

RIVEREAST

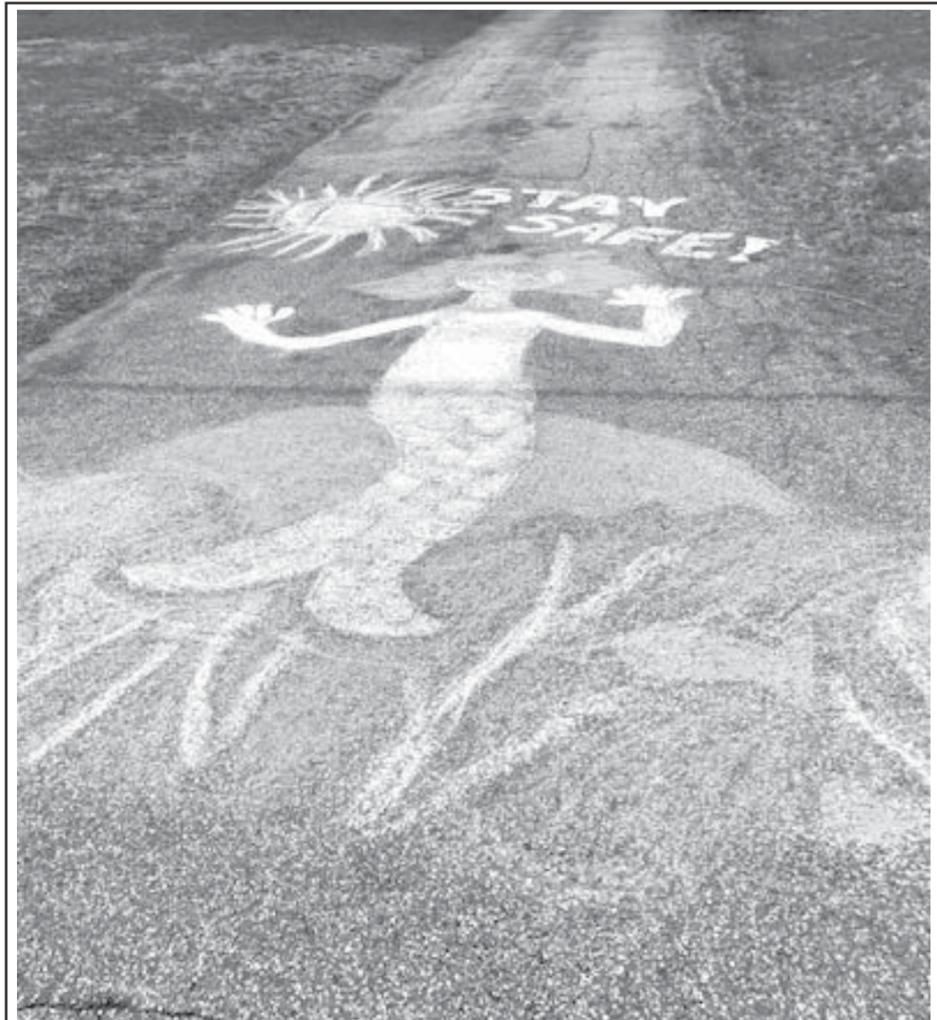
# News Bulletin

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

Volume 44, Number 27

Published by The Glastonbury Citizen

June 5, 2020



**Stay Safe...** While in isolation due to COVID-19, neighbors in Hebron have sketched drawings and wrote messages in chalk to remind folks they are not alone and to be safe. This mermaid was one of the many images seen on driveways and sidewalks on Hall Road.

## New Protocols for Sears Park

by Jack Lakowsky

Beachgoers and visitors of East Hampton's Sears Park on Lake Pocotopaug can still enjoy Belltown's local landmark, but new protocols must be adhered to.

East Hampton Parks and Recreation Director Jeremy Hall said the day-to-day look of the park will be the same, to help mitigate the spread of pandemic COVID-19 new rules like social distancing, occupancy limits and closing children's playscapes will be implemented.

"It might seem a little over the top," Hall said. "But it will be worth it when we have summer crowds."

Hall said the park on recent weekends has already neared capacity limits. Hall explained that, during more "normal" times, Sears Park can accommodate 200 people. For now, the park will close upon reaching 80% capacity, or about 160 people, the maximum number of people calculated to be able to attend the park and still maintain proper distancing. After a closure is announced, new visitors will not be allowed.

According to Hall, if the park closes to capacity, staff will wait to reopen system until capacity is reduced to about 50%. Should this limited capacity system prove unsustainable more restrictive measures, like the prohibition of swimming or closing the entire park indefinitely, can be introduced, according to the Parks and Recreation Department's East Hampton Sears Park Boat Launch Operational Plan.

However, Hall also has authority to close the park if he judges that visitation has reached a point where proper distancing cannot be maintained. He also said the plan will be updated as new information about the pandemic is released.

Mitigation measures listed in the plan are based on consultations with the Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH), the Chatham Health District and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). Local officials also consulted with the state Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP).

DEEP has closed swimming in state parks like Gay City in Hebron and Day Pond in Colchester, but town-operated parks, like Sears, remain open with new rules and limits. Connecticut DPH guidelines say that COVID-19 is not known to spread through recreational swimming in either freshwater or saltwater. Therefore, East Hampton decided to allow swimming at Sears Park. DEEP closed swimming in state parks because of limited staff.

Occupancy limits are among several new regulations for the park. Playscapes, park buildings, restrooms and most other enclosed structures are closed for the foreseeable future, according to Hall. Parties of six or more people are forbidden. Limited picnicking is available to household parties of five or fewer. Staff will sanitize tables every half hour, or as needed, according to Hall. Tables will be spread eight feet apart.

The lakefront, Hall said, will be lined with indicators spaced fifteen feet apart.

"They give a visual perception of where people need to sit," Hall said. "There will be flyers explaining everything."

Hall said the added space between sitting areas allows for socially-distanced movement to and from a visitor's beach site.

See Protocols page 2

## RHAM Principal to be Superintendent for Up to a Year

by Sloan Brewster

The RHAM Board of Education has decided that Scott Leslie will be interim schools superintendent for up to one year.

At a special executive session meeting Monday, the board decided to keep Leslie in the position for that long to give the board more time to look for a superintendent, board chairman Stephanie Bancroft said.

"We are pleased to announce that our cherished high school principal has agreed to serve as our acting superintendent during this time of transition," the board said in a statement Bancroft forwarded. "Mr. Leslie's appointment is for a year, or until the time a new Superintendent of Schools is appointed, whichever occurs first. Mr. Leslie's appointment remains subject to the approval of the Commissioner of Education."

Leslie, who has been principal at RHAM since 2000, will take over for Patricia Law on June 23. Law tendered her resignation on May 12.

In an email Tuesday, Leslie said he was unable to comment on his appointment as he had not yet discussed the details with the board.

When asked if he will remain principal at RHAM while serving as superintendent, he replied he was "not really sure what it is all going to look like yet."

In the meantime, last week Andover board member David Gostanian, whose term ends in June 2023, gave up his seat. In a phone call Tuesday, he said his reasons for resigning had "nothing to do with what's been going on."

Gostanian was referring to changes on the board, including the de-chairing of Susan Rapelye and the resignation of Law. On May 4, the board unanimously voted to remove Rapelye from the chairmanship. Then last Monday, the board elected Bancroft, who was previously secretary, as chair and named Scott Fleeher secretary.

According to Rapelye, it all started at the April 27 meeting, when she gave a statement to the board in which she called members out for what she deemed a non-transparent and non-collaborative process to approve the RHAM 2020-21 budget. She ultimately filed a complaint about the board to the Freedom of Information Commission.

The complaint, dated May 6, accuses the board of preparing the budget "behind the scenes with selected board members and without being held in public." In the correspondence, Rapelye questions the legality of the approved capital and operating budgets "since the preparations and negotiations all happened illegally."

Rapelye said she believes Law's resignation and the FOIC complaint are connected.

Last Friday, in a statement issued by Bancroft, the board acknowledged Rapelye's complaint while noting it was "truly regrettable" that it was filed before the board was given an opportunity to discuss and respond to her concerns through a public board meeting.

"As elected officials, we recognize and appreciate that the fundamental purpose of the FOI statute is to promote open government and to provide broad public access to our meetings and our records," the statement reads. "The board respects its obligations under the FOI statute and is committed to cooperating fully with the FOI complaint in an effort to resolve this matter in a civil and expedient manner."

Gostanian, who is also a member of the

Andover Volunteer Fire Department, said he made the decision with his family in January to leave the board – but waited until budget season was over to make the announcement.

"I'm very, very busy with the fire department," he said. "I've been a member a long time, a lieutenant and president of the association and involved in a lot of projects."

His fire department commitments have increased with COVID-19 as he does infection control training with members, he said. He also has a lot to do as association president and will need to be on hand when the department gets a soon to arrive new tanker.

"There's just a lot going on with the fire department," he said.

Gostanian said he has spoken with residents and learned there are a couple of good candidates that are interested in taking his seat.

Gostanian has been involved with the RHAM board for many years, starting when he was Board of Finance liaison to the board, a post he held for about eight years.

"It's been a long time, it's been an interest-

See Principal page 2

**Protocols cont. from Front Page**

Staff will monitor for social distancing compliance. If inappropriate behavior is seen, town staff will remind visitors of distancing rules. Local police will escort any nuisance visitors out of the park, according to Hall. Hall added that he does not anticipate any issues like this.

Contact sports and ball games are prohibited. Shooting basketballs and playing tennis will be acceptable if played by small, household groups of five or fewer, according to the operational plan.

People older than 65 or anyone with pre-existing health issues should not visit town parks, according to Parks and Rec., especially on hot, crowd-drawing days.

“We’ve had a lot more work to do, but the state has been very helpful,” Hall said.

One of the officials Hall consulted was Russell Melmed, director of health for the Chatham Health District.

“What we’re seeing is a broad understanding that risk of transmission is much lower outdoors than indoors,” Melmed told the *Rivereast*. Indoor air-handling systems, Melmed explained, can facilitate the transmission of coronavirus.

“Time, space, place. These determine transmission,” Melmed said, but added, “Zero risk is not possible.”

**Principal from Front Page**

ing time,” he said. “I was involved with negotiations [and] hired a new superintendent.”

Gostanian said the board is comprised of talented people with a variety of experience.

“RHAM’s a great school,” he said. “Both my kids got great educations [and] did great in college.”

The town of Andover has scheduled a virtual special town meeting for Tuesday, June 30 at 7 p.m. to elect a member to fill the vacancy left by Gostanian. Copies of candidates’ synopses of qualifications and information on how to participate in the meeting will be available on the town website at [www.andoverct.org](http://www.andoverct.org).

# Observations & Ruminations

**By Mike Thompson**

It shouldn’t have taken the horrific murder of George Floyd to affect real change, but hopefully, real change will arise from it.

I’m very much on the side of the peaceful protestors on this one. Frankly, after watching the full video of Floyd being killed by the Minneapolis police last week, I don’t see how anyone cannot be. There are conflicting accounts as to whether he resisted arrest before that infamous video – the police say he did, but surveillance video indicates otherwise – but even if he did, it did not in any way justify kneeling on his neck for nearly nine minutes, suffocating him. Certainly not with three other police officers on the scene. After Floyd was down, what was he realistically going to do? Jump up and take out all four of them with one roundhouse kick like he was some action movie star?

I do not get how one human being can kneel on another human being like that, ignore his pleas for help, his pleas of anguish, his pleas that he can’t breathe. I do not get how Derek Chauvin’s fellow officers could just stand there and watch him do that to another human being. Like I said, it was a horrific murder.

So do I get the anger? Heck yes I get the anger. I don’t blame anyone for protesting. Especially since this is hardly an isolated incident. It has been the case for entirely too long that people of color are treated differently by police. Not all police, certainly. Through my personal and professional life, I’ve had the opportunity to know several police officers, and I really do subscribe to the “bad apples” theory. It’s not all of them.

But the bad apples need to be dealt with. And the good apples, frankly, don’t need – they can’t – just stand there and remain silent. They need to speak out; they need to intervene. They need to let people know “Hey, the Derek Chavins of the world, they’re not us.” Because I have an awful lot of friends more liberal than I, and I can tell you they don’t feel that’s the case.

The bad cops need to be weeded out. And the good cops need to rise up. You’re seeing some indication of that at the moment – Chauvin and his three fellow officers were immediately fired, and in Kentucky earlier this week a police chief was fired because his officers didn’t have their body cameras on when they shot and killed a black man – but it needs to continue after this moment has passed, after things die down and get back to normal.

Now, I don’t condone the violence – at all. There’s something a little fishy about the whole thing. For one thing, an awful lot frankly seems to be done by white people. Not saying white people can’t be angry – I’m white and I’m certainly angry – but all the violence is going to do is make the cause look bad. You can’t help but wonder if it’s being organized by forces whose goals are less than positive – forces on both sides of the political fence.

It’s also leading to innocent people getting hurt. Police, perhaps in an attempt to quell future violence and looting, have been seen turning guns and tear gas on peaceful protestors. (Don’t even get me started on peaceful protestors in DC getting tear-gassed out of the way Monday so that President Trump can have his ridiculous photo op in front of a church.) It’s been awful to see.

And frankly, the violent protests have taken attention away from the peaceful ones – and the vast, vast majority of them have been peaceful. It’s pretty freaking shameful the peaceful ones – including multiple ones in my town of Manchester just in the past few days – aren’t getting more coverage than they are – but the old adage “if it bleeds, it leads” seems to be rearing its ugly head again.

As the protests have expanded across the nation, and as many – but again, not most – have turned ugly, it feels odd to say “Gee, I

hope the president just stays out of this.” But that’s what I, and probably many others, have been thinking. I figured he would only make things worse – and he has.

Instead of calling for peace, President Trump has instead called for more violence – telling the nation’s governors on Monday that “most of you are weak” and that they needed to toughen up and to “dominate,” or else they would look “like a bunch of jerks.” From the Rose Garden Monday evening, he threatened to unleash active military on our own streets if the governors don’t get the situation under control.

He then made that aforementioned walk over to St. John’s Episcopal Church for a photo op. And I’m sorry, that may sound cynical, but that’s what it was. He stood in front of the church and held up a Bible, and looked glumly from side to side as the flashbulbs popped. As a Christian, it greatly offended me. Don’t use religion like that, Mr. President. Don’t use it to try to justify increased violence. Don’t use it to try to score points with your base.

It was a terrible, shameful moment.

In a joint statement Tuesday, nine Episcopal bishops from across New England – including Connecticut Bishop Suffragan Laura Ahrens and Connecticut Bishop Ian Douglas – correctly criticized the moment as “disgraceful and morally repugnant.”

“Simply by holding aloft an unopened Bible he presumed to claim Christian endorsement and imply that of the Episcopal Church,” the bishops said. “Far more disturbingly, he seemed to be affecting the authority of the God and Savior we worship and serve, in order to support his own authority and to wield enhanced use of military force in a perverted attempt to restore peace to our nation.”

The protests show no signs of stopping anytime soon. Hopefully the violence will have quelled by the time you’re reading this on Friday, but the protests themselves don’t seem to be going anywhere – nor should they be. It’s past time for a major change in this country in terms of how law enforcement treats people of color. Compare the images of Floyd getting killed for passing a phony \$20 with those of armed white men storming government buildings, literally screaming in officers’ faces, who faced zero repercussion for their actions. You can’t tell me that’s equal treatment. And Floyd sadly is just the latest example; this has been happening as long as I can remember.

And it needs to stop. Black lives matter. It’s as simple as that.

\* \* \*

Before I go, I owe a deep, deep apology to the owners of three East Hampton businesses: Yellow Marigold, Heather’s Fine Jewelry, and Black Birch & Grace. A letter to the editor published last week incorrectly stated that all three have closed. That never should have been published, as the three are still very much in business. In fact, Yellow Marigold, as you’ll see in a story by Jack Lakowsky in this week’s paper, is moving to a brand-new location, and getting ready to open later this month. Heather’s has closed its brick-and-mortar location, but is fully selling online.

And while Black Birch & Grace is indeed closing, it remains open until the end of the month. In fact, for June it will be open Saturdays, offering deep discounts. For more information, go to [www.facebook.com/BlackBirchandGrace](http://www.facebook.com/BlackBirchandGrace).

Again, my deepest apologies to all three businesses. Things are tough enough for businesses right now without a mistake like that getting published. That never should’ve slipped through, and I feel terrible about it.

\* \* \*

See you next week.

# Support Shown for Colchester School Budget

by Karla Santos

Last Thursday, the Board of Finance held a public hearing regarding the Board of Education budget, featuring 14 speakers, who mostly showed their support for the budget as presented.

As of last Thursday, the budget sits at \$41.40 million, an increase of 0.4%, or \$165,488, over current year spending.

Before the public portion of the meeting, Superintendent of Schools Jeff Burt spoke about the status of the budget.

The proposed budget was initially presented in February and it totaled \$42.47 million or a \$1.23 million increase from last year's budget. That increase equaled to a 2.99% for the 2020-21 school year. However, because of COVID-19 the Board of education and the Board of Finance have been working to reduce the budget increase.

While the budget increase has been reduced, the spending package still contains several proposed new items, including a math interventionist, a substance abuse counselor, entrance security personnel or greeters, a kindergarten teacher, funds for technology hardware, a stipend for a webmaster, an in-school suspension coordinator, an office professional, a new pre-k section, a special education teacher, paraprofessionals and a child development associate.

Some of the areas in the original budget that

have gone through reductions include transfers to capital reserve, some information technology-related items, general supplies, some newly-requested personnel such as a math coach, a technology integrationist, a contingency paraprofessional and a special education teacher, among other items.

As there is no public referendum this year due to COVID-19 protections, the Board of Finance will be voting for the town and education budgets. The school budget vote is set for the finance board's June 15 meeting.

Vince Rose is one of the residents that spoke at last week's hearing. He said he supports the budget as presented and urged residents to step back and look at the budget in this year's context.

He said this budget has been the result of "tremendous amount of work" by the Board of Education, who has tried to come up with a "workable" budget for this year.

"I don't think this is the budget of anyone's dreams," he said, adding that the board is trying to get through the year without harming the school system.

"I'm very concerned with respect to continuing our investment in education," Rose said. "I think that is very easy to lose programs and very hard to rebuild them."

In addition, Rose praised teachers for the

"pretty amazing" job they have done with online learning.

"Kids learning online and continuing to get an education out of very difficult circumstances, that's a testament to the system," Rose said. "I think the investment is worth it."

Sophie Rose, daughter of Vince Rose, also spoke later in the hearing. Rose is a sophomore at Bacon Academy and while she didn't talk about the budget, she spoke as a witness of the job teachers are doing with online learning.

Rose said she was "thankful" for the support she has received from her teachers as this year was her first time taking the Advanced Placement test. She said that while it was "interesting" trying to do it in quarantine, there were a lot of resources offered.

"The teachers were tremendous help in all of it," Sophie Rose said. "The teachers who I didn't have the test for were really good at making sure that I took the time to study for the right class."

She also said that the teacher in the class for which she had the test did a "really good job making sure we all knew how it was going to work".

John Malsbenden was also a speaker at the public hearing. He said he was a teacher and was in support of the budget. He said he has

heard people say that "seniors shouldn't be required to pay taxes" in support of education because they don't have children in the schools. Malsbenden said he "completely" disagrees with that statement.

"A lot of people paid an awful lot of taxes so that I could get a good education," Malsbenden said. "I believe that it is our obligation to pay taxes so the next generation and the generation following that could receive a good education."

In addition, he said that while he supports the budget as presented, he opposes further reductions.

"I'm afraid that if we have any more reductions in this budget it would have a negative impact in the educational infrastructure," he said.

Fire Chief Walter Cox also spoke at the hearing as an individual and also urged the finance board to pass the budget. He said he has lived in Colchester for 42 years and given the circumstances the budget presented is "reasonable."

"We all understand that we are living in a very unprecedented time nationally, within the state of Connecticut and locally and specially for the town of Colchester," Cox said. "It is a very difficult time and the Board of Finance has been tasked with a very difficult decision."

# Colchester Historical Society Exhibit Celebrated

by Karla Santos

While protests against racial injustice are taking place across the country, the Colchester Historical Society is celebrating that it has been recognized by a national organization for the creation of an exhibit that highlights the history of the African American community in Colchester.

The exhibit, "Emerging from the Shadows: The Story of Colchester's School for Colored Children, 1803-1840," opened at the Colchester History Museum in April 2019. The exhibit includes original documents and artifacts that represent the history of the African American community in town.

The recognition comes from the American Association of State and Local History (AASLH), a national organization that informed the Colchester Historical Society that it had been chosen for an Award of Excellence last month. In January, the exhibit also received an Award of Merit from the Connecticut League of History Organizations (CLHO).

For years, the members of the Colchester Historical Society and the Colchester History Museum have been working to gather the information that led to the exhibit.

Programs and Outreach Chairman of the Colchester Historical Society, Gigi Liverant, said that the Society received a grant from the Connecticut Humanities to hire professionals that would research the needed information to put together the exhibit. Kazimiera Kozlowski, former director of the Prudence Crandall Museum, and Diana McCain, an author and history researcher, were hired to do this work. They

started working in fall 2018, digging through history records to find out information about the African American community in Colchester and the region. In addition, their work included information about the School for Colored Children, which is located in the center of town.

"They did a masterful job," Liverant said.

Kozlowski retired from the Prudence Crandall Museum early in 2018. She had previously worked researching the early education of African-American history and was looking for something to do after retirement. At that time, Liverant had asked Kozlowski to take part in the project and she accepted. Kozlowski was the one who contacted McCain, who also agreed to help research, organize and install the exhibit.

"We are thrilled to be able to work with the Colchester Historical Society because that aspect of Connecticut's history often times is overlooked," Kozlowski said. "So to be able to work on a project that would bring to light a little bit more about what the black community was doing as far as education, social involvement, was kind of part of our DNA to be interested in that to begin with, so to work on that project was perfect."

The exhibit was a combination of the basic outline the Historical Society had pulled together previously and the work done by Kozlowski and McCain.

But the project came with a challenge, Kozlowski told the *RiverEast* as she explained that the period in which the color school started was very early.

Kozlowski said that those involved in the project were hoping they could "find much more information on the school."

She said a lot of the work turned out to be trying to put into context what was happening statewide with African Americans in early 18th century and the revolutionary war period; what was happening with Connecticut's public educational system and then figuring out why Colchester might have established that school when it did.

Kozlowski said the team wasn't able to find an answer to all of those questions but is hopeful that with the exhibit, the word will get out to more people who may have information on the topic.

"The more you can bring the topic to light, the more your chances that you'll be able to bring that information," Kozlowski said.

She added that sometimes until people know that information is being sought, they don't know they have the answer to that information.

"I think that's the challenge for folks that are trying to do research on kind of the marginalized communities throughout history," Kozlowski said. "Because often times that population either doesn't leave a permanent record or for too long academics were interpreting history through the eyes of white men rather than the balance of the population surrounding them."

She said that when the exhibit opened last year, it was "exciting" for her. She said she felt the team did justice with the amount of infor-

mation they found and its connection to the work they did on previous years.

McCain's background also includes Connecticut's early history and the accomplishments of African American communities "despite social injustice," Kozlowski said.

"I'm thrilled," she said. "For me it was fun to kind of step out of the career path I was on and step right in to a project that I was familiar with and comfortable with."

Kozlowski said she is thrilled with the awards and gives Liverant "such credit" for putting together the application that led to the recognition.

"I pat myself on the back and Diane and everyone involved in the Historical Society because that's a real achievement to be acknowledged by not only your local community but a national award so that's a big deal," she said.

Kozlowski said she will continue to work with the museum and part of the plan is to do public programing while continuing to focus on the exhibit.

Kozlowski also said this is a special time for the exhibit because of the protests that have been going on nationally, which she believes is "a continuation of attitudes that have been kind of underlying over the past 400 years."

She said history like the one shown at the School for Colored Children shows the "strength of the country."

"I think those are the hand holds we need to show that even despite how difficult it is now, we can make it through," Kozlowski said.

# Yellow Marigold Owner: Isn't My Business Essential?

by Jack Lakowsky

Jordana Costa, owner of Yellow Marigold Massage in East Hampton, said her clients seek massage therapy for essential physical pain management.

"The state doesn't see me as essential," Costa told the *Riverast*. "But so many people depend on me. My clients aren't just numbers to me."

Costa's business has been closed since Gov. Ned Lamont's March 16 executive order closing nonessential businesses. Yellow Marigold is scheduled to reopen June 20 as part of the second phase of the state's attempt at recovering economic losses caused by the continuing COVID-19 pandemic.

And, the store will be opening in a whole new location, 27 East High St., on the upper level.

Costa said her clients see her for many reasons. Some come to postpone the cost of intrusive surgeries. Others want an alternative to opioid pain killers, she said.

"I'm part of the solution," Costa said of helping people manage pain and discomfort. "A big part of what I believe in is helping people see massage therapy as a medical profession."

Costa said massage therapists tend to fall into two categories. The first, with which Costa identifies, are professionals who specialize in pain management. For this reason, Costa said some of her clients seeking alternative pain managements have been referred to her by their physicians.

Spas and saunas belong in the second category, Costa said.

Whether a medical or recreational facility, Costa said, massage therapists will need to implement many changes. Costa is now retrofitting her business in anticipation of official state guidelines.

Costa said she will deep-clean her shop between each client. To accommodate the added work, she said she will schedule appointments

45 minutes apart. Pre-pandemic, she scheduled appointments 15 minutes apart, she said.

"I don't want anyone to feel rushed," Costa said.

Costa said she predicts her waiting area to be closed. She said clients will wait in their cars until she contacts them. She will also cover tables in plastic sheeting. She will ensure all check-outs are speedy.

"Most of my regular clients are ready to come back," Costa said.

Costa will also meet the needs of clients who aren't ready to venture outside. She said she will offer home visits.

"If people are okay with me coming to them, then that works for me," Costa said. "I probably won't offer that forever, but I will until people are comfortable."

Costa said she expects a slow start to be followed by a gradual recovery.

Clients can call 860-338-9989 or email [yymassage.jc@gmail.com](mailto:yymassage.jc@gmail.com) for appointments.

\*\*\*

Another local business on the move is Heather's Fine Jewelry. Owner Heather Phillips made the decision in May to move her store online, and close her brick-and-mortar location. While Phillips did not return comment for this story, in a letter she wrote to customers that she posted on Facebook she wrote, "A lot has changed over the last 11 years. When we started we didn't even have a webpage. Now, almost all shopping is done online. It's hard to justify the overhead cost of a large showroom, electricity and insurance when most sales are made online."

Phillips' full letter can be seen in this week's *Riverast*.

The store can be accessed at [heathers-jewelry.square.site](http://heathers-jewelry.square.site).

## EHPD Condemns Floyd Murder, Further Violence

by Jack Lakowsky

East Hampton Police Chief Dennis Woessner on Wednesday on Facebook condemned the murder of George Floyd, a black man whose fatal suffocation by the Minneapolis Police Department was recorded on video.

The Floyd murder has ignited nationwide outrage. Anti-police brutality protests have spread from Minneapolis to the country's streets, with enormous numbers of protestors chanting "I can't breathe," referencing some of Floyd's last words. Floyd begged for mercy and cried out to his mother before he was killed on a public street.

"The members of the East Hampton Police Department, like so many of you, watched the video of the Minneapolis police officer kneeling on the neck of Mr. George Floyd, who subsequently died," Woessner wrote. "We were angry, disgusted and upset at the officer's actions, knowing that the East Hampton Police Department would never use that type of force."

Chauvin drove his knee into the back of Floyd's neck. Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey in a news conference said this method, used by the now-former police officer, Derek Chauvin, is not taught or sanctioned by the Minnesota city's police department. Floyd begged for his life while pinned against pavement, on his stomach, handcuffed and unarmed.

According to a myriad of media reports, Chauvin has a long history of excessive force complaints and was involved in many violent

incidents. Chauvin was fired and initially charged with third-degree murder and second-degree manslaughter – though on Wednesday the charge was upgraded to include second-degree murder.

Woessner wrote the East Hampton Police Department was equally disturbed with how other officers at the scene stood by and watched while Chauvin crushed Floyd's neck and did nothing to stop the execution.

"The actions of those officers, who took an oath to protect and serve everyone, have tarnished the reputation of police officers everywhere," Woessner wrote, adding that officers across the nation go to work every day and honor their protective oath.

Those three other police officers were also arrested Wednesday, and each charged with aiding and abetting second-degree murder, as well as aiding and abetting second-degree manslaughter.

Woessner asked residents to not let the actions of the Minneapolis officers damage how they view EHPD.

"I want everyone to know that the members of the East Hampton Police Department will serve residents of and visitors to East Hampton with honor and integrity, and at all times conduct ourselves with the highest ethical standards to foster and maintain the trust of our community," Woessner wrote.

Woessner also condemned looting, property damage and any further loss of life caused by ensuing riots.

"Individuals have a right to peacefully protest and be heard, but when a select few decided to perform criminal acts, their actions overshadow all the good that peaceful protests have set out to achieve," Woessner wrote.

Police violence against protestors has also been recorded. On Tuesday, *The Wall Street Journal* reported that the New York City Police Department opened an investigation into officers who accelerated their police SUVs into a crowd of protestors who were blocking the officers.

According to research published by the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS) use of deadly police force is a leading cause of death for young men in the United States, especially black men.

PNAS data shows that police in the United States kill far more people than in any other advanced industrial democracy. Police in the U.S. kill more men aged 25-29 than do overdoses, car accidents, suicide, other homicides, heart disease, and cancer.

Overall, 52 out of every 100,000 young men in the United States will be killed by police, according to PNAS data.

Black men are burdened with what PNAS called a "non-trivial lifetime risk" of being

killed by police use of force. African Americans are the race most likely to be killed by police.

On average, one in 2,000 young men in the U.S. will be killed by police use of force. Black men face a significantly higher risk: one of every 1,000 black men in the U.S. will be killed by police.

\*\*\*

This week's statement by East Hampton Police follows a high-profile incident last October in which a Washington, D.C. civil rights group called for the removal of a local officer due to his connection with an organization that has been classified by the Southern Poverty Law Center as a hate group.

The Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law called for the ouster of Officer Kevin Wilcox after learning of his association with Proud Boys, a group that, according to the committee, has ties to white supremacist and extremist organizations.

Woessner told the Associated Press last fall that while Wilcox had indeed previously made payments to Proud Boys, he had ended his association with the organization the prior February.

The call for Wilcox's dismissal drew national headlines, and a week later Wilcox departed the force, in what Woessner said was a planned retirement.

## Andover Eyes Bunker Hill Bridge Replacement

by Sloan Brewster

The town of Andover is working on replacing the Bunker Hill Road bridge.

Not actually a bridge but rather a triple culvert over the Hop River, the state bridge inspector gave it a structural rating of 3 out of 10, Town Administrator Eric Anderson said. He said local bridges are inspected every year or two, depending on their size. He said when a bridge falls to a rating level of 6 or below, it's eligible for replacement under the Federal Local Bridge Program.

Designed of squashed metal pipes that have reached the end of their service lives, the structure contains large holes through which water and other materials spill out, washing out the road, Anderson said.

"It's basically losing its integrity," he said.

Over the past couple years, the town has patched the culverts, which were installed in the 1960s and 1970s, but voids have been an ongoing issue, the town administrator said.

"Originally they put in two culverts and 10 years later, after a couple storms, they were backing up over the road so they put in the extra one," he said.

The replacement went to public meeting in the fall of 2018. The proposal was for the town to pay 20% of the cost of the project under the Federal Local Bridge Program and the Federal Department of Transportation [DOT] would cover the 80% balance.

The plan failed to pass the public's scrutiny, according to Anderson, who said folks wanted to take a less expensive route.

"The town engineer indicated that we could

probably repair it as opposed to replacing it," he said. "It failed because townspeople wanted to explore. The town decided to try repairs."

The town repaired the road surface where it was failing and found a contractor that could realign the pipes and follow up with the State Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Anderson said. Had the project gone forward, the town would have had to front the entire \$380,000 bill, but DEEP and the Army Corps of Engineers indicated it would not give approval.

"So at this point we only can do the replacement," he said.

Since the replacement has not been designed yet, the cost is "up in the air," Anderson said, adding that a high end estimate is about \$3.3 million.

"Because until you get through the preliminary design phase, it's hard for a solid estimate," he said.

The town would still be funding the project through the Federal Local Bridge Program, so the Federal (DOT) would cover 80% of the project – design, administration and construction – and the town would pay 20%.

In addition, in May Anderson got the town included in the Administered Design Program, a state program for small towns with qualifying bridges. Through the program, the state coordinates the design phase and pays the town's portion of associated costs.

"So that saves us 20% of what is ordinarily a \$400,000 bill," Anderson said. "We still have

to pay 20% when it comes to construction but up through the design phase we don't have to pay any money."

The project has been assigned to Close, Jensen and Miller, PC, of Wethersfield, a construction engineering firm, Anderson said. An engineer from the firm is currently going through the paperwork.

Once that's done, the firm will do borings on Bunker Hill Road to determine the consistency of the soil and its weight bearing capability.

Anderson estimates the design phase will take about a year to 18 months and then construction can begin, once one more hurdle is overcome.

"The issue that we face is that this area does contain several threatened species and because of that, that's likely to cost another six to eight months in federal reviews," Anderson said.

Anderson said the area is home to several threatened amphibian species.

Road Improvements and other town News

The town has started work on repairs at the transfer station and is starting to line up road work for the summer, Anderson said.

According to an announcement from the town, from June 10 to 12 Comer Contracting will chip seal Jurovaty Lane, Jurovaty Road, Parker Bridge Road, Oak Farms Road, School Road, Lakeside Drive, Riverside Drive, Stanley Road, Chesterbrook Lane, Island Street and Wales Road.

While the work is being completed on each road it will be closed for approximately four to six hours. After the chip sealing is finished, the

speed limits on the road will remain 15 miles per hour for several days until the roads are swept.

In July, Comer Contracting will fog seal Jurovaty Lane, Jurovaty Road, Parker Bridge Road, Riverside Drive, Stanley Drive and Chesterbrook Lane.

Some roads that were chip sealed will then be asphalt emulsion fog coated, the announcement reads. In this process, a thin layer of asphalt emulsion is laid over the chip seal to keep the chips in place during plowing, so the road holds up better and is smoother for walkers and drivers. This process will also result in road closures of approximately four hours while the seal is applied and cures.

From July to August, Indus Pavement Preservation will apply a penetrating sealant on Sunset Lane, Townsend Road, Windrush Lane and the walking track at Veterans Memorial Field on Long Hill Road. The sealing is designed to reduce oxidation of the road surface and allow for more time before it next needs to be crack sealed and chip sealed. After the sealant is applied, cars will be requested to stay off the roads for at least three hours.

After the chip seal is applied, Indus will microsurface or cape seal School Road, Lakeside Drive, Island Street, Oak Farms Road.

In the end of July and beginning of August, the Public Works road crew will complete drainage repair on Shoddy Mill Road between Wales Road and Route 6, during which projects, there will be delays and road closures related to the work.

# Marlborough Library Says Goodbye to One Director, Hello to Another

by Karla Santos

A new chapter has begun at Richmond Memorial Library as its director Nancy Wood has retired and a Glastonbury native has been hired to fill the role.

Wood, of Colchester, served as director since 1993. Aubrey Muscaro, who took over as director in April, has worked part-time at Richmond since 2014.

Wood made the decision to retire in December, she said. Leaving Richmond left her with “mixed feelings.”

“I was happy to retire,” Wood said. “It’s good and bad. It’s bittersweet but I really was tired after working for 27 years.”

One thing Wood will take with her in this new stage of her life is the relationships she built at Richmond.

She said she had a good relationship with library patrons who were often surprised when she greeted them by name.

“Because it’s a small community and you get a lot of repeat customers, is easy to get to know people,” Wood said.

Making friends at Richmond has been the best part, she said.

“Friends on the staff, friends on the [Library] Board, friends in the community,” Wood added. “I know more people in Marlborough than I do in Colchester, easily.”

Wood said she was fortunate to work in a place where problems are uncommon and that she never considered her employees to be employees, but thought of them as friends.

“The staff here is wonderful and I know everyone will succeed,” Wood said. “I’ve been lucky to work with many wonderful boards and library board presidents so that really made it a wonderful experience. I’m sad to be gone.”

Wood graduated from New York University in 1974 with a major in art history and a minor in journalism. After graduating, she worked as a production planner for a company in New Haven for five years. She then took a break and had two children. Later, she was encouraged by friends to become a librarian, she said. In 1988, she started graduate school at Southern Connecticut State University, where she earned a master’s degree in library science.

While in graduate school, Wood worked part-time as a library assistant at Welles-Turner Memorial Library in Glastonbury. After she received her degree she was hired as a children’s librarian in New Britain. Wood said she then she started to look for full-time work and was hired as a director at Richmond.

“It was a good fit for me because it was close to home, I knew the community somewhat, I wanted a job where I could really plan the program and move the library forward,” Wood said.

Wood said that during her time at Richmond, she always tried her best to “please everyone.” If patrons needed books or other library materials that were not at Richmond, the library either bought or borrowed them through the Interlibrary Loan and Library Connection Incorporated system, she said.

“I always fulfilled holes that people wanted when we could if they weren’t too expensive,” Wood said. “I would use all the review jour-

nals to order and try to get something that would please everyone.”

Wood has been through a variety of changes in the library world, one of them being the internet, which was non-existent when she originally joined Richmond.

Wood went to a workshop about the internet at the University of Connecticut, and said she was “amazed” by it – and by the fact that it was in color.

“It was unbelievable to us,” Wood said. “After that I was able to bring in computers, internet connection, so I was constantly raising money to do that.”

She said the internet led to a number of changes in library operations.

“We went from one little CD-ROM driven database with a very simple computerized check-in, check-out system to joining a consortium and having at least a dozen computers now,” Wood added.

She said the internet brought a “boom” to the library – attracting more patrons, who ultimately made the library one of the top three circulating libraries in the area.

Since Richmond is not a town department but a private association library partially funded by a grant from the town, Wood’s job also included fundraising.

When she was hired, one of the things the Library Board of Directors wanted her to do was restart the Friends Group, a committee that helps with fundraising, she said. To get the group going, she did little fundraisers.

Today, the Friends committee holds different events, sponsors programs and helps raise funds.

Under Wood’s leadership, the library held a silent auction called 25 Days of Holiday Cheer that for about 25 years was a holiday fundraising success every November, Wood said.

As Wood starts her retirement, she takes many Richmond memories with her – one of which took place during a solar eclipse about two years ago. Wood said the day of the eclipse was “really wonderful.” She planned it so the community could bring lawn chairs and watch the eclipse from the library, screening their eyes with free glasses staff passed out.

“We were shocked by how many people came,” Wood said. “We ran short of glasses. I think we maybe had 200 pairs. It turned into a nice day and it was really fun.”

Another memory Wood said she takes with her is the free ice cream social the library holds every year at the end of the summer.

Richmond said that while there are “very few problems” at Richmond, one of her challenges was not being able to do a library expansion.

Wood said in 2006 a proposed expansion was voted down by a town referendum. In 2012, another attempt was made but federal money did not come through, she said.

One reason Wood supports a library renovation is to improve handicapped-accessibility, Wood said.

“The staff doesn’t have enough space and we don’t have enough space for the collection,” she added. “There’s not accessibility for everyone to the second floor. That’s been a real problem,



After 27 years as the director of Richmond Memorial Library, Nancy Wood, left, has retired. Aubrey Muscaro, right, is the new director and she is working to expand the services offered at the library.

challenges with the building.”

Muscaro and Wood worked together for “a few weeks” before Wood’s last day at Richmond.

“I just wish Aubrey good luck and as I hired her many years ago, I’m confident that she’ll do a great job,” Wood said.

Muscaro said she’s “very excited” about this new opportunity. She said she knows what she wants for the library and has already started to work on it.

“I’m looking forward to increasing our online presence, becoming more community oriented, increasing the number of programs that we do and doing additional community outreach,” Muscaro said.

She said that over the past couple months – while the library has been closed to the public – she has added additional databases.

“I added a digital puzzle to our website for adults and we just rolled out a digital puzzle for children on our website this weekend,” she told the *Rivereast* on Monday.

Muscaro said she is looking to organize “a lot of virtual programs” going forward.

On Monday, the library kicked off curbside pick-up. Patrons interested in taking out materials can call 860-295-6210 and schedule a pickup.

Due to COVID-19, the library building has remained closed since March, but the library has continued to offer services. According to Muscaro, Richmond has been working with other libraries in the Chatham Health District to figure out a reopening plan but a reopening date has not yet been scheduled.

In the meantime, she said the library is ex-

panding virtual programming and offering online reference services as well as electronic books and other materials.

Muscaro earned a master’s degree in library science in 2014 from Southern Connecticut State University. She has also worked in adult programming at the New Britain Public Library, where she later became the head of adult services.

Muscaro said she knew where she wanted to go with her career and that management caught her interest.

“When the position opened up here, it just felt like an incredible opportunity I couldn’t pass over,” she said.

In addition, Muscaro had an “excellent” relationship with Wood, she said.

“She’s been like a mentor and a friend,” Muscaro said. “She’s given me a lot of great advice over the years.”

Muscaro said that she has had “a very interesting beginning to the position,” given the fact that she started her new role in the middle of a pandemic.

“I think having sometime to grow and having some time to get to know the community ahead of time before we reopen has been nice,” Muscaro said. “I love programming and community outreach so I’m working behind the scenes right now.”

Muscaro said that working at Richmond “feels like coming home.”

“It’s a small community, it’s one I’m very familiar with,” she said. “I love it here and there’s no other way to describe it other than I’m feeling like home already.”

# Let the Music Ring Out in Hebron

by Sloan Brewster

If all goes as planned, music will spill over the town of Hebron on Make Music Day and the chiming of bells will put the town to sleep that night.

When the state was shut down to curtail the spread of COVID-19 Judith Podell, organizer of The Town Center Project, was planning for the project's second year of participation in International Make Music Day – an annual celebration in which music is played outside in neighborhoods or public spaces and parks.

Started in France 25 years ago – where it is known as Fête de la Musique – the annual music celebration takes place on June 21 every year.

Podell initially had envisioned a replay of last year's event, which took place along Main Street and featured 23 bands and individual musicians, including a bagpiper, playing a variety of styles of music from jazz to reggae outside local businesses and restaurants.

"There was just such a variety of musicians, a drummer, a bagpipe, a horn, a brass band," she said. "We did a mile of music on 66."

There was someone playing outside Something Simple Café, someone was in front of FennAgain's, someone was in the parking lot at Ted's, someone was at Gina Marie's and someone else was on the patio at Dunkin' Donuts.

"We gave out harmonicas," she said. "There was a parade of kazoo's."

The shutdown and social distancing norms put an end to plans for a repeat performance, however.

"We decided that people were sitting in groups [and] that's not going to work," she said.

While she accepted that the affair could not go as planned, Podell wasn't about to let the music entirely stop. Instead, she decided to bring it to local neighborhoods and is encouraging folks to play music outside their homes on June 21, which this year also happens to be Father's Day.

"Play on your front lawn, deck, driveway and just make music outside," she said. "In my experience it seems like Hebron has an awful lot of musicians."

She even wants people who can't play an instrument to get involved by turning on their favorite tunes and blasting them over speakers.

Drew Gibson, who's organizing the musical festivities for The Town Center Project, said last year's event was well-received. Not only did a variety of musicians perform along Main Street, but there were also people teaching harmonica and ukulele. During the event, Gibson, who's a DJ at the University of Connecticut, set up a jam tent in the field behind the firehouse on Main Street and musicians took turns performing.

"I DJ'd the music just to get music in the air at first so people driving by could just hear music," he said.

He was planning to do a stage behind the firehouse this year but with no permission for a gathering of more than 50, he jumped aboard Podell's notion of bringing music to neighbor-

hoods.

## Make Music Day Films

Gibson is planning to have a musician friend play on his deck and video record it to include in what he hopes will be a longer video he will compile with performances by other musicians around town who film what they do during Make Music Day and send it to the Main Street Project's Post Office box. Someone from the Town Center Project will also meander through town with a camera during the event to capture musical performances on film.

He is also planning to incorporate Bash the Trash – a national project for kids or adults to make instruments out of recyclables – into Make Music Day.

## Chiming Bells

Gibson is planning to close the musical event with the reverberation of bells ringing from households across town. It's something that is done every night at 8 p.m. around Amston Lake and was the brainchild of his wife, Nancy Nurge.

"It was her idea," Gibson said. "What she decided we should do, [she said], let's ring a bell at 8, make sure all our friends are okay and they'll know we're okay."

Gibson and Nurge sit on their deck and ring a bell while posting the event on Facebook Live while others on the lake do the same thing.

"We have friends from Las Vegas, South Dakota, Vermont – all over the place – chime in with all of us to hear the bells," he said. "We get silly. It's just kind of nice checking in with everybody."

Last Saturday someone on the lake hooked up a speaker to blare the sound over the water and through the neighborhood, he said. "So there was this giant liberty bell going on."

Tonight, Friday, is day 80 of the nightly chiming.

Gibson hopes the idea will take on an even bigger life at the end of Make Music Day and people from every neighborhood will step outside at 8 p.m. and join in a melody of bells.

"We figured that would be a kind of neat way to end the day," he said.

## Finding Community in Isolation

Podell said she hopes the event will help remind people they are not alone while they are isolated.

"[The Main Street Project's] mission is to create community," she said. "It's very hard to create community when people aren't together."

She said she recently told a friend that since all the events in her calendar were cancelled, she hasn't been able to remember what day of the week it is or even the hour.

"She said the same thing," Podell said. "Everything you're experiencing, people are also going through."

Her neighbors on Hall Road have tried to stay together by doing different things, she said. One girl tap dances daily at the end of her driveway, which Podell said she enjoys seeing. In March, folks put chalk messages and drawings on driveways and sidewalks.

"My neighbor did this magnificent mermaid



**Musicians lead a group sing along during last year's Make Music Day. Organizers of this year's event are inviting musicians from all over town to participate by giving performances on their lawns, porches or decks in light of restrictions on gatherings and social distancing requirements.**

that was stunning," she said. "A lot of people did; they did beautiful things."

Podell got in on the action too, writing "Hebron Strong" on her driveway. She said chalking the area up helped remind people they are connected and that she hopes to repeat the message using music.

## Cancelled and Still Planned Fun

Since the shutdown, the Main Street Project has had to cancel activities. The town-wide tag sale and vintage mart, which were scheduled for tomorrow, June 6, aren't taking place and Podell doesn't think there will be a Fourth of July event.

"Last year was really fabulous," she said of the event.

Last year, she created a map using 300 colored-coded push-pins to indicate where Hebron residents and predecessors were born, she said. The 240 people who participated indicated they were from 36 states and 33 different countries.

She displayed the map at Old Town Hall during a celebration with music and a reading of the Declaration of Independence.

She was planning a new way to celebrate this year but said there was no way to keep folks six feet apart at Old Town Hall, where it would have been held.

"My instinct is that we're not going to do

anything this year," she said. "I feel bad about that."

The project is still planning to hold summer concerts, though three of the six previously planned have been cancelled.

"I think we can do the ones in August," Podell said.

The annual Harvest Moon Festival is still scheduled for the end of October.

"All things considered, we hope it will take place," Podell said.

Another plan in the works is to have local artists paint "snow folk," she said. She is putting out a call for artists to use their talent to add color and originality to 64-inch tall Styrofoam snowmen supplied by the project, much like last year's contest that ended with six brightly painted chairs that adorn the center of town between spring and fall.

The finished products will be installed as winter decoration when chairs are put away, she said.

"I think we're going to have a people choice, vote on your favorite snowmen," she said. "They should be fabulous in town."

Anyone who films a video of a Make Music day performance and wants it included in a film should mail the clip to TTCP, P.O. box 153 Hebron CT 06248

# Construction Begins on RHAM Parking Lot Changes

by Sloan Brewster

Construction on traffic reconfigurations at the RHAM school campus has begun – with the hope to have the project done by September.

Last week, contractors received state Department of Transportation (DOT) approval to begin the project, said Town Manager Andrew Tierney. Tierney is administrating the project since regional school boards cannot receive bonded money from the state.

The \$984,000 project is being funded by a state grant secured in 2015, following the death a year earlier of Dawn Mallory, 65, a teacher at the middle school.

Mallory who had taught seventh- and eighth-grade math at the middle school, was walking through the parking lot around 7 a.m. the morning of March 14, 2014, when she was struck by a vehicle. State police said the driver, Elizabeth Everett, 50, of Hebron, backed up and ran into Mallory after she realized she had driven into the bus lane.

Everett was later found guilty of misconduct with a motor vehicle by criminal negligence and unsafe backing, and sentenced in February 2017 to 20 months in prison.

Tierney – who said the project should be completed within a 10-week timeframe – credited state Sen. Cathy Osten (D-19) with securing the funds, which he said went to the town and the town put the project to bid.

In April, Milton C. Beebe & Sons Inc., of Storrs, was awarded the bid. Luchs Consulting Engineers, of Meriden, designed the reconfiguration and will oversee the job.

The design includes about a dozen improvements, including a one-way parent drop off loop to separate parking from moving traffic, according to Luchs project manager and principal Ron Dagan. The new driveway would bring parents exclusively to pick up and drop off locations with pavement markings to manage traffic flow. It will also provide longer lanes for dropping

off and picking up children.

The project was approved by the RHAM Board of Education in January 2019. The town's Planning & Zoning Commission subsequently gave its approval that August.

Since then, there have been a couple minor changes to the project, Tierney said. Specifically, two alternate portions in the design were not included with the rest of the project due to funding constraints. An additional parking lot planned in the design will not be constructed and sidewalks planned along Wall Street to Ridge Road were not included in the funding.

The sidewalks will still go in, but they are being funded through the town's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), Tierney said.

In the 2019-20 CIP, \$25,000 was included for the sidewalks and in the 2020-21 CIP, \$134,000 more was allotted for the project.

The plan is to complete the sidewalks "as concurrent as possible" with the rest of the

modifications but the town will need to put out an additional request for proposals for them and it may take an extra month to get construction started, Tierney said. "Hopefully it'll be done by fall."

The campus project had been stalled while the Department of Transportation finalized paperwork, Tierney said.

"It's been a long time coming," he said. "It took a long time to get through the DOT."

In light of the stall, last year then-schools superintendent Patricia Law added \$10,000 to RHAM's 2019-20 budget to pay for a crack-sealing project that would have been included with the modifications.

Last August, while students were on break, the coat of shiny new tar was put on the parking lot, with bright paint lining and numbering student and staff parking spaces and indicating where visitors should park.

## Obituaries

### Portland

#### Marion O'Leary Kollias

Marion O'Leary Kollias, 97, of Glastonbury, former longtime resident of Portland, passed away peacefully at home the evening of Saturday, May 30.

Marion is survived by and will be dearly missed by her beloved husband of 68 years, Paris Kollias; her two daughters, Diane (Kollias) Bascom and her husband Donald, and Marlene Kollias, of Portland; her son, Paul Kollias, of Tuftonboro, N.H.; and her two grandchildren, Katie and Brian Bascom, who were the light of her life. She will also be dearly missed by her many nieces and nephews.

Marion was born in Worcester, Mass., Nov. 24, 1922, the fourth of nine children, to Dennis and Julia (Shea) O'Leary. She was predeceased by her sisters, Eleanor (O'Leary) Aslanian of Worcester, Mass., Lillian (O'Leary) Fontaine of Millbury, Mass., Mary (O'Leary) Collins of Crystal City, Va., Margaret (O'Leary) Nootenboom of Springfield, Va., Catherine (O'Leary) Ritchie of Worcester, Ma., Anne O'Leary of Worcester, Ma., Jean O'Leary of Worcester, Ma., and her brother, Henry O'Leary, of San Diego, Calif.

Marion was educated in Worcester, Mass., before becoming a certified dental assistant and working in Worcester for many years. She later became a paraprofessional for the Middletown Board of Education; a job she thoroughly enjoyed, working with the students.

Marion was very actively involved in the Portland community. She was a founding member of the Brownstone Garden Club in 1963, which is now the Portland-River Valley Garden Club. She was also an active member of St. Mary's Ladies' Guild, the Sojourn Bears, a dedicated team who makes teddy bears for cancer patients, Portland's Senior Readers, the Town of Portland Conservation Commission and the Connecticut Valley Hospital Auxiliary. Marion was a devout Roman Catholic parishioner of Saint Mary Church for the past 60 years, where she also coordinated an annual gift drive for veterans at the Connecticut Veterans Home and Hospital at Veterans Day.

Marion was a proud recipient of the Spirit of Portland award in 2010, in recognition of her many contributions to the community, where she was regarded as "an advocate for everyone, who performs many acts of quiet kindness." She was always known for helping others when she saw important things that needed to be done.

Most importantly, Marion was intensely devoted to her family and friends. She leaves behind many who were touched by her warmth and generosity and will miss her laugh, her love and her compassion.

The family will hold a private graveside service at the State of Connecticut Veterans Cemetery in Middletown.

Donations may be made to Saint Mary Church, 51 Freestone Ave., Portland, CT 06480 or the Portland-River Valley Garden Club, c/o Kelle Young, 67 Black Berry Ridge Rd., Portland, CT 06480.

The Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St, Portland, is in charge of arrangements.



### Haddam Neck

#### Ruth Ann Olson

Ruth Ann Reppy Olson, 85, passed away Friday, May 29, at Beaumont Hospital, Royal Oaks, Mich. She was born Feb. 18, 1935, to Alice Johnson of Brooklyn, N.Y., and John D. Reppy, USN of Hillsboro, Mo., in Palo Alto, Calif., just days after her father, John, had survived the crash of the USS Macon Airship.

She has resided in many places with her family due to her father's naval career, including New Jersey, New York, Georgia, Florida, California, and Hawaii, which was one of her favorites. She liked to refer to herself as "A Navy Brat."

The family eventually settled in Haddam Neck in 1944, where Ruth Ann was raised, graduating in 1953 from East Hampton High School. She went on to spend a year at UConn, where she enjoyed working at the Husky radio station. While attending Laurel Business School in Meriden, she met her future husband, Hilding Paul Olson. She and Paul were married at the Haddam Neck Covenant Church on Oct. 22, 1955. They lived first in Meriden and later in Wallingford, with their four children, David, Robynne, Sue Ann and Karl, then later moved to Randall Avenue, West Hartford.

After a divorce, Ruth Ann worked at The Hartford College for Women in Hartford and in 1980 moved to Ashland, Mass., where she was employed by Tufts University College of Agriculture and later in the Anatomy Department. In 1999, Ruth Ann moved to Chino, Calif., to be closer to family. In 2001, she had the opportunity to climb the Great Wall of China while visiting her son, Karl and daughter-in-law Wenjin.

She remained in California until 2005, when she moved to Southfield, Mich., where Sue Ann and two grandchildren had moved. This is where she settled to enjoy sewing, crocheting, gardening, staying abreast of world politics, supporting animals and a healthy environment. She was an active member of The Peace Lutheran Church and the community.

Ruth Ann will be remembered as a beloved mother, grandmother and sister who lived by the motto passed down from her father, "to make the world a better place for having passed through it."

She will be greatly missed by her children, David Paul Olson and wife Laurie of Woodstock, Robynne Elizabeth Olson of Huntington Beach, Calif., Sue Ann Olson Hakam of Southfield, Mich., and Karl Olson and wife Wenjin of Houston, Texas. She also leaves four grandchildren: Monique Hakam, Vanessa Hakam of Southfield, Mich., Elyane Olson and Lee Olson of Houston, Texas. In addition, she leaves a sister, Alice Reppy Charest and husband Carl, of Haddam Neck and Florida, and a brother, John D. Reppy and wife Judith of Ithaca, N.Y., as well as nieces Mary Reppy and husband Michael of Delaware, Jennifer Charest of Arizona, and nephews, Brett Charest of Ohio, and John H. Reppy and wife Anne of Illinois, plus three grandnieces, Karen and Eleanor Reppy of New York and Madeleine Chmielewski of Arizona.

A memorial service will be held sometime in the future.

In lieu of flowers, please make a donation in Ruth Ann's name to one of two of her favorite charities; the Kind Fund, <https://www.unicefusa.org/mission/protect/education/kids-need-desks-kind> (sponsored by Lawrence O'Donnell to supply desks for Malawi school children, to help girls obtain a high school education) and Salvation Army <https://salvationarmyusa.org>. Ruth Ann's great aunt Mathilda Johnson was a part of this organization.



### East Hampton

#### Mark Royce

Mark Royce passed away peacefully at home after a short hard-fought battle with cancer surrounded by his loving and loyal family.

Mark is predeceased by his father, William Royce, and his only son, Mark Royce Jr. of East Hampton. He leaves behind his best friend and wife Kim Royce of 29 years from Portland; his three daughters, Ashley Royce and Floyd Hardges, Amber Minas and husband Ron Minas, and Samantha Royce and her fiancé Christopher Caffrey. He will be remembered and loved by his seven grandchildren, Kaylee, Brandon, Floyd, Alexa, Lilliana, Greyson and Scarlett who were the spotlight of his life. He also leaves behind his mother, Honey Taylor of East Hampton; brothers, Keith and Todd Royce, Billy and Raymond Langmade; sister, Karen Hudak and partner Dominic LaMonte; his mother-in-law, Cecelia LaPlant, and many nieces and nephews.

Mark grew up in East Hampton and loved hunting and fishing with his father, brothers and friends. Other than hunting and fishing Mark loved watching Uconn Basketball and was the Patriots' number 1 fan. He devoted his weekends to his family with many picnics, intense corn hole competitions, and loud enthusiastic Sunday football games at home. Mark had a love for German Shepherds, especially his boy Henry and little girl Sydney.

Mark's family will keep his memory alive by continuing the weekend shenanigans. "Rest in Peace Papa, we will miss you"

A graveside service will be held at Saint Mary's Cemetery, Saturday June 6, at 10 a.m., with social distancing.

The Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland, is in charge of arrangements.



### Colchester

#### Meghan Havelin Perrin

Meghan Havelin Perrin, 36, of Middlefield, formerly of Colchester, beloved mother, daughter, niece, cousin and friend, passed away Friday, May 29. Born in Hartford July 28, 1983, she was the daughter of Robin Havelin. She was a 2001 graduate of Bacon Academy High School, and she attended Middlesex Community College.

Meghan's welcoming and good-natured style could fill a room with smiles and laughter. Meghan was "the sunshine" of her predeceased, beloved grandmother, Loretta Havelin. She befriended people from all walks of life; and whenever she was able, she was quick to offer anyone in need a kind word, encouragement, or help. She loved music and singing along while she went about her housekeeping chores. She enjoyed reading, movies, TV dramas, and she was an avid fan of the Boston Red Sox and New England Patriots. Meghan was a woman of her age, embracing social media to call out the injustices and hypocrisy she saw in the world, but mostly to share the love she had for her children, family, and friends.

In addition to her mother, Meghan will be forever loved and missed by her three beautiful children, Joshua, Alyssa and Avery; aunts Kim "Titi" Gazdzicki, Sandee Havelin-Holgerson (Pete); uncle Frank Gazdzicki; godparents Carol and Steve Talnose; cousins David Gazdzicki, Adam Gazdzicki, Kate Gazdzicki (Matthew Brown), Jonathan Piktelis, Ashley Montoya, Brittany Monnier, Gabrielle Johnson; lifelong friends Lauren Pinnock, Michelle Lockhart; Art Costa and numerous other extended family members and friends.

Due to COVID-19, the family will hold a private service; however, a memorial service is being planned for a later date.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations can be made to The Hole in the Wall Gang Camp, [www.holeinthewallgang.org](http://www.holeinthewallgang.org).

The Aurora McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester has been entrusted with arrangements. For online condolences, please visit [www.auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com](http://www.auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com).



### Marlborough

#### Carolyn A. Hoyland

Carolyn A. (Bellmore) Hoyland, 77, of Marlborough, beloved wife of Bernard J. Hoyland, passed away peacefully, surrounded by her family at home, after a courageous 21-month battle with pancreatic cancer. Born June 7, 1942, in Hartford, she was the daughter of the late George and Anna (Keane) Bellmore.

Carolyn was raised in West Suffield and was a 1960 graduate of Suffield High School. After high school she started working at The Travelers in Hartford. She met Bernie in 1972 and they got married Jan. 25, 1974. After starting a family, they built their forever home in Marlborough in 1979. When her kids were younger, she worked in the cafeteria at RHAM High School so she could be home when they were. As the kids got older she returned to insurance, and for the last 29 years worked with her second family at DGB in Marlborough.

In her spare time she was a faithful UConn women's basketball fan, watching every game. She enjoyed spending time with her family, especially her grandchildren. Carolyn was a woman who enjoyed cooking, homemaking, and gave endlessly of herself for her family and friends. She will be greatly missed.

Besides her husband she is survived by her son, Marc Hoyland and wife Melissa of Hebron; daughter, Marcy Calsetta of Ellington; brothers, George Bellmore Jr. and wife Adelle, and Thomas Bellmore, both of West Suffield; sisters, Kathleen Ostrowski and husband Ronald of Suffield, and Patricia Bellmore of West Suffield; her two grandchildren Dylan and Derek Calsetta; step-grandchildren, Brian Cole, and Riley Westcott; and several nieces and nephews.

Her family would like to thank Dr. Thumar and staff at the Smilow Cancer Hospital at St. Francis, especially Angie, Diana, Michelle and Gloryvee.

Friends may call at the Spencer Funeral Home with masks and social distancing Tuesday, June 9, from 4-7 p.m. A funeral liturgy will be held privately, due to the restrictions from COVID-19, at St. John Fisher Church, with burial in Marlboro Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers memorial donations may be made to the Ron Foley Foundation for the fight against pancreatic cancer at [www.ronsrun.org/the-foundation](http://www.ronsrun.org/the-foundation).

To leave online condolences, please visit [www.spencerfuneralhomeinc.com](http://www.spencerfuneralhomeinc.com).

### Marlborough

#### Ralph A. Savy Sr.

Ralph Allen Savy Sr. of Marlborough passed away Monday, March 23, after a brief illness. Born Nov. 20, 1931, in Westerly, R.I., to parents Viola and Ralph Andrew Savy. He was predeceased by his brother Charles Savy. He graduated from Stonington High School in 1950 and lived in Mystic until moving to Marlborough in 1959.

He served in the United States Naval Construction Battalion (Seabees) for four years. He was a member of Local 478 Operating Engineers for 20 years. He went on to become an Independent Contractor and built a successful masonry business and shared his trade with his son and grandsons. He was also a former member of the Anchor Lodge 112 in East Hampton and a longtime member of the Marlborough Volunteer Fire Department.

He is survived by his former wife, Ileana Cerasoli and daughters, Gina (Savy) Austyn and Lisa (Savy) Reynolds, sons-in-law David Austyn and Jeffery Reynolds. He was predeceased by his daughter, Karen Lee, and son, Ralph Jr. He leaves behind his six grandchildren, Lindsay Gauthier, Ashley Risley, Ralph Savy III, Nicole Reynolds, Travis Savy, and Jordan Reynolds. He also leaves behind nine great-grandchildren Chase, Mia, Camille, Marlon, Kaylana, Kendall, Kason, James and Harper.

The family would like to thank the entire staff at Marlborough Health and Rehabilitation Center for the wonderful care they provided over the past year and to The Florence Lord Senior Housing where he previously resided.

Due to current health care concerns, services will be held at the convenience of the family.



## Obituaries continued

### Portland

#### William Darrow Jr.

William Anderson Darrow Jr., "Bill," passed away Saturday, May 30. He was the son of William and Mabel (Blore) Darrow, born April 26, 1946. Bill always said his dad, Willie, was his mentor.



Bill was drafted and served in Vietnam in 1968 and 1969. After his service, he married Linda Mazzotta and they had two sons, Jason and Justin. Jason and wife MikYong have a son, Ryan. Justin has a daughter, Mya, and son, Cole.

Later, Bill married Nancy Combe and they had a daughter, Katie, and son, William Benjamin (Billy). Katie Wesseling has a son, Chase. Billy and wife Stephanie have a daughter, Harper.

Bill worked for a cement boat works in Portland and then Rapidprint. He was the vice president of Goss & DeLeeuw for years, a job he loved. After that he was a consultant for a company in Hartford.

Bill has good memories with many friends, Nancy O'Neil, Tony Morelli, Carrie, Tammy, Al, Jeff, Brenda and Jerry, to mention a few. Bill's friend and confidante was Nancy Darrow Croft.

Bill also leaves his sister, Nancy Darrow Sbona, his nephew, Jeffery Sbona, and niece, Cherie Bolton, and was predeceased by his sister, Florence.

Funeral services and burial will be private in Pine Grove Cemetery, Middletown, with full military honors.

The Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland, is in charge of arrangements.

### Marlborough

#### Julie Anne Desiata

Julie Anne (Dean) Desiata, 37, of Marlborough, formerly of East Haddam and Moodus, died unexpectedly Wednesday, May 27, at home in Marlborough. Born April 29, 1983, in Middletown, she was the daughter of the late George F. Dean and Margaret R. (Hunt) Dean.

Julie was raised in Moodus and East Haddam and was a 2001 graduate of Nathan Hale Ray High School.

Julie leaves to mourn her loss her maternal grandmother, Catherine Hunt of Moodus; her two daughters, Alexis and Brianna Desiata, both of Moodus; and her aunt and uncle, Joanne and Kevin Maynard of Moodus.

Funeral services will be private at the convenience of the family, with burial in Mt. Parnassus Cemetery in East Haddam.

To leave online condolences, please visit [www.spencerfuneralhomeinc.com](http://www.spencerfuneralhomeinc.com).