes I saw came from Mark Evanier, a veteran TV producer of his own (among his credits is serving as story editor on *Welcome Back, Kotter*) who now writes about the industry – as well as offering other observations – in his own blog. He'd met Marshall several times over the years and always enjoyed his company. After his passing, Mark shared this short tale that made me laugh:

"One time, I asked him about *The Joey Bishop Show* – the 1961-1965 sitcom, not the subsequent talk show. Garry had not enjoyed the experience and he told me a story. I don't know if it was an episode that he and his partner wrote but there was one where Joey played a dual role — a twin brother or cousin or something. Garry said Joey started complaining because the other character was getting all the good jokes. I laughed (of course), and he said, 'You know, I hated that show but it was worth it just to get that anecdote.'"

* * *

See you next week.