



RIVEREAST

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The Colchester Half Marathon will return next month. The event was first started in 1992 as an initiative of the Hartford Track Club. The marathon started with 25 runners but for the past four to five years, about 600 individuals from Connecticut and from outside the state show up to run. Pictured here is a scene from the 2017 race.

Annual Half Marathon Returns Next Month

by Karla Santos

Registration is now open for the Colchester Half Marathon, which is coming back to town for its 28th year, featuring 13 hilly miles, pre- and post-race massages and a post-race reload party.

The race will start and end at Bacon Academy on Saturday Feb. 29, at 10 a.m.

Registration is available online, through mail and in person the day of the race.

Rick Konon, of Colchester, is the founder and director of the event.

Konon said that since its inception, the marathon has offered a post-race reloading event including food. For the past two years, the post-race food has been prepared and served by the Bacon Academy Culinary Arts students and instructors.

Konon said some of the food options served after the race are the same as when it started 28 years ago.

"We have our original menu," Konon said. "We still have lasagna, both with meat and vegetarian. We still have chili, both with meat and vegetarian, and we have a hot soup, all sorts of hearty food, baked ziti. This year we'll have some Chicken Marsala, we have pizzas, a whole lot of pizzas from Plum Tomato; we even have brownies and ice cream."

The event will also feature a selection of non-

alcoholic beverages, including water, soda, juice boxes for the children, hot coffee, hot tea and hot cocoa.

Konon said even those who don't run are invited to the post-race party.

"I remember running races when my kids were little and my wife and kids were standing around while I was able to have a little bit of chowder or something like that and that wasn't very good because my kids would've liked to have some and so in my race everybody eats."

The Colchester Half Marathon uses a computerized system. Runners have a small computer chip in their bib that allows them to run across the finish line and be automatically recorded.

Facilities such as restrooms and showers at Bacon Academy will also be available for the event. The race, which goes through Colchester and parts of Lebanon, will include three water and Gatorade stations, mile markers painted on the road and volunteers throughout the course. Those who decide to run will also be able to enjoy the rural scenery, hills and dirt roads.

The \$14 race fees go to pay for the food, insurance, and the water and Gatorade, Konon said.

"I don't charge them a convenience fee be-

See Half Marathon page 2

More Senior Housing Coming to Hebron?

by Sloan Brewster

The town of Hebron is taking steps toward building more senior housing.

At last Thursday's meeting of the Board of Selectmen, Town Planner Michael O'Leary gave a presentation on the design for the housing, which would be built next to Stonecroft Village – the town's 32-unit senior community – on a West Main Street parcel known as the Rifkin Property.

In 2017, the town acquired the 4.43-acre parcel for \$385,000 with the intention of developing it into senior housing, due to its proximity to Stonecroft, O'Leary said.

With an increasing senior population – it's predicted to reach 37% by 2025 – senior housing is needed, O'Leary said.

"We went through a fairly extensive process as to how this property could be used for senior housing," he said. "There's an awful lot of data on the increasing percentage of elderly populations in towns throughout the state."

In September, O'Leary presented the board with a concept plan for the housing. The latest presentation was more detailed.

While concepts for the building could change, he said everyone involved in the design phase agreed a single building was the best for the parcel and a barn-like structure would fit with the town's rural character.

Units in the facility would be a housing type not available at Stonecroft, which consists of individual units that open to the outside rather

than apartments in a building with community space.

In addition, the building would leave room on the property in case the town ever wants to expand the Russell Mercier Senior Center.

The building would be built into the slope of the parcel, with the portion on the upside of the hill showing two-stories of living space from the outside and on the downside also showing the basement, where some apartments and the utility and storage rooms would be.

The side of the building facing the senior center will have a silo-shaped front, where community space would be located on every floor.

"It's a really nice gathering spot, it could be a library on one floor, a craft room on another floor, a kitchen on the other," O'Leary said. "It could be used for many things."

According to the plans, the main and upper levels would consist of 14 to 16 one- and two-bedroom apartments each and there would be six units in the basement, for a total of 34 to 36 units.

The plan also includes a potential parking lot expansion for the senior center, which O'Leary said could be done as a separate project.

"There's a parking issue at the existing senior center," he said.

Access to the property would be from West Main Street with a possible entry also con-

structed from Route 66.

"Access to Route 66 could be just emergency access or it could be a right turn in and a right turn out," he said.

Board of Selectmen Chairman Daniel Larson said he liked the design, adding that it makes sense to have access from West Main Street and Route 66.

Selectman Mark Rubera said it was "a great design" but questioned the idea of offering additional services without revenue.

"Why would we engage in a project that gets no revenue for the town and yet we have to provide more services?" he said. "I don't see how it's a homerun for us."

"We're proposing a building to be built with subsidized housing," Town Manager Andrew Tierney said.

He said there was a need for senior housing and that the town would be looking for state grants toward the project.

In a phone call Monday, he said the town had issued a Request for Proposals for a consultant to seek out the grants. The salary would be based on and come out of the grants the person obtains.

Gail Richmond said seniors want to stay in town but can't remain in single-family houses.

"They've been living here all these years, paying taxes," she said. "What do they tell me when I go down to the senior center? They want to stay here because they've planted in the com-

munity. Their whole social life is here, their activities are here and they want to remain."

Florence O'Sullivan, Housing Authority chairman, echoed Richmond's comments adding that some seniors on a fixed "are really scrambling" to get by and warning officials "to be careful not to make it impossible for anyone to live" in the new facility.

At \$590 a month, rent at Stonecroft is "very affordable," she said.

"We do have some people living in current [Stonecroft] housing that have been there since it was built in 1990," she said, and added, "Seniors need a place too."

While the new building itself is not planned as a money-maker, it would generate local activity and bring money to businesses, O'Leary said, adding that other developments around the town center will bring revenue.

"Lower-income residents, to me that's the town's responsibility to step in when you have a group that needs services," he said. "To me, one of the town's responsibilities is to step in when an income level group needs town services."

"They paid taxes to the town, they contributed to the town," Richmond reiterated. "We have a responsibility."

The next steps on the project will be to work with an architect to get site, architectural and building costs to bring a total cost proposal to the board, Tierney said.

Half Marathon cont. from Front Page

cause actually that convenience is a convenience to me because the online registration, they organize all the information, they in put it, they give it to the timer so they can input it into their computers," Konon said. "All that goes hand-in-hand and it's really a convenience for the race director and I don't understand why other races charge that to the runner."

Konon said that when he started the race in 1992, as part of the Hartford Track Club, the fee was only \$2 – but as the race grew, he realized he needed to charge more.

"Between 1992 and 2009, the race was growing – it was up to about 150 people – and I was paying for everything out of my pocket," Konon said.

That's when he asked the Hartford Track Club to allow him to charge a higher fee. The fee increased from \$2 to \$12. Konon said at that point he was concerned people would not attend the race because of the price change.

"But the funny thing was, it doubled to like 300 that year in 2009," Konon said. "I think part of it was people probably thought it wasn't a decent race for \$2 and once it became \$12, they gave it a second chance."

Konon said that he then realized the \$12 still didn't quite cover everything and raised the price to \$14.

"It has been \$14 ever since," Konon said.

However, Konon said he does not turn down anyone for their inability to pay for the race.

"I ask them to come back when you can afford to pay but run the race and join us at the party," Konon said. "So if someone wants to pay \$2, they can pay \$2, if someone wants to run the race for free, they can run it for free."

He added that a lot of people who do run the race donate to it as well. The online registration system allows individuals to register, donate to the race, donate to the Colchester Land Trust and donate to Bacon Academy Project Graduation.

The fee stays \$14 until 6 p.m. the day before

the race. Registration on the race day is \$20. Volunteers will be on site starting at 8 a.m.

Konon said he started the event while he was the newsletter editor for the Hartford Track Club.

"Back in 1992, there weren't as many races through the winter as there are now," Konon said.

To keep the Hartford Track Club members running through the winter, Konon decided to help the club create a winter race.

"But because my race was going to be 13 miles, it needed to be a little more informal," he said. "I wanted to provide people with showers and food after the race. The initial years that happened at my condominium."

Konon said that at that point t-shirts were not provided for the race.

"What I did provide was a huge meal afterwards," he said. "For several years my wife cooked at our condominium. We had lasagna and chili and salad and cold cuts and pasta salad and things like that. Hearty food because you've run 13 miles and it's a very hilly course. The last Saturday in February is often very cold so you want to come back and start recovering and one of the best ways to recover is with food."

Konon said some people have run all 27 races and will run again this year.

Yvonne Lee has run the Colchester Half Marathon since 2009.

"It's a great race," Lee said, adding that what brings her back is "the camaraderie, the hills, the food."

Lee said this year she is looking forward to "just seeing everybody."

"The guy who puts it on he's amazing, he's got such a great energy and the food is amazing too," Lee said.

To learn more about the race, to register or volunteer, visit <https://runsignup.com/Race/CT/Colchester/ColchesterHalfMarathon28thRunning>.

East Hampton PZC Receives Update on Pocotopaug

by Jack Lakowsky

Town Planning and Zoning official Jeremy DeCarli presented a draft of proposed revisions to the Lake Pocotopaug Protection Zone to the Planning and Zoning Commission Wednesday evening.

The plan has been updated since it was last presented at a public forum in December. DeCarli said the plan was updated according to community feedback.

One update was made to the prohibited uses section; the language prohibiting "underground oil tanks" was updated to "underground fuel tanks."

Another update was to the conditions of clearing activities within the Lake Pocotopaug Watershed Overlay District, specifically regarding soil stabilization. The language changed from allowing the PZC official to approve an exemption to the provision requiring soil stabilization within two days of disturbance. This exception allowance was eliminated, and the

provision now reads that a phasing plan must specifically detail erosion and sediment controls.

The updated plan will be presented at a public forum in February.

The PZC also reviewed the contract for the sale of the current East Hampton town hall, which won't be needed after the under-construction municipal hub is completed.

"Our job today is to discuss whether the sale is good or bad," said PZC Chairman Ray Zatorski.

DeCarli spoke highly of the sale.

"It makes total sense," DeCarli said. "There's no potential use for us in this building."

The contract reads that the building will be renovated and rehabilitated to suit space for offices.

"It's in the heart of our commercial area," DeCarli said.

'Denim, Diamonds & Drafts' Returns Next Month in East Hampton

by Jack Lakowsky

The Connecticut Draft Horse Rescue invites the public to its annual, award-winning "Denim, Diamonds & Drafts" fundraiser slated to take place at St. Clements Castle in Portland.

The fundraising dinner is scheduled for Saturday, Feb. 29, at 6 p.m. Tickets are \$80.

According to CDHR member-at-large Sarah Grote, this is the horse rescue organization's largest fundraiser of the year.

"We'll have a dinner buffet, dessert, a live auction, a silent auction, retail items and some fun activities," Grote said.

Grote said the fundraiser will help pay for CDHR's operational costs. Money earned will also contribute to the nonprofit's capital campaign, an effort to help build CDHR's barn at their new Autumn Ridge property. Starting construction on the barn will mark the final phase of the capital campaign.

Grote said that every effort undertaken by CDHR is to help further their goals of rescuing, rehabilitating, retraining and reforming the horses that come under the organization's care.

CDHR focuses on saving draft horses – large animals bred for heavy labor – that would otherwise be bound for slaughter. The organization also rescues horses from neglect, abuse and can temporarily adopt horses whose owners are no longer able to care for them.

On rare occasions, CDHR will also adopt horses that may not be able to move to an individual's home or farm.

Grote offered as example the story of Spencer and Oliver, an inseparable pair of horses that CDHR adopted as their ambassadors.

"They were a bonded pair," Grote said. "When we got them, they were emaciated and neglected."

CDHR rehabilitated Oliver and Spencer to the point that they were able to represent CDHR and the State of Connecticut in the Big E Connecticut Day Parade.

"Those two, they went from abuse to basically royalty," Grote said.

Grote said that Oliver recently passed away unexpectedly. In tribute to the two horses, a professional painting of the duo will be sold as an auction item at Denim, Diamonds & Drafts. Valuable offers like this are what helped CDHR's event win best charity event in *Hartford Magazine's* 2019 "Best of" issue. CDHR was also congratulated in an official citation from the state General Assembly.

This is just a single example of CDHR's work.

Stacey Golub, founder and executive director of CDHR, said in a release that the organization has rescued over 100 animals, including seven last year.

Locally, Grote said, two horses were rescued from a neglectful farm in Lyme.

"We're all volunteer," Grote said of the workers at CDHR. "We rely on generosity. [People's] love for horses is just inspirational."

Grote said last year's event raised around



The annual 'Denim, Diamonds & Drafts' fundraiser, to support Connecticut Draft Horse Rescue, returns next month. Pictured here are two of CDHR's horses, Spencer and Oliver, in the Connecticut Day parade at The Big E last fall.

\$10,000 through donations, tickets and retail.

"The sky is the limit," Grote said of this year's event. "We're hoping for six figures."

Tickets can be purchased by calling 860-267-

1542 or via PayPal at ctdraftrescue@aol.com. Deadline for ticket purchases is Feb. 19. For information on CDHR, visit www.ctdraftrescue.com.

Portland Selectmen Form Group to Focus on Brownfields

by Jack Lakowsky

The Board of Selectmen Tuesday established a group to look at redevelopment of brownfields on Brownstone Avenue.

The selectmen approved the creation of the Brownfields Redevelopment Focus Group Committee, which will be tasked with evaluating the redevelopment of three town-owned brownfields along Brownstone Avenue and determine the best and most efficient course of action for the remediation of those brownfields.

The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection defines brownfields as a site once used for industrial, manufacturing or commercial use that has been abandoned due to known or suspected contamination from past uses.

These brownfield parcels then become inert and are a hindrance to revitalizing local economies. Investigation and remediation is required before any restoration, redevelopment or remediation can occur, as required by state statute.

According to the DEEP website, the following are benefits of brownfield remediation: reduction or elimination of public exposure to pollutants; reducing industrial sprawl by returning abandoned sites to productive use; creating new tax revenue; reversing urban decay, revitalizing municipalities and; creating short and long-term jobs.

"We want this to move," said First Selectman Susan Bransfield. "We want for people to know about it."

Bransfield added that if the town and the focus group remain dedicated, then contractors and subcontractors would stay motivated to complete the work in a timely fashion.

According to the resolution, Portland will apply to the state Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) for a grant of \$750,000 to fund the project.

Bransfield said she has a list of more than 20 people who have expressed interest in vol-

unteering for the focus group. The prospective volunteers have diverse career backgrounds, according to the selectman, including health-care, law, real estate, environmental professionals, business owners and landscapers.

"This is not a building committee," Bransfield said to the board. "They'll gather information, analyze and communicate their work. We can't tell an environmental professional what to do when work starts. The group can establish timelines and come up with a work plan."

Bransfield went on to say that this is the town's first attempt at such a project.

"If we find success here, it could be a model for further development," she said. "We can work with our neighbors along the Connecticut River."

The focus group's goals as stated in the referendum are: to gather information from residents, businesses and town officials; assist with

building momentum for the remediation portion of the project; to keep the general public informed and updated on the project's progress; to review Portland Zoning Regulations; and to develop a plan for redevelopment of the remediated Brownfields.

Bransfield said that, in a discussion with DECD chairman David Lehman, she was told brownfield remediation and redevelopment will be presented to state lawmakers as a priority item necessary for improving living standards in Connecticut.

One nearby example of a successful brownfield listed on DECD's website is Flanagan's Landing on New London Turnpike in Glastonbury. That project converted an unused former pigskin tannery mill into a 250-unit apartment community. According to DECD, approximately 400 temporary and 90 permanent jobs resulted from the project.

Colchester Selectmen Ring in New Year with Board Appointments

by Karla Santos

Seven individuals were either appointed or interviewed for positions in various boards and commissions during last Thursday's (Jan. 2) Board of Selectmen meeting, which was the first of the new year.

The Colchester Board of Selectmen started the New Year off with plenty of activity as they interviewed and appointed individuals to boards and commissions while they also discussed and took action on other issues on the agenda for the first Board meeting of the year.

During the meeting, Geraldine Transue and Sandra Gaetano were interviewed for the Commission on Aging.

Beatrice Farlekas and James Stavola were both interviewed and appointed to the Police Commission.

Ronny Segura was interviewed and appointed

to the Water and Sewer Commission. Gregg LePage had already been interviewed and on Thursday was appointed to the Water and Sewer Commission.

Carla Roselli had already been interviewed and on Thursday was appointed to the Agriculture Commission.

The board will make a decision during its next meeting in regards to those who were interviewed but not appointed.

The board also discussed and made a motion for the First Selectman Mary Bylone to sign the Homeland Security Grant Program memorandum of agreement. Sean Shoemaker, the town's Emergency Management Director and Fire Marshal was at the meeting to provide the Board more information about the program. He said the program is offered at no expense to

the town and it's meant to provide reimbursement of funds to the town in the event of an emergency.

"It's a statewide program; we've done it every year," Shoemaker said.

Shoemaker said that the Homeland Security Grant Program is part of a number of pools of money that come from the federal government and get administered by the state of Connecticut. The Emergency Management Performance Grant is also part of those pools of money. The town does not automatically participate in these programs which is why the agreement has to be signed every year it wants to take part in it.

The board also approved some changes to the RecPlex Concession Stand Contract, which will go out to bid. The selectmen, meanwhile, tabled a proposal to remove the Parks and Rec-

reation Department's extra fee for non-residents to participate in programs.

In addition, the meeting went through the approval of a request for proposal for the Colchester Water Division Well 3A – Pump House & Associated Piping to Milton C. Beebe & Sons, Inc., the cost of \$546,559 for the replacement of a well. The motion also authorized the first selectman to enter into a contract and sign all necessary documents. The contract was awarded through a bid.

The Board also approved the purchase of a new computer software and conversion of the existing assessors' office data for \$16,000. The last time the software was changed was about 20 years ago. After the Board of Selectmen's approval, the request will go to the Board of Finance for other approvals.

Special Election is Next Week in Colchester

by Karla Santos

In less than a week, Colchester residents will get to help decide who their next representative in the state House of Representatives will be.

Lebanon Republican Mark DeCaprio and Colchester Democrat Brian Smith are facing off Tuesday, Jan. 14, to see who will get to complete the term of the late Linda Orange. Orange, a Democrat, represented the 48th District in the state House for more than two decades, until her death from cancer last November.

The district includes most of Colchester, as well as portions of Lebanon, Mansfield and Windham. The term runs through November 2020.

In next week's election, only residents of voting districts 1, 2 and 3 will be able to vote. Residents of voting district 4, in the Westchester section of town, are part of the 34th District, which is represented by Republican Irene Haines of East Haddam.

Voting will take place from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m.

The polling locations will be Town Hall for district 1, Abundant Life Church for district 2 and Bacon Academy for district 3.

DeCaprio, 61, is running with both the Republican Party and the Independent Party. Smith, 62, is running with both the Democratic Party and the Working Families Party.

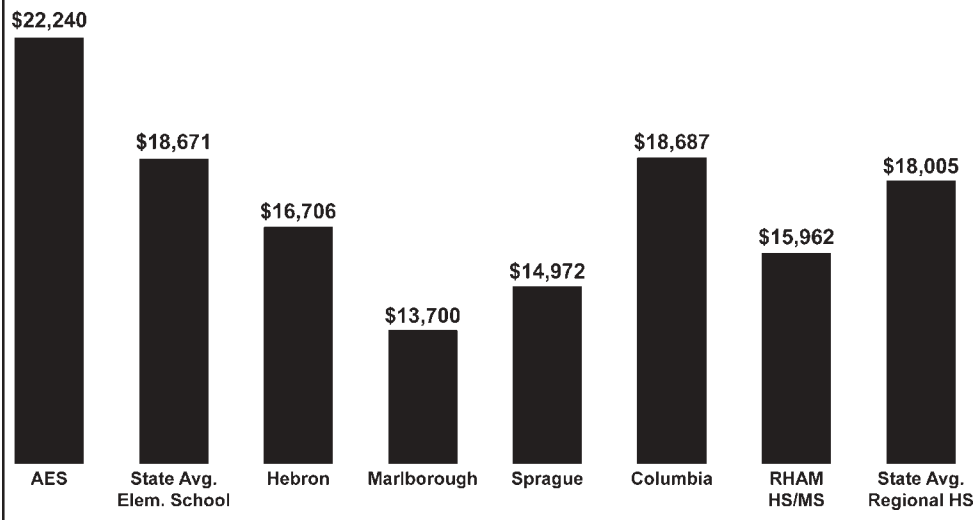
DeCaprio ran for the 48th District seat in 2018, but was defeated by Orange. He has said one of his goals is to work to help keep taxes as low as possible for working families.

Smith, meanwhile, has said one of his goals with the district is to help its towns maintain the quality of life and the character of their communities.

In the closing days of the campaign, the candidates have been reaching out to their opponents' towns. DeCaprio had a rally at the Colchester Green on Wednesday, while Smith was due to hold a community conversation Thursday at Blondie's Diner in Lebanon, after press time.

Elementary School Cost Comparisons

2016-17 Average Cost Per Student



According to this graph, Andover Elementary School's per pupil costs are higher than all the others listed. Andover pays \$22,240 compared with a state average of \$18,671 and the area town average of \$17,261.



In the coming budget season, the Board of Selectmen wants to take care of some long-neglected town needs. The trees seen in this picture were part of a large die off in the past year-and-a-half due to gypsy moths and emerald ash borers. Town officials said they will need \$100,000 to take them down.

Andover Per-Pupil Spending Markedly Higher than Other Towns

by Sloan Brewster

Andover's per-pupil-spending is about 40% higher than it is in surrounding communities, according to a recent presentation by the town administrator.

At the December Board of Education meeting, Town Administrator Eric Anderson gave a PowerPoint presentation on education and general budgets, comparing Andover's mill rate, costs per student and government spending with that of other towns.

"Where are we and how do we stack up to all our neighbors from a cost perspective?" he said was what the presentation addressed.

The analysis included comparisons with surrounding towns as well as eastern Connecticut towns with similar populations including Hebron, Marlborough, Bolton, Coventry, Columbia, Sprague and Salem.

Education board member Dan Foran took issue with Anderson bringing in comparisons with Sprague, which he said had different demographics than Andover and a C+ rating in academics versus Andover's A+ rating.

"I really feel we should not model ourselves after them," he said.

Andover – based on data Anderson collected on 2016 to 2017 – spends 77 percent of its total budget on education, which translates to 7 percent more than average, he said.

Per pupil costs indicated the biggest skew, with Andover's bar towering over all the others in the graph.

According to the data, Andover Elementary School's cost per student is \$22,240 compared with a state elementary school average of \$18,671. The other towns spend an average of \$17,261.

Hebron spends \$16,706 per student, Marlborough spends \$13,700, Sprague spends \$14,972 and Columbia spends \$18,687.

In a phone call Tuesday, Adrian Mandeville, vice first selectman, attributed the schism in part to the small size of the town and the fact that there are fewer children to spread out the costs. He said he expects Andover always will be a little more expensive than surrounding towns but should not be as much as it is.

"There is such a dramatic difference between our spending per pupil and the surrounding towns. It's amazing the difference in costs between us and other towns. We are an outlier in our region," he said, calculating the difference to 40%. "There is a difference between being a little higher and a lot higher."

Schools Superintendent Sally Doyen said she could not speak to the disparity.

"We certainly have been aware of our enrollment," she said. "We track it very closely."

Doyen said the 8% increase in her proposed 2020-21 budget, which she presented at Wednesday's Board of Education meeting, was mostly due to the board's decision last month to add two more classrooms next school year.

Doyen said the board had requested her budget be based on the additional classrooms.

"That's a Board of Ed discussion; that's what they indicated that they want to build a budget on," she said.

At the December meeting, Mandeville argued that Andover has seen a 50% reduction in enrollment but only a 12% decrease in educational costs and that the town has fallen behind in infrastructure improvements.

"We have to fix this so that school buses can drive on bridges," he said. "The class size policies, and I know nobody wants to hear it, is part of your problem."

As far as the town side is concerned, Andover's 34.99 mill rate is "pretty reflective of neighboring communities," Anderson said.

"Bolton's is the highest."

According to the presentation, Hebron's mill rate is 37.05, Marlborough's is 37.25, Bolton's is 39, Coventry's is 32.2, Columbia's is 29.33, Sprague's is 34.75 and Salem's is 32.2.

At \$3,609, Andover's per capita spending "is in line with other towns," he said, comparing it with the average of \$3628; and a range from \$3268 to \$4,550.

"We spend about \$3,600 for every man woman and child," he said.

Mandeville said there should be a better medium between Andover and other towns and that both the town's and schools needs should be met.

"The budgets haven't really been balanced very well," he said.

That was the crux of why First Selectman Jeff Maguire asked Anderson to complete the analysis. "There's been a significant amount of work that has not been completed that has been backlogged as a community," he said. "We're going to try to take care of them; obviously how much we get done will depend how much money there is."

Maguire said he wanted the information in order to start a conversation.

"If we don't have the data we can't make any decisions, that's what I've been complaining about for four years," he said. "This is what we're trying to do to get out in front of all these issues and be the best financial stewards for the town of Andover."

Anderson and Mandeville said the town is underfunded on roadwork and bridges and culvert replacements.

"We're \$400,000 short between where we are and need to be on paving," Mandeville said.

Anderson said he was working on definitive plans for those repairs, which he would include

that in his 2020-21 Budget.

Mandeville and Anderson said with only a three-person crew, the Public Works Department is shorthanded and to be functional needs another person.

In addition, Anderson said the state has still not released the full amount of town aide road funding for 2019 and the first allotment for 2020 is now due.

"We are \$195,000 in the hole," he said. "We should have gotten \$195,000 last year. We got half."

Anderson will also be asking for a significant increase in funding for tree work to take down the large number of Ash trees and White Oaks that have died off in the past year-and-a-half due to gypsy moths and emerald ash borers.

"We're going to have to ask for a chunk," he said. "We're looking at \$100,000 for the trees."

There will also be reductions in the state's Educational Cost Sharing [ECS] funding.

"We know we're getting less ECS as pretty much all the towns are, due to declining enrollment," Anderson said.

According to his PowerPoint presentation, Andover will likely lose approximately \$67,300 in ECS funding in the next budget cycle and \$134,700 the year after. In addition, Andover's portion of the RHAM budget will be going up by about 7% based on an increasing number of Andover students in the school.

"The worst-case total cost increase from these factors is \$499,000," Anderson said while giving the presentation. "This equates to about a two-mill tax increase."

Anderson will present a "preliminary super rough draft" of the municipal portion of the 2020-21 budget to the Board of Selectmen on at its regular meeting, next Monday.

Andover Proposed School Budget Up 8 Percent

by Sloan Brewster

Andover Schools Superintendent Sally Doyen is seeking an 8% increase in spending for the next school year.

At Wednesday's Board of Education meeting, Doyen made a push for a \$4.39 million budget for 2020-2021, an 8% or \$326,000 increase over the current year's \$4.07 million spending plan.

The two main goals of the budget are to "meet needs student and remain aware the rest of the community," Doyen said.

Doyen said she was "budgeting for 16 classes."

At several board meetings in past months parents have raised concerns about overcrowded classrooms in second and fifth grade, often bursting into tears in the process. In response the board added two new paraprofessionals to offer a helpful hand for the remainder of the year and added two new classes to next year's roster, bringing the total from 14 to 16.

Doyen said she projects there will be 186 students in the school next year. As of Wednesday, there were 201 students in the school in the current year.

"It's a constant flux on these numbers," she

said.

With the two additional classrooms, the school will need two more teachers, who will likely opt into health insurance, Doyen said.

"With two new employees, we have to assume with this budget that they will take insurance," she said.

Other drivers for the increase include a contracted increase in teacher salaries and a 10% cost hike for benefits.

In total, the budget accounts for \$848,300 to pay salaries for certified staff, a \$100,300 increase over the current year. Salaries are 70% of the total budget.

"Professional contracted services is down a little bit," Doyen said.

The school offers professional support services for students through a social worker, a psychologist, an occupational therapist, a physical therapist and a school nurse. The budget also covers a pre-k consultant, who works with pre-k classes to assure the district is following guidelines. Legal fees and the district's website are also included in that line item.

"We are in this wonderful media center, we also have an art room, maker space and play-

grounds," she said. "We provide support services."

The line item went down by \$2,500 bringing it from \$307,564 to 305,064.

Repairs for building and grounds increased by \$31,494 from \$161,206 to \$192,700.

"This part year we're on the low side," Doyen. "We are looking at an increase in that line of almost 19½%."

The line item for supplies will see "quite a bit of increase," Doyen said. The \$318,050, a 12% uptake from the current year's \$283,625, will pay for instructional supplies classroom needs including textbooks, nursing supplies, heating oil, diesel fuel, electricity and cleaning supplies.

The costs of heating oil and diesel fuel will be going up next year, Doyen said.

The costs for furniture, fixtures and equipment will see a \$5,000 reduction, going from \$5,000 in the current year to \$0 next year.

The line item for miscellaneous expenses, including covering entrance fees and busses for student field trips and professional associations in which personal participate, such as the Con-

necticut Association of Board of Education [CABE], will see a 1% reduction, going from \$19,145 to \$18,950.

In a phone call, Wednesday, First Selectman Jeff Maguire, when told of the proposed 8% hike said, it was a "fairly substantial increase" and that he would look over the numbers in detail.

"There are issues that the Board of Education needs to grapple with; I mean there's a decrease in the population with children," he said. "It just doesn't match up."

Maguire also pointed out that last month Town Administrator Eric Anderson presented the education board with numbers indicating that the district has a much higher per pupil cost than neighboring towns.

"I would think that based on the information that was provided by the town administrator as far as how we compare to other local school districts that [much of an increase] might not be the most appropriate thing," he said.

The board will review the budget at its next meeting and must present it to the town by Feb. 26.

East Hampton Police News

From Dec. 23-29, East Hampton Police responded to 13 medical calls, four motor vehicle accidents and 10 alarms, and made 15 traffic stops, police said.

Portland Police News

1/1: Cathleen Anderson-Baker, 70, of 14 Waverly Ave., was charged with second-degree assault and disorderly conduct, Portland Police said.

Obituaries

East Hampton

Frederick P. Hansen

Frederick P. Hansen, 91, beloved husband of Phyllis S. Hansen (deceased) of East Hampton, died Sunday, Jan. 5, at Middlesex Hospital, with family by his side. He is best remembered for his great work ethic, sense of responsibility and duty, and for heeding the call to service for his nation, his community, and his church.



Born Nov. 2, 1928, in Hartford, he grew up in the Wilson section of Windsor on a small farm, the son of the late Peter Christian and Margaret (Rowell) Hansen. He attended John Fitch High School in Windsor, going on to earn his Bachelor of Science in agriculture at UConn, class of 1951. He is a veteran of the Korean War, serving until May 1954 and achieving the rank of Corporal. Landing in Yokohama on the day of the Korean Armistice, he was sent north to serve in Sapporo, Japan on the island of Hokkaido.

After discharge, he married Mabel Allen in 1954, the mother of his 4 children, making their home in Granby. An active member of the Lost Acres Fire Department, he served on the Building and Truck committee. He served on the Granby Board of Tax Review, becoming chair for a number of years, and on the Republican Town Committee. He was a deacon of First Congregational Church of Granby.

He married his second wife Joan Marshall in 1969, moving to Middle Haddam, buying and beginning the restoration process of a much-loved historic home. Unexpectedly widowed in 1972, he considered it his good fortune to meet his third wife, Phyllis, whom he wed in 1978. She helped him to finish restoring the home as they built a rich and loving life together. They were a perfect couple, becoming well-known in town as a couple who not only contributed many volunteer hours, but held many lively social gatherings, including the highly-anticipated annual Night Blooming Cereus Flower event held at their lovely garden home. He built and maintained the beautiful flowerbeds, hummingbird and songbird feeders that graced their home, making it a great treat to visit them and sit in their secret garden patio.

He retired from Nutmeg International Truck and Eastern Connecticut Truck Sales in 1992 at the age of 74. He also sold firetrucks for Central States Fire Apparatus of South Dakota part-time for 10 of his working years, delivering firetrucks across the country. One year a much younger companion got to go along to keep Fred from making a solo trip to South Dakota, and he delighted in the excitement of a cross-country ride in a real firetruck!

He spent many hours as a volunteer at the Westbrook Tourist Information Center with his wife Phyllis. He was a member of the Republican Town Committee, the Belfry Club of Middle Haddam, and was an active and very involved member of the Second Congregational Church of Middle Haddam, a special church he was completely dedicated to. Living next door, he would often take the job of turning the AC, heat and lights on/off and could occasionally be seen mowing the grass early on a Sunday morning before churchgoers arrived. He loved the church meals, especially the annual Strawberry Shortcake Supper. His wise counsel on many church fundraising goals, building maintenance and restoration efforts were highly regarded. He was a member of the Planning and Zoning Commission in East Hampton for 22 years, serving as vice chairman and chairman for a number of years.

It was his involvement in Rotary where he truly found a home and a cause to which he was committed. He was honored three times as a Paul Harris Fellow, was active in the Scholarship Committee, Old Home Day including the Car Raffle, and Breakfast with Santa. He loved the annual boat ride on the lake, numerous special event dinners and the camaraderie of an active service organization. He had perfect attendance for many, many years – he just loved his Rotary meetings and never wanted to miss them! His family is much comforted knowing how well loved and respected he was by his fellow Rotarians and his church family, and how they cared for him in his later years, assisting him in and out of buildings and helping him avoid lines by bringing his plates to him at his beloved church and Rotary meals. He was a wonderful father and grandfather, setting a great example for his family as someone to look up to.

He leaves his son, Jeffrey Allen Hansen of Richmond, Va.; his daughter, Margaret (Meg) Hansen Cooley (Ken) of Farmington; son-in-law, Kurt Neumann of Granby; daughter-in-law, Beryl Nelson of Meridian, Idaho; his most special friend, Rita Arnold of East Hampton; and her children (Laura, Jim, Jackie and Regina). He also leaves eight grandchildren, Sara Eggers (Gary) of Maumelle, Ark., and Jennifer Zaneli (Troy) of Meridian, Idaho, Michele Rausch of Indianapolis, Ind., Carly Santangelo (Aaron) of Cuba, N.Y., Amy Stukenholtz (Tyler) of Boise, Idaho, Ben Cooley of Farmington, Jonathan Whaley (Tess) of Milford and Llewelyne Arden of Lopez Island, Wash.; 13 great-grandchildren (Murielle, Amy, Danielle, Rebekah, Caden, Kenna, Jack, Owen, Cellan, Alex, Leighton, Hazel and Tobin); cousins George H. Nash and Nancy Nash, Ted, Walter and Roger Stevenson; sister-in-law Lois Longley, nephew Ed Longley and niece Susan Longley.

He was predeceased by his three former wives, Phyllis Stedman Hansen, Joan Marshall Hansen, and Mabel Allen Taylor; his brother, Howard Hansen; his daughter, Lois Hansen Neumann; his son, Gregory Peter Hansen; and a sweet infant grandson, Daniel Frederick Cooley.

A memorial service will be held Saturday, Jan. 11, at 11 a.m., at the Second Congregational Church in Middle Haddam, with the Rev. James A. Simpson officiating. Burial will follow in Union Hill Cemetery in Middle Haddam. There will be no calling hours.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Second Congregational Church Memorial Fund, P.O. Box 206, Middle Haddam, CT 06456.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Colchester

Lawrence H. Webster

Lawrence H. Webster, 80, of Colchester, passed away at Hartford Hospital Thursday, Jan. 2. Born in Colchester May 17, 1939, he was the son of the late Harold and Anne (McGrath) Webster.

Larry was a 1957 graduate of Bacon Academy, where he was a talented baseball player. After high school, he went on to serve with the U.S. Air Force, where he also played on the Air Force baseball team for several years. While serving at the Dover Air Force base, he met Doris Manuel, who he married April 28, 1962. The couple shared 55 years together before she predeceased him Jan. 28, 2018. Larry retired from Pratt and Whitney Aircraft several years ago after a long and successful career.

A friendly, outgoing and sociable man, Larry enjoyed time with friends, watching his favorite teams, Yankees, Giants and UConn basketball, or participating with several groups in and around Colchester. He was a charter member of the Good Times Motoring Club, a member of the Masons, Wooster Lodge 10 AF & AM, a member of the American Legion, Donald Bigelow Post 54, and a member of the coffee club, where he would meet up with good friends at various restaurants in town.

Larry was a fun-loving friend to all and he will be sadly missed. He leaves several nieces and nephews and many extended family members and friends.

A graveside funeral service with full military honors will be held Friday, Jan. 17, at 11 a.m., at Linwood Cemetery, Linwood Avenue, Colchester.

In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory may be made to the Colchester Hayward Volunteer Fire Department, 54 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester, CT 06415.

The Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester has been entrusted with care of arrangements. For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.



Hebron

Leah Anne Liebeskind

Leah Anne Liebeskind, 32, of Hebron, passed away Monday, Dec. 30. She was born Sept. 7, 1987, in Honolulu, Hawaii, the daughter of Eric and Jeanette (Maika) Liebeskind.

Besides her parents, she leaves her four children, Noah, Asher, Greyson and Peyton; and her brothers, Micah and Justin Liebeskind.

Relatives and friends joined the family Sunday, Jan. 5, at the Coventry-Pietras Funeral Home, 2665 Boston Tpke. (Route 44), Coventry. A Mass of Christian Burial was held Monday, Jan. 6, at St. Maurice Church, 32 Hebron Rd., Bolton. Burial followed at Bolton Center Cemetery.

For online condolences, visit pietrasfuneralhome.com.



Colchester

Lynda Tommasi

Lynda Tommasi, 66, of Norwich, formerly of Lebanon, passed away at Backus Hospital Tuesday, Jan. 7. Born Aug. 20, 1953; she was the daughter of the late William and Shirley (McGrath) Lyons.

Lynda grew up and lived in Maine for several years until she moved to Connecticut, where she attended school in Colchester. She was a devoted grandmother and mother who would show her love through baking delicious baked goods for her friends and family. Her motherly personality was not only shown to her family, but to everyone around her.

She is survived by her son Adam Tommasi and his wife Amber of Marlborough; daughter Lisa and her husband Jeff Reck of Lisbon; grandchildren, Dylan, Alyssa, Britney, Aimee, Kimee, Jeffrey, Jacob, Andrew, and Anthony; stepbrother John Pellet; and numerous extended family and friends.

In addition to her parents, she was predeceased by a son, Michael Tommasi; her brothers Paul, Terrence, Ronald and David Lyons; and a stepbrother, John Pellet.

Calling hours will be held today, Jan. 10, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester, from 4-6 pm., with a memorial service at 6 p.m. Burial will be private.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to cover funeral expenses, c/o Lisa Reck, 19 Kenyon Rd., Lisbon, CT 06351.

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.



East Hampton

Shirley Mae Staples

Shirley Mae Staples, 83, of Middletown, formerly of East Hampton, died Monday, Dec. 30, at Glastonbury Health Care. Born Sept. 5, 1936, in Chicopee, Mass., she was the daughter of the late Charles and Gladys (Rockwell) Kidd.

Shirley had worked many jobs in her lifetime to provide for her family including both, Bevin Bell and Gong Bell, Pratt & Whitney, and as a home health aide. Shirley was also a former member of the East Hampton's Homemakers Club.

She is survived by her three sons, Arthur Staples of East Hartford, Thomas Staples of Germany and Barry Staples of East Hampton; two brothers, Kenneth Kidd of Berlin, George Kidd of West Haven; seven grandchildren, Michael, Julia, Joshua, Nicolas, Alannah, Keanan and Owen.

She was predeceased by five siblings, Charles, Donald, Laurence, Sammy and Barbara.

Funeral services for Shirley will be held at the convenience of the family in the spring.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Portland

Lucille Baars

Lucille (Leland) Baars, 89, of Portland, passed away peacefully though unexpectedly on Dec. 31 after a brief illness. She was predeceased by her beloved husband Ed.

Lu was an amazing woman who loved her family, relished her past, and left her mark on the future. Lu was a teacher for many years in the Portland school system and was still recognized by former students who now have families of their own. She was an avid reader and frequented the Portland Library that did its best to keep up with her appetite for books. She was a longtime member of Zion Lutheran Church and served for many years on the altar guild and funeral committee.

Lu leaves behind her daughter, Susan Detwiler and her husband Don of Pennsylvania; son, Paul Baars and his wife Lisa, and daughter Kimberly Watrous and her husband John. She leaves her grandchildren, Jeffrey Baars and his wife Kate of Washington, Matthew Baars, and Michael Rousseau as well as four great-grandchildren Joey-Lynn, Kaylee, Dakota and Tara.

Lu was predeceased by her sister Dorothy Engelman and her brother Howard Leland, and leaves behind her niece and nephew Jackie and Christopher Leland and her great-niece Samantha.

Lu will be deeply missed and forever remembered.

The funeral was held Monday, Jan. 6, in the Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland. Burial was in the family plot in Swedish Cemetery Portland. Friends called at the funeral home on Monday morning before the service.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be sent to the Portland Library, 20 Freestone Ave., Portland, CT 06480.



Portland

Mary Ferguson

Mary Ferguson, 60, of Portland, passed away peacefully and painlessly Saturday, Dec. 21, with family at her side. Mary was born in Aldeburgh, England, on Bentwaters Air Force Base.

Mary lived most of her life in Portland. She very much enjoyed the people and the town. After graduation from Portland High School, she studied at Eastern Connecticut State University and UConn throughout her life.

Mary passionately pursued the intellectual and emotional issues central to her life – with family as core and Jesus as Savior. A spiritual pinnacle in Mary's life came as she welcomed her daughter Grace Leigh Delaney. Mary sent thanks to the heavens daily for Grace; she viewed her daughter as a true miracle. Mary's spiritual commitments assisted her to overcome a series of physical trials until the very last day of her life. Mary was an emotional and spiritual rock for her daughter throughout her life. Guiding her through the trials and tribulations of school and forming a foundation for her daughter to now take to college with her.

Mary had a beautiful singing voice and throughout the decades she wrote songs and recorded music. This included many religious pieces. She was also a gifted artist whose drawings and sketches reflect her deeply she appreciated nature and inspired artistry.

Mary is predeceased by her father, William John Ferguson.

In addition to her daughter Grace, Mary leaves behind her mother Theresa Ferguson, stepmother Diane Ferguson, and four sisters: Catherin Onuoha, Loretta Foley, Susan Starkowski and Janet Ferguson. Mary was also loved and cherished by 18 nieces/nephews, eight grandnieces/nephews, and extended family.

Mary had a special place in her heart for every member of her expansive family and sought to have a personal relationship with each of them to learn about their lives and to share her gospel.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be held Saturday, Jan. 18, in St. Mary Church, Portland, at 10 a.m. Burial will be at St. Mary Cemetery, Portland. Friends may call at the Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St, Portland on Friday, Jan. 17, from 6-8 p.m.

