

RIVEREAST

News Bulletin

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

Volume 43, Number 50

Published by The Glastonbury Citizen

September 27, 2019



First Time at the Fest!... Will Sawyer, of Colchester, and his 6-year-old daughter Lylah attended the Celebrate Colchester-57 Fest for the first time on Saturday. The father and daughter said they enjoyed the various attractions of the festival, including the music, food and vendors. See story, additional photo on page 9. Photo by Karla Santos.

Safety Measures Taken in Face of EEE Threat

by Michelle Richmond

With the risk of Eastern equine encephalitis (EEE) spreading throughout Connecticut and the death of a second person in the state this week, area towns are taking measures to minimize the risk to their residents.

According to a press release distributed by the Chatham Health District, despite the decline in mosquito populations, EEE has "grown considerably over the last several weeks and has now been documented in 15 municipalities, mostly in eastern Connecticut."

With this advisory in mind, officials in East Hampton and Portland are taking preventive measures to help safeguard their residents.

Portland Parks and Recreation Director Nathan Foley said that he is working with First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield and School Superintendent Philip O'Reilly, "trying to be more cautious."

He recently sent out a letter regarding his department's decision to limit the hours on Parks and Recreation fields "until further notice."

"We want to get teams off the fields and courts before dark," he stated. "If it's practice, we're telling them to bump them earlier but if there's an actual game going on it's not that easy to do and they run into the evening. We're trying to limit the possibility of exposure to all participants at this time."

Don Bascom, Portland Fair chairman, stated that they are "well aware" of the situation and that they have taken some precautions for those going to the Oct 4-6 event at the Portland Exchange Club Grounds.

"We're going to have signage about the EEE at the fair and we're also offering bug repellent for anyone who would like some," he stated.

"We'll have some in the office as well as in the EMT tent and it will be free of charge to anyone who wants it."

Bascom stated that there are some limitations to spraying the field.

"There are certain regulations and there are limitations to where you can spray in the flood plain," he stated. "But we're recommending that people wear long sleeves and pants if they come at night."

Bascom added that based on past fair participation, some 15,000 people are expected to attend this year's fair.

East Hampton School Superintendent Paul Smith stated they have "curtailed all afterschool activities to end at dusk."

"We scheduled all games and sports activities at all four schools to be finished by dusk," Smith stated. "We started this as of last Wednesday and we're looking weeks ahead to keep this in place. We'll probably maintain this schedule until the first hard frost."

The risk of mosquito-borne illnesses is generally wiped out after the first killing frost, which usually takes place in October.

Smith also noted that the tree lines around the high school and middle school were treated with an organic spray earlier this week.

"These fields are used not only by our kids but they're used by Parks and Rec programs," he noted. "We didn't spray the fields themselves but by spraying the tree lines, this is supposed to create a 35-45-day barrier."

Portland Public Schools are also joining in limiting outdoor activities after dusk.

Superintendent of Schools Philip O'Reilly sent out a letter stating that athletic practices

See EEE Threat page 2

5K to Honor Late RHAM Teacher

by Sloan Brewster

Andrej Cavarkapa's passion for running was contagious.

Born in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, in 1987, Cavarkapa was four years old when his family moved to the United States, according to a press release. He graduated from Eastern Connecticut State University in 2009 with degrees in biology and biochemistry, and received his master's degree in secondary education from Eastern in 2012.

On Jan. 25, 2017, while on a run in West Hartford on his 30th birthday, Cavarkapa was hit by a car. He died several days later, on Jan. 31.

An annual race to keep Cavarkapa's spirit alive and share his love of running – The Andrej 5k – is in its second year and takes place tomorrow at Mansfield Hollow State Park, a favorite running locale of the former RHAM science teacher.

The race has been organized by four of Cavarkapa's closest friends: Jackie Fedor and

Heather Lepper, who were his college housemates; Hannah Lawrie, who was dating him when he passed away; and Emma Bounty, who was a close friend of his at E.O. Smith High School in Storrs.

"I think that [running] was something that he really, really loved and it's a good way to honor him and get more people to run," Lawrie said.

Always trying to get others into running, Cavarkapa was "really humble" about how good he was at it, she added.

The four women shared memories of Cavarkapa and all the ways he had inspired them in phone calls with the *RiverEast*.

"He really valued his friendships," Lepper said. "Maintaining relationships was one of his most important aspects. Being able to share our memories is really important to us."

From blaring eclectic music choices and creating beautiful paintings, to traveling and refusing to make plans or write lists, to cooking and holding "Funky Friday" dance parties, to

thrift shopping and pushing friends to better themselves, Cavarkapa had a passion for life, they said.

"His main thing was just I never really saw him down," Lepper said. "He was always just such a happy spirit."

Depending on when the women would visit or go on a drive with Cavarkapa, he would blast different music, they said. Sometimes, it was Madonna, other times, 1980s or 1990s rap – and still others, it was R&B.

"He'd be playing his music so loud I'd be banging on his door and he didn't even hear me," Lawrie said. "He was a very eclectic person and you never really knew what you were going to get from him."

Noting that Cavarkapa was wont to inspire folks to run, the women admitted they were occasionally his targets.

Bounty said he got her excited to run her first half marathon and was a great teacher and friend.

See 5K to Honor page 2



Andrej Cavarkapa

EEE Threat cont. from Front Page

and all outdoor activities will end by dusk.

“We are currently working with other districts in an attempt to move athletic competitions to earlier start times or weekends in response to this issue,” he wrote.

Athletic competitions will not be required to end early and may run past dusk. However, attempts will be made to move these competitions to earlier in the afternoon.

As an added precaution, a field trip to Hammonasset Beach State Park has been postponed until Oct. 30 due to guidelines issued by the Connecticut Department of Public Health, which read:

“The Department of Public Health advises against unnecessary trips into mosquito breeding grounds and marshes as the mosquitoes that

transmit the EEE virus are associated with freshwater swamps and are most active at dusk and dawn.”

Chatham Health District is recommending that residents take the following steps to prevent diseases transmitted by mosquitos:

Avoid outdoor activities during peak mosquito biting times -the hours from dusk to dawn.

Apply EPA registered insect repellents when outdoors.

Cover up (Wear long sleeves, long pants and socks when outdoors).

Drain standing water around your property (Mosquitos lay their eggs in standing water such as wading pools, clogged rain gutters and bird-baths).

Install and repair screens.

5K to Honor cont. from Front Page

When he would visit Lawrie at her New Haven home, they would run on the beach at Harkness Memorial or Bluff Point state parks.

“He always lapped me and ran around me in circles,” Fedor said about training sessions with him. “He was always very motivating.”

She recalled calling Cavarkapa for advice when she was training for her first half marathon in 2016. He recommended the shoes he thought she should wear and, always on the hunt for a bargain, told her to buy them on eBay.

“One of the other things Andrej did, we also did was a lot of thrift shopping,” she said. “Salvation Army, thrift shops, he loved to bargain shop.”

With Lepper, though’ Cavarkapa’s efforts went unanswered.

“Andrej always tried to force me to run but it was one of those things, oh no I’m ok,” she said.

RHAM High School Principal Scott Leslie recalled Cavarkapa as a dedicated teacher whose students enjoyed being in his classroom. With a love for physics and math, he wanted students to share in that love.

“Andrej was very kind,” Leslie said. “Kids really appreciated his dedication to doing his best to making sure that they had the best possible experience in his classes, and that didn’t just cover academics – because certainly he worked really, really hard to be the best teacher he could be – but it also extended to his interactions with students.”

Cavarkapa had a passion for bees and spread the word about their importance, wanting students to understand that they played an integral part in the environment, Leslie said. In his memory, students painted a giant mural of bees with the words “Save the bees” on the wall adjacent to the science room and throughout the school painted smaller bees corresponding to the part of the building they are going toward, Leslie said. So, for example, near the auditorium the painted bees in tutus and near the senior study room they are wearing graduation hats.

“They are scattered throughout the building so students that knew Andrej and wanted to pre-

serve his memory painted those all over the building, it’s wonderful,” Leslie said. “We adored Andrej, he just was a wonderful, wonderful teacher and person and artist.”

The run, which is sponsored by Eastern and outside organizations, loops through the woods at the park. While it is a timed race, it is also a fun run and walk and dogs are allowed.

Prizes will be awarded to the first pup that crosses the finish line, the top runner and top walker.

Cavarkapa’s parents – Branko Cavarkapa, a professor in the business department at Eastern and Aleksandra Cavarkapa – walk the route with participants, the women said.

People from as far as Hawaii, Colorado, Idaho, Switzerland, Florida and San Diego participated in solidarity last year, running where they were at the time of the race, the women said. This year they will do the same.

“A lot of our friends that don’t live nearby, they still buy tickets and participate,” Fedor said.

Proceeds from the race support the Andrej Cavarkapa Memorial Endowed Scholarship, which assists biology majors with financial need, with a preference for RHAM graduates.

Last year, 190 people ran or walked in the inaugural Andrej 5K. All are welcome to run or walk the trail - including dogs - although the terrain is not suitable for strollers or wheelchairs.

The second annual Andrej 5K takes place tomorrow, Saturday Sept. 28 at 10:30 a.m., at Mansfield Hollow State Park.

Entrants can register for the run online at tinyurl.com/y2jho6s5. All proceeds will go to Andrej’s memorial endowed scholarship. To sponsor the event, donate directly to the scholarship by filling out the Andrej Cavarkapa Memorial Endowed Scholarship sponsorship form, at ecsufoundation.com/andrej5k-sponsorship.

An after party will follow the run. Follow the event’s social media pages for more details, facebook.com/Andrej5K and instagram.com/andrej5k.

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

I’m baaaaaack.

A big tip of the hat to Elizabeth Regan, who came back to the *Rivereast* fold last week to fill in for me as editor, while I took a vacation to visit my folks down in Alabama.

Well, actually, my folks were already up here for the first two weeks of the month. Then I headed back down with them, on the train, to Alabama to spend a week there.

Yep, you read right – the train.

My dad has long been a fan of all things railroad, and has actually made the long-distance trek from Alabama to Connecticut on train before – complete with the sleeping car and the dining car I’d only seen in old movies. This time around, he talked me into it, so I accompanied him and my mom for the day-and-a-half ride.

Yes, it took significantly longer than flying would have, but you don’t take an overnight train for the convenience; you take it for the experience. And it was a pretty neat experience.

For starters, it’s a beautiful way to see the countryside. It was fun to look out the window, see the train go in and out of woods and mountainsides, and watch the shops and homes of small towns that we’d pass through. The overnight leg of the trip was through large swaths of nothingness – which made for a pretty peaceful feel. There were no lights of any kind anywhere to be seen, and while that may have made peeks out the window a little on the dull side, it actually proved quite serene to be surrounded by so little development.

Of course, one of my fellow passengers may have wished there were a little more development in the area. Having had a little too much to drink, the passenger was being loud and rowdy – and finally crossed a line when he started to pick a fight with a couple of the riders in the coach section of the train. That was the last straw for the Amtrak staff – who wound up kicking him off the train at a stop in Virginia in the middle of the night.

I didn’t witness the tossing; I heard about it the next morning, as I was actually able to sleep. It certainly wasn’t the best sleep I ever had – there’s only so much deep sleep to be had while on a moving, occasionally-bumpy train. But it was a comfortable bed, and the train attendants – who overall were just excellent throughout the whole trip – did their best to make everyone feel as much at home as possible.

The food was actually pretty good – with the best part being a cooked-to-order steak I had for dinner. Everything about the steak was terrific; a perfect medium-rare, seasoned well, with sides of a delicious baked potato and wonderfully flavorful green beans. The other two meals I had on the train – breakfast and lunch the next day – weren’t quite as good but I’d hardly classify them as bad.

One of the more interesting things about the dining car is that, for efficiency, the staff typically sits you with other diners, which makes for a communal eating experience and

also some pretty interesting conversation sometimes. My last meal on the trip, lunch, came when we weren’t far from our stop in Alabama. The train had picked up some new passengers in Atlanta, and I wound up having lunch with an older couple from southern Georgia, who were taking the train to New Orleans.

Shortly after sitting down, the standard small talk began – including the husband asking me what I did for a living. I told him I edit a newspaper in Connecticut, which he at first seemed impressed by, but then he quickly asked me if I do anything for CNN. I told him no.

“Good,” he replied. “The Communist News Network.”

Yep, I was in the South.

The dining car proved to be a fun experience, and the food was, again, great – and it makes me sad to report the experience is going away at the end of the month. Starting in October, the meals will be premade boxed meals, and people can eat in lounge cars if they really want to, but they’ll also be welcome to take their food back to their rooms and eat there.

It’s an attempt to cut back in expenses – which unfortunately is necessary as the Trump administration keeps slashing the funding for Amtrak. It’s a government-owned corporation, and thus reliant on Washington to survive, and unfortunately, Trump keeps gutting public transportation. It’s not a huge shock for an administration that isn’t exactly environmentally-conscious, but it’s still very disappointing.

Still, while losing the dining car stinks, I think the overnight train experience would still be something worth trying, if only once. It’s a neat, peaceful way to see the country.

* * *

As the calendar prepares to turn to October, we’re reminded Election Day is drawing ever closer, so there’s some housekeeping items I should relay to readers. Effective immediately, no more free pictures of candidates out and about will be published. It’s getting too close to elections, and we don’t want to make it seem like we’re playing favorites. Text about the candidates is okay; but no more pictures. To do that, you’ll have to buy an ad.

Also, you’ve no doubt noticed the last couple of weeks the number of letters to the editor starting to swell, as people have been getting endorsements in for various candidates. For the sake of space, only letters written by people who live in one of the six towns the *Rivereast* covers – Andover, Hebron, Marlborough, Colchester, East Hampton or Portland – will be published. It doesn’t matter if the letter-writer is opining about a candidate running in one of our towns. Unless the writer is from one of the towns, the letter won’t be published.

Thanks for your understanding.

* * *

See you next week.

Huntington's Fundraiser Returns to Marlborough

by Karla Santos

On Sunday, the Connecticut Chapter of the Huntington's Disease Society of America will hold its second annual fundraiser Music on the Vine. The event will take place at Chateau Le Gari, 303 South Main St., from 2:30 to 7 p.m.

Susan McGann, of Colchester, a 13-year volunteer with the Connecticut Chapter of the Huntington's Disease Society of America, said Sunday's goal is to raise \$3,500. Last year, the event raised around \$3,200, McGann said.

"One hundred percent of the money that we raise goes to our mission of improving of everyone affected by Huntington's disease," McGann added.

The funds go to further research as well as help support groups – such as Danielson resident Jennifer Almeida's new peer-to-peer group that she's starting next month in Norwich.

Music on the Vine is free for children 11 and younger. Children 12 and older, students and seniors 62 and older can attend the event for

\$10 and adults for \$20.

The event will feature four musical performers and an extra special guest, David Lutkin, who will star in *Woody Sez: The Life and Music of Woody Guthrie* at Ivoryton Playhouse from Oct. 23 to Nov. 10.

McGann said Woody Guthrie is important to the organization because he had Huntington's disease and his wife started Huntington's Disease Society of America 52 years ago.

Other performers at the event are South of Hebron, Carlton Burns, Sequel and Rock Bottom.

"It's family-friendly because there's a lot of kid's activities," McGann said.

Brick and Basil Pizza and Momma's Ice Cream food trucks will also be on board at the event offering their services.

"Anyone should go it's not like it's just for people with Huntington," McGann said. "It's a great activity to come to. Last year we had a lot

of local people just come and had fun."

The event will also feature a raffle featuring a variety of prizes, including gift certificates to Rhode Island restaurants, gift baskets, comedy club tickets, massages and more.

The Connecticut Chapter of the Huntington's Disease Society of America hosts three support groups that meet in Norwich, North Haven and Fairfield.

The organization is completely volunteer-led – and mostly virtual, McGann said.

"The support groups are the only things that are actually provided at places," McGann said.

Support groups hold sessions on a monthly basis.

The organization also provides education to medical professionals and long-term care facilities.

In addition, the Huntington's Disease Society of America hosts a once a year education day in which prominent professionals experi-

enced with Huntington's Disease provide a free day of education for families and medical professionals.

According to McGann, the organization supports research in order to find a cure for the disease.

"That's the most important thing," McGann said. "Because presently it's fatal and it does not have a cure."

Huntington's disease is genetic and hereditary, and, McGann said, "if you have a parent that has it you have a 50-50 chance of having it."

McGann said she became involved with the Huntington's Disease Society of America because the illness is in her husband's family. Her sister-in-law died from it, her 67-year-old husband has it, she said.

For Music on the Vine tickets, visit <https://app.donorview.com/b0org>.

Food, Folks, Fun at Annual Colchester Festival

by Karla Santos

Saturday's Battle of the Teen Bands at the Celebrate Colchester – 57 Fest had a focus on showcasing talent, rather than on competition.

This is the second time that The Music Bureau of Salem, a full-service music instrument shop with an indoor stage, has put together the Battle of the Teen Bands for the annual festival.

Mike Oken, owner of The Music Bureau, said that last year the Battle of the Teen Bands included judges.

"But this year we decided just to do a showcase, less judging, everything-gets-a-prize type of thing," he said.

The Battle of the Teen Bands featured a total of five groups from Colchester and other nearby towns performing at the festival, which is an annual celebration of Colchester being named in a 2005 CNN/Money Magazine poll the 57th best town in the country in which to live.

"What we like about it is – it just gives talented kids a vehicle to showcase their talents and promote music education," Oken said. "They are all terrific. They are all very talented and it takes a lot of guts to get on a big stage in front of a lot of people. It's high-pressure and these kids, they seem like they are pros already."

The four-member Uncharted band performed last year as well as at this year's festival. Member Jackson Hickey called it "exciting" to play again – and also noticed a difference in the Battle of the Teen Bands this year.

"Definitely there's more talent than last year" and "more songs," he said.

The Fast Back Band was also on the stage of the festival Saturday. Fast Back featured band members from South and East Windsor, Stafford Springs, and Canton.

Oken said that while his business hosts instrument lessons and other events such as open mic, right from the shop, the Battle of the Teen Bands is the only event the business hosts out-

side of its location.

While the Battle of the Teen Bands attracted an audience at Celebrate Colchester – 57 Fest, others enjoyed the many other activities that were offered at the event.

Touch-a-Truck, car seat checks, Cornhole and a Bacon Academy Robotics demonstration were among the activities provided at the festival.

The event also featured a variety of food trucks including Munchies, Colchester Lions Club, Wojo's Roadside, Supreme Hot Dogs, Greekin' Out, J&R's Lemonade, Classic Scoop Ice Cream, Ben & Jerrys and Uncle D's Blazin BBQ. The food options included tacos, hot dogs, burgers, ice cream, tater tots, gyros, fries, baklava, salads, lemonade and more.

Will Sawyer recently moved to Colchester and said Saturday was his first time at the event.

"I heard about it on Facebook," said Sawyer, who attended the festival with wife and daughter. "My sister talked about it and she had been before. It sounded kind of cool so we wanted to find something fun to do today. I went around and checked out some of the vendors, watched some of the bands, they were pretty cool."

Sawyer added that there were "a lot of good food vendors" at the festival. "A lot of good stuff there," he said.

At the other end of the spectrum was Stacy Violette, of Colchester, who has attended the festival for more than 10 years. Violette said she was disappointed the fireworks were canceled but admitted that it was "better to be safe than sorry."

As reported last week, the fireworks show was pulled, and the event ended earlier than originally planned, due to the recent cases of eastern equine encephalitis in the area.

Still, Violette enjoyed the other aspects of the festival. The sun was bright and temperatures reached the 80s on Saturday – weather



Jackson Hickey, Jack Pineau, Josh Fuller and Mason Candler are the members of the local band Uncharted. The group performed at the 57 Fest for the second year and they were one from a variety of bands performing at the event on Saturday.

that Violette said was "picture-perfect."

"It's nice to see everyone relaxing and enjoying the sunshine," she said, and added, "It's wonderful to see the sense of community, kids, their parents, their grandparents, all ages, people from local towns that come celebrate just being part of a small town."

Joshua Braga, of Colchester, said he had attended the fest previous years, but Saturday was his first time attending the event with the local fire department.

Braga said that as a cadet he was walking around the fest making sure attendees were safe and ready to communicate with the team to respond to any issues.

"I've been doing public service for about two years so to come with the fire department, I see

it as an honor and I love being part of the fire department," Braga said. "It's a lot of fun."

According to Tiffany Quinn, recreation director for the town of Colchester, the winner of the festival's \$20,000 vehicle raffle was Richard Barber and the winner of eight weeks of day camp raffle was Mary Miraglia.

"Colchester Recreation would like to thank our top sponsors – Apple Rehab and Voya – for their support and sponsorship," Quinn said. "Our program sponsors included the Children's Dental Associates, UCFS, Edward Jones Financial Planning and Dutch Oil. We are so grateful for the support of all of the vendors and sponsors. The Colchester community spent a beautiful day enjoying fun activities, delicious food and great music."

WJJMS Put on Brief Lockdown in Colchester

by Karla Santos

The William J. Johnston Middle School underwent a soft lockdown Tuesday morning after alleged threats were made by a student.

In a phone interview with the *Rivereast*, Superintendent of Schools Jeffrey Burt said that because the verbal threat was identified as "not a viable threat," he would not disclose the specifics of it.

"We just had a rumor so we had to verify it," Burt said. "There's no verified threat."

That morning, Burt sent a letter to parents informing them of the lockdown, which took place from about 7:30-8:30 a.m.

The school was placed on lockdown as a "safety precaution," Burt said on the letter.

"A soft lockdown is where classes continue as normal," Burt told the *Rivereast*. "Students

just don't move through the hallways."

After hearing about the alleged threat, the matter was investigated by the school, the central office administration, the school resource officer and State Police.

"As a result of the investigation, it was determined that there was and is no viable threat," Burt said in the letter. "Once this determination was made the soft lockdown was lifted and the school continued its regular schedule."

The school resource officer will be at the school throughout the week.

Parents are asked to contact Burt's office if they have any more information or questions at 860-537-7208.

East Hampton Brewery Bans Kids and Pets

by Michelle Richmond

Hitting up the local brewery? Leave your kids and pets at home.

Starting Monday, Fat Orange Cat Brew Co. will no longer allow children or pets. As of that date, only those 21 and older will be allowed to enter the brewery.

The brewery made the announcement via social media, saying "we take the safety of our staff, our customers, our cherished pets

and our property very, very, very seriously."

Described on its website as a "seasonal homestead brewery, specializing in extremely high-quality small batch recipes," Fat Orange Cat opened in August 2016 in a barn in the Salmon River Watershed area.

Fat Orange Cat owner and founder Sheila Mullen declined to comment further for this story.

Traffic Light Upgrade Project Underway in Colchester

by Karla Santos

The state Department of Transportation is working on a traffic light project that includes 16 locations across central and eastern Connecticut – and three of those are in the town of Colchester.

The \$2.6 million project is funded by the state Department of Transportation (DOT).

The three Colchester lights that are being improved are located at the intersections of South Main Street and Lebanon Avenue; Main Street and Linwood Avenue; and South Main Street and Norwich Avenue.

The goal of the project is to upgrade all signal equipment or pedestrian control features at various towns of the DOT Districts 1 and 2. Colchester is part of the DOT's District 2. The DOT has a total of four districts.

The work is expected to be completed by the end of November.

"It's basically four projects per season for each one of our districts," DOT spokesman Kevin Nursick said. "Each one of those projects

can contain somewhere between 10 and 20 locations for either upgrades or new installations."

First Selectman Art Shilosky said he is "happy" the project has gotten as far as it has.

"I'll be happy when it's all done because it is kind of congested in town," Shilosky said.

One of the main changes with the traffic lights in Colchester will be experienced by motorists traveling eastbound at the intersection of Main Street and Linwood Avenue, where a right-turn arrow will be implemented.

"The main issue here was coming up Linwood Avenue, by the church, there is a sign [specifying] no turn on red," Shilosky said. "It backed the traffic up all the way down to Stop & Shop. The town was able to convince DOT to put a turn right arrow when the traffic from Main Street is going left on Linwood Avenue to relieve all the traffic."

The "no turn on red" sign at that intersection will stay, Shilosky said.

"What is going to happen though is once the

two arrows go to red, you are not going to be able to turn right on Main St.," Shilosky said. "I think that everybody is under the impression that the sign is going to go away."

According to Shilosky, adding the green arrow to turn right at that intersection is "pretty hot topic in town."

"Everybody was upset when that 'no turn on red' came in so it's taking us like three years to get that corrected," he said.

Another change to the three Colchester traffic lights the DOT is working on is cameras.

Nursick said the ages of these signals is 16, 16 and 25 years respectively. And while these lights already have cameras on them they are being upgraded.

"Cameras are generally now the way of the future when it comes to traffic signal control," Nursick said. "They do the same thing that the loop detector did, only better."

Loop detectors are wires that are installed in the pavement. They detect the magnetic field

of vehicles when they get close, triggering the signal control module, Nursick said.

"Loop detectors are subject to failure all the time," Nursick said. "If that wire gets broken somehow in the pavement then the loop detector no longer works. The computer system detects that and then the traffic signal will go into a default mode that is safe but is not efficient for moving traffic because it's not getting real-time information about where the traffic is at the various legs of the intersection."

"So when you use the cameras," he added, "you don't have that problem."

Nursick said the cameras are more responsive, less subject to failure and easier to maintain – and added that the DOT is moving toward more camera control systems.

Nursick said the DOT is also constructing pedestrian accessible ramps at the intersections to meet the current ADA standards, and will also review the crosswalk signals.

Portland High School Debuts Podcast Studio

by Michelle Richmond

There was a time when subjects like English, math, history, social studies and perhaps a foreign language pretty much rounded out a typical high school curriculum.

Those days changed permanently in 1991 when David Kuzminski, Portland High School technology coordinator, introduced the Town-Tech Program, a partnership between Portland High School, and the Town of Portland.

Designed to provide an atmosphere that would allow students to participate in town government while working on tech projects, the class introduced students to a field, which has led some graduates to careers in documentary film making, web designing and beyond.

According to Kuzminski, the class has "migrated" a lot since when he first started it. Today, the program encompasses topics such as: digital photography, web programming, videography and publishing as well as the recently added podcasting studio.

"When we first started out, we digitized 136 assessor's maps," he said. "It was a huge endeavor. We later got into the GIS (Geographic Information Systems), managing websites and more."

Eventually, Town-Tech students worked with town officials to create *Portland on the Move*, a public access program highlighting different aspects of the town, including the police and fire departments, the library, the Water Department's Outreach Program and others.

"By doing this show students were able to learn about writing, managing and producing a television show while working in the 'real world' on actual town projects."

The 2019-20 school year signaled yet another innovation: a four-person state-of-the-art podcast studio where guests can record podcasts covering a multitude of subjects. This project is also run by PHS students and the studio can be rented by anyone who wants to record a podcast.

"We've done a series of podcasts, about anxiety, diversity, opioid addiction and a lot of other subjects," said Kuzminski. "We have Skype capability so not everyone has to be in the studio in person when they do the podcast."

The Tech Program has also assisted the Fire

Department with GIS maps to aid in emergencies.

"They use an application called 'Rover,' said Kuzminski. "It goes over their phones and assists them in tracking the fire's location as well as the nearest water hydrants within a 1000-ft radius. Every one of our fire trucks has 1,000 feet of hose so this tells them where they are, based on our maps."

"Those base maps are what we give to Rover and then they're integrated into their software and also into the 911 system in Middletown because they dispatch our fire and police."

Currently, the students host and maintain some 25 websites for local commercial businesses and organizations. In addition, they create the Town of Portland Annual Report, the School Calendar, as well as the GIS maps for the town.

Other ongoing projects include digital photography, directing, producing and filming the *Portland on the Move* TV show as well as hosting and maintaining the Portland School District website and the Town of Portland School District Annual Calendar and Guide.

When asked how much a student needs to know when they first sign up for the Town Tech class, Kuzminski said: "Pretty much, nothing."

"We start them with off with web design, where they learn to code and then basically, depending on the interest of the kid we incorporate other things. We try to incorporate our curriculum with the strengths of the students while incorporating a lot of the 'real life' stuff."

The Town Tech program is offered to students starting in Grade 9 and many keep in touch with Kuzminski after graduation. Kevin Armstrong is one of those students. He graduated from PHS in 2007 and returned here to work as Kuzminski's assistant.

"I went to UConn with the intention of going into pharmacy, but I figured out that I didn't care for it much," he stated.

Armstrong ended up with a degree in Geomatics from UConn and now works side by side with Kuzminski.

"Our focus is to give kids the opportunity to learn in a different way as opposed to general education," Armstrong said. "Other classes are structured and follow a set lesson plan with set



Dave Kuzminski heads up the Town-Tech Program at Portland High School.

books but we try to focus on 'hands on' and what's new in the world. We do have some structure with grades and assignments but our primary focus is on exposing kids to something they wouldn't ordinarily get to do before their college years."

It also allows students to explore the world of technology without the hefty financial investment in a college course, according to Armstrong.

"This is a good way to try the tech industry and not waste money on these courses in college and then find out that they really aren't interested in it. In our class it's more of a 'try before you buy' opportunity. It's a good chance to try something new."

"It doesn't have to be a career they go into, but it gives them a skill set they can use if they

eventually start their own business."

Stuart Noelte, PHS art teacher, also forms part of the team and brings the necessary "certified teacher requirement" to the program.

"Stu brings the art component to the class as far as design and photography. He also helps us with the grading portion," said Armstrong.

Future aspirations for some of the current students range anywhere from careers in photography to fashion design, coding, IT, architecture and software engineering.

"These kids get 'hands on' experience in business," noted Kuzminski. "They learn how to talk to clients and interact with them while creating what the client needs. This is real life stuff."

For more information or to rent the podcast studio, call Kuzminski at 860-342-6769.

Andover PZC Gives Initial Approval to Seniors-to-School Plan

by Sloan Brewster

Converting the third and fourth grade wing at Andover Elementary School fits into the town's Plan of Conservation and Development, according to the Planning & Zoning Commission.

Last week, during its regular monthly meeting, the commission gave an initial approval of the proposal. Before the vote was taken, the commission held a public hearing.

Despite a lower than anticipated turnout, with about a dozen residents in attendance, there was a lot of feedback and discussion, Planning and Zoning Commission Robert Hamburger said in a phone call Tuesday.

While comments from the public included concerns about student safety, building security and that the measure is only a temporary solution, the commission's charge was to look at whether or not the proposal is consistent with the town's Plan of Conservation and Development [POCD], Hamburger said.

Town Administrator Eric Anderson gave a presentation about the plan and how it fits with demographics and projections in town, including changing enrollment numbers at Andover Elementary School and the increasing senior population, Hamburger said.

Last year, the Board of Education offered the wing for a possible senior space when selectmen closed the old firehouse on Center Street, which had been used as a senior center since the early 1990s and was also a meeting spot for boards and commissions.

Anderson discussed the closure of the old building, which was in a state of disrepair and had a mold infestation, Hamburger said.

During the discussion, commission members

Leigh Ann Hutchinson and Ann Crème said the town needs a stand-alone community center, according to the minutes.

Now that the commission has completed its initial review, the Board of Selectmen will look at the broader concerns, Hamburger said.

"It goes back to the Board of Selectmen for a public meeting and maybe a referendum," he said. "That would look at all the relevant issues."

Once those steps are completed, the proposal would return to the commission to look at as a special permit for a change of use, Hamburger said. At that time, the commission would look at such aspects as fire code, the number of bathrooms, parking, "all the relevant codes" and occupancy codes or "the minutia."

"I'm sure that there's a whole long laundry list that we would have to consider" he said.

In a phone call Tuesday, First Selectman Jeff Maguire said the board had not determined if the proposal would be on the agenda for its meeting next Wednesday.

"There's financial ramifications that we don't have all the answers to," Maguire said was the hold up on the decision to put in on the agenda. "We have to work with all the parties involved to find out where we're going."

* * *

Meanwhile at a special Board of Selectmen meeting Monday the Long Term Planning Committee presented its final report and residents erupted with concerns about converting the wing.

The committee was formed 18 months ago to look at the needs of the town going forward and come up with ideas on how to push for-

ward plans in the POCD.

The town needs a senior/community center, the report states. In the short term, the solution would be the school wing, but in the long term the town needs a stand-alone community center on the 70-acre town property behind Town Hall.

"Many people do want a stand-alone community center," committee member Amanda Gibson said. "We do know that it'll take some time and cost more money."

Gibson pointed out that there was also the need for space for meetings and said to schedule the special meeting another meeting had to be bumped.

"I just wanted to say, you know here we are in our community room, it's really our only space," she said. "The town's getting creative for how to use the resources it has."

Gibson said Hartford Public Schools have a shared space.

"We feel it might be important to have that conversation with some other schools," she said. "See how they deal with it."

After the presentation, Maguire opened the floor to public comment and residents chimed in about the senior center.

Dave Kluczowski said families move to town for the good school system and putting the senior center there would put it at the bottom of the list. He said it was not a common practice to do such a thing and that the shared space Gibson mentioned in Hartford was in the library and was only used part-time.

Putting shared space in the school would also diminish security, he said.

"Why are we going to have a public space in

our school when we do not have a single example of this?" he asked.

"It tells you that we are being creative," Maguire said. "We all need to share."

Kluczowski asked what other towns do such a thing.

"So we can't do anything until other towns do?" asked Adrian Mandeville, vice first selectman. "Look at other countries. Look at Japan. Look at the Netherlands. They integrate their seniors with their schools."

"Millennials won't send their kids to a building that's shared space," Daniel Foran, a member of the Board of Education, said.

When Kluczowski and Foran said the measure would drive young people out of town, Maguire said "That's okay," eliciting mimicking remarks from Foran about it being okay to drive people out of town.

In the phone call the following day, Maguire said he had misspoken and was directing the comment to Foran specifically, not others in the community.

"I want people to work together," Maguire said.

Mandeville, in a phone call Tuesday, took a moment to clarify what he thought Maguire meant.

"Jeff's point, in saying that, was if you don't want to be a part of the community then leave," he said. "Community is the whole community. It's old people and young people. It's not just the students. We as a board we have to worry about the whole community."

In coming weeks, look for a story that delves deeper into the Long Term Planning Committee's 100-page final report.

East Hartford Man Arrested After High-Speed Chase in Andover

by Sloan Brewster

An East Hartford man was arrested earlier this month after holding a woman at gunpoint while taking police on a high-speed chase that began in Andover.

According to Andover Resident State Trooper Darrell Tetreault, the situation, which took place on September 11, originated in Willimantic, where Simmie Freeman, 34 of 22 Webster Street in East Hartford, went to see his wife.

In the process of getting a divorce, Freeman showed up to talk to the woman "about their personal stuff," the trooper said.

She got in the car and Freeman allegedly took off, holding her at gunpoint.

While on the road, the woman texted 911 and state police dispatchers retrieved her location at 144 Route 6 in Andover, which is Andover Plaza, Tetreault said.

A trooper responded to the scene and saw the woman in the car, Tetreault said. Freeman, in turn, saw the trooper and sped off.

The trooper followed and a high-speed pursuit ensued, during which the woman continued to text with dispatchers, Tetreault said. Police chased Freeman all the way to Hartford at speeds exceeding 100 mph – and despite the chase being at night, Freeman "had no lights on whatsoever," Tetreault said.

The chase ended in Hartford where the sus-

pect crashed his vehicle and took off on foot, the trooper said. After a short foot pursuit, he was caught and transported to Hartford Hospital.

Once Freeman was released from the hospital, he was taken into custody, Tetreault said.

His wife gave a statement that Freeman had held her at gunpoint and police located a gun in the car as well as drugs, Tetreault said.

The gun was stolen from East Hartford, said East Hartford Police Department Public Information Officer Josh Litwin.

According to a press release from state police, Freeman was arrested by Trooper Andrew Eckman and charged with theft of a firearm, criminal possession of a firearm, criminal use of a firearm, reckless endangerment, interfering, weapon in a motor vehicle, carrying a revolver without a permit, possession of controlled substance, engaging police in pursuit and reckless driving.

Freeman was initially given a \$1 million bond, which, at his Sept. 12 arraignment, was lowered to \$250,000.

The bond was so high initially "due to the extreme circumstances of the situation" and "the way it unfolded," Tetreault said.

Freeman's next court date is Oct. 18 in Rockville Superior Court.

Police News

9/6: Jessica Hull, 30, of 8 Midwood Farm Rd., was issued a summons for operating an unregistered and uninsured motor vehicle and misuse of registration plate, East Hampton Police said.

9/12: Katherine Morrissey, 40, of 54 School Rd., Andover, was issued a summons for failure to drive right and DUI, police said.

9/16: Harry Scott, 34, of 39 Haddam Neck Rd., was arrested and charged with disorderly conduct and third-degree criminal mischief, police said.

9/16: Shaun McGarty, 42, of 47 Main St., was arrested and charged with disorderly conduct,

second-degree threatening, second-degree reckless endangerment and DUI, police said.

9/16: Rolando Larriuz, 47, of 124 Sunnyside Ave., Waterbury, was charged with issuing a bad check and sixth-degree larceny, police said,

9/18: Kyle Cone, 58, of 94 Abbey Rd., East Hampton was arrested and charged with home invasion, second-degree burglary, criminal violation of a restraining order and interfering with a police officer, police said.

Also, from Sept. 9-15, officers responded to 10 medical calls, one motor vehicle crash and seven alarms accident, and made 37 traffic stops, police said.

Obituaries

Hebron

Harry A. Egazarian

Harry A. Egazarian, 85, entered into eternal life Sunday, Sept. 22. He died peacefully, surrounded by his loved ones. Harry was born Nov. 23, 1933, in Worcester, Mass., to Kachador and Araxe (Assadorian) Egazarian. He graduated from Classical High School in 1952 and proudly attended the University of Connecticut graduating with a Pharmacy Degree in 1956.



While attending UConn, Harry met the girl of his dreams, Marilyn O'Leary, also of Worcester, Mass. Their first date was a UConn basketball game! He remained an avid fan of UConn basketball and the Boston Red Sox.

Harry and Marilyn were married Nov. 23, 1957, and shared an amazing 51 years together. They settled in East Hartford after college. Harry served as a member of the Democratic Town Committee and as a member of the town charter revision committee in 1965. He was also elected to the Town Council and served as deputy mayor for 12 years. Harry was a member of the Knights of Columbus - 4th Degree and served in the East Hartford Kiwanis club for many years. Harry was a faithful communicant of St. Christopher Parish in East Hartford for over 50 years.

Harry was a pharmacist in East Hartford for 56 years and owner of Pat's Medical Pharmacy on Main Street. All local physicians knew Harry for being willing to provide emergency medications at any hour of the night long before 24hr pharmacies existed. After selling Pat's Medical in 1996 Harry worked at ShopRite Pharmacy in East Hartford until 2012. Taking care of his community was Harry's life work.

When Harry wasn't working in the pharmacy he could be found tending to the more than 300 rose bushes around his home. Marilyn loved the endless bouquets of beautiful roses on her kitchen table. Friends and family were always welcome to roses from Harry's beautiful garden.

Harry frequently traveled to his cottage at Higgins Beach, Maine, a beautiful home away from home filled with friends and family. He was known for his love of lobster, horse shoes, and long walks on the beach. Perhaps most precious of all to Harry was seeing his grandkids enjoying Higgins Beach.

Harry was a proud American who loved his Armenian heritage. Born to Armenian immigrants, both survivors of the Armenian holocaust, Harry made sure his entire family appreciated Armenian music and culture. In 1971, Harry along with Marilyn and dear friends Baggie and Queenie Hovanessian and Al and Tina Boyajian started KEF TIME Hartford, an annual Armenian music festival that continued for almost 40 years.

Harry is survived by his children, Gregory and Karen Egazarian of Warrenton, Va., Margaret McGowan of Manchester, and John and Cheryl Egazarian of Marlborough; and his beloved grandchildren, Ryan, Grace, Sara, Chelsea and Maximilian. He is also survived by his sister, Margaret (Egazarian) Urbec; as well as many cherished nieces, nephews and their children.

Harry was predeceased by his wife, Marilyn (O'Leary) Egazarian and his sister Rose (Egazarian) Urbec.

Funeral services will be today, Sept. 27, with a Mass of Christian Burial celebrated at 11 a.m. at St. Christopher Church of St. Edmund Campion Parish, 538 Brewer St., East Hartford. The family has asked that everyone go directly to the church on Friday morning. Burial will be at Silver Lane Cemetery, East Hartford. Relatives and friends called at the D'Esopo-East Hartford Memorial Chapel, 30 Carter St., East Hartford, Thursday, Sept. 26.

Harry struggled with Parkinson's disease until the time of his death.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions in Harry's name may be made to Beat Parkinson's Today, Inc., 102 Pitkin St., East Hartford, CT 06108. Online donations can be made at beatpdtoday.com.

For any online expressions of sympathy to the family, visit desopo.com.

Cromwell

Mary McKeown Savoie

Mary McKeown Savoie, 88, of Cromwell, formerly of Windsor Locks and Westbrook, died peacefully Thursday, Sept. 19.

She was predeceased by her beloved husband Lawrence (Larry) and her brother and sister-in-law, Nancy (Downing) and James Edward McKeown of West Haven.

Mary was born in New Haven, and was the oldest child of Bridie (Killeen) and Jim McKeown. She graduated from St. Mary's High School in New Haven and received her Bachelor's Degree from Central Connecticut State University in 1978. Mary taught Business Education classes for eight years at Windsor Locks Hill School where she also assisted with costumes for their theater production.

As a mom raising four children, Mary still found time to be involved in her community. She was a past president of the Windsor Locks Women's Club, member of the Old Saybrook Lions' Club, a Eucharistic minister at St. Mark of Westbrook and St. John of Cromwell, and a past member of the Westbrook Planning & Zoning Board. She was a devout Catholic who loved singing in Rome with the St. Mark's Church Choir and with the Covenant Village choral group at their annual holiday concert. She loved to read, travel and relax at Island View Beach in Westbrook. She and Larry loved family vacations to the Outer Banks, the Adirondacks and a Caribbean cruise with their children and grandchildren.

She was the beloved mother of Martin Savoie of Sevierville, Tenn., Carol Seredynski and her husband Tom of Hebron, Cathy Holmes and her husband Mike of Ivoryton, and Laureen Borgatti and her husband John of Agawam, Mass. She was also the proud grandmother to Peter and Mariesa Negosanti, Jeffrey and Glenn Holmes, and Brian and Amy Seredynski. In addition, she leaves behind three step-grandchildren, Jason, Jeremy and Justin Borgatti, as well as six great-grandchildren.

The family will be welcoming friends Saturday, Sept. 28, from 10-11 a.m., at St. John Church, located at 5 St. John Court, Cromwell. The funeral Mass will be held at 11 a.m.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made in her name to Wayfinders, (wayfindersma.org/support-us), 120 Maple St., Suite 400, Springfield, MA 01103 or the Alzheimer's Association of Connecticut at alz.org/ct. A private burial will take place on a later date.

To share memories or send condolences to the family, visit doolittlefuneralservice.com.



Hamden

Paul C. Kaiser

Paul Conrad Kaiser of Hamden, formerly of Glastonbury, died peacefully at home Wednesday, Sept. 18.

Paul was born Oct. 28, 1930, in New Haven, to the late Frederick William and Doris (Tice) Kaiser. A graduate of Hillhouse High School in New Haven, Paul attended Hartwick College, Oneonta, N.Y., then went on to earn his Master of Divinity from the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia.

Accepting his first pastoral call in 1956, Paul led development of a mission church, St. Michael's Lutheran Church in Camillus, N.Y. In 1959 he accepted a call to Concordia Lutheran Church, Manchester, serving there until 1966 when he became the personnel director for Mal Tool & Engineering.

In 1981 Paul went to work for the City of New Haven as a social worker, retiring as a coordinator at age 84. Paul continuously served the church throughout his life assisting several Lutheran congregations. He had served as a Justice of the Peace for the town of Hamden and was on the Church Council at Emanuel Lutheran Church, New Haven, where he was a member.

Paul will be dearly missed by many. He was predeceased by a grandson, Mark Albert and by his niece Kristen Bianchi. He is survived by his five children, daughter Karen Miller (Taso) of Hebron; daughter Deborah Morse of Athens, Tenn.; son Frederick Kaiser II (John) of Woodbridge; daughter Lisa Matteson (Seth) of Port Richey, Fla.; and son David Kaiser (Jessica) of Northboro, Mass.; four grandchildren; and one great-grandchild. He is also survived by his sisters, Katherine Paquette (Russell), Doris Hyland, and Beverly Bianchi (John), and several nieces and nephews.

Paul offers to all the people he came to know throughout his life, his thanks for their being his friend.

Calling hours will take place today, Sept. 27, from 4-7 p.m., at Beecher & Bennett Funeral Home, Whitney Avenue, Hamden. A Service of Christian Burial will take place at Emanuel Lutheran Church, 280 Humphrey Street, New Haven on Saturday, Sept. 28, at 11 a.m. Interment will be private.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to Emanuel Lutheran Church, New Haven, or to a charity of your choice.

East Hampton

Dennis G. Banning

Dennis G. Banning, 58, of East Hampton, passed away unexpectedly Monday, Sept. 16. Born Jan. 31, 1961 in Middletown, he was the son of Barbara (Ackley) Banning and the late Joseph B. Banning. Dennis was a lifetime resident of East Hampton, graduating from East Hampton High School in 1979.



Dennis was a lifelong carpenter, having learned the trade from his father and brothers. Many of his family and friends reaped the benefits of his vast knowledge and skills over the years. He later became a proud member of the Connecticut Carpenters Local 24. He was also an active member of the Sons of American Legion in Marlborough.

Dennis loved the outdoors; fishing, clamming, and gardening especially if it involved anything regarding Atlantic Giant pumpkins. He was an avid UConn football fan, and enjoyed many weekends tailgating with friends before the games. He also had an extensive knowledge of the town's history and would often surprise people with interesting facts.

Besides his mother, Dennis leaves behind his sisters and two special brothers-in-law, Laura and Ron Landry, Karen and Rob Ennen; a dear sister-in-law, Patricia Daly Banning; brother Joseph B. Banning; along with his nieces and nephews and their children, for whom he had a soft spot and would do anything for. He had many lifelong friends who will miss his companionship.

He was predeceased by his father, Joseph; his brothers, Stephen and Richard (Dick); and his nephew and godson, Andrew Ennen.

A celebration of life will be held Saturday, Oct. 5, at the American Legion from 1-4 p.m. There will be a brief ceremony at 1:30 p.m., followed by refreshments.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in memory of Dennis to the Sandy Peszynski Breast Cancer Foundation (SPBCF), 93 East High St., East Hampton, CT 06424 or online at spbcf.com/Online-Donations.html, or a charity of your choice.

Colchester

Ralph Louis Marshall

Ralph Louis Marshall, 85, of Colchester, formerly of Columbia, passed away Monday, Sept. 23. He was born in Hartford to the late Samuel and Ethel (Rosen) Marshall. He grew up in New Britain, later attending grammar school and high school in Willimantic, finally graduating from Eastern Connecticut State Teacher's College in Willimantic.



In the 1950s, Ralph served his country in the U.S. Army, at Fort Dix, N.J. He successfully served as a reading and writing skills instructor to men who would have otherwise remained illiterate. Ralph took pride in the fact that he received a citation for his excellent teaching from the Army. He also taught English to new immigrants at the evening adult education program in Willimantic for several years. Ralph received his master's and advanced degrees at the University of Connecticut in Educational Administration. He taught in the Willimantic school system before beginning his 30-year tenure as the principal of Sweeney School in Willimantic.

Ralph was honored as Principal of the Year by Windham Public Schools, several times during his career at Sweeney School. The Thanksgiving Feast and the enjoyment of his singing of the turkey song, as well as the annual assembly during which he read The Giving Tree, were a few of the many well-loved traditions that he established while at Sweeney School. After his retirement in 1992, Ralph continued to consult and taught paraprofessional courses at Quinebaug Valley Community College.

Ralph always loved working in his garden, reading, UConn basketball, and the Boston Celtics. He had a wry sense of humor that would keep people who experienced his jokes, on their toes. After he moved from Columbia, where he lived for 40 years, to Colchester in 2013, Ralph continued to enjoy gardening and going to the gym. Ralph considered his most cherished achievement to be the loving, close knit family which he created.

Ralph is survived by his wife, Ellen (Shapiro) Marshall; his children, Michael and Elizabeth; his daughter-in-law, Ann; and grandchildren, Benjamin and Hanna Marshall. He is also survived by his beloved brother and sister-in-law, Dr. David and Barbara Marshall of Troy, N.Y. Extended family includes many adored nieces, nephews, and cousins.

Today, Sept. 27, at 11 a.m., there will be a memorial service at the Temple Bnai Israel at 383 Jackson St. in Willimantic. Graveside service will be private and at the convenience of the family.

To sign the online memorial guestbook, visit potterfuneralhome.com.