



RIVEREAST

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Andover Resident in 'Nutcracker'... Amanda Bogdan of Andover will star as Dew Drop and Snow Princess in *New England's Nutcracker*, to be performed by New England Dance Dec. 7 and 8 at Kingswood Oxford in West Hartford. Showtimes will be at 3 p.m. both days. Tickets are \$30, and can be obtained by calling 860-632-0446.

Officer Linked to 'Proud Boys' Retires

by Sloan Brewster

East Hampton Police Officer Kevin Wilcox retired Tuesday – and while Police Chief Dennis Woessner said it was a planned retirement, the news comes just one week after a Washington, D.C. civil rights group called for him to be removed from office.

Last week, the Washington, D.C.-based The Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law called for the dismissal of Wilcox after learning of his association with Proud Boys, a group that, according to the committee, has ties to white supremacist and extremist organizations.

"Proud Boys is a male-chauvinist group with ties to white nationalism whose members regularly engage in violence," the committee said in an Oct. 16 press release.

Proud Boys was started in 2016 by Vice Media co-founder Gavin McInnes, according to officialproudboys.com. The organization describes itself as "a pro-Western fraternal organization for men who refuse to apologize for creating the modern world; a.k.a. Western Chauvinists."

The Southern Poverty Law Center has classified the all-male Proud Boys as a hate group.

In July, The Lawyers' Committee called for East Hampton Police Chief Dennis Woessner to conduct an inquiry into Wilcox, according to the press release. On Sept. 26, the chief informed the committee that, despite confirming Wilcox made payments to Proud Boys, he deemed the matter "unfounded."

Woessner told the Associated Press last week that Wilcox "stopped his association" with the Proud Boys in February. The AP also quoted a letter Woessner wrote in September, in which he said Wilcox "adamantly denies being associated with white supremacists' groups."

Woessner added this week that the police department reviewed Wilcox's history and found that no complaints "concerning any bias" had been lodged against Wilcox.

Woessner also said Wilcox retired from the East Hampton Police Department on Tuesday.

Woessner said it was a planned retirement. He declined to provide Wilcox's contact information.

"He is retiring in good standing after a 20-plus year career at the East Hampton Police Department in service to its citizens and its town," Woessner said. "We've reviewed all the information and there is no nexus to any white supremacy or anything like that. He has a 20-plus year career serving the citizens, the residents and visitors of the town of East Hampton and that's what we should be focusing on. He's a good cop."

In a statement Kristen Clarke, president and executive director of the Lawyers' Committee, called "the infiltration of white supremacists into police departments" a national crisis.

"As communities contend with rising hate crimes, it is critical that African Americans and people of color have faith in local law enforcement," Wilcox said. "Police officers who affiliate with white supremacist groups contribute to a climate of fear and mistrust, infect the ranks with bias and racism, and exacerbate the divides between communities of color and the police."

According to the Proud Boys website, the organization's values center on the tenets of "minimal government, maximum freedom, anti-political correctness, anti-drug war, closed borders, anti-racial guilt, anti-racism, pro-free speech (First Amendment), pro-gun rights (Second Amendment), glorifying the entrepreneur, venerating the housewife [and] reinstating a spirit of western chauvinism."

The Southern Poverty Law Center, on its website, classifies the Proud Boys as a hate group with an ideology of "General Hatred." The center claims that leaders of the Proud Boys have affiliations with known extremists.

"They are known for anti-Muslim and misogynistic rhetoric," the website states.

Proud Boys denies those allegations.

"We are not an '-ism,' '-ist,' or '-phobic' that fits the Left's narrative," the website states. "We

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Colchester Fuel Cell Project Heads to Town Meeting

by Karla Santos

There will be a town meeting in Colchester next Wednesday, Oct. 30, for residents to vote on an agreement that would move the town's fuel cell project forward.

The town meeting will take place at 7 p.m. at Town Hall.

The vote is on a 20-year tax stabilization agreement with Bloom Clean Energy Company, LLC for the payment of the personal property taxes of a \$35 million fuel cell the company is planning to build in town.

In a memo from Town Assessor John Chaponis to First Selectman Art Shilosky, Chaponis explained the plan is to build the fuel cell at 160 Old Amston Rd., a 13-acre parcel owned by Eversource. Bloom Energy will lease the land for 20 years.

Chaponis said the energy generated by the fuel cell is not intended for any particular property owner and will be sold back to Eversource for use on the grid.

According to the memo, the 10-megawatt fuel cell is expected to bring to town a total of \$9,110,707 in personal property taxes.

"Bloom is requesting that the town take the estimated \$9,110,707 that they would pay over the 20 years and stabilize that amount into 20 equal annual tax bills of \$455,535.36," the memo says.

In addition, the town plans to revalue the land based on its new use, "which would create an approximate additional \$30,000 per year in tax dollars," the memo says.

The project will also include natural gas lines

from the Salem town line to the project's location. Those gas lines are also taxable as personal property and will bring additional revenue to town, but it is unknown exactly how much.

"We've been working on this for over a year," Shilosky said. "We just finally settled on an agreement. Bloom Energy has already signed the contract with Eversource so they are in partnership with this. This is going to be big for this town."

A letter from Bloom Energy to the town states that the fuel cell will generate electricity that will be exported to the existing electrical grid through Eversource's Judd Brook Substation located on site.

If residents authorize the tax stabilization

agreement, Bloom Energy expects construction to begin in the second quarter of 2020. The start of construction is subject to receiving all necessary approvals.

The construction of a fuel cell in Colchester is expected to bring many benefits to the town including economic development, natural gas and budget stability.

"Economic development of this magnitude is huge," Chaponis said in an email to the *RiverEast*. "To give you some comparison, the CVS plaza on Main Street is 45,000 square feet retail and valued at \$5.4 million. ... You would need six new CVS plazas, or 300,000 square feet of new retail, in order to add \$35 million to the Grand List. Furthermore, 300,000 square

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Fuel Cell Project cont. from Front Page

feet of new retail would require town services – fire, police, water and sewer hookup – and put a strain on our existing traffic issues in town. Colchester is extremely lucky to be in this position.”

Selectman Rosemary Coyle said the revenue the project will bring into town will have a significant impact.

“State revenue continues to diminish and what happens is if that happens, the only way to make it up is in property tax,” Coyle said. “This will be additional revenue that will help us with all kinds of things that we want to do. I think this is exciting. I think we are lucky this is going to happen.”

Coyle said the revenue could help with the town’s needs including the construction of a new senior center and the need in the fire department for equipment replacement.

But Coyle is certain that a plan is needed for the successful management of these additional funds.

“It’s wonderful news but I think once you know things like this are going to happen it is a responsibility of us the elected officials to sit down and make a plan, because the money is there for 20 years,” she said. “What are we going to do with the money? How do we use it in the best interest of the town so that it helps the town? I just think there are so many conversations that come and I’m very excited that we are going to have that opportunity. I can see no disadvantage to doing this”

Coyle said she is hopeful that some of the issues the town is not able to budget for will be addressed when they start to receive the funds from the fuel well.

“Maybe some of those things that we’ve had to postpone over and over and over again can be resolved when this comes into play,” Coyle said. “I think it needs a lot of communication, a lot of work between the boards and we all need to talk about it, make a plan.”

‘Proud Boys’ cont. from Front Page

truly believe that the West Is The Best and welcome those who believe in the same tenets as us.”

Proud Boys members have had run-ins with the law in the past. According to the Associated Press, in New York City in October 2018, police arrested several Proud Boys members after they brawled with anti-fascist protesters following a speech by McInnes at a Manhattan Republican club. Proud Boys members also have frequently clashed with counterprotesters at rallies in California and Oregon, the AP said.

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

It’s getting to be the time of year where I crawl up on my soapbox and implore people to vote come Election Day. Or, if they’re not going to be here, cast an absentee ballot. However they do it, just get out there and do their civic duty: vote.

Turnout in municipal elections – like the one we’re having this year – is rarely terrible in *Rivereast*-land, but it could always be better. For example, in the last municipal election year, 2017, East Hampton saw a voter turnout of 41%, Portland saw 38% and Marlborough had 32%. All three towns were better than the statewide average that year of 30%, but it still means more than half of the registered voters in those three towns stayed home.

Why? Despite the ink you’ll see on the *Rivereast* pages – especially the letters to the editor pages – every odd-numbered year, municipal elections generally aren’t big attention-grabbers. There’s little to nothing in the way of radio or television spots, and everyone is generally genial, so there tends to be very little in the way of mudslinging.

I also think people are under the mistaken impression that municipal elections simply don’t mean as much as state or national elections, so they’re less apt to come out. You could argue, however, municipal elections mean more, at least in terms of immediate impact to you, a resident of said municipality.

And then there’s voter fatigue – too many elections. Whether it’s state or municipal, there’s one every year, which means another year of seeing lawn signs dot people’s yards, another year of canvassing by politicians and their supporters, another year of.....well, everything that an election entails.

While I think that’s still no excuse for people to stay home – Election Day is, after all, only one day out of a whole 365 – the fact is that, for whatever reason, municipal numbers are low, and probably will continue to be. Secretary of State Denise Merrill has an idea that she feels might help.

I saw an interesting story in the *Norwich Bulletin* the other day in which Merrill proposed having municipal elections fall in even-numbered years, the same year state elections take place.

“I think we should probably have them all every two years, altogether,” she told the paper.

The stats appear to back her up. The last state election in 2018 saw an average turnout rate of 66%. And of course, if you move municipal elections to even-numbered years they’ll sync up with presidential elections, which are always a big draw. The 2016 election brought out 77% of Connecticut’s registered voters; can you imagine if that many people were also voting for their own municipal officials?

It could happen – and I think the matter’s at least worth exploring. However, in the Land of Steady Habits, the idea of moving the election probably would be a non-starter with people. I mean, Andover still holds its elec-

tions in May – for no apparent reason other than “that’s how it’s always been.” This is a state reluctant to change its electoral ways.

Still, I think it would be an interesting concept to explore.

* * *

Sirius XM has a temporary channel up devoted to Johnny Carson and specifically, to his run as host of *The Tonight Show* (which started in 1962). Now, I’m a bit too young to have watched Carson growing up; 11:30 p.m. was well past my bedtime. But, thanks to the internet and the TV channel Antenna TV, which airs old *Tonight* episodes nightly, I’ve caught parts of many episodes over the years, and can tell you this: The man was a brilliant interviewer.

His opening monologue could be hit-and-miss, as opening monologues often are (though Carson had no problem admitting when a joke bombed, and often could wring some hearty laughs from the audience with this frank reaction). But when he sat down and interviewed a subject, it was magic. Late-night hosts these days can sometimes seem bored during an interview, or can make it all about the host, barely letting the guest get a word in edgewise. Not Carson, though. When interviewing someone, he had a tendency to treat them like they were the most important person in the room, and he often seemed fascinated with what his guests had to say. A Carson interview can really be quite interesting to watch – or, in the case of Sirius XM, listen to.

The man was also just flat-out funny, a quality that he always had on display, be it in interviews, in the monologues, or anywhere in between. Here are some highlights of his I recently came across:

“According to statistics, it’s a lot easier to get hit by lightning than to win a Lotto jackpot. The good side: you don’t hear from your relatives.”

“When turkeys mate they think of swans.”

“If it weren’t for Philo T. Farnsworth, inventor of television, we’d still be eating frozen radio dinners.”

“If life were fair, Elvis would be alive and all the impersonators would be dead.”

“Happiness is sitting down to watch some slides of your neighbor’s vacation and finding out that he spent two weeks in a nudist colony.”

“Anytime four New Yorkers get into a cab together without arguing, a bank robbery has just taken place.”

“If variety is the spice of life, marriage is the big can of leftover Spam.”

“For three days after death, hair and fingernails continue to grow but the phone calls taper off.”

“Mail your packages early so the post office can lose them in time for Christmas.”

And on his last-ever episode of *The Tonight Show*, on May 22, 1992, Carson at one point quipped: “I am taking the ‘applause’ sign home, and putting it in the bedroom.”

* * *

See you next week.

Meet the Board of Finance Candidates



Egan



Evans



Hayes



Negrón



Peters

by Karla Santos

Election Day is Tuesday, Nov. 5 – and there are several candidates running for Board of Finance seats. There are four people running for two full-term seats, and there are also two people running to fill a vacancy for four years. The *Rivereast* recently asked each of the candidates a series of questions. Here are their responses. (Note: Responses have been edited for length and clarity.)

Democrats

Michael Egan

Age and Occupation: 56, professional engineer – specifically, senior project manager and chief structural engineer for a civil engineering consulting firm.

Previous Experience on Town Boards and Commissions: I previously served on the Board of Education for nine years. Prior to being appointed to the Board of Education to fill a vacant position, I was the chairman of the Jack Jackter Building Committee, which I had served on for eight years. After my service on the school board, I volunteered to fill a vacancy on the Colchester Sewer and Water Commission, a position I held for almost two years, leaving after my election to the Board of Finance two years ago.

Why Are You Running? The Board of Finance's role is to balance the need for services provided by the town with the ability to pay for those services. The board needs a representative that sees the value in a school system that prepares our children for a complex world and as a Board of Education member and building committee chairman, I have worked with the school system to achieve that goal. Providing the resources to maintain and enhance the town's infrastructure is a critical aspect of the board's role and with my professional background and service on the Sewer and Water Commission, I can provide key insights to the Board on these issues. I also see the value of providing recreational opportunities, enhancing our parks and open spaces and maintaining the town's historic charm. These all impact the quality of life that our residents in Colchester enjoy.

What Are the Key Issues Facing Colchester That You Hope to Address if Elected?

Colchester has the opportunity to enhance economic development in the coming years with the introduction of the new Eversource natural gas project. Managing these changes will be challenging, but effective leadership and insightful planning can result in the responsible growth that can ease the residential tax burdens while still maintaining quality of life. The new Senior Center Project must be fast tracked. We have the location, the committee and the project's funding will not increase our existing payments to our debit services. Seniors have waited for this project long enough, time to get this built. The implementation of the new paramedic program along with upgrades to some of the aging fire department equipment will also be key issues in the coming years that the Board of Finance needs to address.

Michael Hayes

Age and Occupation: 70, retired.

Previous Experience on Town Boards and Commissions: Sewer & Water Commission. Also, as the former owner of Community Lawn and Landscaping Company, I was responsible for developing yearly and long-term budgets, negotiating with lenders for working capital and maintaining all the books. I also have been a certified residential real estate appraiser for the Department of Veterans Affairs' Loan Guaranty Division and a former State of Connecticut certified residential real estate appraiser.

Why Are You Running? Shortly after retirement I realized retirement was not for me, so I took a part-time job at Hope Ace Hardware where I have met so many of Colchester's residents. Members of the Sewer & Water Commission manage a budget similar to those the

Board of Finance deals with. I have spent the last three years attending as many Board of Finance meetings as possible to educate myself on how it reviews line-by-line items in its approval of both the education and town budgets. I am running to move the town forward in a fiscally responsible manner while maintaining needed services.

What Are the Key Issues Facing Colchester That You Hope to Address if Elected? I feel some of the key issues facing Colchester are funding for education due to reductions of state funding. Building a new senior center is a priority. A recent financial update seems to indicate that the new senior center can be built with no impact on our taxes. We need to provide adequate funding for our first responders. On a separate issue the fire department wants to implement a paramedic program and we need to work with them to determine the cost to the town to implement this program based on financial data but also the benefit service it will provide.

Republican

Evan A. Evans

Age and Occupation: 50, retired military officer, realtor. (Note: Evans has also been cross-endorsed by the Colchester Independent Party.)

Previous Experience on Town Boards and Commissions: I served on the Business Development Task Force during Linda Hodge's administration

Why Are You Running? We need a change at all levels of government. People spend entirely too much time in one position. As a Realtor, I see the challenges that Colchester has in being competitive with the area. We need to control our spending and keep Colchester affordable.

What Are the Key Issues Facing Colchester That You Hope to Address if Elected? We can be more efficient with our taxes dollars. As a member of the Board of Finance, I will push the Board of Selectmen and the Board Education to ensure that every efficiency that can be explored and brought to the public for their say. I also believe we need to be more transparent in government by utilizing the OpenGov software to its fullest extent possible.

* * *

There are also two candidates running to fill a Board of Finance vacancy for four years. Taxpayers can vote for one.

Democrat

Nilda Negrón

Age and Occupation: Attorney for over 25 years. I own a small general practice law office and monitor all the accounting and business matters of the office. (Note: Negrón declined to provide her age for this story.)

Previous Experience on Town Boards and Commissions: I am currently on the Board of Finance and have been there for approximately one year, after joining due to a resignation of one of the members.

Why Are You Running? I love the town of Colchester and moved here approximately 15 years ago for the educational system, the open space, reasonable tax rate and the small-town atmosphere. I believe that we need to preserve the small-town atmosphere but expand the commercial and business base as this town needs to grow and secure additional revenue. It is important that Colchester maintain and stabilize quality programs, town government and educational system. It is paramount that we balance our need for these programs with fiscal responsibility in order to maintain a reasonable tax rate for this town and continue to attract new homeowners, and businesses.

What Are the Key Issues Facing Colchester That You Hope to Address if Elected? The main issues facing Colchester that will be addressed by the board in the upcoming year are the continued monitoring and development of

the paramedic program in the fire department, the building of a new senior center, the funding of C3 program (Collaborative for Colchester's Children), youth and social service programs, technology in the educational school system; and maintaining the tax rate.

Colchester Independent Party

Tearice Peters

Age and Occupation: 55, retired from 16 years as a chief operations officer for a financial publication, and production company. I am also president of the Colchester Concerned Citizens and Secretary for the Colchester Independent Party.

Previous Experience on Town Boards and Commissions: I've served as vice chair of the 2006 Charter Review and Revision Commission, elected to the Board of Assessment Appeals and appointed to Board of Finance 2017.

Why Are You Running? I feel there is a need to bring a fiscally responsible approach to the board. Making sure taxpayers' money is being wisely spent. I will ask the tough questions and I'm not controlled by party politics; I'm not bound to too a party line. I believe in an open, transparent government that is inclusive and respectful of all residents to participate in no matter their stance or political affiliation. My loyalties, like always, are with the citizens of Colchester.

What Are the Key Issues Facing Colchester That You Hope to Address if Elected?

There are many challenges that will be affecting the financial picture of the town. One being the delicate balance of obtaining a budget that meets the needs and wants of the citizens without causing a financial tax burden on the town, taxpayers and small businesses. There are projects which have been started or are in the planning stages that will need funding to be completed, such as the new senior center, implementation of the certified ambulance paramedic program, road work, address the recreation fields and many other projects or services, all which potentially could impact our taxes.

Meet the Marlborough Board of Finance Candidates



Bourbeau



Gorgoglione



Hjulstrom



Majocho-Steinbrecher



Thomas



Zimmer

by Karla Santos

Election Day is Tuesday, Nov. 5 – and there are several candidates running for Board of Finance seats. There are six people running, and taxpayers can vote for any four, and four will be elected. Democrat Michael Nastro is running unopposed to fill a Board of Finance Alternate seat. The *Rivereast* recently asked each of the candidates a series of questions. Here are their responses. (Note: Responses have been edited for length and clarity.)

Democrats

Deborah C. Bourbeau

Age and Occupation: Retired elementary school teacher. (Note: Bourbeau declined to provide her age for this story.)

Previous Experience on Town Boards and Commissions: Currently, I am an alternate on the Board of Finance. I am unaffiliated, but when I was asked by the Democratic Town Committee to serve on the Board of Finance in 2017, I had to say ‘yes.’ In the past I have also served as a member of the Richmond Memorial Library Association Board for six years, four of them as president. I was on the Bicentennial Committee heading the logo contest and the time capsule creation and was part of the original group planning that special event. I have been a volunteer at the Marlborough Arts Center since its inception many years ago.

Why Are You Running? After two years I feel that I have gained a better understanding of the budget process and the working relationship with the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Education. Being active in each budget hearing and budget vote since moving here in 1975, I found that I had lots to say and some questions to ask. Instead of doing so, “after the fact” regarding both portions of the town’s budget, I felt that I should be part of the solution.

What Are the Key Issues Facing Marlborough That You Hope to Address if Elected? Taxes are the big “elephant” in the room. Everyone pays taxes; some do so without a problem while others struggle. Our history, until the past four years, has shown an ever-increasing debt, infrastructure needs that were not being addressed, and ever rising taxes. Recently there has been a positive change. Waste has been eliminated, policies and spending patterns have been streamlined, and efficiency is the name of the game. I want to be able to look people in the eye when discussing taxes and assure them that we on the Board of Finance scrutinize each line item in both the town budget and the Board of Education budget.

Anne Majocho-Steinbrecher

Age and Occupation: Senior Informatics Analyst. (Note: Majocho-Steinbrecher declined to provide her age for this story.)

Previous Experience on Town Boards and Commissions: While I was on the Boy Scouts of America Committee for 12 years, this is my first try for town boards and commissions. However, I usually read through the minutes and look through the annual report.

Why Are You Running? My kids have grown and now I have capacity to work for the residents of Marlborough. I have a lot of budget experience, so I think I can best service on the Board of Finance.

What Are the Key Issues Facing Marlborough That You Hope to Address if Elected? Balance tax revenue with what the town of Marlborough needs while keeping the small-town charm. Keep up with the rainy-day fund, since we don’t know what the state will

provide us. Also, we need to officially define the relationship between the Board of Education and the Board of Finance, since the Board of Education is approximately 75% of the expenses in Marlborough.

Shawn Thomas

Thomas did not respond to questions by press time.

Dieter Zimmer

Age and Occupation: Retired. (Note: Zimmer declined to provide his age for this story.)

Previous Experience on Town Boards and Commissions: I am a member of the Board of Finance. I have served on the PTO as treasurer; served on the RHAM Board of Education for 25 years, 20 years as treasurer; served on several committees like Building Committee for the Marlborough Elementary School renovation and building the senior center. I have been a member of the Girl Scouts for 31 years. I was a co-leader for 27 years with a very active GS Troop.

Why Are You Running? For the last 35 years I have actively and enthusiastically served our community. I am proud and honored that Marlborough citizens have supported me throughout these years and let me be a part of the growth. With the town’s support I can continue and commit to Marlborough’s proud and exciting future.

What Are the Key Issues Facing Marlborough That You Hope to Address if Elected? Marlborough’s population make-up has shifted with fewer young families and an increasing older population. The needs of the town have changed to address this shift. Therefore it is important to change the tax base, bringing more businesses back to Marlborough to make it affordable to Marlborough citizens. The challenge is to keep our older population and to attract younger families to come back to Marlborough. At the same time, keep the taxes in an affordable range to all. These are challenging and exciting times for Marlborough.

Republicans

Ken A. Hjulstrom

Age and Occupation: 64, real estate agent with William Raveis Real Estate.

Previous Experience on Town Boards and Commissions: From 1998-2003, Marlborough Board of Education; 2009-11, Marlborough Board of Assessment Appeals; 2011 to present, Marlborough Board of Finance. Also, I’ve been on the Marlborough Lions Club from 2004 to present; serve as president of the Florence Lord Senior Housing Executive Board; have served on the Marlborough Republican Town Committee from 1998 to present, chairman from 2008 to present. I am also past co-vice president of the Marlborough PTO.

Why Are You Running? I sincerely enjoy giving back to my community and as a member of the Board of Finance. I strive at being our community’s “fiscal watchdog” by working to keep taxes as low as possible and by scrutinizing budgets, town projects and capital re-

quests. That with the uncertainty regarding revenues from the State of Connecticut, it is more critical now than ever that we tighten our belts on a local level and make sure that every tax dollar is spent wisely and that we set priorities when deciding on what is needed for our town.

What Are the Key Issues Facing Marlborough That You Hope to Address if Elected? Continue to address the challenges of uncertainties regarding funding from the State of Connecticut and dealing with the never-ending state mandates that further burden our town’s finances. Continue to fund infrastructure projects to continue the work started nearly two decades ago, which is now baring fruit with the redevelopment of our Town Center. Work cooperatively with Town Hall and the Economic Development Commission to decide what is to be done with the undeveloped Business Park that has been sitting idle for the last two decades. Demand detailed and well-defined information from our Town Hall and from our Boards of Education when addressing budget and capital requests. Require more control over budgets and spending on Capital expenditures for road and bridge projects and the purchase of equipment. Strive to require Town Hall to get legal expenditures under control, which have ballooned in recent years. Make sure that our town’s facilities, including our school, are properly maintained and that long-term maintenance issues are addressed so that they do not fall into disrepair, as was the case with the school back in the 1990s.

Liz Gorgoglione

Age and Occupation: 38, vice president of underwriting and portfolio management at United Bank.

Previous Experience on Town Boards and Commissions: From 2017 to present, Board of Finance; from 2008 to present, coach, Marlborough Youth Athletic League Basketball; from 2012-17, commissioner and secretary,

Marlborough Youth Athletic League; from 2018 to present, member, Marlborough Republican Town Committee; from 2007 to present, volunteer events with Marlborough Elementary School and Girl Scouts.

Why Are You Running? Financial education and accountability are imperative to both individual financial success as well as a community’s economic and financial success. I believe my background in business finance and my civic involvement with personal finance continues to bring a healthy perspective to the Board of Finance. I want to see this town be the best it can be and that starts with its finances. I believe my experience and skill set is of value in continuing to help build responsible budgets with the limited resources we have. We can broaden and deepen the tax base one small business at a time. We need to continue to spend less than what we bring in. And we need to dive deeper on income and expenses, both current and anticipated, in order to truly understand needs, wants, and potential waste.

What Are the Key Issues Facing Marlborough That You Hope to Address if Elected? I hope to help create more transparency with processes and information so that members of the community better understand what is that affects them and how. Ongoing and increasing state mandates further burden our town finances as the state pushes more costs onto small towns like us. We need to better understand finances, budgets and legislation at the state level in order to better plan for the ramifications it has for our town budgets and the impact on our taxpayers. Continue to support infrastructure projects related to the town as a whole, including Marlborough Elementary School, the senior center, the fire department, library, food bank, etc. The divisiveness and defensiveness within boards and commissions, both with themselves and other boards, needs to cease.

Osten Target of Violent Threats on Facebook

by Sloan Brewster

Hartford’s Capitol Police are investigating threats made on social media against state Sen. Cathy Osten (D-19).

In a phone call Tuesday, Osten, whose district includes the towns of Columbia, Franklin, Hebron, Lebanon, Ledyard, Lisbon, Marlborough, Montville, Norwich and Sprague, said the threats were made on the Connecticut Republican Facebook page.

The posts, which were posted Monday, began innocuously, Osten said. Then someone posted a photo of a tire track on a yard allegedly made by her car while campaigning door-to-door for first selectman.

“And from that point on, things went south,” she said.

The posts were deleted, said J. R. Romano, chair of the state Republican Party.

“When we became aware of it, we obviously took them down,” Romano said. “We generally have safety settings. We rely on Facebook to filter them out. That obviously didn’t work.”

Two of them can be seen in a screen shot available on the state Democrats’ webpage.

One, posted by someone with the screen name Casey Richer, says, “She does that to the wrong person, she might get shot.”

The other, posted by someone with the screen

name Joe Diaco, says, “I would have pulled her out that car and knocked her out. Then called the cops and news stations – I do a lot of work to my lawn to keep it looking nice, screw that.”

Romano said the three people that posted the comments are not affiliated with state Republicans and do not live in Connecticut. One is in the Philippines, one is in Massachusetts and the other is in New York.

“They’re not elected officials; they’re just random people,” he said.

Osten said she had not seen the posts herself but that someone had made her aware of them.

She voiced surprise that driving on someone’s lawn would elicit that level of a response, adding that “out in this neck of the woods” if a landowner allows her to drive on their lawn she would, but that she would not do so if she wasn’t given permission.

“I’m still not even certain what that has to do with anything,” she said. “That’s just silliness. It certainly doesn’t rise to the level of shooting somebody or taking somebody out of their car and beating them up.”

Osten said she contacted the resident state trooper in Sprague, where she lives and is first selectman and that Democrats brought the matter to the attention of the Capital Police in Hart-

ford.

In a phone call Wednesday, Scott Driscoll, public information officer for the Capitol Police, said Connecticut State Police were the primary investigators on the matter. As of press time, state police had not returned calls for this story.

Osten and Democrats said people should be able to disagree on policy but should not be allowed to threaten one another and that people and their families should not be nervous or afraid.

“What we’re really doing is saying to people that’s just not acceptable behavior and we should all call it out,” she said. “We have got to stop this rhetoric. It’s just not acceptable. It’s not acceptable.”

When asked if she was at all afraid, Osten replied that she had worked in corrections for 20 years and did what she would normally do, including maintaining an awareness of her surroundings and making sure her doors and car were locked.

“You can’t let other people tell you what to do,” she said.

She reiterated that people should call out others who make threats on social media, “no matter what party.”

According to a press release, Connecticut

Senate President Martin Looney (D-New Haven) and Senate Majority Leader Bob Duff (D-Norwalk) spoke Tuesday at Sprague Town Hall, denouncing the online threats.

Looney concurred with Osten that it should not matter what party someone is in, they should not post threats.

“I think this is a matter that should not be partisan,” he said.

Looney said he has called out a Democratic candidate in New Britain “who made some really improper and personally disparaging remarks about the Republican mayor, Erin Stewart.”

“It should not be tolerated as part of the public debate,” he said.

Looney said Osten’s work on the state and local level should not be “denigrated,” but instead “celebrated.”

“Cathy Osten is one of the most outstanding and hardworking public officials in the state,” he said.

Romano said he agreed with Democrats that the posts were unacceptable.

“It was completely over the top,” he said. “There’s no question in my mind that it’s the unfortunate and tragic side of social media and every party deals with it.”

Three Sent to Hospital After Amston Lake Incident

by Sloan Brewster

A canoe accident on Amston Lake last weekend left three Wesleyan students hospitalized.

According to a press release from the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), on Saturday at about 3:45 p.m., DEEP’s Environmental Conservation (EnCon) Police responded to a reported boating accident on the Hebron side of the lake.

The lake stretches between Hebron, Lebanon and Colchester.

Hebron Town Manager Andrew Tierney shared some details that he said had been reported to him. According to Tierney, a group of students from Wesleyan University in Middletown had rented a house on the Lebanon side of the lake. They took two canoes onto the lake from Ames Road.

One of the canoes capsized, he said.

Connecticut State Police Troop K as well as the Hebron and Lebanon Fire Departments also responded, a dispatcher who answered the phone Monday afternoon at Troop K said. State police did not issue a press release.

“We were on scene before [EnCon], but they took over the investigation,” the dispatcher said.

Windham Hospital Paramedics also responded, according to the press release. Three victims were transported to area hospitals.

According to the press release, Nabiha Syed, 19, of Belmont, N.Y.; Roshaan Siddiqui, 18, of Chicago, Ill.; Zainab Mubalsher, 19, of Aldie, Va.; and Nadya Jaunbocus, 19, of Port Louis, Maritius were involved in the accident.

Syed and Siddiqui, were transported and admitted to Hartford Hospital, where they remained as of Monday, DEEP said. Mubalsher was treated at Middlesex Marlborough Clinic and released that day.

Jaunbocus refused medical attention, according to DEEP.

In a phone call Wednesday, Pamela Cruz, a spokesperson for Hartford Hospital, said Syed is listed in serious condition. Siddiqui is not in the directory, she said.

It was difficult to find the victims and it took

about 15 minutes from the time the call came in to get to them as they were from out of town and had difficulty giving their exact location, Hebron Fire Chief Nick Wallick said in a phone call Tuesday.

“It was very hard to locate the people but once we did we went to work,” he said.

When responders arrived on scene, there were two people in the water and two bystanders that were helping get them out of the water.

One of the victims was flown to Hartford Hospital via LifeStar in a “critical nature,” Wallick said. The two people who helped with the rescue effort were also treated due to exposure to the water.

As far as what had happened that led to the overturning of the canoe, Wallick said it was a mystery.

“We dealt with a medical portion of it and let everything else go,” he said. “Nobody knows exactly what happened because everybody had a little part of the call but nobody knows the entire story, not DEEP and not even me.”

In contrast to a car accident, which is “clear cut,” the chief said “the whole call was vague.” As an example he said he did not know if the people in the canoe were wearing personal floatation devices [PFDs].

“There were PFDs, they were around but I don’t know if anyone was wearing them,” he said. “This is one of those calls where I can’t tell you much. We spent an hour down at the site with DEEP trying to sort it all out and we walked away with more questions than we had when we started.”

Wesleyan issued the following statement in response to incident:

“We have been in touch with the families, are providing support for the students involved, and assisting authorities investigating the incident,” he said. “The health and safety of our students is paramount, and we are all hoping for the student’s recovery.”

EnCon Police are investigating the accident and, as of Tuesday would not release any additional details.

RHAM School Board Nixes Money for Field Drainage

by Sloan Brewster

The RHAM Board of Education has opted against spending additional money on drainage problems on the high school athletic field, at this time.

At Monday's board meeting, Schools Superintendent Patricia Law apprised the board of the need for \$505 or \$2,166 to cover repairs to the field, depending which of two options the board agreed to do.

"I would prefer not to overspend at all," she said, "but I would feel more comfortable at \$505."

Ultimately, though, the board voted 5-3 against spending any money at all.

Law said the funds would be drawn from the operations account and put in the capital account. While noting they were small amounts, Law said she did not want to make the decision herself, as transferring the money would mean spending more on capital than was allocated.

"I am not comfortable being the one making the decision on this transfer at this point," Law said.

With the 2019-20 budget, \$25,000 was set aside for field improvements but was not enough,

Law said. She wanted the board to weigh in on the decision to spend more than that.

Law said she had approached various companies with requests for estimates on what they could do with \$25,000 to repair the drainage problems.

"Most said nothing," she said.

One company was able to complete some repairs along the edges of the field, leaving \$4,500 in the account, she said. There were two more possible fixes that could be done with the remaining money – plus the additional amounts.

Option 1, which would cost a total of \$5,005, or \$505 more than what remains in the pot, was to put in 220 feet of drainage at the end of the field, Law said. Option 2, which would run \$6,666 or \$2,166 more, was put drainage in the whole 293-foot end area.

The board made a motion – which it ultimately voted down – to spend the \$2,166.

In discussion, board members went back and forth about the expense.

Joseph O'Connor said it was a small amount to spend.

"It is a safety concern," he said, calling the

field "a swamp."

O'Connor said he was concerned that water from the field would back up on the track that had been resurfaced three years ago for approximately \$110,000.

Other board members did not agree with pumping more money into the problem, saying it is too early in the year to predict if the money will be needed for something else later.

Susan Rapelye, board vice chair, said she had a problem with the idea as it would be "robbing Peter to pay Paul."

Parents have long decried drainage issues on the field and at nearly every board meeting,

someone – often several people – stands up and complains about games being cancelled or moved because of the wet field.

Last month, the board held three public sessions to garner thoughts on a proposal to install a \$2.5 million artificial turf field to fix the drainage issues.

The turf would also solve the problem of a lack of field space, Law said, at the public session in Hebron. Artificial turf can be used more often than grass, which can only withstand about 200 hours of use per year.

There is no timetable on any potential turf field project.

Former Public Works Employee Sues Marlborough, Traversa

by Karla Santos

The Town of Marlborough and First Selectman Amy Traversa are facing a lawsuit from a former town employee who claims to have been "unlawfully" terminated.

James Foley, who worked in the town's Public Works Department, filed a lawsuit last month against the town and Traversa.

Foley's employment with the town began in July 1996, the lawsuit states. Until March 2019, Foley held various positions within his department.

According to the suit, on Nov. 13, 2012, Foley was diagnosed with a medical condition that the defendants were aware of. In January 2017, Foley requested intermittent Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) leave and the defendants denied the request, the lawsuit says.

The lawsuit states that in March 2017, Foley submitted a request for intermittent FMLA leave. The request included supporting medical information and certification from Foley's physician indicating his request was for an "FMLA-qualifying reason."

In the lawsuit, Foley claims Traversa told him that "if he proceeded with the submission of his request for intermittent FMLA leave, he could either resign his position or termination proceedings would be instituted against him."

The lawsuit states that Traversa and the town "discouraged" Foley from taking the requested leave and "exercising his rights under the FMLA."

The lawsuit adds that Traversa "criticized" Foley for requesting leave under the FMLA.

The lawsuit also states that in February 2018, Foley requested FMLA leave to care for his mother, who was suffering from a "serious medical condition." The request was granted in March – but, the lawsuit claims, Traversa asked Foley for more information than was required to certify his leave request.

Specifically, Foley claims in the lawsuit, Traversa "demanded additional medical information" regarding his mother's medical condition.

"This was a violation of [Foley's] rights under the FMLA," the lawsuit says.

Also, according to the lawsuit, in August 2018, Foley submitted another FMLA leave request for his own "serious health condition."

(Foley declined to specify the condition to the *Rivereast*.)

According to the lawsuit, however, Traversa, without Foley's consent, contacted his medical providers directly and sought "additional information related to [Foley's] medical condition beyond the information required," the lawsuit states. The lawsuit adds that Traversa and the town required Foley to "take more leave than was necessary" in order to "account for other types of leave."

The lawsuit says that in September 2018, Foley was suspended from employment for four days for "excessive absenteeism."

"The alleged 'absenteeism' included FMLA-protected leave," the lawsuit says.

In September 2018, Foley filed a complaint with the U.S. Department of Labor against Traversa and the town because they had "violated the provisions of the FMLA with regard to Plaintiff's exercise of rights under the FMLA."

From December 2018 to January 2019, Foley claims in the suit that he "repeatedly" asked Traversa how much of his FMLA leave time he had used. In February, the suit alleges, Traversa told Foley he was no longer eligible for FMLA time.

In March, Foley's employment with the town was terminated, due to his absence from work due to his health condition, the lawsuit says.

The lawsuit states that in June, Traversa and the town were found by the Department of Labor to have violated Foley's rights.

In the lawsuit, Foley is asking for reinstatement to his job, as well as granting of intermittent leave, "freedom from retaliation," and an unspecified amount of money.

Foley told the *Rivereast* he could not comment further, and his attorney Jacques J. Parenteau, did not return a request for comment for this story.

Traversa's attorney, who is also the town's labor and employment attorney, Nick Grello, also did not return a request for comment.

Traversa told the *Rivereast* she could not provide any comments due to the pending litigation.

"Because litigation is pending, I am unable to comment further or provide any details, but I am fully confident that the town will ultimately prevail in this matter," Traversa said.

Colchester Police News

9/21: State Police said James Christopher Welch, 34, of East Haddam, was arrested and charged with violation of probation.

9/23: State Police said Neftali Bruno-Pabon, 32, of Hartford, was arrested and charged with operation of vehicle under suspension, possession of controlled substance and third degree larceny.

10/10: State Police said Shase Ricks, 27, of 4 Pinney Rd., Bloomfield, was arrested and charged with operating vehicle under suspension, speeding, use of drug paraphernalia, sale of controlled substance, possession of con-

trolled substance.

10/11: State Police said Armando Olmino, 38, of East Hartford, was arrested and charged with driving under the influence, failure to drive in proper lane, driving without a license.

10/17: State Police said Joseph Nicholas Parker, 30, of Windermere, Fla., was arrested and charged with two charges of first-degree failure to appear and two charges of second-degree failure to appear.

10/24: State Police said Chanquil Barnes, 29, of Willimantic, was arrested and charged with violation of probation.

Andover Police News

9/22: State Police said Andrew Beaudry, 32, of Columbia, was arrested and charged with driving under the influence and failure to drive at a reasonable distance apart from vehicle in front.

East Hampton Police News

10/4: Steven Garcia, 31, of 23253 Hall Rd., Sedalia, Mo., was arrested and charged with driving under the influence, East Hampton Police said.

10/12: James Wernicki, 29, of 2 Lynn Ave., Southington, was arrested and charged with for driving under the influence, failure to drive right, failure to display proper lights and operating without a license, police said.

Also, from Sept. 30-Oct. 13, officers responded to 26 medical calls, eight motor vehicle crashes and nine alarms, and made 28 traffic stops, police said.

Marlborough Police News

9/24: State Police said Jeremy Cimmino, 27, of North Southington, was arrested and charged with second degree failure to appear.

9/28: State Police said Robin Toce, 52, of Wethersfield, was arrested and charged with driving under the influence, traffic-controlled signals and evasion of responsibility in operation of vehicle.

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Police News

10/13: State Police said Bruce Turgeon, 42, of 19 Hickory St., Marlborough, was arrested and charged with disorderly conduct and third-degree assault.

10/21: State Police said Thomas Grylka, 25, of 58 Champion Hill Rd., East Hampton, was arrested and charged with driving under the influence, failure to drive upon right and assault of public safety or emergency medical personnel.

Hebron Police News

10/8: State Police said Ketan Patel, 34, of Newington, was arrested and charged with first degree criminal trespassing and violation of protective order.

Obituaries

Andover

R. Maurice Lacombe

Maurice Lacombe, 94, of Andover, passed away peacefully after a brief illness, surrounded by loving family, Thursday, Oct. 17. Special thanks to the Andover Volunteer Department and the staff at Manchester Memorial Hospital for their wonderful care.

He was born in Waterbury June 15, 1925, to Alfred and Aldea (Gelinas) Lacombe. He left high school to join the Army and was honorably discharged April 1946, Private 1st Class, Company K 376th Infantry Regiment. He was married to the love of his life, Doris (Gelinas) in October 1947, who predeceased him in 1991.

He went to work at Uniroyal in Naugatuck for over 40 years. His passion was the love for his family, watching and playing golf, going to the dog races, horse races, casino, duckpin bowling and scratching lottery tickets.

He is survived by his son, Robert, and daughter-in-law, Beatrice; three sisters, Cecile Soucy, Lillian Orzell and Irene Lacombe; three brothers, Roger Lacombe, Charles Lacombe and Rene Lacombe.

He is also survived by three granddaughters and their spouses, Theresa and Juan Castillo, Regina and Allen Laine, Elizabeth Lacombe and Jeremy Crowe. He is also survived by 8 great-grandchildren: Emilia Castillo, Serena Castillo, Clarisa Castillo, Mason Laine, Brady Laine, Kiele Laine, Brendan Crowe and Lauren Crowe.

He was predeceased by his brother Raymond Lacombe and his sister Theresa Lacombe.

His family will receive friends for memorial calling hours at Woodtick Memorial Funeral Home at 420 Woodtick Rd., Wolcott, Tuesday, Oct. 22, followed by a memorial service at St. Mary Magdalen Church at 145 Buckingham St. in Oakville.

For online condolences, visit woodtickmemorial.com.

Hebron

Karl V. Behnke

Karl V. Behnke, 70, of Hebron and Vermont, passed away Tuesday, June 4, in a Keene, N.H., hospital, from complications from cancer. He was formerly of Basketshop Road in Hebron.

He was born Oct. 25, 1948, the son of Victor and Helen Rathbun Behnke, who predeceased him. His wife Patricia Shea passed away in June 2013.

He leaves behind his cousins, Olive Rathbun Field (Nelson) of Columbia and Eleanor Rathbun Haggerty (John) of Mansfield; also, many nieces and nephews and many friends who will miss him dearly in Vermont.

There was a graveside service Wednesday, Oct. 23, at 11 a.m., in St. Peter's Cemetery, Hebron.

Colchester

Amy Sue Smith

Amy Sue (Haas) Smith, 47, of Colchester, passed away Sunday, Oct. 13, after a courageous battle with cancer. Born in Hartford Aug. 3, 1972, she was the daughter of Gilbert and Sue (Tucker) Haas.

Amy married her beloved husband Daniel June 12, 2012 and the couple made their home in Colchester. Amy was employed by the New London public school system, working as both a librarian and secretary. Amy was a kind soul with an infectious smile that could light up an entire room. Her biggest joy in life came from spending time with her beloved family, friends, and pets. She believed in living life to the fullest but also made sure to take time to enjoy and appreciate the little things in life such as enjoying a good book or a Broadway show. Amy was also a talented clarinet player and was a former member of the Colchester Civic Orchestra.

Amy will be forever loved and missed by her husband, Daniel; her parents, Gilbert and Sue; her brother, Michael (Maricel) Haas of Chandler, Ariz.; brothers-in-law, Gene Smith of Fort Pierce, Fla., James Smith of Vancouver, Wash.; god-daughter, Erica Montalvo; and many extended family members and friends.

Calling hours will be held Wednesday, Nov. 6, from 10-11 a.m., directly at St. Andrew Church, 128 Norwich Ave., Colchester, with a memorial Mass to follow at 11 a.m.

Donations in Amy's name can be made to the American Cancer Society (cancer.org/donate) or to the Connecticut Humane Society (give.cthumane.org).

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Marlborough

Phillip Angelo Casserino

Phillip Angelo Casserino was called home to be with the Lord Monday, Oct. 7, at the age of 81, in Lancaster, Calif., surrounded by his loving family. Phillip was born Dec. 7, 1937, in Middletown.

He joined the Air Force in 1957 and received Honorable Discharge in 1961. He enjoyed playing pool and watching old war movies. Phillip was a loving husband, father, grandfather and great grandfather and will be dearly missed.

He was preceded in death by his loving wife Joyce; brothers Richard and Robert; sisters Alice, Phyllis and Caroline.

Phillip leaves behind his daughter, Penny Casserino of Lancaster, Calif.; son, Philip and wife Lana Casserino of Byhalia, Miss.; daughter, Alana and husband Edward Tobias of Marlborough; son, Jay and wife Gladys Serra of Portland; his brother, Alan Casserino of South Carolina; close friend Violet Del Rossi of Lancaster, Calif.; his dear sister-in-law Francine Magnano of Middletown; 16 grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren; and numerous nieces and nephews.

He will be laid to rest next to his wife Joyce today, Oct. 25, at 3 p.m. Services will be at Rose Hills Memorial Park and Mortuary in Whittier, Calif.

In lieu of flowers please make a donation for him to the Pulmonary Fibrosis Foundation under his name.

Colchester

Albert Joseph Tarnowski

Albert Joseph Tarnowski, "Snooky," 76, lifelong resident of Colchester, passed away at home Tuesday, Oct. 22. Born in New London April 10, 1943, he was a son of the late Henry and Mary (Ruszala) Tarnowski.

Albert attended school in Colchester and graduated from Bacon Academy with the class of 1961. Albert was a talented baseball player and was accepted into the Red Sox Baseball Camp. He was also a devout fan of the Cleveland Indians. He was a former member of the Colchester Farmers Club. Albert retired several years ago after a career as a tool and dye maker for Arwood Corporation in Groton.

He will be sadly missed by many, including his wife, Carolann Violissi of Portland; brother, Frank and wife Marian Tarnowski of Colchester; nieces and nephews, Brooke Vigneri, Brittney Vigneri, Michael Tarnowski, Theresa and husband Patrick Murray; his beloved dog, Dina Marie; and many extended family members and friends.

In addition to his parents, he was predeceased by a brother, Robert Tarnowski.

Funeral services will be held at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester, Saturday, Oct. 26, beginning with a calling hour from 9-10 a.m., followed by the funeral Mass at St. Andrew Church at 10:30 a.m. Burial will be in the Linwood Cemetery.

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

East Hampton

Stephen C. Camp

On Oct. 14, Stephen Camp, or Steve as everyone called him, passed away surrounded by family. Steve fought a long and courageous battle with brain cancer.

Steve was the tough adventurous outdoors type. He loved hunting, fishing, riding ATVs, snowmobiling, golfing and especially riding his Harley Davidson. He always said he felt free on his bike and he's surely riding in Heaven.

Steve leaves behind two sons, Steve Camp Jr. of Arizona and Nicholas Camp of Maine; two grandchildren, Alley and Ava Camp of Arizona; his father, Jonathan Camp of Norwich; sisters, Barbara Camp Willis of Dickson, Ten.; Joyce Camp Molnar and husband Dan of Gaylordsville, children, Cheryl, Mike, Kathleen and Stacey; his brother, Michael Camp and wife Christina of East Hampton, and their sons Jordan and Colby; finally, his longtime girlfriend Doreen Donat of East Haddam.

Steve will be greeted in heaven by his mother Anne Camp Olson and brother Christopher.

Steve will always be remembered for his loving soul and how he would always be there to help anyone. He wouldn't hesitate to give you the shirt off his back! Steve donated his body to the UConn medical program in hopes of helping others.

A celebration of his life will be held for friends and family at the VFW at 20 North Maple St., on Saturday, Nov. 16, from 1-5 p.m.

In lieu of flowers, a donation box for his grandchildren will be available.

