

RIVEREAST

News Bulletin

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

Volume 42, Number 49

Published by The Glastonbury Citizen

September 14, 2018



Never Forget... The Belltown community converged on the Congregational Church of East Hampton lawn Tuesday to honor first responders who died in the attacks on the Twin Towers and the Pentagon on Sept. 11, 2001. Roughly 170 people in attendance also paid homage to local police, fire and ambulance personnel who respond to local emergencies every day.

Trying to Reduce Arrigoni Suicides

by Elizabeth Regan

The state Department of Transportation has announced measures local officials hope will significantly reduce suicides on the 80-year-old Arrigoni Bridge.

A letter from transportation department Commissioner James Redeker to Middletown Mayor Daniel Drew said the department will install 8-foot-high fencing on both sidewalk railings for the entire length of the bridge. The work will occur as part of an estimated \$37 million project to repair the approaches on either side of the bridge. The work is slated to begin in 2019 with an expected completion date in 2021.

Drew has been advocating for suicide prevention measures on the bridge for three years, ever since the July 2015 murder of 7-month-old Aaden Moreno by his father, Tony Moreno. A jury in February 2017 convicted Tony Moreno of murder and risk of injury to a minor; a Middlesex Superior Court judge sentenced him to 70 years in prison that May.

The same day Moreno was sentenced, Portland police responded to an unrelated call for a jumper on the bridge. According to the department, the suicide involved a gun.

The protective fence may be similar to one of the two types of fencing used on the new Tappan Zee Bridge, according to the letter: thin wire mesh or non-climbable wire fencing.

A project to replace the center deck was completed in November 2012. State transportation department documents show the upcoming initiative will address the deck spans on either side of the bridge, replace sidewalks, install new pedestrian railings and update lighting.

Engineers said traffic lanes will be reduced to one lane each for the expected 18-month construction period on the approach decks.

Drew hailed the addition of protective fencing last week in a post on his Facebook page.

"Research has shown that preventative measures, like barrier fences, reduce significantly or eliminate suicides and attempts at those sites

and have an overall reductive effect in a geographic region," he wrote on Sept. 8.

State transportation department spokesman Kevin Nursick said the fencing is not "easily defeatable."

"It will act as a deterrent for reckless and irresponsible thrill seekers and hopefully also as a deterrent for folks who are considering harming themselves," Nursick said.

He emphasized anti-suicide fencing is not typically installed on the 4,000 bridges under state control. When 8-foot fencing is used, it is traditionally limited to areas directly over highways – in this case, Route 9. He credited input from municipal leaders and area mental health agencies for the department's decision to continue the heightened fence for the full length of the bridge.

Nursick said the fencing is likely to go up during the latter part of the project, though he cautioned the exact timing is still to be determined.

Drew said in his Facebook post he was shocked to learn about how many people die by suicide on the bridge.

"It'll be a few years before these fences are installed and longer even before new data is available but, when they are, I expect that the number of suicides experienced there will drop precipitously and hopefully in this region overall," he wrote.

Data provided by the Middletown Police Department this week show police responded 42 times since 2010 to suicide-related emergency calls on the bridge, which could include suicides, attempted suicides, suspicious activity and well-being checks. It is unclear how many people ultimately jumped or how many died.

Six of those calls originated on the Portland side of the bridge, according to the data.

Middletown Police Department spokesman
See Arrigoni page 2

Oei Wins First Runner-Up at Miss America

by Sloan Brewster

Hebron's Bridget Oei didn't take home the crown in the Miss America pageant Sunday night.

But she came pretty darn close.

Oei, who won Miss Connecticut in June, was named first runner-up at the national competition, while Miss New York, Nia Franklin, was the overall winner. According to WTNH-TV, Oei's finish marked the first time since 1936 a Connecticut resident has made it to the top five at Miss America.

The competition was dubbed this year "Miss America 2.0," due to recent changes made to the event – the most prolific of which was eliminating the swimsuit portion. In a phone call Monday, the day after the competition took place in Atlantic City's Jim Whelan Boardwalk Hall, Oei, 22, repeatedly referred to it with its

new title.

She also said the lack of the swimsuit portion did not dampen her enthusiasm in the least.

"I really appreciate that the new competition – Miss America 2.0 – was focused on highlighting the accomplishments of the 51 people competing," she said. "Sometimes when you're looking at swimsuits, you don't get that same connection."

In place of swimsuits, the competition made room for contestants to talk about themselves and answer questions about their jobs and roles, Oei explained. It gave them a chance to learn from one another.

The additional questions were peer-generated, and Oei's came from Miss Nebraska, Jessica Lynn Shultis, who asked her how she encourages young women with no fine arts experience to compete in the Miss America program.

Oei's response was that the new format of the competition gives a deeper focus to highlighting the multi-faceted talents of competitors.

Be creative, she said.

"Think outside the box when generating a talent," she recalled answering. "You don't necessarily have to do a fine arts talent."

Instead, Oei said she suggested that competitors work with something they know, such as a love for athleticism. Shultis, who had no background in fine arts, had faced that challenge, Oei said.

"Miss Nebraska herself did a monologue about her battle with cancer and her struggle, so that was one [way to handle it]," she said.

When she was named to the top 10, Oei had

to answer an additional question. This one asked her to name something she wished she could invent. She replied that she wanted to create an app that would allow the user to plug in symptoms someone was experiencing to determine if they need to go to the hospital or if someone should dial 911.

"A few years ago one of my good friends in college had a stroke," she said. "He was 21 and healthy and my friends and I didn't recognize the symptoms until 24 hours later."

If they had realized they needed to bring him to the hospital, doctors could have given him the appropriate medication and possibly prevented the stroke.

"I'm always thinking of inventions and different ways to make things better," Oei said. "I

See Oei Wins page 2



Bridget Oei took her skill in Irish step dancing to the Miss America stage. The Hebron native, who was named Miss Connecticut in June, was named first runner-up in the Miss America 2019 competition.

Oei Wins cont. from Front Page

would love to start working on it.” Oei, who is half-Irish and half-Chinese, nods to each culture when competing. A longtime competitive Irish step dancer, she took her dancing skill to the Miss America stage. She said she was proud to showcase the Irish art in the competition and on national television.

The red color of her gown spoke to her Chinese side. A lucky color in Chinese culture, red is the color of every gown Oei chooses for competitions. Her Miss America gown was designed by Jovani Couture with beads and sparkles at the top and was sponsored by Regalia Magnificent Apparel.

“I just felt so fierce and confident wearing it,” Oei said.

Oei said she is excited to return to Connecti-

cut to continue spreading the word on her theme for her year as Miss Connecticut – Women in STEM: Inspiring the Next Generation of Innovators. She plans to tour schools and talk to young women about exploring science, technology, engineering and math (STEM).

Oei, a University of Connecticut environmental chemistry graduate, has only been competing in pageants for the past three years. As first runner-up in Miss America, she was awarded a \$25,000 scholarship. In June, when she was crowned Miss CT, she won \$17,000 toward graduate school.

She plans to pursue medicine and said she will use the scholarships for her first year of med school. She won’t know where she’s going until the spring.



Arrigoni cont. from Front Page

woman Heather Desmond said the Middletown and Portland police departments split the bridge down the middle.

According to Portland police, calls on the Portland side of the bridge included the May 2017 suicide involving a gun and a November 2012 suicide.

Portland First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield stressed Drew was the impetus for the project, but added she has been kept in the loop by staff members with the state transportation department.

“It is a beautiful bridge and I trust the DOT will do their best to maintain the beauty as well as the integrity of the bridge,” she said, acknowledging concerns from at least one resident who was worried the protective fencing would obstruct the bridge’s well-known vistas.

“I certainly respect and will work with the DOT to enhance safety on the Arrigoni Bridge,” she added.

The Arrigoni approach project will also include six suicide prevention call signs that could be installed on either end of the bridge and in the middle, according to Nursick.

Bransfield said the signage has been a particular area of focus for her based on suggestions from residents.

The Portland public works department – which will be responsible for maintaining the signs on the Portland side of the bridge – has been working with the transportation department on appropriate signage, according to Bransfield.

Nursick said the signs have been made and



A state Department of Transportation plan to upgrade the approaches on either side of the Arrigoni Bridge will include anti-suicide fencing across the entire span and half a dozen signs (one of which is shown here) so those who may be contemplating suicide know where to go for help.

are awaiting installation by the transportation department soon.

Hebron Fair Offers Variety of Activities

by Sloan Brewster

There was a bit of everything at the Hebron Harvest Fair last weekend.

The fair, which is hosted by the Hebron Lions Agricultural Society, took place Sept. 6 through 9.

Paul Wnuk of Manchester took a turn on the pull-up bar at the U.S. military's booth, and performed 11 of them. This was his first time at the iconic fair, and Wnuk was there to snack on fair food and was especially interested in the delicious fried pickles.

Wnuk was not alone – a lot of folks were there for the food.

Barbara Storey of Marlborough said she started out with a milkshake and a steak and cheese sandwich and topped it off with popcorn, but she also enjoyed other aspects of the day.

"It was just nice to be able to be outside and enjoy yourself," she said. "It's been so hot. It just makes this more enjoyable."

With so many options, the *Rivereast* stopped by a couple of local booths to chat about how they were doing – and try to snatch some of their recipes.

Marlborough Congregational Church was offering up hot apple crumble made by Chef Charles Williams. The recipe was a no-go, however.

"It's a secret recipe," said Darren Cook, church member. "I tell everybody we peel 100 [apples]. Gotta be Granny Smith."

Sales at the fair and at Hebron's annual Maple Fest support the church's general budget, Denise Seifert, church member, said. Seifert and Cook said business was steady and they were going through lots of trays.

Nearby, the French Social Circle, of East Hartford, was selling poutine to support the club. According to Richard Marcel, club president, it's a French-Canadian recipe consisting of cheddar cheese curds and gravy over French fries.

A pair of Bristol residents – Caleb Brown and Wes Brown, who are not related – were at the fair together and took a few minutes of relaxation at a picnic table in front of the cow exhibition barn after enjoying burgers and homemade potato chips and trying out a few rides.

Ten-year-old Caleb said his first ride of the day was the roller coaster, which made its first

appearance in the fair's 48 year history. The 150-foot ride was brought in by the fair's amusement provider – Reithoffer Shows Inc, according to Michael Tarbell, fair superintendent.

Caleb said the ride was fun, but Dizzy Dragon was his favorite.

Despite the proximity of the cows, Caleb said he had no interest in giving them a closer look.

"I don't like the smell," he said.

Caleb and Wes also enjoyed the tractor pull, and said the tractor they watched took on too much weight, causing the engine to blow. *Rivereast* was on hand for that episode as well. The engine screamed as it revved, black smoke billowing from the overburdened machine before the announcer declared its demise.

Inside the barn of cows, Rauri Phelon, 9, of Prospect Farm in Westfield, Mass., was mucking a stall while her sister Dakota Lyn Phelon, 11, and cousin Madison Riba, 6, tended three milking cows – Nikki, Cutie Pie and Shaylee.

The farm has been to seven fairs so far this year and plans to hit nine or 10 before the fair season comes to a close, said Bridget Riba, Madison's mom.

"I like coming to the fair to show other kids the cows and I love seeing their faces when they first pet the cows," Dakota said.

Dealing with the cows at fairs also ties into Dakota's long-term plans to maintain the farm many years from now. If it goes her way, she and Rauri will live there together with some herding dogs that will keep the cows in line, she said.

"[I] want to keep the farm going no matter what I have to do," she said.

Standing outside the barn, Grace Balogh of Willow Ridge Farm was giving a cow a haircut and showed off some of the tricks of the trade.

"She's a little chubby up here," Balogh said, pointing at the chest area under the animal's chin. "If we take a little off there, it thins her out."

Jennifer DeAngelo, of Plymouth, Mass., stood in one of the stalls affectionately stroking a cow, smoothing the letter's "Got Milk" that Balogh had shaped into its beige coat.

"They're just beautiful," DeAngelo said of the cows, which are her favorite part of the fair.

As to the "Got Milk" haircut, she said it was hilarious.



The annual Hebron Harvest Fair returned last weekend and offered something for everyone. Pictured, Paul Wnuk of Manchester takes a turn on the pull-up bar, eventually cranking out 11 of them. Despite a rainy start, the four-day festival drew 117,000, with attendance particularly strong on the weekend, fair superintendent Mike Tarbell said.

In the Arts & Crafts tent, Keith Butzgy of K & K Custom of Columbia, displayed Adirondack chairs with custom engravings that he makes of solid plastic using Connecticut-developed software.

As Butzgy was talking about his hobby and saying it was his first time displaying the chairs at a fair, a child suddenly ran up to Bryan Tarbell, of Naked Steel Baking Supplies of Columbia, who shared the booth with Butzgy.

The child, Graeme Tarbell, 7, smiled excitedly as he told, Tarbell – his dad – about a dog he had just seen at DockDogs.

"He jumped eight feet!" Graeme said, his face glowing as he described the dog leaping to reach a beam before splashing into the water. "He had to jump eight feet!"

The pooch missed his next target of 8.2 feet, however, the boy and his older brother, Lucas Tarbell, 11, said.

The boy's sister, Lorryn Tarbell, 10, chimed in that she had enjoyed the pig races but had

not rooted for Donald Rump Roast, the winner in the first round she witnessed. Rather, she was shooting for Tyrone the Terrible.

"He had horns sticking out his nose and he was really fat and wrinkly," she said of Tyrone.

Miley Swinus won the second round, and again, Lorryn was hoping for another racer. In that round, she wanted Lady Hoga to come in ahead.

"There [were] two that looked really mean and [Lady Hoga] was not a mean one," she said. "Miley Swinus was mean."

On the way out of the fair, this *Rivereast* reporter accepted a ride in one of the Lions Club's golf carts. Driver Chap Thomson, who "just joined" the club, said it was not uncommon for folks to forget where they parked in the huge lot.

"Most people just forget to notice where they are," he said.

Phew, I wasn't alone.

Portland Officials Hope to Curb Voting Tension

by Elizabeth Regan

Officials are hopeful increased staffing and enhanced communication at the polls this November will ensure Election Day runs more smoothly than the recent primaries.

First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield said last week that she and Town Clerk Ryan Curley have received complaints from poll workers and residents about "confusion" at the Republican and Democratic primaries on Aug. 14.

Bransfield attributed the problem to a lack of poll workers.

"I did have a few complaints that there was perhaps some confusion, when questions were asked and there weren't enough people to answer," Bransfield said.

Republican Registrar of Voters Pauline Neumann and Democratic Registrar of Voters Athena Neville said this week they had not anticipated the number of voters who came out to choose the gubernatorial candidates who will be facing off in November.

"We were a couple people short, but we did manage to get everybody's vote in," Neville said. "Everybody got their vote."

Neumann said primaries are typically "very slow," which left them surprised by the number of voters who came through the doors this year.

Turnout at the Republican and Democratic primaries came in at 31.62 percent and 30.77 percent, respectively, according to Curley. He said there were a total of three Republicans and five Democrats working the polls that day.

But statistics from the Office of the Secretary of the State indicate that in 2010 – which is the last time gubernatorial nominations for both parties were contested – turnout was actually higher than it was this year. That's when

Dan Malloy and Ned Lamont were on the Democratic ballot and Tom Foley, then-Lt. Gov. Michael Fedele and Oz Griebel were on the Republican ballot.

Republican turnout came in at 34.43 percent of eligible voters in 2010, while Democratic turnout came in at 31.60 percent.

Neumann has been in her role since 2000 and Neville has been there since 2012.

Curley said low staffing numbers can be a problem because it means long days for the few poll workers in attendance.

"I think that leads to tension at the polls," he said.

The first selectwoman and town clerk cited complaints from poll workers about yelling among the registrars on Primary Day. Bransfield attributed the tension to fatigue.

"I need to do what I can as far as making sure there are enough workers available," Bransfield said.

Neumann acknowledged it was "a long day" at the polls, adding it can get "a little stressful."

Polls are open from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m., with registrars and moderators arriving early and staying late.

But neither registrar would confirm there was yelling involved.

"I'm not going to say it did or it didn't [happen]," Neville said. "I don't know what they're referring to."

Registrars of voters, who are elected every four years, are responsible for administering elections, registering voters and appointing and training election officials in accordance with state election laws.

The current elections budget includes

\$39,750 for the registrars' part-time salary, poll worker stipends, voting machine maintenance and conferences and meetings. The line item represents a decrease of 4.22 from last year's budget.

Data provided by Curley shows the registrars currently make an annual salary of \$5,483, plus \$536 each for every primary, election or referendum. Deputy registrars make \$13.05 per hour for a primary or election, while poll workers make minimum wage.

Bransfield said a working group consisting of Curley, Neville, Neumann and regional election monitor Carol Conklin has been formed to ensure a smooth election process this November. The group will be meeting this month.

Conklin's role as regional election monitor was created through 2015 legislation, according to Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments (RiverCOG) Executive Director Samuel Gold. He said Conklin is responsible for working with election officials in RiverCOG's 17-town coverage area to ensure all workers are properly trained.

Conklin said last week her position, funded by a grant from the state, allows her to provide "hands-on" guidance to those responsible for elections in each town. She said much of her focus is on new registrars.

"The thing is, there's been years and years of history of the assumption that one registrar would always train another registrar. They're two different parties, they don't always get along. They may get along, but they may not see each other," she said. "It's been an assumption that kind of went on too long because it's not a good working assumption."

She said it's typical to get requests, like the

one from Bransfield and Curley, to come in and advise the election team when issues arise – even when the registrars involved are not new to the job.

Neville said she expects the meeting will help open the lines of communication between the registrars, Curley and Bransfield.

Neumann said the two registrars are already at work lining up election workers and training them. Neumann and Neville are also ordering ballots, getting the tabulator cards programmed and arranging for the voting machines to be tested two weeks before the election.

Curley and Bransfield said officials will be addressing other concerns, including the current exit from the polling place in the middle school band room. Located on the side of the building, voters currently tend to walk down a grassy hill to the parking area in front of the building instead of following a paved walkway in the other direction that leads to the driveway.

Curley said he hopes to work with public works director Bob Shea to install a paved pathway, with enhanced lighting, to help voters arrive safely at their vehicles.

The registrars emphasized everything is on track for a successful election in November.

Neumann and Neville predicted a large turnout. The Republican surmised new levels of voter engagement are the result of concern over how taxpayer money is being spent, while the Democrat attributed it to "anger" over the current political climate.

They agreed that voting is the best way to get those points across.

"This is the American way," Neumann said. "This is how you express yourself."

Fireworks A Go For Fall Festival in Colchester

by Allison Lazur

The date for the 14th annual Celebrate Colchester-57 Fest is fast approaching and lack of funding for the event's fireworks was cause for concern for the town's parks and recreation department – until Monday.

That's when Parks and Recreation Director Tiffany Quinn said the fireworks are "a go" as part of the popular fall festival.

After sending out an email blast last week-end to anyone who subscribes to the festival's website and posting on the festival's Facebook page asking for last minute donations, Quinn said several businesses and individuals stepped up to raise the \$5,700 needed for the \$8,325 fireworks.

The post urged those interested in donating to do so by 8 a.m. Monday, Sept. 10 or risk having the fireworks canceled due to lack of funds.

Quinn said donations came from several private individuals and several businesses, including Troiano Chrysler Jeep Dodge, Dime Bank, Copies Plus More, Willimantic Waste and The Music Bureau.

"We are so thankful to all of the generous donations that we have received over the past weekend from businesses and members of the community," Quinn said in an email to the *Rivereast*. She described the support as "overwhelming."

Quinn said the festival is still short \$950, but she was confident the goal would be met.

The event is "a go," she said – "fireworks and all."

The parks and recreation department has been soliciting donations for the festival for the past several months and has spent a portion of that time making changes to accommodate bud-

get restrictions and vendor requests, she said.

"When we realized that donations were not going to be received as they had in recent years, we cut expenses where we could without it affecting the event," she said. "Some of the feedback that we received from vendors and businesses had to do with the layout, times and fees associated with the event. We were able to work with them to establish mutually agreeable terms that seemed to benefit everyone involved."

Quinn said even after expenses were cut, the parks and recreation department still "faced challenges meeting the sponsorship goals," but that funding has been a problem for the past few years.

Quinn said in the future the parks and recreation department "will look to partner with the town and the community to ensure that we are not putting an undue burden on local businesses

with the expectation that they fund all local community events. This may include fundraising, donation drives, sponsorships and more."

The presenting sponsor or top sponsor for this year's event is Alpha Q, Inc., an aerospace manufacturing company. Other sponsors include Baldi Stone and Gravel, Reliable Auto, Sharr Realty, Daniels Oil, Goldi-Locks Self Storage, First Approach EMS Education and Staffing, and Angelo's Bakery.

The Celebrate Colchester-57 Fest is scheduled to take place Sept. 22 from 1-8:30 p.m. at the recreation complex on Old Hebron Rd. Rain date is Sept. 23.

Anyone interested in making donations can call the town's park and recreation office or visit www.celebrate-colchester.com.

East Hampton Budget Goes to Voters – Yet Again

by Elizabeth Regan

The third town budget referendum will be held Wednesday in the latest installment of a protracted and contentious budget season with opposing factions each claiming the other side is holding the process hostage.

The \$14.95 million budget proposal approved by the Town Council in August – which includes general government operations, debt and capital spending – represents a 5.16 percent increase over the current budget. The increase is largely driven by debt from the high school renovation project.

The referendum will be held Sept. 19 from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. in the middle school gymnasium. Voters struck down the proposed general government budget first in May and then again in June.

The \$14.95 million general government budget is down from \$15.14 million at the first referendum and \$15.17 million in the subsequent round.

The proposed town operations budget now comes in at \$10.73 million. Representing an increase of 1.11 percent over the current budget, it did not change from the amount that failed at the last referendum.

The \$992,206 capital and transfers budget is an increase of 21.7 percent over the current budget.

The town's debt accounts for \$3.23 million of the council's budget proposal. That's an in-

crease of 15.74 percent over the current year.

The budget proposal, if approved by voters at referendum, could result in a mill rate of 32.21 mills, which would amount to a 0.89 mill increase over the current year. The projected increase is down from the 1.01 mill increase associated with the budget proposal that failed in June.

Property taxes for someone with a home assessed at \$250,000 would go up \$223 in the upcoming budget year if the general government budget passes.

Hostage Negotiations

The \$30.50 million education budget, which was presented as a separate question at the initial budget referendum in May, passed on the first try by 125 votes despite the fact that it included the reduction of eight teaching positions. Three of the affected teachers were laid off; the remaining positions were left unfilled after teachers retired or were shuffled around the district.

But some of the same voters who supported the education budget rejected the proposed general government budget at the first and subsequent referendum. Advocates for the school system have been vocal at public meetings and on social media in saying they believe some or all of an unexpected allocation of \$715,415 in Education Cost Sharing (ECS) funds from the state should be applied to the education

budget.

The advocates for the school system were further angered by the finance board's refusal to endorse a plan crafted by Finance Director Jeff Jylkka at the request of Superintendent of School Paul K. Smith. The budget maneuver would have taken \$250,000 slated for student computer tablets and classroom interior door locks out of the town's proposed 2018-19 capital budget, funding them instead through a portion of the past fiscal year's budget surplus.

The \$250,000 freed up in the capital budget would have been directed to the Board of Education to restore three teaching positions, according to the plan. Smith said at the time he would use the funding to bring back a third grade, fifth grade and high school English teaching position. Since then, Smith has reassigned one kindergarten teacher to grade three in order to mitigate the effect of the staffing reductions.

While the finance board knocked down Jylkka's proposal, they did approve a supplemental appropriation of \$223,000 for repairs to the library roof. The move transferred the funds from the 2017-18 fund balance to the 2017-18 capital reserve fund. The move combined with a previous vote by finance board members to pay for a public works plow truck and a paver with cash instead of financing them.

The supplemental appropriations were en-

dorsed by the council last month and on Monday by voters at a town meeting (see related story on page 1).

Councilors in August approved the latest town budget proposal with an emphatic message for those who may be considering voting down the budget in the hope of restoring any teaching positions: If the spending plan fails again, the council will make further cuts.

According to Republican Town Committee Chairwoman Melissa Engel, it is a long-held belief of this and former councils that people vote "no" because they think the budget is too high.

"There shouldn't be any confusion," Engel said.

Council member Mark Philhower, also a Republican, emphasized the same point.

"We were quite clear on day one of the budget process that if the budget failed – and we were quite clear on education as well as general government – there will be cuts," Philhower said.

Councilor James "Pete" Brown, a Democrat, put it this way: "I've said this on other occasions, that for all practical purposes, if a budget does not pass, it's too high."

Councilors have rebuffed the suggestion from fellow member Dean Markham to include advisory questions that would give officials more solid data with which to determine voter intent.

Andover Senior Center to Elementary School?

by Sloan Brewster

Moldy conditions at the old firehouse on Center Street that serves as the town's senior center have led to the relocation of several senior activities, most recently the weekly luncheon program.

But the senior center may have – albeit temporarily – a new home.

The Board of Education Wednesday gave schools Superintendent Sally Doyen the go-ahead to look into what needs to be done to the third- and fourth-grade wing of the school to get the seniors in there.

Doyen said Thursday it's too preliminary to estimate what the cost of the move would be.

The idea for repurposing the wing is a product of declining enrollment, Doyen told the board. Enrollment has been declining for two years.

According to Doyen, by the 2020-21 school year, there will be 175 students spread out over 13 to 14 classes. The 2017-18 school year saw 202 students in 15 classes. This year, there are 191 students in 14 classes, Doyen said, with an additional "eight or nine" classrooms being used for special activities such as art, music and technology.

There are 26 general classrooms at the school.

As the numbers of students trend downward and classrooms empty, she said she was looking at ways to make use of them. She said the board attorney has already okayed the proposal to move the seniors to the school.

"It is perfectly legal and acceptable," she said. "The thought [is] that maybe we could transform that space for something very useful, actually, for the town."

The third- and fourth-grade wing has four classrooms, three of which have classes in them this year, Doyen said. The tentative plan is to move the classes and the health room, which is also in that wing, for the 2019-20 year. To do that she would make use of empty rooms in other areas of the school and consolidate under-used rooms with one or two special education teachers with limited numbers of students. The plan also includes possibly consolidating the two tech labs into one.

"We would be rearranging some of those other functions," Doyen said. "These are all very tentative ideas that we'll be working on all through the course of the year with a goal that if we are going to make this transition it will be next year."

Doyen said she would update the board regularly on her progress and once she has a specific plan for what needs to be accomplished to make the move possible she will ask for final approval to make it happen.

Doyen has already taken steps to reconfigure classrooms in light of the reducing number of students. In June, the board gave her approval to transform a corner of the library into a Maker Space and bring the art room to the room across the hall. With the technology room next to the library they created what Doyen has dubbed a learning triangle.

With no physical changes to the structure, if the numbers of students rise again, which Doyen has said she anticipates will happen in about 10 years, all the changes can be undone and the classrooms put to use for classes once again, she said.

"It just makes sense at this time to acknowledge that we will have some space that we can devote to something else," she said of the plan to move seniors in. "[We're] trying our best to make good use of the facility."

For the seniors, the move is being considered for a different reason entirely.

The senior center occupies the Old Firehouse on Center Street, which is plagued with mold. At the Board of Selectmen meeting on Sept. 5, the board gave Town Administrator Joseph Higgins permission to spend \$440 to perform air quality testing on the building.

The mold has been present for 80 years, speakers at the selectmen's meeting said, and when the Fire Department still housed the building it made various attempts to mitigate the mold – but to no avail.

Cathy Palazzi, senior coordinator, attended the school board meeting and said she thinks a move to the school would work for seniors.

"I'm very concerned for the seniors," she said. "I've been worried for years about the building but now it's reached a peak."

During a tour of the building last month, the upstairs portion of the building had a harsh mildew/mold-like odor. Down in the garage/basement area the smell was much stronger and along the wall and on the ceiling the large patches of mold could be clearly seen.

Green Home Solutions of West Hartford, which will be performing the air quality test, will be taking seven different air samples inside the building, Higgins said.

The relocation wouldn't put the kibosh on the search for a new, more permanent home for

the center. Palazzi has her sights on ultimately moving to a new community center, which she said she has discussed with the Long Term Planning Committee.

The committee is "projecting it will be 10 years," she said of the development of the center. "I'm projecting, no, it needs to be sooner."

In the meantime, she is looking at ways to optimize a potential move to the school.

"I would like to see some kind of intergenerational program with the seniors [and students]," she told the education board.

Board member Michael Russo suggested the seniors spend a day in the Maker Space and said the children and seniors could learn from each other.

"They would love that," Palazzi said of the seniors.

Palazzi is also making plans to have vehicles, including senior vans and an ambulance, that are parked in the old firehouse moved to the Public Works Facility for fear they are being damaged by the mold.

"They do feel they have been contaminated," Palazzi said referring to members of the fire department who recommended the vehicles be stored elsewhere.

It would not be the first time a town vehicle was damaged from being parked in the garage.

At the selectmen's meeting, Curt Dowling, chief engineer of the Andover Fire Department, said he recalled a 1978 fire truck the department had purchased and said the mold ruined it.

"It was so far rotted in 12 years that we had to scrap it," he said.

East Hampton Voters OK Purchases Using ‘Unusual’ Budget Surplus

by Elizabeth Regan

Voters at Monday night’s town meeting gave the go-ahead for the purchase of a public works paver and plow truck, as well as the repair of the community center roof, using a majority of the town’s “unusual” budget surplus.

The three items were bundled together in one resolution to fund the items with \$570,000 of the 740,000 budget surplus from 2017-18.

The town is still operating according to the 2017-18 budget for general government, debt and capital after the proposed town budget failed twice at referendum. The \$30.50 million education budget passed on the first try.

Moderator Steve Greco asked for a show of hands after a voice vote was inconclusive. There were 41 voters in favor and 32 opposed.

An amendment to split the resolution into three separate motions was made by one resident and seconded by another, but was never voted on.

Town Manager Michael Maniscalco said the plow truck, paver and library roof repairs were bundled into one vote because they were all capital projects, they came from the same funding source and there was an immediate need for all three of them.

The surplus funds will be transferred from the fund balance – known as the rainy day fund – to the budget for capital projects. Finance Director Jeff Jylkka said Wednesday that the move leaves the full fund balance at 12.3 percent of the current operating budget, which he has described as a healthy savings in the eyes of municipal credit rating agencies.

The plow truck and paver were originally set to be leased as part of the proposed 2018-19 town government budget, but Board of Finance members decided they wanted to pay cash instead.

Finance Board Chairman Richard Brown, after repeated questions were raised about the finance board’s motivation in buying the items outright, responded to say the proceeds from

the town’s tax sale left the town at the end of the fiscal year with an “unusual” budget surplus.

“Rather than buy a car or a truck on credit and run up the town’s credit card bill, we have this cash that we are directing toward the purchase of these needed vehicles that are being held together pretty much by duct tape,” Brown said. “And if you want your roads plowed this winter, we need these vehicles. If you want your roads repaired, we need the paving box.”

Maniscalco said the need for the additional plow truck is compounded by the fact that the roads in two new developments – Whispering Woods and Skyline Estates – will soon be turned over to the town for clearing and maintenance now that road construction is almost complete.

The finance board back in July recommended the library roof repairs be included as an additional appropriation – instead of as a line item in the proposed budget – after Maniscalco said paying for repairs out of the surplus would be more expedient than waiting for voters to approve a town budget.

Numerous voters at Tuesday’s town meeting objected to the “off-budget appropriations” as an example of bad budgeting lacking in transparency. They argued that approving each year’s budget in an all-day referendum by a machine vote is fairer than making expensive decisions throughout the year at town meetings many residents are unable to attend.

Resident and former Board of Education member Tania Sones called the maneuver “inappropriate.”

“This whole process in itself – purchasing vehicles or doing anything in cash – isn’t appropriate,” Sones said. “We’re dipping into our savings to be able to accomplish this. We should adjust the mill rate accordingly every year to include these items instead of doing it with 70 people in the room.”

Town Council member James “Pete” Brown

spoke up to emphasize the importance of approving all three items.

“I’ve heard the rumors that people will vote for the library and vote the trucks down for other reasons,” Brown said. “I know what’s out there. But I really think, I really think you’re selling yourself and the town short.”

Maniscalco said after the meeting Brown was likely referring to rumors that education supporters planned to vote down the public works appropriations so that the money could be used for education.

The ire of the education advocates has been rising over the course of a contentious budget season. It began with the finance board members’ decision to cut \$670,000 from the Board of Education’s budget proposal, was exacerbated by their refusal to direct an unexpected state education grant to the schools, and grew even stronger with their subsequent rejection of the finance director’s plan to reinstate three teaching positions out of the budget surplus (see related budget story on page 15).

Rules of Engagement

The amendment raised by resident Mary Ann Dostaler and seconded by Jim Monahan would have split the resolution into three separate votes.

Robert’s Rules of Order, the definitive text on parliamentary procedure, states meeting participants may amend sections of a resolution by a majority vote of the membership. If passed, the amendment supersedes the original motion. If it fails, the original motion remains unchanged.

State statute specifies that all questions arising in town meetings “shall be decided in accordance with standard parliamentary practice” unless the town has established its own rules for conducting the meeting.

Town Attorney Richard D. Carella, while acknowledging the amended motion was “per-

fectly legal,” stood up at the meeting to suggest voters address the original resolution first. That’s what voters expected based on the wording in the state-required meeting notice published in the Aug. 31 *Rivereast*, according to Carella’s analysis.

“The call of the meeting was to vote on the resolution as a whole,” Carella said. “I think you should call for that vote. People may want to vote on that resolution, right? Up or down. If it goes down, then I think you should accept the amendment for another vote.”

According to New England Association of Parliamentarian Vice President Carl Pease, of Maine, amendments to a pending main motion “must be disposed of in some manner” before members can vote on the main motion.

He noted in an email to the *Rivereast* that members of the town meeting also could have used a specific motion tailored to this kind of situation. Known in parliamentary parlance as “division of the question,” the move splits a single motion into parts for separate votes.

Carella on Wednesday disputed the role of Robert’s Rules in town meetings. He reiterated that a town meeting “must follow what’s published in the paper.”

“It’s not a motion; it’s a town meeting resolution. That’s what gets voted on first,” he said.

He said state statute allows towns to adopt what he described as “whatever rules they want to follow.”

When asked by the *Rivereast* what rules the town uses to conduct its meetings, he was not immediately able to furnish an answer.

Steve Greco, the town meeting moderator, said Wednesday that he ran the meeting according to Robert’s Rules.

“The town has always operated under Robert’s Rules,” Greco said.

Marlborough Bodybuilder Makes Opera Debut

by Allison Lazur

Resident Armen Kevorkian is no stranger to the stage. With two amateur bodybuilding competitions under her belt, she now moves to making her opera debut next month.

“For me it’s really important to show no matter how old you are, you don’t stop dreaming – you don’t stop reaching for the stars,” Kevorkian said.

After taking home three first place titles in the All Natural Bodybuilding Competition in 1998 and two second place titles in the International Natural Bodybuilding and Fitness Federation Northeast Classic in 2012, Kevorkian was faced with a shoulder injury that forced her to stop competing.

“It’s been hard for me not to lift because I love bodybuilding and weight lifting and feeling fit,” she said. “I think I just needed another passion to turn to and I’ve always loved musical theatre and loved singing.”

At the beginning of the year, Kevorkian said she decided to get into musical theatre.

Approximately nine years ago Kevorkian dabbled in group singing while working at Travelers Insurance – a company with a choral group that puts on a Christmas performance annually – but group and solo singing are much different than musical theatre, she explained.

After landing a solo role in the company’s Christmas show nine years ago, Kevorkian learned she would be performing with the group and singing her solo number at the Bushnell – a theatre that seats approximately 3,700 people.

Kevorkian said she was riddled with stage fright, but was determined to overcome her fear by forcing herself to get in front of people to sing as often as she could.

“I was terrified,” she said. “I had three weeks to overcome this fear, so I went to karaoke every single night of the week for three weeks.”

After singing at venues such as Winchester Café in Portland and the now-defunct Marco Polo Restaurant in East Hartford, Kevorkian nailed her solo role at the Bushnell and received

a standing ovation, she said.

From there, Kevorkian continued performing by becoming involved with a country band, as well as a group called The Glamour Girls.

She eventually moved to participating in the audition circuit this year.

She explained as a kid she had some jazz and tap dance training, but never any formal vocal training, so Kevorkian began taking voice lessons at Summit Studios in Manchester as a first step towards landing a role.

These lessons quickly turned into preparations for a slew of upcoming auditions.

In addition to seeking out formal vocal training, Kevorkian also said she went as far as building herself a tap dancing floor, bought tap shoes and started watching YouTube videos on the dance style so she could audition for roles that involved tap dancing.

Between April and May, Kevorkian took about eight auditions for shows around the state, such as *Leader of the Pack* and *Young Frankenstein*, before landing a principal role in the Gilbert and Sullivan opera *The Mikado*, put on by the Connecticut Gilbert and Sullivan Society.

The auditions were a combination of dancing, singing and reciting lines, she explained.

“I went to the audition for *The Mikado* and it was just so intimidating,” she said, adding, “Everyone’s voices were just incredible.”

While Kevorkian said she didn’t expect to win the part, “it’s nice to be validated.”

“No one ever told me I had a good singing voice or gave me encouragement,” she said.

Kevorkian will be playing the role of Katisha for the matinee performance on Oct. 13.

Kevorkian explained the character Katisha as a “mean, big, bully,” who is manipulative in order to get what she wants near the end of the first act and throughout the second act of the show.

The Mikado is a comedic opera, Kevorkian said. Characteristic of Gilbert and Sullivan operas, the plot is complicated and quirky.

“[Gilbert and Sullivan] operas are so funny,



Amateur body builder Armen Kevorkian is giving opera a shot after injuring her shoulder after her last competition in 2012, the International Natural Bodybuilding and Fitness Federation (INBF) Northeast Classic. Kevorkian took home two second place titles at the amateur competition and will take the stage next month in the Gilbert and Sullivan opera, *The Mikado*.

if you can get the story,” she said.

Kevorkian said that, like bodybuilding, performing on stage comes down to confidence.

“I knew I had worked as hard as I possibly could to sculpt my body to be the way I wanted it to be,” she said. “I had that confidence that I did all that I possibly could to be successful – same with preparing for *The Mikado*.”

Kevorkian said she listens to the songs she has to learn in her car, while on her elliptical and even goes to bed with them in her head.

“I got knocked down from the bodybuilding but I got back up and I put my energy into the singing,” she said. “I’m so excited to be in this

show and I feel so lucky to perform with so many talented people too.”

At 57 years old, Kevorkian added “I’m still young enough that I want to make these last however many years the best that they can be.”

Performances of *The Mikado* are scheduled for Saturday, Oct. 13, at 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. and Sunday, Oct. 14, at 2 p.m., at the Connecticut Gilbert and Sullivan Society, located at 256 Kelsey Hill Rd, Deep River.

Anyone interested in seeing the show can find ticket information at ctgands.org/tickets.

Marlborough Martial Arts Studio to Close After Nearly 30 Years

by Allison Lazur

Frank Corbo, owner and instructor of Marlborough Martial Arts, is closing his doors at the end of the month, after 27 years in business. Corbo – who started the martial arts studio in 1991 – said he is retiring and looking forward to the next new adventure.

Corbo's love for the martial arts stems back to his childhood.

His father, who served in the Coast Guard and was also a self-defense instructor there, introduced martial arts to Corbo at the age of five, beginning with boxing.

Corbo later entered into the Marine Corps, returning from the service in 1975 and was "looking for something to do" so got back into practicing martial arts, he said.

However, the opening of Marlborough Martial Arts didn't happen until Corbo was laid off by Pratt and Whitney after working for them for about 15 years. At that time, he decided to make a career change and open the gym in Marlborough – in a location close to his home in town.

Over the last nearly three decades, Corbo has taught and learned from thousands of students, children and adults alike, some of which have been involved with the gym for about 13 years and "all have different stories," he explained.

A large portion of Corbo's classes are dedicated to children, including those with special needs.

One specific interaction with a 7- or 8-year-old student resonated with Corbo throughout his career.

Corbo explained that a young girl he taught was visually impaired. She was able to see fairly well peripherally, but her forward vision was poor. While working with her in class, he discovered she was following his movements because he was dressed in red – a color she could partially see, he explained.

Corbo said he subsequently decided to pur-

chase a pair of red sparring gloves for their next session so she could mimic his hand motions. At that session, Corbo said he continued to challenge her to excel in her training. She was becoming frustrated, but instead of giving up, she looked at him and said, "I'll try harder to do better."

Corbo added, "She had every reason to say, 'This is the best I can do given what I've been given,' but yet she stopped and said, 'No, I'll try harder to do better.'"

Corbo said those words made him pause and reflect on the life lesson this young girl had just taught him.

Since that encounter, Corbo said he tries to use variations of that lesson.

He said he stresses to his students, "Don't be afraid to show the world how great you are [and] sometimes people will hold you back because they're afraid of what you can accomplish."

Over the years, the offerings of Marlborough Martial Arts have changed based on what was popular at the time, Corbo said.

"We just really offered a full experience in martial arts training and that's what I wanted out of the school," Corbo said.

But over the years, Corbo expanded the business' repertoire, adding in offerings in cardio fitness program, mixed martial arts and tai chi.

"I think one of the reasons why we stayed successful is we tried to stay just a little bit ahead of the curve," he said.

The clientele has also changed to be predominantly children, while during the first few years in business there were more adults and even a teenage class, he explained.

With this shift, Corbo said the focus of classes is geared more towards "student development."

"It may become a child's first social activity where they're with other people outside of

school – outside of academic training," he said.

Corbo said that the martial arts have also been used as a tool for physically handicapped children to achieve personal life goals, adding "that's where martial arts make a big difference in society."

"Not all parents bring their children to a karate school to earn a black belt," he said.

Corbo reminisced about a situation where parents had brought their son to his martial arts school after a doctor had low expectations for the boy's physical movement and strength.

Through martial arts training, Corbo said he was able to help the child do two things at once and enhance coordination – something the doctor did not think was possible. He said the parents returned to the doctor, pleased, to show what their son had been able to accomplish through the martial arts.

The everlasting impact Corbo has had on his students is what will make retiring difficult, he said.

When Corbo informed his students he would be retiring he said the response was shock from most, while some students even cried, but said ultimately all of his students are happy for him.

"As a martial arts instructor you develop a personal relationship with your clients," he said. "As I pack things up and look at old photo albums, it's [been] difficult because you've developed a relationship with these people over time."

Moving forward, Corbo said he plans to take dancing lessons with his wife, travel and serve as the "occasional laborer" for her painting business, while continuing to train with martial arts friends.

"It's been a great journey," he said, adding, "I'm so glad that people allowed me to take it [and] and be a part of it with them."

* * *

Corbo will teach his last class next Thurs-



After nearly three decades in business, Frank Corbo will close the doors of Marlborough Martial Arts to retire after teaching thousands of students since 1991.

day and host a gathering the following Sunday, Sept. 23 from noon to 3 p.m. where former and current students can reminisce, take photos and share stories.

Marlborough Domestic Incident Leads to Injury

by Allison Lazur

A local man with a possibly violent past was arrested on a host of charges last week following a domestic dispute during which he allegedly tried to light a woman's shirt on fire.

State Police said Thomas H. Saltonstall, 45, of 51 Hebron Rd., was arrested and charged with risk of injury to child, disorderly conduct, third-degree assault, second-degree threatening and second-degree unlawful restraint.

Although Saltonstall's prior arrest history wasn't included in the arrest warrant affidavit, and state police would neither confirm nor deny he's the same man, court records show a Thomas H. Saltonstall with the same date of birth was convicted of murder in July 1994 and sentenced to 32 years in prison. He also had two convictions of first-degree robbery with a deadly weapon the same month.

According to the archives of the *Hartford Courant*, Saltonstall admitted killing a transsexual friend in 1993, and hiding the body in the trunk of a car. The *Courant* reported Saltonstall maintained the death, which was by strangulation, was accidental.

State Department of Correction spokesman said Saltonstall served 21 years of the 32-year sentence and was released in March 2015.

On Sept. 1, state police said a woman filed a report of a domestic issue that occurred between her, her son and Saltonstall on Aug. 29, according to the arrest warrant affidavit.

The affidavit states that the alleged victim arrived home to find Saltonstall having a discussion with her son. She later discovered that discussion involved her son's martial arts instructor, who Saltonstall allegedly threatened to kill.

The conversation escalated after the woman asked Saltonstall why he was acting upset, the

affidavit states.

The woman and Saltonstall proceeded to argue for four hours, the affidavit stated. During that time, the alleged victim told police Saltonstall "became physical with her, dragging her around by her hair and attempting to become confrontational with [her son]," the affidavit states.

The affidavit also states Saltonstall attempted to light the woman's shirt on fire, as well as physically block the exits so she and her son could not leave.

At the conclusion of the four-hour argument, the affidavit explains, the woman and her son left the house. Saltonstall approached the son and threatened to kill him, the affidavit states.

According to the affidavit, the trooper who obtained the statement observed several visible bruises on the woman's arms, as well as injuries to the back of her head, back, shins, shoulders and forearms.

The woman also provided the trooper with a Facebook live video, which depicted a verbal argument and Saltonstall putting his hand "within inches" of the victim's son's face, the affidavit states.

The woman told the trooper Saltonstall often threatens her son and attempts to provoke a fight, and that both her son and Saltonstall have a history of physical confrontations, the affidavit states.

The trooper contacted Saltonstall regarding this incident and requested a statement. However, Saltonstall told the trooper he did not wish to provide any details and would be contacting his lawyer, the affidavit states.

Saltonstall is currently free on a \$10,000 bond, and is next due in court Oct. 2.

EH

East Hampton Police News

8/24: Robert Filippone, 71 of 54 Waterview Circle, was issued a summons for misuse of plates, operating a motor vehicle under suspension and operating an unregistered and uninsured motor vehicle, East Hampton Police said.

8/25: Robert Wiggins, 65, of 22 Flood Rd., Marlborough, was arrested and charged with DUI and drinking while driving, police said.

8/28: Mckenzie Caso, 21, of 42 Keirstead Circle, Marlborough, was arrested and charged with DUI and failure to drive right, police said.

8/30: William Marchinkoski, 48, of 89

Sherland Ave., New Haven, was taken into custody pursuant to an active warrant and charged with fourth-degree larceny, police said.

8/30: Richard Caron, 77, of 5 Mark Twain Dr., was issued a summons for operating a motor vehicle without minimum insurance and operating an unregistered motor vehicle, police said.

From Aug. 27-Sept. 2, officers responded to 11 medical calls, two motor vehicle crashes and 13 alarms, and made 32 traffic stops, police said.

Marlborough Crash Victims Identified

State Police have released the details of a four-car crash that occurred on Route 2 last Wednesday, Sept. 5.

Police said roadwork led to the four-car crash, which happened just before 10:30 a.m.

According to police, a Toyota Camry, driven by Sandra Lee Caldrello, 89, of P.O. Box 487, Quaker Hill, was stopped in the right lane of Route 2 west, near the onramp of exit 12, due to highway maintenance.

A Volvo driven by Douglas H. Warren, 64, of 15 Matarese Hills, Westerly, R.I., was stopped in front of the Camry.

A Nissan Sentra driven by Brian C. Medeiros, 34, of 191 S. Whittlesey Ave., Wallingford, was next to the Camry in the left lane.

A BMW driven by Douglas W. Bennett-Shinkovich, 31, of 389 Lebanon Ave., Colchester, was traveling west behind the Camry and struck the vehicle from behind, catapulting the Camry into the air. The Camry

subsequently struck the Volvo and the Nissan Sentra before coming to a final rest on its roof in the middle of Route 2, police said.

Caldrello was transported by Marlborough Fire Department to Hartford Hospital with suspected minor injuries and her passenger Phyllis B. Motin, 76, of 28 Wiemes Ct., Waterford, was also transported with suspected minor injuries by American Medical Response (AMR) to Hartford Hospital, police said.

Warren was transported by East Hampton Fire Department to Marlborough Clinic, Medeiros was transported by Glastonbury Ambulance to St. Francis Hospital and Bennett-Shinkovich was transported to Marlborough Clinic by Colchester Fire Department, all with non-life-threatening injuries, police said.

Bennett-Shinkovich was issued an infraction for following too close, police said.

Colchester Police News

9/2: State Police said Brian E. Forgette, 37, of 303 Mohegan Park Rd., Norwich, was arrested and charged with second-degree criminal trespassing, interfering with officer/resisting and disorderly conduct.

9/7: State Police said Alexandra L. Stewart, 25, of 33 Tilley St., New London, was arrested and charged with second-degree failure to appear after turning herself in pursuant to an active arrest warrant.

Portland Police News

9/2: Briana Alvarez, 25, of 60 Lovely St., Farmington, was charged with operating under suspension and failure to obey traffic control signal, Portland Police said.

9/7: Nicole Brean, 31, of 625 Main St., was charged with first-degree failure to appear, police said.

Marlborough Four-Vehicle Collision, Four Injured

A four-car collision occurred Wednesday morning on Route 2 near the exit 12 on-ramp at approximately 10:29 a.m., according to Fire Chief Kevin Asklar.

Asklar explained that cars were stopped for roadway construction. However, a vehicle traveling westbound did not stop, resulting in a collision.

Asklar said four individuals with injuries

were transported to Hartford Hospital and Middlesex Clinic by ambulances from Glastonbury, Colchester, East Hampton and Marlborough. A second ambulance from Colchester responded to an additional Marlborough medical call while the fire department was dispatched, Asklar said.

State Police would not provide any additional details by press time Thursday.

Marlborough Two-Vehicle Collision, One with Possible Injuries

State Police said a vehicle was rear-ended on Route 2, leaving one man with possible injuries.

At approximately 2:09 p.m. on Sept. 7, a Coca-Cola freight truck driven by Brian Hellyar, 59, of 291 Garden St., Wethersfield, was traveling east on Route 2 in the right lane near the exit 13 on-ramp when the truck was

rear-ended by a Sierra GMC truck driven by Thomas Degnan, 51, of 10 Hamburg Rd., East Haddam, police said.

Degnan complained of chest pain and was transported by Marlborough Fire Department to Middlesex Hospital and issued an infraction for following too close, police said.

Colchester Head-On Collision Injures One

State Police said failure to grant the right of way is to blame for a two-vehicle crash on Sept. 4.

At approximately 10:01 p.m. a Nissan Rogue, driven by Theresa Sanders, 42, of 6 Silver Dr., Middletown, was traveling northbound on South Main Street near the CVS, when a Dodge driven by Alaya P. Torpy, 23,

of 301 Jameson Ct., Seven Fields, Pa., attempted to turn into the CVS parking lot in front of the Nissan Rogue, causing a collision.

Sanders was transported to Marlborough Hospital by the Colchester Fire Department with minor injuries, police said, and Torpy was found at fault and issued an infraction for failure to grant right of way.

Hebron Two-Vehicle Collision, Two with Possible Injuries

State Police said that, while they directing Hebron Fair traffic, a collision occurred in the Hebron fairgrounds area.

At approximately 10:28 p.m. Friday, Sept. 7, April Hutchins, 36, of 29 Chestnut Ct., Cromwell, was traveling south on Route 85 in a Nissan Sentra when she was directed to stop for fair traffic by police. The Sentra stopped at the intersection of Route 85 and Gate B of the Hebron fairgrounds and was

rear-ended by a Subaru Impreza driven by Susan Ann Slivinsky, 54, of 37 Hunter Rd., Tolland.

Hutchins and her 9-year-old male passenger were both transported to Middlesex Hospital by Hebron Emergency Services with possible injuries, police said.

Slivinsky was found at fault and issued an infraction for following too close.

Marlborough Vehicle Overtakes, One Woman Injured

State Police said an overcorrection to stay in the right lane on Route 2 left one woman with minor hand injuries.

At approximately 2:18 p.m. on Sept. 4, a Mercury Mountaineer driven by Ellen N. Wolfe, 19, of 140 Woodside St., Manchester, was traveling in the right lane on Route 2, just

past exit 15 when the vehicle failed to stay in the lane. Wolfe overcorrected and the vehicle overturned, police said.

Wolfe was transported to Marlborough Clinic by the Marlborough Fire Department for minor injury to hands.

Three Arrested in Marlborough Burglary

State Police said an active burglary on Hodge Road led to the arrest of a 21-year-old man, a 14-year-old juvenile and a 16-year-old juvenile.

At approximately 2:02 p.m. on Sept. 4, state troopers, Marlborough Police and East Hampton Police responded to several reports of an active burglary in progress on Hodge Road.

State Police said after an extensive search, including a foot pursuit by a Marlborough of-

ficer, the 14-year-old male suspect was located and arrested.

East Hampton Police, using a dog, located the vehicle reported to be used during the burglary and arrested Cody J. Foran, 21, of 6 Sherwood Ln., and charged him with risk of injury to a child, third-degree burglary and conspiracy, state police said.

After an investigation, state police said a 16-year-old juvenile was also identified and arrested in connection with the incident.

Hebron Police News

9/8: State Police said Edward D. Garrison, 49, of 4 Burnham St., Enfield, was arrested and charged with disorderly conduct and third-degree assault.

From the Editor's Desk

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

Football is back – which means it's time for the start of what's become a trend these past few years: headlines touting the game's declining ratings.

A couple of things wrong with this scenario: while the ratings for NBC's season opener of *Sunday Night Football* this past Sunday were indeed down, they were down 9 percent over last year's season opener, which isn't huge – especially when you consider the ratings for that particular game were up 5 percent from the 2016 opener. So we're not talking massive year-to-year drops here. And let's not forget the game faced competition from the Miss America broadcast on ABC and the still-bafflingly-popular *Big Brother* on CBS.

But there's another, more interesting, reason why you should be skeptical next time someone tells you "football's ratings are way down!" While the ratings for NBC's Sunday night game, as well as ESPN's *Monday Night Football* openers on Monday, were indeed down over last year, the ratings for the CBS and Fox broadcasts in the afternoon on Sunday were up – in some cases, by a lot. CBS averaged a 29 percent increase in ratings for its Sunday afternoon broadcasts.

I read an intriguing guess as to why Fox and CBS saw increases while NBC and ESPN were down: Fox and CBS air regional games; the games feature hometown teams, and the teams you get as a viewer can vary depending on where you live. NBC and ESPN, meanwhile, aired national games. The teams that played were the same, whether you lived in Maine or California.

The theory I saw speculated that people just are more interested in seeing their hometown teams. I'm a bigger baseball fan than I am a football one, and I can certainly relate to that. The games are simply more captivating when you're a fan of one of the particular teams. Unless it's playoff time, I'm not all that interested in seeing, say, Kansas City take on Detroit.

I wouldn't be surprised if, by and large, folks across the country felt the same way I do. Between cable options, and streaming options, there are more alternatives to watch than ever before – so I can't blame a Patriots fan for not clearing the calendar for Bears-Packers.

If the ratings NFL games fetch look dif-

ferent these days than they did in seasons past, it might not be because of concussions or protests or politics or anything like that; it may simply be that people's viewing habits are changing. Literally everything else on television has had to deal with this reality already; football, welcome to the party.

* * *

Speaking of Miss America – which I did, several paragraphs ago – congratulations to Hebron's own Bridget Oei! Bridget, you may recall, won Miss Connecticut in June. Well, this past Sunday, she competed against 50 other women (the number includes the winner from the District of Columbia) in the Miss America....well, they're not calling it a pageant anymore. The Miss America competition. Bridget won first runner-up! Very impressive!

I admit I didn't see the broadcast, but the *Washington Post* had a review of it – and said that Bridget brought down the house during the talent portion of the competition. Bridget performed some Irish step-dancing and then did a moonwalk!

It would've been simply awesome if Bridget had won the entire competition, but first runner-up is huge! It's an amazing achievement, and she has so much to be proud of. She also gets \$25,000 in scholarship money.

Congratulations, Bridget!

* * *

There seem to be more and more bear sightings these days. And they're not just near wooded areas or out in the country, either. Heck, just recently I saw on the news one spotted wandering around the Buckland shopping area in Manchester – an area that's hardly woody.

So, with that in mind, the town of Portland this week passed along some tips for what to do if you see a bear. While the tips came from Portland, I'd say anyone could use them – as it's becoming increasingly apparent bears can turn up just about anywhere.

If you see a bear, the town said:

Observe it from a distance; advertise your presence by shouting and waving your arms or walk slowly away; never attempt to feed or attract bears; and report bear sightings to the Wildlife Division at 860-424-3011.

* * *

See you next week.

Obituaries

Andover

Virginia Holcombe Wanagel

Virginia Holcombe Wanagel, 91, of Andover, passed away peacefully Friday, Aug. 24, at Manatee Memorial Hospital in Bradenton, Fla. Born Oct. 15, 1926 in Florida, she was predeceased by her husband, Robert Wanagel of Andover, and by her parents, Robert Luther Holcombe and Elsie Miller.



Ginny had fond memories of her early years in Florida then moving to Connecticut, graduating from Hall High School in West Hartford. She was a stay-at-home mom with her two children through their elementary school years. She worked for the Optical Style Bar in Manchester and then onto Pratt and Whitney. Once retired, she enjoyed her social outings with the Andover Seniors, part of the Young at Heart Club, being a church deacon and various volunteer positions in and around Andover.

Ginny leaves her two sons, Walter Montie of Andover, Robert Montie and wife Charlyn Montie of East Haddam; her three grandchildren, Robert Montie and wife Erica of Colchester, Stephen Montie of Rockville, Jennifer Bentley and husband Blake of Chaplin; great-grandchildren, Stephenie Montie, Robert Montie, Nicholas Montie, Pierce Montie, Mary Montie, Brianna Bentley; her half-sister, Debra Holcombe Agoos; and extended family of nieces and nephews.

Mom, you will always be with us in the lessons you gave, the life you shared and the love you showed. All our memories of you shall bring us comfort and peace. You shall rest in our hearts forever.

Burial shall be held at the Fairview Cemetery in West Hartford with her immediate family.

Portland

Anne F. Kvietkauskas

Anne F. Kvietkauskas, 94, of Portland, passed away Sunday, Sept. 9, at Portland Care & Rehabilitation. She was the loving wife of the late Adolph F. Kvietkauskas, to whom she had been married for 62 years. Born in Providence, R.I., July 24, 1924, daughter of the late Annie (Flynn) Guckian and Patrick Guckian, she had been a resident of Portland for over 64 years.



Prior to her retirement she worked at Middlesex Hospital in the volunteer services department. After she retired she volunteered many years at Middlesex Hospital. She enjoyed travel with her husband and traveled extensively, visiting the Far East, Tahiti, Australia, New Zealand and all over Europe.

She is survived by her sons, Robert and his wife Teresa of Carlisle, Mass., Dennis and his wife Laura of Hebron, Gary and his wife Francine of Portland, and daughter Julia Ahearn and her husband Brian of Killingworth; seven grandchildren, John and Michael Ahearn, Peter Kvietkauskas, Callie and Scott Yorker, Annie O'Malley and John Pauler.

She was predeceased by a brother, Francis Guckian, and sisters, Margaret Guckian, Rita Egan and Catherine Finch.

The family wishes to express gratitude to her caregiver, Marina. We cannot say enough about the loving care she gave our mother. Also, the kindness, support, and compassion from the staff at Portland Care and Rehabilitation.

The funeral was held Thursday, Sept. 13, in the Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland. Burial was in the State Veterans Cemetery, Middletown. Friends called at the funeral home Thursday morning, before the service.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Alzheimer's Association, 2911 Dixwell Ave., Suite 104, Hamden, CT 06618.

Middle Haddam

Julia Ann Blauvelt

Julia Ann (Hawley) Blauvelt passed into eternal rest and peace Thursday, Sept. 6.

Known to all as Julie, she was born in Monroe, Connecticut on Saturday, July 6, 1929. Her delighted parents were Bradford William Hawley and Fanny Henrietta (Schmidt) Hawley.

Julie attended Monroe Elementary School, Whittier Junior High School and Bassick High School in Bridgeport, graduating in June 1947. As a young girl, Julie had a dog named Skippy whom she loved dearly and Skippy loved cows.

Julie enjoyed acting in many school plays. This enjoyment partially shaped her future career. After graduating from Bassick, Julie attended The Teachers' College of Connecticut in New Britain (now known as Central Connecticut State University), graduating in 1951 with a degree in elementary education. Julie's first teaching position was at Charter Oak School in West Hartford.

On July 5, 1952, Julie married Richard I. (Dick) Blauvelt and they settled in Middle Haddam. In 1953, she took a new teaching position at Central School in Portland. In 1954, Julie moved to the old Gildersleeve School in Portland as teaching principal and second grade teacher. 1960 saw a move to the Hebron Avenue School in Glastonbury to teach kindergarten. A 1963 career pause to raise her younger son, Peter, ended in 1969 when both Julie and Peter returned to elementary school. Julie continued teaching first grade at the Valley View School in Portland until her retirement in 1995.

Many children who passed through her classes remember being in a play because she gave one every year she taught. *Peter Pan*, *Katie No-Pockets* and other plays brought many good laughs over the years.

In retirement and as a longtime member of Trinity Episcopal Church of Portland, Julie found fulfillment with the Women's Guild of the church and spent many hours volunteering at the Thrift Shop along with her friends.

Julie leaves two sons, Richard H. Blauvelt and his fiancée, June Goguen, of Hinsdale, N.H., and Peter T. Blauvelt and his wife, Pamela, of Newport, R.I.; three grandchildren, Emma and Jillian of Boston, Mass., and Christopher of East Hampton.

Julie was predeceased by her daughter, Jill Anne, in July of 1974 and by her husband, Dick, in July of 2011.

Funeral services will be held Saturday, Sept. 15, at 11 a.m., in the Trinity Episcopal Church, 345 Main St., Portland. Burial will be in the family plot in the Swedish Cemetery, Portland. Friends may call at the Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland, on Friday, Sept. 14, from 5-7 p.m.

East Hampton

Anna Hyde Vaillancourt

Anna Hyde Vaillancourt, 92, of Wakefield, R.I., passed away Saturday. She was the wife of the late Albert Vaillancourt.

Born in Middletown, she was a daughter of the late Thomas and Margaret (Cavanaugh) Hyde. She was originally a resident of East Hampton, and more recently a resident of the Peace Dale House in Wakefield, R.I.

She is survived by three stepchildren, Dianne McHugh of Wakefield, Claire Whitty of West Yarmouth, Mass., and Robert Vaillancourt of Burlington, Mass.; two grandchildren, Kathleen Schneider and Christopher McHugh; and five great-grandchildren, Sophia and Sylvia Schneider, Samuel, Elizabeth and Jack McHugh; as well as many nieces and nephews. She was the sister of the late Margaret Kenny, Mary Fox, and Yvonne Cozzi.

A private Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated in East Hampton, Connecticut.

For an online guestbook and condolences, visit averrystortifuneralhome.com.

Portland

Susan Martha DeRing

Susan Martha (Brown) DeRing, 74, of Portland, died Sunday, Sept. 9, at The Hospital of Central Connecticut surrounded by her family. She was born in Granville, N.Y., to Edith (Lorenz) and Raymond Brown.

She was a registered nurse and graduated from St. Mary's School of Nursing in Amsterdam, N.Y. She has been a resident of Portland for 48 years. Sue co-founded Young Horizon's Day Care Center in Higganum in 1982 and dedicated her life to providing a nurturing and loving environment for so many children. In addition to her passion for early childhood development, Sue was always helping those in need and those less fortunate. You would always find Sue preparing home-cooked meals for her children and neighbors, baking for her church and other charities and assembling care packages for the troops overseas.

Sue is survived by her daughters, Kathleen DeRing and Kristine Howard of Portland; her sons, Lt. Col. Tommy DeRing (Jessica) of Portland and Joseph DeRing (Maureen) of Belleair, Fla. Sue lived for her grandchildren. They were truly the lights of her life: Ryan, Maryssa, Brandon, Emily, Gracie, Faith and JJ. She is also survived by her brother, David Brown of Little River, S.C., and several nieces and nephews.

She was predeceased by her brother James Brown and her former husband Philip DeRing.

The funeral will be held today, Sept. 14, at 8 a.m., from the Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland, followed by a Mass of Christian Burial in St. Mary Church, Portland, at 10 a.m. Burial will be at a later date in Granville, N.Y. Friends may call at the funeral home today from 8-9:30 a.m.

In lieu of flowers, please make memorial contributions in the name of Susan DeRing to St. Mary's Church of Portland, Birthright, The Portland American Legion, or St. Vincent DePaul/Amazing Grace Food Pantry.

Marlborough

Eleanor Mildred Davis

Eleanor Mildred Davis, 95, of Marlborough, formerly of Long Island, N.Y., widow of the late Raymond Davis, passed away peacefully Monday, Sept. 3, at the Marlborough Health and Rehab Center. Born Jan. 16, 1923, in Brooklyn, N.Y., she was the daughter of the late Edward and Marie (Palace) Schelski.



Mrs. Davis had worked as a secretary, owned two businesses and was an office administrator for many years before her retirement. After moving to Marlborough, she attended both the Marlborough Congregational Church as well as the senior center. Eleanor was an avid quilter and was most notably known for her "crazy quilts."

She leaves her four children, Keith Ripka, Valerie Schaus and her husband Stephen of Charlestown, R.I., Clyde Ripka and his wife Kristin of Holmes, N.Y., and Audrey Negron and her husband Stephen of Brooklyn, N.Y.; 10 grandchildren; and three great grandchildren.

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

Colchester

Debra A. Lewis

Debra A. Lewis, 62, of Colchester, died Wednesday, Aug. 22, at Harrington Court Transitional Health Care, after a long battle with illness. Debra was born March 30, 1956.

She was one of three children of Loretta M. (Denton) Lewis of Colchester and the late Gordon W. Lewis. Debra was raised in Colchester and attended Bacon Academy.

Besides her mother, Debra leaves behind her son Leonard Nelson Jr. and Tammy Lee of Colchester, and her son Andrew and daughter-in-law Lorraine Nelson of Manchester; six grandchildren, David, Dalton, Deryk, Mariah, Krista, Cole; great-granddaughter Skylar; her sister, Margaret Strickland of East Hartford; and brother and sister-in-law, Gordon and Janet Lewis of Colchester. She also leaves behind several nieces, nephews and cousins.

Debra enjoyed spending time with her grandchildren and great-granddaughter, playing computer games, watching movies and doing puzzle books with her mother.

A private ceremony will be held at Marlboro Cemetery.

Portland

Deirdre Sheil Bray

Deirdre Sheil Bray, a vibrant woman of remarkable grace, strength, and compassion, died Sept. 5, after a brief illness. Born in Hartford Nov. 29, 1949, she was the daughter of the late John R. and Beverly Sheil.

A graduate of Mercy High School and Southern Connecticut State College, Deirdre went on to earn a master's degree in speech pathology at Florida State University. She began her career as a speech pathologist in the Maryland School System and also worked at several health care facilities. After returning to Connecticut, she worked for Middlesex Hospital Home Care and for the past 11 years at Gaylord Hospital, until she reluctantly retired due to Parkinson's disease. Following her retirement she became a warrior in her fight against this disease, joining Rock Steady Boxing Gym, in her efforts to remain active and diminish the effects of Parkinson's.

Deirdre's profession as a speech pathologist gave her great happiness and fulfillment. She cherished the time spent working with her colleagues, her patients and their families. She also took tremendous joy in music, singing in the choir at St. Mary Church. She was a voracious reader, a bird lover, and an avid gardener with a deep appreciation for nature.

Deirdre loved to talk sports (to anyone), especially about her favorites: FSU Seminoles, Boston Red Sox, Green Bay Packers, Golden State Warriors, Providence Friars, and UConn Women Huskies. Above all, her world revolved around her family, especially her husband of 43 years, her son and daughter-in-law, and her precious grandchildren.

Deirdre was a beacon of love who always reached out to others. Her personal kindness and ever-generous spirit touched many lives. She was a champion of human rights and human dignity. As an advocate for those who struggle with addiction, she volunteered her time with Families Anonymous, Portland Chapter. She had a deep and abiding faith from which she drew her strength.

She leaves behind her beloved soulmate and husband, Mel L. Bray; her son, Keith and daughter-in-law, Lyra; her granddaughters, Areia, Alexia and Savanna Rose. She also leaves her siblings, Keavy (Ralph) Peterson, Maura Sheil-Hughes, Michael (Natalie) Sheil and Jay (Wendy) Sheil and nephews, Evan, Kurt, Ryan, Tyler, Neal, Ian, and niece, Christina, all of whom she adored. She took great joy in her great nephews and nieces, Elliott, Noah, Hayden, Evan Boyd, Keegan, Cecelia, and Gabby, and a host of wonderful cousins and friends.

Her stepdaughter Virginia Bray Holmberg predeceased her.

Deirdre, you will always be missed, you will always be remembered, you will always be loved.

The funeral was held Tuesday, Sept. 11, from the Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland, followed by a Mass of Christian Burial in St. Mary Church, Portland. Burial was in the family plot in Indian Hill Cemetery, Middletown. Friends called at the funeral home Monday, Sept. 10.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations can be made to: The Church of St. Mary Renovation Fund, 45 Freestone Ave., Portland, CT 06480 or to the Michael J. Fox Foundation, Donation Processing, P.O. Box 5014, Hagerstown, MD 21741-501.

Portland

Susan Sweeney

Susan (Reinhardt) Sweeney, 77, of San Diego, Calif., formerly of Portland, passed away Wednesday, Aug. 29. She was born Sept. 12, 1940, in Bridgeport, to the late George and Lillian Reinhardt.



Susan lived most of her life in Portland. She and her husband moved to Texas, New York, back to Portland, then retiring to San Diego. She was a member of Zion Lutheran church in Portland. She worked as a medical secretary at various locations throughout her career. She enjoyed teaching her children and grandchildren arts and crafts such as quilting, sewing and needlepoint.

Susan is survived by her husband of 57 years, William Sweeney of San Diego, Calif.; sons and daughters-in-law, Marc and Kim Sweeney of Portland; Eric and Fifin Sweeney of La Jolla, Calif.; and grandchildren, Ryan and his wife Elyse, Erin, Ian and Alanna.

A celebration of life will be held at a later date in Portland.

Memorial donations in lieu of flowers may be made to the Portland Fire Department, c/o Town of Portland, 33 East Main St., P.O. Box 71, Portland, CT 06480-0071.