

RIVEREAST

# News Bulletin

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**Money for Marlborough...** The Connecticut Interlocal Risk Management Agency recently presented First Selectman Amy Traversa with a check for \$11,173, the town's prorated share of CIRMA's \$5 million Members' Equity Distribution for 2019. The town and Board of Education have received \$61,965 in distributed Members' Equity since the program began in 2011. From left are Carol Fitzsimons of CIRMA, selectmen Evelyn Godbout and Cliff Dennis, Traversa, and town Finance Director Hayley Wagner.

## Is This the End for Chatham Party?

by Elizabeth Regan

For the first time in 14 years, there will be no Chatham Party banner flying on Election Day.

Party Chairman Kyle Dostaler this week acknowledged the Chathams are not endorsing any candidates in the municipal election.

"The Chatham Party had a good run, and far longer than anyone expected. We accomplished a lot in over 14 years. But the reality is that the deck is stacked against independent third parties. The system is two against one," Dostaler said.

The struggling third party failed to win any seats in the past three municipal elections. The repeated defeat has been a departure from the party's early years, when members won a majority on the Town Council in both 2005 and 2011.

The party was formed back when the big controversy in town was the eviction of eight shops, restaurants and medical offices from the East Hampton Mall so that a new Shaw's Supermarket could rise up in its place.

"The Town Council then was not supporting local business at all," Dostaler said.

In 2010, the Chatham Party garnered significant support when it backed ousted police Chief Matthew Reimondo after he was fired by then-Town Manager Jeffery O'Keefe. Reimondo was reinstated by voters in a referendum, and the Chatham Party went on to win four out of seven council seats the following year.

According to Dostaler, the independent third party's ethos always revolved around challenging the status quo.

"We ran simply to take on the local Democratic and Republican parties and offer an alternative for voters," he said.

Dostaler stopped short of saying it's the end of the road for the Chatham Party.

"To say we're over, I don't know. But we're certainly not running any candidates this time," he said.

Third parties registered with the state have until Sept. 4 to endorse candidates, according to the Office of the Secretary of the State.

Chatham Party slates over the years have consisted of a mix of registered Democrats, Republicans and unaffiliated voters. Political diversity is another hallmark of the party, according to Dostaler.

"While we've evolved, the local Democratic and Republican committees continue to put forward many of the same candidates they have for the past 20 years," he said. "We were hoping they would change, but they have their own form of status quo."

Current Town Council Chairman Melissa Engel was caught unaware this week that the Chatham Party would not be running any candidates, but offered her support for the move.

"I'm okay with that," she said. "I look forward to a more reasonable political season. It'd

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## Welcoming Students 'The Bacon Way'

by Karla Santos

The halls of Bacon Academy in Colchester have been quiet for the past two months, but the school is ready to receive students with its traditional, unique welcome back: "First Day the Bacon Way."

The typical first day of school at Bacon Academy greets students in three ways: classes, a pep rally and field day.

This year the field day component is going to be held on the school's baseball field instead of at its traditional location on the football field. According to Bacon Principal Matthew Peel, the switch is an effort to protect the new grass growing on the gridiron.

"There's going to be all kinds of regular games out there, like cornhole and Frisbee, but there's also going to be big bounce houses and obstacle courses," Peel said.

The student-organized and -funded event in the past has included waterslides, dunk tanks, inflatable hamster wheels and more, according to Peel.

"It's a great time just for kids to get that first day back," Peel said. "They kind of see their classes real quick and then they get a chance to see some of their friends and ease their way back into school the first day, and they get to have a couple of hours to enjoy."

Food trucks will also be on hand during the

first day of school, Peel said.

The cost of field day ranges between \$4,000 and \$6,000, but Peel said that students organizing the event this year were able to save money since the local chapter of the National Guard is working with them to volunteer and to donate some of the inflatables and activities that are normally rented.

"It's not a military recruitment thing. It's just the National Guard reached out to the school and just asked what can we do to support your school," Peel said. "They have access through their programs to a bunch of [these] types of inflatables, so they are supporting us."

While the first day of school at Bacon Academy starts with fun, most of the focus for the rest of the school year is on academics.

School starts on Aug. 28 for the entire Colchester school district.

New this year, additional courses have been added for college credit.

"We have well over 50 different classes that earn college credit now," Peel said. "It's becoming more prevalent that kids are leaving here and starting college with 30 or more credits. Certainly not every kid, but each graduating class has a good handful that are starting some place with more than 30 credits."

Peel is also looking forward to continuing

the school's relationships in the manufacturing world. He said three juniors going into their senior year were able to take part in a summer internship at Electric Boat.

"I just went to the closing ceremony last Friday and it was awesome," Peel said.

Peel said educators in Colchester schools will continue taking a closer look at curriculum to assess "exactly what we do in our classes" throughout the school year.

"We are looking forward to a really great year where our teachers are going to be challenging themselves to improve their teaching," Peel said. "We have a really, really great faculty and staff that works really hard."

While neither Bacon nor any of the schools in the Colchester school district are welcoming students with major renovations, Bacon is updating the sound system in the auditorium and in the football field. According to Peel, the sound system at the school is the one that was originally installed when it was first built in 1993 and is showing its age.

Other changes for the upcoming school year in the Colchester school district include a new program for students with disabilities ages 18 to 21.

Colchester Superintendent of Schools Jeffrey Burt said the program is designed to help stu-

dents navigate life after school.

"It's an incredible program that has partnerships with local businesses that provide job training opportunities, so we are very excited about that," he said.

According to Burt, the district is also starting to implement a new technology plan to enhance instruction.

"What we need to make sure is that if we purchase technology today, we have a long range plan [so that] in three or five years, when that laptop or that Chromebook is no longer usable, that we have budgeted for that," Burt said. "So we've created a 10 year technology plan that is part of the budget process that makes sure that we have sustainability of our technology over time."

The Colchester school district has about 2,300 students, but according to Burt, it looks like the district "might be a little more above the projected enrollment."

"We are slightly ahead in a couple of schools than we anticipated, which is good news," Burt said.

Final school enrollment numbers will be released on Oct. 1.

The Colchester school district employs about 400 individuals. Burt said that the number of

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**Chatham Party cont. from Front Page**

be nice to have a campaign without any name calling and twisting of facts.”

The eight-term council Republican and members of the Chatham Party have had a volatile relationship, clashing on many issues over the past 14 years.

Derek Johnson, who served two terms on the Town Council as a member of the Chatham Party, said he has “mixed feelings” about the failure of the third party to put up any candidates this year.

Johnson for the first time is running as a Democrat. He had been a lifelong registered Republican before he changed his affiliation this year.

“I think that many of the goals of the Chatham Party are laudatory, and I think it’s important to have a third party because, in some respects, they represent voices that often aren’t heard,” he said.

He said he’s found that those who can speak for themselves are also able “to take care of themselves pretty well” - which makes it the job of government to fend for the rest.

“I believe the government should be responsible to those people who have the least voice, not those with the most voice,” Johnson said. “I think in some respects, that’s what the Chatham Party and all third parties do: They provide an avenue for those voices.”



**‘The Bacon Way’ cont. from Front Page**

employees in the district “is holding steady,” but there were staff reductions as part of the budget process, leading to a total of 7.6 reduced positions.

The Colchester school district is working with a \$41.24 million budget, an increase of 1.7% from last year.

The budget was approved in the June referendum.

“We really are trying to strengthen what we currently do,” Burt said. “We are trying to sustain and strengthen our programs and we are not looking for whole new innovations and new things and new initiatives. It really is just trying to build on the great work that’s has been happening in the district over the last decade.”

# Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

I had a nice chuckle reading some of the letters to the editor in this week’s *Rivereast* – specifically the ones penned by a few members of the Colchester Republican party that were trashing Stan Soby.

Soby, as you may recall, was bounced from a nomination at last month’s Republican caucus in Colchester. The reasoning was that Soby retweeted attacks against Donald Trump too often, and also retweeted state Democrats – another perceived no-no.

But Soby didn’t roll over and accept defeat, instead successfully petitioning for a primary, which will be held Sept. 10. After Republicans briefly wringed their hands over Soby having the audacity to exercise his democratic right to seek a primary, they resumed this week to attacking him for an allegedly terrible performance as selectman.

The only thing is, I remember the issues that are written about in the letters this week – these issues and actions by Soby that were supposedly so repugnant. Where was this upset and outrage at the time?

One of the letters criticizes Soby for his involvement in removing a member of the Planning and Zoning Commission after said member openly suggested prospective business owners locate their business in Lebanon and avoid paying taxes to Colchester, as Colchester taxes were too high. A Colchester official publically discouraging the transaction of business in Colchester? That is simply not in the best interest of the town – so frankly I had no problem with Soby’s involvement.

And neither did town Republicans at the time. Yes, there was some discussion on Facebook, but no Republican stance was taken against the matter that I can recall – nor can I recall a glut of letters to the editor at the time slamming Soby. Yet, here’s a letter this week, criticizing Soby and implying he didn’t support free speech.

Another issue brought up by Republicans this week is the relatively recent controversy regarding the town charter language being changed to essentially strip the Board of Finance of a large chunk of its power regarding the town budget. Now, to

be fair, this issue did spark a lot of controversy, and for good reason. But I don’t recall the people so upset about it in the letters this week speaking out at the time. And I certainly don’t recall Soby being painted as the instigator of the whole thing as he is in the letters.

But what made me laugh the most was the criticism against Soby for nominating a convicted felon for the Planning and Zoning Commission. No names were specified, but it was obvious the letter-writer was thinking of Bruce Hayn. Hayn really is a convicted felon – serving four months in prison for the 2011 torching of his own Norwich business.

I was surprised when Hayn’s name popped up among the nominees for a PZC vacancy a little over a year ago. While everyone deserves a second chance, I personally thought it was a little too soon – and was anxious to see what others thought. I and my Colchester reporter kept our ears to the ground, and our eyes on Facebook, looking for an outcry against this nomination. I thought it would make for a heck of a story.

What we found was.....nothing. No upset. Hayn was nominated, welcomed onto the commission, and that was that. So, spare me this outrage that Soby pushed for Hayn to join Planning and Zoning. Where was it a year ago? If it was so offensive an act, why wait until now, more than a year later, when Soby is campaigning for a primary?

Heck, it wasn’t even offensive enough to be mentioned as one of the reasons Soby didn’t get the nomination last month. Nor were the other two items Soby is being slammed in the letters pages for his involvement with.

So, cry me a river, Colchester Republicans. If you want to punish Soby for speaking out against a Republican president on Twitter, or retweeting Democrat state officials, that’s one thing. I don’t agree with the reasoning, but at least I can kind of sort of see it. But don’t try to manufacture upset now about events that clearly didn’t bother you at the time. It’s incredibly transparent.

\* \* \*

See you next week.

# School Back in Session Next Week in Marlborough

by Karla Santos

When the school year starts on Wednesday, Elmer Thienes-Mary Hall Elementary School students and staff will have a new sight to greet them before they even step into the building – completely relined and repaved parking lots.

School principal Dan White said in an interview Tuesday that the renovation of the school parking lots throughout the whole grounds was a much-needed upgrade.

“It really addressed some safety concerns, especially in some of our older lots that really were kind of getting to be a little bit unsafe just for the vast number of people we have coming in,” White said.

The renovation of the school parking lots took about a month, he said. The project cost was approximately \$300,000, he added, and it was funded by the town’s capital plan.

“We are so proud of what the school looks like,” Superintendent of Schools David Sklarz said. “It looks beautiful in the outside and it looks even more beautiful in the inside.”

The first day of school is Aug. 28, but the staff will all be back on Aug. 26 for a professional development day with a focus on social and emotional learning.

On that day, Sklarz said, teachers will all be using the same technique, which has the goal of helping students improve how they feel about themselves.

“That’s one of the keys to helping students always do better, if we are consistent about it,” Sklarz said.

Teachers and the entire school staff are required to participate in the workshop.

“Then we are going to continue that theme throughout the school year,” Sklarz said.

Part of the workshop is designed to improve how the school staff talks to the students and the vocabulary they use, he added.

“It’s kind of a state initiative and so we are going to be in the forefront and we are excited about it,” Sklarz said.

The professional development day will be followed by an Aug. 27 meet-and-greet, a one-hour event in which students and parents are welcome to stop by the school to visit class-

rooms and teachers. The meet-and greet will start at 8:15 a.m.

Aug. 27, weather permitting, will also be the day the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) along with some students will decorate the walkways in the front of the school with chalk. The goal is to welcome students to the first day of school with motivational and happy greetings. The decoration of the front walkways is now a three-year tradition in Marlborough.

The 2019-20 school year in Marlborough is expected to receive about 445 students. Fifteen of those are new students that moved into the district from the start of summer to now, White said.

The school currently has a staff of approximately 70 individuals including custodians, cafeteria workers, paraeducators and teachers. That is about the same amount of individuals the school employed last year.

Another change for Elmer Thienes-Mary Hall Elementary School for the 2019-20 school year is the size of the kindergarten class.

“We have a big kindergarten group, so instead of three kindergarten classes we’ll have four,” Assistant Principal Kim Kelley said.

The classroom size in the Marlborough school district ranges from 17 to 23 students depending on the grade level.

The Drug Abuse Resistance and Education (DARE) program will also be re-entering the Marlborough school district this year.

Sklarz said the program not only focuses on drugs but also on saying ‘no’ in general, as well as on cyberbullying and the dangers that can be found on the internet.

DARE is implemented in partnership with local Resident State Trooper Jeff Dunshee, who will be involved in the teaching part of the program.

Students in grades four through six will take part in the DARE program.

In terms of academics, the school has some new online initiatives; one of them Matific, which is designed to give students extra practice in math. The school will also welcome the school year with additional online resources for science.



Elmer Thienes-Mary Hall Elementary School is welcoming students and staff with renovated parking lots. Photo by Karla Santos.

The school will also continue to teach its robotics program to pre-kindergarten through sixth grade students.

Kelley said she is excited about the robotics program “because we’ll now have some kids that have had coding for a couple of years.”

“We can get much more in-depth with coding expectations of them,” she said. “It’s getting really interesting and fun to watch the coding depth that they can get into.”

Each grade level will go through about eight coding lessons over the course of the year. This is the third year the school is teaching coding.

The school’s physical education department will also be offering some excitement to students this new school year.

White said that the physical education teacher, Trafford Underwood, is very excited because he is going to be adding a number of pieces to his trestle tree, an indoor climbing system with ladders.

“Ladders can be anywhere from three and a half feet to seven feet tall and then the ladders are connected by a variety of things,” White

said. “The nice thing is he can very easily change the difficulty so it meets the needs of pre-k students all the way through six grade students.”

The school’s trestle tree was new last year and Underwood has been able to supplement it through some donations from the PTO, White said.

“All of this ties into how students feel about themselves, some team building and it ties also into that whole thing with school safety and a plan with school safety,” Sklarz said.

The school will also continue to produce its fall musical, a tradition put together by sixth-graders. This year, students will produce *Tom Sawyer*, a performance that will take place Thursday, Oct. 17. Students will rehearse for the show twice a week starting on the second week of school. The community room will feature a brand-new sound system allowing students to offer a better-quality performance.

The Marlborough school district is working on a \$7,140,379 budget, up 1.6% from the previous school year.

# Portland Future Fireworks Shows Again in Question

by Elizabeth Regan

The future of the annual Portland Fireworks display is again up in the air.

Fireworks Committee Chairman Sharon Hoy said last week that fundraising efforts for the \$25,000 pyrotechnics show held in July left less than \$200 in the committee coffers for the coming year.

Hoy said the “Portland skies will be dark next year” unless the committee secures approximately \$15,000 in pledges from businesses and corporations.

Money for the annual show comes from donations, proceeds from numerous fundraisers throughout the year, and a \$2,500 appropriation from the town budget.

One of the biggest fundraisers is an annual bake sale.

“We are literally making our money cupcake by cupcake,” she said. “And that gets a little difficult when you have to have \$25,000 to put on a show.”

She expressed gratitude to the local companies that have made some “very large donations” in the past, citing that kind of buy-in from the business community as the key to continuing the fireworks tradition in town.

“Ideally, if we could get commitment for \$15,000, we can raise the rest,” she said. “Anyone or any company who can help should let us know now with their pledge amount. The responses will determine if we move on or just abandon fireworks for 2020.”

She said the committee hopes to decide by Sept. 30 whether there is enough interest from corporate and business sponsors to continue the annual tradition.

This is not the first time the fireworks were in danger of fizzling. Financial constraints in 2017 led to the postponement of the summer-

time display. It was ultimately held in October as part of the Portland Fair.

The fireworks, which had always been held at the Portland fairgrounds, subsequently returned to the traditional July timeframe but went off for the past two years on the hilltop campus of the Portland secondary schools. The new location solved flooding problems that plague the fairgrounds.

The fireworks were cancelled in 2006 for flooding, 2011 due to inclement weather, and 2014 because of a bridge repair on Route 17A.

The show began in the early 1990s under the direction of retired Sgt. Mike Dapkus of the Portland Police Department, a fireworks aficionado who provided the fireworks at cost and donated his time to carry out the display. Dapkus stepped back after almost 20 years with the show in 2008.

Dapkus called for the creation of a fireworks committee before his departure to ensure the event’s continuity.

Hoy said a plea for volunteers in the *Rivereast* caught the attention of a core group of residents that became the Fireworks Committee.

“We all showed up, and we’re still here today,” Hoy said.

The group of 10 active members holds numerous fundraisers throughout the year and coordinates the fireworks show. The event itself has grown from a pyrotechnics display alone to a full-scale evening of offerings including music, food and raffles.

Hoy described the fireworks show as a gathering for locals as well as an attraction for people from other towns and even other states.

She said the idea of losing the show now is distressing, especially in light of the planned Brainerd Place development on the site of the

former Elmcrest Hospital. The mixed-use project promises to bring 238 apartments and 10,510 square feet of commercial space to town.

“We would like to be able to continue as Brainerd Place is being developed, to bring people into our town and show them what we have here,” Hoy said.

First Selectman Susan Bransfield applauded the committee for their work over the past decade.

“I think this is one of the best fundraising groups that I’ve participated with,” Bransfield said. “It’s just a wonderful group of people that have done a tremendous amount of work very quietly, but very effectively.”

Fundraisers in addition to the bake sale include the sale of pies at the Portland Fair, themed ladies’ teas in December, and a prom dress fashion show in the spring.

A GoFundMe crowdsourcing page raised \$750 in the final weeks before this year’s show, according to committee member Jill Deane. She said she will continue the online fundraising effort in the future if the committee makes the decision to move forward with the show.

But members emphasized the success of the program rests on donations from the business community.

Bransfield said it will be “very, very challenging” to put on a show in 2020 if donations don’t pick up.

“And we’d love to do it, but we’re realists. We think it’s very important to tell our loyal followers that we need some assistance,” she said.

According to Hoy, the committee needs more volunteers in addition to more money.

“We need people that can bake, we need people that can sell, we need people to canvas businesses to get prizes for the raffles,” she said.

Members would like to hold new and different fundraisers as well, she said - “but we need help.”

Committee member June Martin said fireworks have been important to her ever since she was young.

“As a child, you didn’t get to do too much, but you got to go to the fireworks because that was free,” she said.

The tradition continued when she’d bring her own children, now grown, to see the show.

“It’s just for kids, but we’re all big kids,” she said.

Bransfield described the event as an intergenerational draw that celebrates the country’s founding.

“It’s not just a fireworks show, but a patriotic day for us to remember how important it is that we have independence and that young children and families continue the tradition of celebrating America. And we can’t say that enough,” Bransfield said.

Hoy lamented that the volunteers might have to make a hard decision.

“It makes me sad to think this might be the end,” Hoy said. “My generation was very patriotic, and I guess I’m concerned the younger generations have lost some of that.”

Those interested in becoming a donor or volunteering with the committee can contact Hoy at 860-685-1265 or [sharhoy1@comcast.net](mailto:sharhoy1@comcast.net). Donations may be made payable to the Portland Fireworks, c/o Portland Police Department, P.O. Box 71, Portland, CT 06480.



# Hebron Ready for New School Year

by Sloan Brewster

An affiliation between Hebron Public Schools and Teachers College of Columbia University will bring two college staff into local classrooms when school starts next Wednesday.

Two literary specialists from the college will work on units of study with teachers and in classes, said Don Briere, the district's director of educational services.

Briere said it would be a "learning experience" and was "the biggest thing I think that we're most excited about" in the upcoming school year.

In the previous three years, the district implemented a workshop based on research from the college; this is the first year it is an affiliated district, Briere and interim Superintendent of Schools Lynne Pierson said.

"That's the new piece," Pierson said. "That's big."

Hebron Elementary School Principal Michael Larkin said it was impressive that the district was accepted into an affiliation with the college.

"It's big because they don't necessarily have the capital at Teachers College to accept all the districts that apply," Larkin said.

Last spring the district applied for an affiliation and was accepted at the end school year, Briere said.

Another new partnership – this one with the nonprofit regional educational service center EASTCONN – will help with the augmentation of social and emotional learning being de-

veloped at the district's two schools.

Similar to the affiliation with Teachers College, the one with EASTCONN will also bring weekly onsite support to teachers to inform current practice and make the program "even better," Briere said.

A new school psychologist at Hebron Elementary School will also bring a greater level of support for all students, he said.

A multi-sensory learning space at Gilead Hill School that was funded through a \$12,000 grant from the state Department of Education and built this summer is one way students will get additional support throughout the school year, Briere said. EASTCONN will offer guidance on how to use it as a reinforcement and therapeutic space for students.

"I would describe that as purpose-driven so it's not just creating a space that looks and feels nice, it's creating a space that has purpose that links to instruction and the social and emotional well-being of students," Pierson said. "It's critically important that we work with experts in this area and EASTCONN is assisting us in the developing of processes that have to be used."

In addition, there will be a sensory path that will tie into social and emotional learning, Gilead Hill School Principal Katie Uriano said. It will be used for students who might benefit from gross motor activities.

The path, which Pierson said would help students be more available for learning, will include such things as hand print stickers on the

wall that students will push, alphabet stepping stones on which they will hop to follow the alphabet and a frog-themed hopping activity.

"Sometimes students find it grounding to engage in pushing or pulling activities or jumping activities," Uriano said. "Then when they go into another learning environment like their classroom they might be more engaged."

The path, which was funded by the Hebron Parent Teachers Association, will be incorporated into occupational and physical therapy programs for students.

According to Pierson, the path is about providing an environment that's focused on teaching and learning while supporting students' total development.

"More and more it's clear that children today are probably overstimulated," she said. "When you're working with young children they tend to be fidgety or active. In the old days teachers would sit children in desks and instruct them but I don't think that works."

Ensuring children learn to read, write and speak is "all linked together" with social and emotional learning, Pierson said.

Special education will be coupled with social and emotional learning opportunities this year, Briere said. A leg of the work with EASTCONN will be to re-envision and realize a support program for students who have the most individual needs.

He said he hopes the individualized and highly structured teaching strategies, which are

a new focus area in special education, will become an example and resource for neighboring districts.

The district and the Hebron Board of Education are also working on a plan to bring student liaisons to monthly board meetings, Pierson said.

This year the district will be reapplying for accreditation to the National Association of the Education of Young Children, the administrators said. The process, which takes place every five years, involves site visits and program and classroom portfolios.

One of the biggest changes for the upcoming school year is the changing of the guard, Pierson said. Former schools superintendent Timothy Van Tassel left in June for a position as superintendent of Suffield Public Schools. Also in June, former Board of Education chair Erica Bromley resigned from her position on the board and was replaced by vice chair Heather Petit.

"This is a year of transition," Pierson said. Pierson said she would not be implementing new ideas while serving as interim superintendent. That is something for someone who plans to be in the seat for much longer, she added.

"Things are going well. There are some wonderful programs, approaches, strategies that are being used effectively with all children," she said. "It's not the time for some outsider like me to come in and say, 'Oh I've got this brilliant idea.'"

## \$7 Million Sewer Upgrade Project Proposed in Hebron

by Sloan Brewster

The town of Hebron is proposing a \$10 million bond package, including \$7 million in upgrades to the sewer system.

Last week, the Board of Selectmen approved a motion to send the \$7.6 million proposal to a special town meeting and then, assuming it is approved, to a referendum on Election Day in November.

The sewer upgrades would be achieved in two phases, said Public Works Director Kevin Kelly.

The proposal dates back to the 2016-17 fiscal year, when the town received a \$39,329 planning grant from the Clean Water Fund through the state Department of Energy and Environmental Protection to assess the condition of the pump station and system. The system was built beginning in 1989, has a 40-year lifespan and was already showing the signs of age, Kelly said.

"We've been experiencing expensive repairs and we had a concern for the conditions of the stations and whether there was inflow of infiltration into the system," he said.

The Clean Water Fund grant approved, the town sent out a request for quotations (RFQ) and ultimately selected Wright-Pierce Engineering of Middletown to complete the four-year study, Kelly said. The study of the nine pump stations included an estimate of the cost for upgrades.

Phase 1 would consist of repairing four of the stations and would cost \$3.3 million, Kelly said. Phase 2 would be fixing the remainder of the stations and would also cost \$3.3 million.

The additional amount in the funding would cover the cost for designing the project, the re-

placement of grinder pumps as well as sewer evaluation surveys and force main inspections, Kelly said. A force main is a sewer that's operated by pressure rather than gravity.

Assuming the proposal is passed onto the November referendum, the ballot question will be to approve the \$7.6 million in sewer upgrades in two phases, said Finance Director Elaine Griffin. The project would be bonded and the question also includes authorizing the issuance of bonds, notes and obligations for the \$7.6 million.

Phase 1 would begin in 2020 and phase 2 would begin in 2027, Kelly said.

"We expect designs to be completed in the late fall, bidding will be over winter and the start of construction will be in spring," he said of phase 1, estimating the project would take between 14 and 16 months to complete.

There are currently no state grants available for sewer projects, Kelly said. There are low-interest loans available through the Clean Water Fund, which the town is looking into.

Town Manager Andrew Tierney said while not all residents in town are hooked up to the sewer system, it benefits the town as a whole.

"It's part of the town's \$55 million infrastructure and is listed in the town's audit every year," he said.

Kelly pointed out that businesses in the town center are serviced by the sewer system as are Colebrook Village, an assisted living facility on John E. Horton Boulevard, Hebron Elementary and RHAM middle and high schools.

According to the town's website, the system consists of 17 miles of sewer supported by the nine pump stations and was completed in the



**This generator at the pump station on Church Street will be replaced as part of a \$7.6 million sewer upgrade project proposed for the town.**

early 1990s. It also serves the Amston Lake District and the area along Church Street.

"If the upgrades don't happen, the cost of maintenance will increase as well as the risk of sudden failure," Kelly said. "Repairs are expensive."

As an example, he said a damaged pipe the department is in the process of replacing is expected to cost \$25,000.

In addition to the question on the sewer upgrades, the November ballot will include a referendum question on \$2.4 million in road and parking lot improvements, Griffin said.

"We're going to go for the whole \$10 mil-

lion," she said. "Since we have a lot of roads that are lagging behind, we figured if we were going to do one, do both."

Kelly is currently evaluating which roads will be on the list for repairs, Griffin said, adding that there are approximately eight that need fixing as does the parking lot at the Russell Mercier Senior Center.

"The senior center parking lot is really breaking down and needs to be done as well as some things at the elementary school," she said.

Next Thursday, Aug. 22, the Board of Finance will hold a public hearing on the project at 7 p.m. at the Hebron Town Office Building.

# Hebron Day Celebrates History and Community

by Sloan Brewster

Burnt Hill Park is turning 10, Hebron Day is in its sixth year, and tomorrow the two celebrations will converge.

Hebron Day, a free family event, takes place at Burnt Hill Park on Saturday from 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. The fun will begin with a nod to the committee that served when the 171 acres that encompass the park were purchased by the town.

"We invited back the people who served on the initial committee for a rededication that's going to open the festival," Parks and Recreation Director Rich Calarco said.

Prior to the town's purchase of the land, it consisted of a chicken farm and cornfields, Calarco said. Now it houses Parks and Recreation buildings, game fields, community gardens and three miles of trails.

"It's become very popular for people to walk their dogs here," Calarco said. "The object was to build a park that was not just game fields."

The committee decided on the name Burnt Hill to honor the area's history and native American roots, Calarco said.

According to a history written in 1908 by Connecticut Deputy Comptroller F. C. Bissell to celebrate the town's bicentennial, the area

around the park was known as Burnt Hill by the Native Americans as it was kept clear by annual burning and used as a planting ground for corn.

From about 1720 to 1882, the 100-acre front parcel of the park, where the historic Peters' House is located, was owned by the Peters family, who were early residents of the town, said M.A. Foote, town historian.

"They owned a lot of property on both sides of East Street," Foote said. "Interestingly, half of them – when it came to the time of the Revolutionary War – half were patriots and half were Tories."

John and Mary Marks Peters arrived in Hebron prior to 1720, and most of their 12 children were born in town.

Other tidbits Foote shared about the Peters were about the Reverend Samuel Peters. Born in the Peters House in 1735, he traveled to England where he was ordained a minister of the Anglican Church.

After preaching to the local congregation to remain loyal English subjects prior to the Revolutionary War, some folks threatened to tar and feather him and he returned to England, she

said. While he did eventually come back to the states, he never again set foot in Hebron.

The minister's slaves, Caesar and Lois, were also the subject of a tale that has been passed on through the generations, Foote said. He had decided to sell the couple but changed his mind after they had been picked for transport to their new owners – so the townsfolk created a reason to get them back.

"They came up with a ruse that they could not leave the state because they owed money on clothing," she said. "It's a spectacular story because that was in 1787 and shortly after that, Hebron freed its slaves."

The Peters House will be open from 10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on Hebron Day. It will also be open on September 21 for Archaeology Day – a free event that will include digs for adults and kids.

Other fun that will take place on Hebron Day includes food vendors, craft booths, a Kids Activity Zone with a DJ, a bounce house, games, pony rides and face painting, according to Richard Marzi, organizer.

New attractions this year include a presentation by the Connecticut Drone Club, a petting

zoo from Circle K Farms and a robotic demonstration from Rage Robotics Club. There will be belly dancing by the Sultans' Delight Belly Dance Troop, a DJ from Tower Radio will play oldies, and the CATO Rocket Club will launch a rocket.

The car show that was part of last year's festivities will be returning.

Town Manager Andrew Tierney will be on hand with his 1955 Chevy Bel Air.

"Weather looks great," Tierney said. "Hope everybody comes out and enjoys themselves. It's a beautiful facility and a great day for the community to celebrate."

Marzi, who has been organizing the Hebron Day for the past three years, said his favorite part was putting it all together. He also organizes the Hebron Farmers and Crafters Market, which takes place on Saturdays from June through September. In September, it will be held on the 14<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>.

So far the weather has been great all season, Marzi said.

"This Saturday, the sixth annual Hebron Day is probably going to be our best weather day," he said.

## Positivity Preached as RHAM Schools Start New Year

by Sloan Brewster

As RHAM students return to school next Thursday, they will be starting the process of creating a new charter for a positive environment conducive to learning.

This year the focus of the school's social and emotional learning program will be to bring it to the students, said Scott Leslie, RHAM High School principal. Last year's focus was on the staff learning about it ahead of rolling it out to students.

For students, the program will give them a chance to determine how to make a school climate that is truly suited to learning, according to the principal.

"Students are going to be engaged in having opportunities to ask themselves how do they want to be treated here at school, how do they expect to treat others, what kind of feedback and environment is going to create the most conducive environment for learning," Leslie said. "They can identify what they want to see in the school climate, how they want to be treated and expect to treat others."

Once students have isolated what that climate should look like, they will create a school charter of the key expectations that they have determined will foster learning.

"You can't necessarily separate the teaching and learning from good school environment," Leslie said.

Students at the middle school will be working on much the same thing, according to Principal Mike Seroussi. They will work on drafting a charter during Seventh Grade Team Day.

During team day, which encompasses two days of activities, students will be broken into teams and each team will develop a charter, he said. The charters will then be combined into an overall plan for a good climate.

"It's something that we can refer to, sort of like a school contract," the principal said.

Creating a school charter is based on the "rec-

ognizing, understanding, labeling, expressing and regulating emotions" program [RULER] out of the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence, Seroussi said. Students list how they want to feel at school and what guidelines will support those positive emotions.

This school year, high school staff will reexamine and update the school's mission statement, Leslie said. The update will tie into the idea of creating a positive school environment and will also be aligned with teaching students soft skills.

"What are the skills above and beyond academics that you want kids to excel in?" Leslie said.

Those skills include communication, critical thinking, collaboration, motivation and integrity.

Another change school staff is working on is upped graduation requirements, Leslie said. The Class of 2023 will be expected to earn 25 credits.

Currently, the state expects graduating students to get 20 credits, the principal said. RHAM, however, has a higher standard and requires 24 credits.

Staff will have to assure the appropriate programs are in place for students to achieve the 25 credit obligation, Leslie said.

Another change in state requirements is that students must get at least one credit in world language, Leslie said. Previously, it was strongly suggested but not required. Students will also be expected to earn an additional half credit in health.

The state changes will also require graduating seniors to prove they had a "mastery experience" or demonstrate the skills they have learned over their four-year high school career, Leslie said. The requirement could be portrayed through a project or portfolio.

The high school will also continue the Youth Manufacturing Pipeline Initiative Program it



Students at the RHAM high and middle schools will head into school for the first day back next Thursday.

started last year.

A collaboration between high schools and manufacturers, the program offers certification courses in the basics of manufacturing, Leslie said. Students in the program learn the same thing their adult counterparts learn in courses where they receive their certifications.

In year two, the school is running two sections with 18 students enrolled and room for more, Leslie said. Last year's program was so successful that of the 11 students enrolled, eight decided to pursue employment immediately after graduation and were hired by manufacturers.

"That was a pretty remarkable program," he said.

The school has also added an EMT certification program, Leslie said. Students enrolled will go through training and meet the hours required

for hospital observation and in the emergency room.

In the middle school, career and tech education has had "a huge facelift," Seroussi said. For example, new equipment will allow the school to offer units on robotics and eighth-graders will be able to choose from a more formalized offering of manufacturing classes, including in woodworking and plastics.

With a new computer science teacher, eighth graders will be able to take advanced computer science, he said. They will also have the chance to take a personal wellness class that will look at topics from nutrition to finance.

"Kids don't know how to how to keep a budget, so this teaches them a little bit of everything," Seroussi said. "It's every parent of teenagers' dream."

# Busy Summer as Andover School Staff Prep for New Year

by Sloan Brewster

After a busy summer, Andover Elementary School will reopen its doors for the new school year next Wednesday.

Over the summer, staff worked hard on moving classrooms from the third and fourth grade wing into the other part of the school, said Schools Superintendent Sally Doyen. Due to declining enrollment the wing was closed and classes moved to empty rooms elsewhere in the building.

Over the summer, some students in the six-week Community Organized and Operated Latchkey (C.O.O.L.) Program spent time at the school, Doyen said. The program is an extension of a before and after school program that runs through the school year.

In the new summer version, students spent time doing activities in the gym and music room and also went to Andover Lake almost every day for swimming lessons and water fun, the superintendent said.

"It was really a cooperative arrangement," she said. "The seniors let them use the van so they went to the lake."

The school's makerspace, which debuted last year, will be integrated into learning experiences for all grade levels, said Doyen and Principal John Briody. The space supports programs in Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math (STEAM).

"[The first year] was highly successful," Doyen said. "Moreso than I think we could have hoped for in its first year."

In its pilot year, the space was only used by fifth- and sixth-graders, Briody said. This year, it will be used every other week by kindergarten through fourth-graders and every week by

grades five and six.

Programs in the space will include learning to use 3-D printers and virtual reality goggles, he said. For example, last year, sixth graders took virtual tours of New York City in advance of going on a field trip to the Big Apple.

Staff will be learning about a new social and emotional program, Briody said. In this first year of the program, teachers will spend the year training in it and next year it will be rolled out to students.

The program is a social and emotional approach to learning based on the "recognizing, understanding, labeling, expressing and regulating emotions" program [RULER] out of the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence, he said.

"I think it's going to be a really, really positive initiative and everybody's excited about it," he said. "The premise, the belief, the understanding is that everything starts with the adults' needs to develop their own emotional intelligence in order to be good staff members and collaborate; and ultimately for it to get reflected down to the students."

This year, Spanish will be offered to second-graders for the first time, Briody said. Previously, it was only available to students in grades three through six.

The new offering is a reflection of the reduced number of students in the school, he added.

"I mean it's kind of like a good news/bad news story," he said. "Because of declining enrollment we had the ability to offer it to another grade level."

Younger students who study a foreign language show an aptitude in learning languages and when they get to middle school are better



Earlier this week, a fifth-grade class at Andover Elementary School was shining and ready for the influx of students on the first day of school with new books and supplies dotting the neatly lined desks.

prepared for instruction in them, the principal said.

"It's been proven," he said. "There's a tremendous amount of research out there that [with] repeated short exposure to a foreign language like Spanish, the students start to learn it."

One big thing students will be pleased about, according to Briody, is a new swing set on the upper playground.

"It was a student council-led program," he said.

Students raised some funds toward the swing

set and contributed to the installation.

The absence of a swing set on the upper playground is something students have bemoaned in past years, the principal said.

"The [kindergarten to grade 3] kids have recess on the lower playground with a playscape and swing set," he said. "When they move up to [grades] four through six, the upper playground had a small playscape with no swings."

Sometimes, new fourth-graders so missed playing on the swings that they convinced teachers to bring them to the lower playground for recess, he said.

# Familiar Names Pepper East Hampton Candidate Slates

by Elizabeth Regan

The ballot for the municipal election in East Hampton is shaping up to include many familiar names.

All seven current members of the Town Council are running for reelection: Republicans Melissa Engel, Mark Philhower, Tim Feegel and Josh Piteo and Democrats James "Pete" Brown, Dean Markham and Kevin Reich.

The other two council candidates are Democrats Barbara Moore and Derek Johnson.

This is the first time Johnson is running as a Democrat. Hohanson is a former registered Republican who served two terms on the council as a member of the Chatham Party.

An independent third party, the Chatham Party is not running any candidates for the first time since it began in 2005 (see related story on the cover).

Johnson said this week that his values and goals are shared by the Democrats.

When asked if he considered running as a Republican, he simply said "no."

Johnson, who has two school-aged children, vowed to be an "outspoken force" in support of education.

"At a very personal level for me, I think we need to take more positive steps to ensure our kids both embrace and overcome the challenges of this century and of the global economy," he said.

A resident of the Lake Pocotopaug watershed, Johnson pointed to the lake as the other most pivotal issue in town. He said his focus if elected will be on examining and implementing the fixes necessary to improve the quality of the notoriously impaired body of water.

Moore, the Democratic Town Committee chairman, described it as "interesting" that Johnson chose to run on the Democratic ticket despite his history as a Republican and mem-

ber of the Chatham Party.

She said his focus on education will benefit the Democratic slate for Town Council, which does not include any other candidates with young children.

"His interest has always been education, even when he was with the Chatham Party. I think that side of him is going to be a big help for all of us," she said.

Moore, a former council chairman who runs her own catering business, served for six years on the council.

"I served with him twice on the council and always respected his thoughts and ideas. He's very quick with his wit and quick with his ideas," Moore said.

Republican Town Committee Chairman Russell Bonaccorso said he believes the four Republican incumbents are well-positioned to retain their seats.

"I know there's a wave nationwide of anti-Trump that's affecting the under-tickets, but in East Hampton, Conn., it seems like it's still a very strong base," he said.

He noted Republican gubernatorial candidate Bob Stefanowski and state Senate candidate Melissa Ziobron won in East Hampton last year despite losing statewide.

He said the incumbents have shown a commitment to fiscal responsibility during their time on the council.

All of the Republicans except for Feegel have served multiple terms.

"We understand expenses are going up, and that's tough to offset. We're doing our best to keep it under check and I think they've been doing a good job of that overall," Bonaccorso said.

Each voter will be able to select up to five candidates for Town Council on the ballot.

## Further Down the Ballot

Democrats have a full slate for all offices except Board of Education, where they nominated three candidates out of a possible four.

Republicans failed to endorse the maximum number of candidates in any races except for one.

Bonaccorso said it's difficult to find volunteers to try to fill all the open seats.

"It's a thankless job; they're not paid," he said. "The whole spirit of volunteerism right now is tough."

An Army reservist, Bonaccorso said he sees the volunteer shortage affecting military organizations like the VFW and American Legion as well.

"Everyone is struggling to get people to volunteer," he said.

In the Board of Education contest, three of the four members of the Board of Education whose terms are expiring this year will not be running for reelection. Democrats Joanne Barmasse, the current vice-chairman, and Lois Villa will be departing, along with Republican Jarod Bushey.

That leaves Republican incumbent Nancy Oakley vying for a seat, along with GOP members Salvatore Nucifora and Jim Radavich Jr.

Oakley is a reinsurance broker and the mother of two school-aged children; Nucifora is a mechanical engineer and 2006 state Senate candidate; and Radavich is a newcomer to politics who has been active in community organizations.

Democratic candidates are local business owner and mother of two young children, Amy Ordonez; lawyer and retired Federal Aviation Administration staffer Kurt Comisky; substitute teacher Bob Hein; and educator Martha

Wick, an East Hampton newcomer.

The race will also include one unaffiliated candidate who petitioned her way onto the ballot. Tania K. Sones was approved as a petitioning candidate by the Office of the Secretary of the State last Friday after getting 76 signatures.

She needed at least 36 signatures to get her name on the ballot, according to Town Clerk Kelly Bilodeau. The secretary of the state's office requires petitioning candidates to get at least one percent of the votes cast for the same office during the previous election.

Sones campaigned unsuccessfully for Town Council in 2015 as a member of the Chatham Party and then served on the Board of Education as a Republican.

Currently registered as a Republican, Sones said she is running as a petitioning candidate to show the decisions she makes are not influenced by any specific political party and to give residents another option.

"I decided to run as a petitioning candidate to give residents another option. Too often people may vote across party lines, but I hope this gives them the opportunity to vote for an experienced candidate who is independently seeking a seat for the BOE," she said.

The Board of Finance race for three open seats pits Republican incumbents Bridget McLennan and Eric Peterson against Democratic challengers Matt Bennington and Wesley Jenks.

Board of Finance Janine Jiantonia is not running for re-election.

Candidates for the open Zoning Board of Appeals seat starting in 2019 are Republican Margaret Jacobson and Democrat Robyn Letourneau. Democrat John Tuttle is unchallenged for the seat opening up in 2020.

# Wisconsin Man Picked to be New East Hampton Town Manager

by Elizabeth Regan

A Wisconsin man with 29 years' experience in municipal government has accepted the position of East Hampton town manager.

David E. Cox, formerly the village administrator in Hartland, Wisc., signed a three-year, \$140,000 contract on Friday after the East Hampton Town Council approved the offer earlier that morning.

Cox will report to the East Hampton Town Hall for his first day on Sept. 3.

Council Chairman Melissa Engel this week said Cox was one of 33 candidates for the position. The council closely reviewed a list of 10 candidates selected by the consulting firm GovUSA before selecting five for live interviews.

Engel identified the finalists as Cox and a candidate from Vermont.

"I'm excited," she said. "It's interesting having someone that's not from New England."

Cox, 51, resigned as Hartland's chief executive official in May after almost seven years on the job. According to the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, he announced his resignation just days after the April 2 local election led to turnover on the village board.

He told the *Journal Sentinel* he had been considering his resignation prior to the election, and that it was always about giving the board – which he said included many new members since the 2017 election – the opportunity to move ahead with someone of its own choosing.

The village board in the Midwest is roughly equivalent to the town council in New England.

In an interview with the *Rivereast* this week, Cox said he and his wife were looking at opportunities all over the country before they settled on the East Coast.

The couple has two sons. The oldest is currently a sophomore at Northeastern University in Boston.

Cox said his wife will be staying in Wisconsin with their younger son until the high school student graduates next spring.

He said he was looking for the kind of smaller, "hometown" feel that was present in the towns he'd worked in previously.

His resume said the town of Hartland has a population of 9,200, with 52 full-time employees. That's compared to East Hampton, which has about 13,000 residents and 62.5 full-time employees.

"I'm excited to come to East Hampton, excited to get going and get working. The issues and opportunities that exist there are ones that will be fun to work with and require a lot of input from the community, so I'm hoping we can receive that," he said.

Cox is replacing Michael Maniscalco, who left in July to take over as South Windsor's town manager.

The East Hampton job opening was posted with a starting salary range of \$135,000 to \$145,000. Maniscalco, who'd been in the position for almost seven years, had been making \$138,000 at the time of his departure.

Cox will receive a \$600 per month automobile stipend in addition to his base salary, according to the contract. He gets 20 days of vacation per year and may be paid for a maximum of five unused days at the end of the contract year.

The Town Council vote to authorize the contract was 6-1, with Republican Josh Piteo voting against it.

Piteo this week said he is a big supporter of

Cox's selection as town manager.

"It was me and Melissa Engel who saw the first interview and said 'this is the guy we should have,'" Piteo said.

His objection to the contract revolves around the \$600 per week car allowance, which he described as "overly generous."

"It's the highest it's ever been, and the salary is the highest it's ever been. So the taxpayers are on the hook for a lot. I know you have to attract and retain good help and you want to keep him on the job, but there are limitations," Piteo said.

Engel pointed to Cox's personality and his experience with lakes and public water systems as some of the big factors in his favor.

"He's got a sense of humor. He's smart," she said. "And he's dealt with much larger lakes than ours."

Blue-green algae blooms have long plagued East Hampton's Lake Pocotopaug. The blooms thrive on nitrogen and phosphorous that can come from fertilizer, wastewater and stormwater runoff. The annual appearance of blue-green algae blooms in late summer inevitably leads to calls from residents for local officials to take steps to cure its chronic ills.

Cox said the village of Twin Lakes, a town of about 6,000 year-round residents where he served as administrator for more than 12 years, included a thousand acres of lakes. Part of his role was to provide staff support for the Twin Lakes Lake Protection and Rehabilitation District.

"There were the activities related to maintenance and there were the regulatory activities of trying to make sure the nutrient levels were kept in check and the invasive species were kept

in check," he said.

While he described blue-green algae blooms in Twin Lakes as rare, he said they did happen. That's when he became involved with stormwater management strategies and regulatory changes to prevent the wrong nutrients from getting into the lake.

He said Twin Lakes was also beginning to explore a public water system during his tenure there.

"Starting from scratch is very difficult, and that is a conversation we were having in Twin Lakes. We had small, private systems, [so] is there a way to use those, leverage those, connect those? Those are some things we would talk about," Cox said.

The idea of bringing a large-scale, public water system to town was one of Maniscalco's unfinished items of business when he left town.

Historic industrial contamination in the Village Center combined with high iron and manganese levels in aquifers throughout town have led to water quality concerns since the 1960s.

Previous studies had identified a price tag of at least \$80 million to build out a wellfield in the Cobalt section of town or bring in water from the Metropolitan District Commission through Portland; subsequent proposals from two private water companies ranged from \$12.5 to \$42.88 million.

"The real issue, I think, is how to fund it," Cox said.

The newly-selected town manager described the issues facing the town as ones that will require a lot of input from the community.

"If people have ideas, stop in, call in. We'll try and have a conversation," he said.

## Middletown Man Arrested on Dozens of Larceny Charges

by Karla Santos

A 30-year-old Middletown man is facing no less than 50 charges after allegedly using a local man's credit card he found in a car rental.

Byers was arrested on Aug. 10 after Glastonbury Police turned him over to the Troop K barracks in Colchester on an active warrant. He was charged with 25 counts of sixth-degree larceny and 25 counts of illegal use of a credit card.

An arrest warrant affidavit signed Aug. 5 by a Manchester Superior Court judge said Byers was identified after surveillance video from several stores showed him using a credit card that had been reported with fraudulent charges.

A Marlborough resident on July 2 reported to Marlborough Officer Jay Kehoe that his credit card had been illegally used, the warrant said. The alleged victim told Kehoe he believed he may have left his card in an Enterprise Rental Car that he had returned at the Enterprise office on Buckland Road in

Manchester on or around June 19.

The warrant said Byers admitted he found the card a day after his father had rented the vehicle for him. Byers told police he started using the card about a week after he found it.

Byers used the card in a variety of locations in the Hartford County including a Sunoco gas station in New Britain, Starbucks in Wethersfield, Wendy's, Shell, GameStop, JC Penney, Walmart, Finish Line and McDonald's in Manchester, the warrant said. He also used the card at New China Garden in Hartford, Walmart in Rocky Hill and Walmart in Hartford, among other stores.

Byers' fraudulent charges on the credit card totaled \$2,533.60, according to police.

The warrant said Byers told police that he was in a treatment program for fentanyl addiction.

Byers was released on a \$40,000 bond and is scheduled to appear in Manchester Superior Court on Sept. 26.

## East Hampton Youth Struck By Car

by Elizabeth Regan

An East Hampton youth was struck by a car Saturday evening in the vicinity of the town's annual fireworks display, according to police.

East Hampton Police Chief Dennis Woessner said the juvenile received non-life threatening injuries to the lower extremities in the incident, which occurred at 8:14 p.m. near the intersection of North Main Street and Hills Avenue.

The driver remained at the scene, Woessner said.

Fire Chief Greg Voelker said emergency responders made an airlift request to LifeStar but were denied due to predicted storms in

the area. The youth was transported to Connecticut Children's Medical Center by ambulance.

The crash occurred shortly before the fireworks went off at high school, according to Woessner.

Woessner on Tuesday said the investigation was ongoing, with witnesses still coming forward.

Police said anyone who may have seen the incident should contact the East Hampton Police Department at 860-267-9544 or email Officer David Gionfriddo at [dgionfriddo@easthamptonct.gov](mailto:dgionfriddo@easthamptonct.gov).

## SUV Stolen from Portland Parking Lot

by Elizabeth Regan

Police are reminding residents to shut off and lock unattended cars after a vehicle was stolen from Cumberland Farms last week.

According to the Portland Police Department, a 2002 Chevrolet Trailblazer was reported stolen at about 10:13 p.m. on Aug. 13. It was running in the parking lot at the time of the theft.

Surveillance footage of the scene showed a light skinned, white or Hispanic male get out of a vehicle that had been reported stolen from Hartford several days before, according to police. The man then got into the running SUV and drove away.

Portland police said officers in East Hamp-

ton located the suspect traveling east on Route 66, but an attempted traffic stop was unsuccessful.

The stolen SUV was tracked to Hartford using electronic items in the car at the time of the theft, police said. The vehicle had been abandoned by the suspect when officers found it.

Police are using evidence recovered from the vehicle to try to identify the suspect, they said.

Police also reminded residents to lock vehicles overnight and not to leave spare keys or remote starters in vehicles.



# Obituaries

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## *Colchester*

### Marie Blancato David

Marie Blancato David, 64, of Colchester, passed away on the morning of Friday, Aug. 16, at home, surrounded by her loving family. Born Oct. 13, 1954, in Waterbury; she was the daughter of Mary (Grasso) Blancato and the late Joseph Blancato.

On April 29, 1977, she married her husband, Donald David. The couple settled in Hebron and raised two daughters Katie and Susan.

Marie was a graduate of Southern Connecticut University, where she met her college sweetheart. She worked for many years as a registered nurse with her most memorable job being a visiting nurse at VNA East where she earned the prestigious Nightingale award.

Marie enjoyed her many walks on the airline trails with her closest family and friends. She loved to travel and went to many places over the years but the highlight of each year was the annual family Maine trip. Her special place was by the ocean on the Marginal Way.

Above all, family was always first. Her biggest smiles came when she was with her four grandchildren. She had a forever bond with her two daughters. It was love at first sight with her husband and soulmate that was so strong they were married in less than two years. Their love grew from there and became the beautiful family they have today.

In addition to her loving husband of 42 years, she is survived by her daughters, Katie Gower and husband Adam and Susan Hannoush and husband Mike; her grandchildren, Bryce Gower, Maggie Gower, Blair Hannoush and Scarlett Hannoush; her mother, Mary Blancato; and her sister Joan Pethigal and husband Chuck; nephews Jeff and Jimmy; and extended families and friends.

Calling hours will be held Sunday, Aug. 25, at the Hebron Lions Club Fairgrounds, 347 Gilead St., Hebron, CT 06248. Calling hours are from 1-3 p.m.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be made in Marie's memory to the Terri Brodeur Breast Cancer Foundation or Hebron Lions Charities.

For online condolences, visit [auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com](http://auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com).

## *Portland*

### Joseph J. Ladika

Joseph J. Ladika, 94, formerly of Glastonbury, beloved husband of the late Jean Ladika, passed away Saturday, Aug. 10, at the Holyoke Soldiers Home in Massachusetts. Born April 19, 1925, in Portland, he was the son of the late Frank and Mollie (Goreck) Ladika.

He is survived by his daughter, Joanne Solecki and her husband Thomas of Hebron; son, Edward Ladika and his partner Edward Potyrala of Holyoke, Mass.; and his two grandchildren, Matthew and Erica Solecki.

He proudly served his country as a Marine during World War II.

A private service and burial was held at the family's convenience.

Memorial donations may be made in his name to the Holyoke Soldiers Home, 110 Cherry St., Holyoke, MA 01040.

## *Marlborough*

### Ted Dubitzky

Ted Dubitzky, 76, of Marlborough, died Friday, Aug. 9, in Israel while on vacation. He passed away after complications from emergency surgery. He was born in Hartford May 29, 1943. He was the son of the late Aaron and Simcha Dubitzky.

He earned a B.S degree from Brooklyn Polytechnic Institute, now Tandon Engineering of NYU, in civil engineering. He continued his education and received a master's degree in the same field from Columbia University. In his spare time he was an avid tennis player and talented operatic singer.

He is survived by his wife, Deborah; his sisters, Aviva Budd, Ann Cope; six children; and 13 grandchildren.