



RIVEREAST

News Bulletin

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

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Eight ‘SnoFolk’ have come to Hebron – including this creation, named “Knits & Giggles,” which sits on the southwest corner of Stonecroft Drive and Route 85. Made by Ruth Reinwald, the figure is knitting its unfinished scarf.

Painted ‘SnoFolk’ Come To Downtown Hebron

By Sloan Brewster

Step aside, Frosty; Hebron’s painted “SnoFolk” are here.

Eight colorfully painted SnoFolk – with the exception of one that’s in black and white – are smiling through the center of town. The creations were another initiative of Judy Podell, president and chairman of The Town Center Project [TTCP], a nonprofit initiative created to restore the vibrancy of Hebron’s town center.

Through TTCP, Podell also conceived the painted Adirondack chairs that grace the town’s historic district in spring and summer. TTCP has also initiated local events, including Make Music Day, in which musicians perform along Main Street or, as the case was last spring due to COVID-19, perform on local lawns and porches.

The idea for the SnoFolk came two years ago during the Maple Festival, when members of TTCP were promoting the Adirondack chairs, Podell said. A woman admiring the chairs mentioned that her sister paints snowmen.

Podell’s ears immediately perked up.

She asked how one paints snowmen and learned about a competition in Stroudsburg, Pa., where she has since traveled twice to speak to the event organizer and check out the formations – which, she said, are made of Styrofoam by a man in Georgia and overlaid with bedliner, a coating used in truck beds.

The structures contain armatures to hook arms in and an anchor to connect it to the ground.

It took a while for Podell to get the project underway, as she had to get a grant. Ultimately, she received one the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, she said. The project also received support from Peridot Foundation of Hebron, whose founder Gail Hughes has supported TTCP since its inception.

Once the SnoFolk were built they, and \$50 for supplies, were given to local artists whose submitted sketches and themes were approved

by judges. Individual artists selected poses for their figures, with two – Podell and Caleb Greenleaf – opting not to attach arms.

The completed SnoFolk, which were installed last Saturday throughout downtown, were transformed into unique masterpieces and named by the artists.

“Ted,” which was done by Jordan Summerer, and was erected next to the Welcome to Hebron sign on the stone wall at the intersection of routes 85 and 66. It is painted blue with daisy-like flowers, wearing a gold fringe skirt, a straw hat and a lei, and appears to be doing a hula dance.

“Knits & Giggles” – on the southwest corner of Stonecroft Drive and Route 85 – is the creation of Ruth Reinwald. It is painted in geometrically-shaped snowflakes and donning a red scarf affixed to knitting needles, which the figure is holding while seemingly knitting the unfinished wrap.

“Time Machine,” Podell’s work, is comprised of photos depicting the past, present and future of Hebron with the future embodied in pictures of children. It sits on the northwest corner of

See SnoFolk, page 23

Next Week Last Issue of Year

Next week’s Rivereast will be the last issue until January. The office will be closed the weeks of Dec. 21 and Dec. 28, and there will be no papers published those weeks. The next issue after next week will be dated Jan. 8.

Any items people wish to have published in next week’s paper must be submitted by noon Tuesday, Dec. 15. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from all of us at the Rivereast News Bulletin.

Belltown Senior Living Facilities Receive \$1.5M Grant

by Jack Lakowsky

Gov. Ned Lamont and Connecticut Housing Commissioner Seila Mosquera-Bruno last week announced a \$13 million fund to be distributed to 12 small cities and towns throughout the state.

East Hampton was one of those beneficiaries and will receive \$1.5 million, according to Jodi Brazal, executive director of the East Hampton Housing Authority and head of the Chatham Acres and Bellwood Court properties.

Brazal said the money will be used to make significant improvements at Bellwood and Chatham. She noted that \$1.5 million was the maximum award allotted to towns.

The funds, which Lamont’s office announced

Dec. 4, flow from the Community Development Block Grant (CBDG) Small Cities Program, sponsored by both the state Department of Housing and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Eligible towns must have populations below 50,000 people.

The dollars are intended to improve neighborhoods, eliminate blight, and attract economic development.

“These awards will help to improve the lives of our neighbors,” Mosquera-Bruno said in the announcement. “Whether it’s helping a family to complete essential [renovations] or making public housing facilities ADA compliant. [CBDG] funding is an important program.

These funds provide flexibility in our toolbox, allowing us to assist municipalities in leveraging different resources together.”

Brazal said the grant was highly competitive, and that she and her team apply for grants regularly. She described rent at the two properties as moderate, and so there is not much leftover revenue for capital improvements.

“We haven’t been fortunate [with grants] for many years,” Brazal told the Rivereast on Wednesday. “But this money will make such a huge difference, and we feel very blessed.”

Brazal said when she received notice about winning the grant, “it felt like a gift wrapped in the biggest bow ever.”

“Our buildings are from around 1976,” said Brazal. “It’s time to do some things. Folks living here feel [the money and work] are quite overdue, and they’re right.”

Modernization will be a major focus. Brazal said Chatham and Bellwood are not suited to modern needs. For example, the properties currently house young people with disabilities and seniors aging-in-place, two demographics the buildings were not designed to serve.

Along with window upgrades to improve energy efficiency and the installation of new water heaters, handicapped accessibility is a pressing need at the sites, Brazal explained.

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From the Editor's Desk

Observations & Ruminations

By Mike Thompson

I was sad to hear about *The Hartford Courant* losing its newsroom.

As was reported late last week by several news outlets not just across the state but across the country – as the *Courant* is such a historic newspaper – the decision was made by ownership not to renew the *Courant's* lease on its Hartford space. So, effective Dec. 27, the newsroom will be vacated.

In hindsight, the news was more shocking than it probably should've been. Tribune Publishing Company, which operates the *Courant*, announced in October it would start printing the newspaper in Springfield, Mass. – ending a more than 250-year tradition of publishing the paper in Hartford.

Tribune Publishing also recently closed other newsrooms across the country, including those for the *Orlando Sentinel* and the iconic *New York Daily News*.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, *Courant* reporters have been largely working remotely since March anyway – but the idea of this being a permanent arrangement is a depressing one.

As someone who's worked in newspapers for nearly 20 years, I can tell you that there's definitely something to be said for that newsroom camaraderie – reporters bouncing ideas off one another, talking about stories, even the veteran reporters offering advice to the newbies. It's tough to duplicate all that with texts and emails.

Look, with the virus situation the way it is, it's necessary for reporters to work remotely right now – and it'll probably remain that way for at least the first half of next year. Simply put, the fewer people in a workplace during a pandemic, the better.

Are there benefits to working remotely? Absolutely – particularly if you're rushing to

complete a story, if you're not feeling well, if the weather is inclement, or other reasons that might pop up. And it's true that in this day and age, there's a lot that not just reporters but all components of a news staff – from advertising to layout – can get done without having to be physically present in an office.

But to shutter a newsroom completely? I just don't think it's a great idea. There's not a doubt in my mind that newsroom repartee, that newsroom camaraderie, makes for a better product. It's a shame Tribune Publishing has opted not to see it this way.

* * *

'Tis the season for Christmas music on the radio – and I'm happy to report I've already heard one of my absolute favorites, "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas," multiple times. I've written in the past about my fondness for the song – particularly for the original Judy Garland recording, which was sweet but also with just enough touches of melancholy.

One lyric in particular strikes me – and it's one that would later be changed, as per the request of none other than Frank Sinatra. The original version contains the line "Until then, we'll have to muddle through somehow." Sinatra, when recording the song for his *A Jolly Christmas with Frank Sinatra* album in the '50s, contacted the original writer and reportedly said, "Do you think you could jolly up that line for me?"

So, the line became "Hang a shining star upon the highest bough."

And I get it. It's certainly a happier lyric. But there's something about the original verse that just appeals to me – especially this year. For many of us, 2020 has been a whole lot of mudding. And, even with the vaccines starting to come out, it looks like a good chunk of

Editor's Desk continued on page 4



Young Republicans Share Holiday Spirit... The Young Republicans of Bacon Academy recently worked to create Holiday cards for the residents of Harrington Court. Together the group made over 80 cards. From left are Jack Spaulding, Brendan Cicero, Connor Wilcox, Matthew Kranc, William Girard and Laney Barrett. Not pictured, but contributed to card-making, are: Sam Blumberger, Ella Dubiel and Jade Hostetler.

Reader Forum • Reader Forum • Reader Forum • Reader Forum • Reader Forum

Season's Greetings from MHVC

To the Editor:

Middlesex Hospital Vocal Chords wishes you all a happy holiday season! Thank you for your support throughout the past 30 years. We miss you so much but most of all, we miss lifting your spirits and ours with song! Stay safe, stay well, and we can look forward to seeing you all again in 2021.

In the meantime, visit us on the web at vocalchords20.org and like us on Facebook!

Middlesex Hospital Vocal Chords

The Death of Shame

To the Editor:

When the history of America is written, it will reflect upon a people who were convinced to hate their own government. Citizens who voted against policies designed to protect them from the ravages of economic plunder. People who were duped into trusting their future and placing their faith in an unhinged television personality wearing a red hat. Trump's intent to delegitimize the election with false allegations and refusing to concede is not because of voter fraud. It's because he doesn't give a damn about the process or the people. He continues to ignore a raging pandemic claiming 3,000 lives every day and the worst is yet to come.

The reality is even the Republican Party and their voters don't care about the system. The only time republicans become concerned is when the fall-out from Trump's incompetence and shameless self-dealing impacts them personally. Take for instance, Gabriel Sterling, a Republican voting official from the state of Georgia, who issued an emotional plea to the nation. Mr. Sterling never appealed on behalf of disenfranchised voters, immigrants, African Americans, voter suppression, or mail-in ballots. When he finally did petition support and sound the alarm, it wasn't because the system was under attack; it was only because he and his inner circle were under attack.

The last four years we've witnessed the death of shame. A time when people became sicker than they should've been, poorer than they ought to have been and less safe than they deserved to be. However, when the history of America is written, hopefully it will reflect on a people who finally got it right and put an end to an ugly insurgency of fear and self-dealing. A people who returned to the ideals of decency and respect that have served the nation well for generations.

Joe Stevens – Hebron

We Can Do Hard Things

To the Editor:

2020 has been a hard year for almost everyone. The daily stress and anxiety caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has left many of us feeling exhausted and burned out. Many are struggling with job loss, reduced hours, depression/anxiety, isolation from loved ones, difficult parenting moments, and the overall challenges of living in limbo.

But please know this: you can do hard things. You have gotten through every day until this point, and you are strong enough to continue moving forward. If you needed a sign that you will be OK, this is it.

Keep putting one foot in front of the other. Reduce your expectations for yourself. It's perfectly OK to be less productive than you were before the pandemic. Truly getting through each day is a victory in and of itself.

Rest when you need to. Be honest with yourself about what you can and cannot handle. It's OK to turn down a commitment. Taking care of yourself is critically important, especially right now.

I believe in you. You're doing so great in these uncharted waters. You can do hard things, and you are.

Michelle Noehren
Colchester is Kind

Thanks from Garden Club

To the Editor:

On behalf of The Portland Garden Club, I would like to thank everyone who purchased holiday planters, cemetery logs, or white birch candles at our holiday sale on Sunday, Dec. 6. It was a huge success, with all items sold out by 10 a.m. Thanks also to all who donated supplies to the activity including the club members, the Swedish and Indian Hill cemeteries, Phil Olson, Judy Pogmore, Candy Valk, and Judy Lane.

The Federated Garden Clubs of Connecticut, Inc. recently presented The Portland Garden Club with the prestigious Award of Excellence for a small club for their many projects of civic beautification, education, and conservation to benefit their community. Everyone's support to our fundraisers helps make these activities possible.

A very special thanks to the Town of Portland for granting us permission to hold the sale and to the *Rivereast News Bulletin* for advertising the event.

Susanne Anderson-Woronoff, President
The Portland Garden Club

See Letters, page 4

Bulletin Board

Ah, those devious Russians. Never overlooking an opportunity to humiliate America, they have begun to inoculate people with their new anti-Coronavirus vaccine, dubbed "Sputnik V," while we continue to conduct long and tedious clinical trials in the name of public safety.

You don't see them Ruskies worrying about sifting through reams of inconvenient test data. No siree. It's straight from petri dish to bloodstream with those fellas. As long as the vaccine wards off Covid, who cares about a few minor side effects like, say, virulent leukemia or a little uncontrollable bleeding from every orifice?

Meanwhile, we just dawdle along.

I guess this is what comes of having a nation full of lawyers blithely prepared to impede the march of science by filing suit against pharmaceutical companies and experimental labs on behalf of convicted killers and other perfectly acceptable test populations.

By contrast, in Russia, 99 percent of political prisoners in Siberian gulags patriotically volunteered to be injected with Sputnik V juice for the good of the nation and an extra spoonful of stone soup.

Okay, I made that up about the gulags. But it's true about the lawyers.

Anyway, I was wondering why the Russians named their new vaccine after an old satellite. At first I figured they did it because their vaccine is simply out of this world (or, less likely, because without further testing it could possibly put you out of this world).

Alas, it turns out, the name Sputnik V is just another obnoxious example of nationalistic chest thumping—a reminder to the world that the Russians launched the world's first artificial satellite (Sputnik 1) to orbit the earth in 1957, beating the Americans, just as they've now beaten the Americans to distributing a vaccine.

All I can say about this unseemly chortling is that if you've got to go back all the way back to 1957 for a triumph to brag about—that being a beachball-sized gizmo that circled the earth for two weeks going beep-beep before the batteries finally crapped out—well, things must be a bit grim in the Motherland.

Still, if they want to name their vaccine Sputnik V (the V stands for "vaccine") as some sort of one-upmanship, I suggest that we name ours (whenever it debuts) the "Moon Shot" vaccine as a reminder that we actually put men on the moon—one of whom hit a golf ball. (Only Americans would spend a kazillion dollars to send a guy to the moon to hit a golf ball. Is this a great country, or what?)

And if Vladimir Putin promises to be a nice boy and refrains from interfering in our elections or gassing on at interminable lengths about a 63-year-old metal beachball that burned to a cinder when it finally fell out of the sky, we might even let him hold one of the rocks we brought back to Earth from our moon visits.

(Okay, I agree, it's a hell of a long way to go for a few rocks, but we did it and they didn't, so there!)

Meanwhile, a recent news article reported that an opinion poll of Canadians indicated that a majority (68 percent) would not take the Russian vaccine even if they could get it for free.

All I can say is, if a people as impetuous as the Canadians won't shoot up the stuff, how eager are the Dutch going to be?

As for me, I think I'll just shelter in place under my bed and hope Moon Shot is thoroughly vetted and approved for public distribution before I have to deal with some further catastrophe—like a national potato chip shortage for instance. I mean, toilet paper is one thing, but...

Jim Hallas, Publisher

News copy deadline for *The Rivereast News Bulletin* is Tuesday at noon. Please address all letters & news articles to: *Rivereast News Bulletin*, P.O. Box 373, Glastonbury, CT 06033

Letter Writers: Due to space constraints, letter writers must limit their letters to **300 words or less**. No exceptions will be made. E-mail is preferred. Word or text documents are best. Letters submitted without a contact phone number will not be published nor will anonymous letters or letters submitted by someone other than the person who wrote it. We cannot guarantee all letters will be published.

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Reader Forum • Reader Forum

★ *Letters cont. from page 2*

Happy Holiday to Everyone

To the Editor:
Driving around the streets of Portland, I can't help but feel the joy and delight of this holiday! So many folks have put their time and effort into decorating their home from the smallest lighted wreath to a simple candle in their window. It's a pleasure and a treat to see all the bright lights and colors.

Do yourself a favor and bring your children on a drive throughout our town. It will definitely put you and your family in the spirit of Christmas (no masks required).

Well done, Portland.

Joyce Fidrych – Portland

The Big Lie

To the Editor:
The Big Lie is one that is so outlandish that people believe that no-one would ever make such a charge. Hitler used this technique to blame the Jews, the communists and the socialists for the country's loss in WWI. Big Lies led to the rise of fascism, under which democracy died, Europe was occupied & the atrocities of the Holocaust followed.

Donald Trump's Big Lies are that he won the election, and that the race was stolen. Claims of fraud abound in the Trump camp yet the same lawyers who spout charges of fraud in public, quietly deny any fraud when questioned by the court. His lies continue as he cons millions of dollars from a cultish following.

I have worked at the polls in several towns over the past years. They are staffed by a totally honest and dedicated staff.

Let's say goodbye to the Big Lie and the Big Liar, Donald Trump.

Ed Gyllenhammer – Portland

Festival of Wreaths Thanks

To the Editor:
On Nov. 28, the Portland Historical Society began its ninth annual Festival of Wreaths – "Jingle & Mingle" – online for the very first time. Showcasing 35 uniquely-decorated holiday wreaths, sprays and tabletop decorations, each demonstrated the wonderful ideas of individuals, businesses, classrooms and organizations of Portland. On behalf of the society, I would like to thank the following for their donations of holiday decorations for the festival: Portland River Valley Garden Club, EverGreen Landscaping, Jim and Martha McCabe, Frank Connolly, Colleen Brede, Mallory and Sarah Perruccio, Elwin Guild and Joan Giesemann, Chris Sullivan, Portland Fair Association, Martha Lutecki, the Brownstone Quorum, Julie Macksoud, George and Carol Gilbert, Portland Garden Club, Rhea DeBari, Gotta's Farm, St. Mary's Ladies Guild, Jane Klemba, Tall Tale Antiques, Alexia Belperron, Room 13 third-graders at Gildersleeve School, Carrie and Bernd Frost, Amy Knous and John Levay.

We thank the people who went online and shopped for holiday decor from the comfort of their homes – many were lucky to find new beautiful, fun holiday decorations. We had wreaths to please everyone – from beautiful mixed greens harvested fresh from Portland yards to sparkling ornaments, flashing lights and bird seed pinecones for our feathered friends. Many thanks to our volunteers, and to Jim McCabe for the use of his carriage house.

The profits from this fundraiser will help the society preserve Portland's history at the Ruth Callander House Museum of Portland History and provide educational programs for the community.

**The Portland Historical Society, Inc.
Deborah Ellsworth, Ways & Means**

No Local Hunting

To the Editor:
According to People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, "Hunting might have been necessary for human survival in prehistoric times, but today most hunters stalk and kill animals merely for the thrill of it, not out of necessity. This unnecessary, violent form of 'entertainment' rips animal families apart and leaves countless animals orphaned or badly injured when hunters miss their targets. Quick kills are rare, and many animals suffer prolonged, painful deaths when hunters severely injure but fail to kill them. Hunting also disrupts migration and hibernation patterns and destroys families. For animals such as wolves and geese, who mate for life and live in close-knit family units, hunting can devastate entire communities. The fear and the inescapable, earsplitting noises from the gunfire and other commotion that hunters create cause hunted animals to suffer tremendous stress. This severely compromises their routine and their eating habits, making it hard for them to store the fat and energy that they need to survive the winter. Loud noises can also disrupt mating rituals and can cause parent animals to flee their dens and nests, leaving their young vulnerable to natural predators."

I don't believe our town lands are best used as hunting grounds. Hunting is already permitted in East Hampton on state land within Meshomasic State Forest. I urge the East Hampton Town Council to reject the request to hunt waterfowl on the properties in question and to enact an ordinance banning any and all hunting on town land.

Brian Gay – East Hampton

More 'Accomplishments'

To the Editor:
I would like to follow up with my own list of President Trump's accomplishments:

- Children in cages (needs no comment);
- Insulted Gold Star families, mocked a disabled reporter, and frequently insults and mocks reporters, especially those wearing masks;
- Attempted to take away health coverage, by repealing the ACA (Obamacare);
- COVID-19: As I write this, over 283,000 Americans are dead from a virus he said was "a hoax." Tell that to those Americans who contracted it, and/or lost loved ones to it.

I could go with other "accomplishments," but I'll stop here.

Ellen Kraemer – Colchester

Outlandish Theories

To the Editor:
Kudos to Andover's Sam Prentice for saving curious *Rivereast* readers \$49.95 each. Anyone wanting to see just how crazy the far-right media company Newsmax is will be blocked from reading articles without a subscription. Happily, Sam's channeling Newsmax in his *Rivereast* letters will get us free weekly summaries of their most outlandish conspiracy theories. Like last week where Sam said the Dominion software-voting program involved "astronomical" fraud. Actually there were zero fraud votes found with that system. I wonder what descriptive adjective Sam would use if a single fraudulent vote was found. Infinite?

Sam also quotes Giuliani, Trump's incompetent attorney, claiming "Pennsylvania delivered 1.8 million mail-in ballots but 2.5 million were returned." LOL! Our national and village idiots got all confused about the June primary (1.8

million ballots sent out) and the November general election (2.5 million returned). Two separate events, boys! Hopefully Sam was never left in charge of balancing a company's books.

Forgetting his celebration when Trump beat Clinton in the 2016 Electoral College 306 to 232, it was called a "massive landslide victory." But losing by the same score is 'massive voter fraud'? Clinton won the popular vote by 2.87 million but this time around Biden has a 7 million (and growing) lead. What does that even look like? It exceeds every Trump voter in the combined 13 red states of Alaska, Montana, Wyoming, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Idaho, Utah, Iowa, Arkansas, Mississippi and West Virginia.

Rivereast readers encountering the next Sam Prentice letter should expect a bumbling Chief Inspector Clouseau doing his sorry best to convince you that "This is a very serious matter and every Democrat in this reuoom is under the suspicions." Lastly, if you haven't seen it, do consider googling "Hitler Four Seasons Hotel." Humor – a necessary, wonderful balm these days.

Ed Smith – Andover

Heartfelt Appreciation

To the Editor:
On behalf of our residents and staff, I would like to extend our most heartfelt appreciation to our Board of Commissioners Tom Denman, Bonnie Berkovich, Beth Kelpen and Roseanne Amenta; East Hampton Town Manager David Cox; Cathy Sirois; members of the East Hampton Town Council; and our very talented grant writer Jennifer Svelnys of Housing Development Team, LLC, for their support in applying for the Community Development Block Grant for 2020.

The East Hampton Housing Authority has been awarded \$1.5 million to be used to address safety and health concerns while allowing residents to maintain their independence within the community. Our objectives include altering the laundry facility and restrooms to become handicapped-accessible; installing ramps and sidewalks for safe ambulation and entrance into apartments; replacing leaking windows, water heaters over 10 years old, and heating units to improve energy efficiency and visibility; installing a modern emergency response system to ensure timely action in emergency situations; and installing new entrance locks that will allow for residents to successfully enter their apartments despite physical limitations.

We would like to recognize the fact that without the support of each and every one of you, we would not have been successful. Again, we are most grateful.

**Sincerely,
Jodi Brazal, LMSW, GCG
Executive Director of the East Hampton
Housing Authority**

Residents Spread Joy

To the Editor:
I want to thank the residents of Fairview Street in Portland. Their hard work dedicated to displaying fun Halloween decorations and beautiful Christmas holiday lights do not go unnoticed. My kids and I drive through each night to enjoy the display and look for new additions.

This year, more than ever, we are thankful for the joy you are spreading to our family and others.

**Melissa Vibberts – Portland
See Letters, page 15**

Editor's Desk continued from page 2

2021 will be the same way too.
Someday soon, we all will be together, if the fates allow. Until then, we'll have to muddle through somehow.

It's true now more than ever.

But did you know there was still another set of lyrics to "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas" – one that was actually deemed *too* depressing? The song, as many of you know, was written for the 1944 film *Meet Me in St. Louis*. A key plot point of the film revolves around the movie's central family pondering a move from St. Louis to New York. The family's youngest daughter, played by Margaret O'Brien, doesn't want to leave, and is consoled one night with a song by her older sister, played by Judy Garland.

Except the song wasn't all that consoling. In fact, it was downright depressing – so depressing that Judy actually refused to record it, and pleaded with the film's songwriter, Hugh Martin, to rewrite it to make it at least a little more upbeat. Martin was hesitant, until one of the film's other stars, Tom Drake, took Martin aside to offer some advice.

There are two different accounts of what Drake said to Martin. In one, he advised, "This is potentially a very great and important song. I feel that in my guts. Now listen to me. Don't be a stubborn idiot. Write a lyric for that beautiful melody that Judy will sing. You'll thank me."

In the other version that talk, Drake was a little more, well, blunt, saying: "You stupid son of a bitch! You're gonna foul up your life if you don't write another verse of that song!"

Regardless of how it went down, Martin agreed to change the song, albeit reluctantly. (He also removed a religious reference, as per the edict of the movie studio.) So I'll leave you with the *original* original words to "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas," as Martin had originally intended.

Have yourself a merry little Christmas.

It may be your last.

Next year we may all be living in the past.

Have yourself a merry little Christmas.

Pop that champagne cork.

Next year we may all be living in New York.

No good times like the olden days.

Happy golden days of yore.

Faithful friends who were dear to us.

Will be near to us no more.

But at least we all will be together.

If the Lord allows.

From now on, we'll have to muddle through somehow.

So have yourself a merry little Christmas now.

See you next week.

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Talks on Proposed Salt Facility Resume Next Week

By Jack Lakowsky

After extensive review and questions from the Portland Planning and Zoning Commission and the public, an application to construct a salt processing and storage facility at 34 Gospel Lane was furthered to the commission's Dec. 17 meeting.

Mary Dickerson, Portland's development planner, said the commission will likely make its final decision at that meeting.

The first public hearing on this proposal was held Nov. 19, when it was continued until Dec. 3 – at which point it was again continued to Dec. 17.

In the narrative submitted to the Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC), civil engineer Christopher Bell, who represents the property's prospective owner, wrote the site is currently used as a vehicle storage and repair garage for DRVN Enterprises, a trucking company. If the proposal is approved, DRVN would still use the property.

A new 110-ft. by 130-ft. building will be used for processing and storage of road salt.

The new salt storage area will be about 2 acres. The containment area will have asphalt surfacing with a layer of high-density polyethylene (HDPE) liner protecting surface and subsurface soils from leaching. The area will be bored bordered with concrete blocks.

Hours of operation, including processing and shipment, will be from 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, and 7 a.m. until noon on Saturday. There are no proposed hours for Sunday.

Bell received approval from the state Department of Engineering and Environmental Protection (DEEP) in November, with the state agency approving the salt storage facility and the site's Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan.

The applicant owns a similar facility in New London. Dickerson inquired as to whether any violations of DEEP regulations or other policies were attached to the New London facility. There were none, according to a correspondence between Dickerson and Bell.

The public and PZC members voiced concern about machinery noise levels. To address

this, Bell is currently conducting a sound study and final conclusions of that have not yet been reached, he told the *Rivereast* on Tuesday.

The New London facility is soon to be unavailable to the property's owner. In the November meeting, PZC asked why this was. Bell said he did not know and would have to confirm.

Meeting minutes and written correspondence from after the November meeting do not have this information, and Bell did not return request for a follow-up interview to clarify on why the New London site will no longer be viable.

Bell said Portland residents and officials also asked for information on how groundwater wells will be protected. Bell said to the commission that he will measure the salinity of nearby wells on William St. Ext., Portland-Cobalt Road, and Gospel Lane. This number, when determined, will be the applicant's base measurement and with it will find if pollution has occurred.

If the applicant is at fault for pollution of a

well, they will at their own cost have to remedy the problem.

Bell in his correspondence with the town estimated that three or four trucks will use the site per hour when in use, but this will vary depending on number of deliveries and distances traveled. This volume would begin the day following a freeze or snowstorm and could last up to 3 days. According to Dec. 3 minutes, trucks will only use residential roads to reach a customer, but there are no such clients in Portland.

Bell approximated 75,000 tons of salt would be stored on the property, or a pile between 20 and 25 feet. This amount is less than what is stored in New London, which is about 90,000.

Bell said a large amount of tax revenue from the facility will behoove the town's overall budget.

Bell said the only concern he hasn't yet addressed is final approval from the state Department of Transportation, a lengthy process.

Last Call for Portland Ornaments

Boy Scout Troop 2 of Portland announced pewter ornaments will no longer be sold after Dec. 24. Ornaments are \$10 each.

Call Peggy at 860-342-1095 to either purchase or pick up a picture list of the available ornaments.

Police News

11/17: Andrew Oshura, 30, of Middletown, was charged with second-degree threatening, second-degree harassment and second-degree breach of peace, Portland Police said.

11/20: Daniel Rolnick, 35, of 12 Fairview St., was charged with third-degree assault and disorderly conduct, police said.

11/21: Jason Hawkins, 48, of Windsor, was charged with operating under suspension, police said.

Online Holiday Sales Continue for Historical Society

Although the Portland Historical Society's Ruth Callander House Museum of Portland History will not be open this month, the society's 2020 Festival of Wreaths continues and the Callander House Cupboard is open online.

If you missed the town anniversary four years ago, copies of the town's 175th Anniversary Commemorative Book are still available. Other products available are decorative tiles featuring the 175th Anniversary logo, a glass suncatcher portraying a "brownstoner" schooner honoring our shipbuilding past made by Pairpoint Glass of Sagamore, Mass., and the "What's in a Name?" bell produced by East Hampton's Bevin Brothers Manufacturing, makers of bells

since 1832 – back when Portland was still part of Chatham along with East Hampton and Middle Haddam. The bell highlights the name progression until Portland's incorporation in 1841.

Also available: an Anniversary Pie Basket (\$40), copies of *Images of Portland*, cream linen tea towels printed in cranberry with scenes from around Portland, and even notepads with Portland scenes.

To do your online shopping from the Callander House Cupboard or to purchase a holiday wreath or decoration, go to www.Portlandhistsoc.org and click on the link, or visit the link directly, at portland-historical-society-inc.square.site.

Trinity Episcopal Church News

Trinity Episcopal Church, 345 Main St., will not hold any inside Sunday services or Church School while Portland is a COVID-red zone town.

The church is continuing its 10:30 a.m. Zoom Sunday services indefinitely. Information for online services and Bible study opportunities is at trinitychurchportlandct.org.

The church is open for prayer and meditation Fridays from 2-4 p.m. Anyone inside the church must follow current COVID-19 protocols including wearing masks and social distancing.

For more information on church activities or to make an appointment with the Rev. Darryl Burke, email trinitychurchportlandct@gmail.com or call 860-342-0458.

Holiday Book Store

The Friends of Portland Library's Holiday Book Store is open for all of December in the Second-Hand Prose Book sale area at the library, 20 Freestone Ave., during regular library hours.

The sale features a variety of used books, as well as puzzles, audio books, holiday books, cookbooks, coffee table books, CDs and DVDs. All proceeds benefit programs funded by the Friends, including the library's DVD collection, the Museum Pass program, and other children's, family and adult programs held throughout the year.

Visit www.friendsofportlandlibraryct.org or email friendsoftheportlandlibray@gmail.com for more information.

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Second Phase of Bridge Construction

State Sen. Norm Needleman (D-33) has announced "Phase 2" of the state Department of Transportation construction activities on the Arrigoni Bridge repair project will begin Monday, Dec. 14.

This second stage of construction will consist of placing temporary concrete barriers on routes 17/66 to facilitate work on the center lanes of the Arrigoni Bridge approach-spans.

These barriers will reduce the bridge to one travel lane in each direction; periodic alternating traffic will occur in overnight hours.

This stage of construction is expected to be completed in April 2021 and will be followed by Stage 3. The bridge construction will continue through a scheduled completion date of Feb. 25, 2022.

Senior Center News & Notes

The Waverly Senior Center, 7 Waverly Ave., is currently closed to the public until further notice. Staff is still working, however. For more information call 860-342-6760 or email Mary Pont at mpont@portlandct.org or Carol Revicki at crevicki@portlandct.org. Hours are Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., and Friday, 8-11 a.m.

Watercolor Lessons with Bivenne Staiger: While lessons at the center are currently on hold, seniors may take online lessons with Staiger through Yale Peabody Museum's Natural Sciences Illustration Program. Visit www.peabody.yale.edu for more information or email bivenne@yahoo.com.

Special Event Coming: The senior center and Parks and Recreation are teaming up to make a special sweet treat for the families at Chatham Court to enjoy over the holidays. Watch for more details.

The Checklist: Tuesday, Dec. 15, 11 a.m., via Zoom. Cahill & Associates Financial Services, LLC, will present "The Importance of Checklists in Your Life." Learn who needs a

checklist and why. Register by calling 860-635-4800, ext. 111.

T'ai Chi with Tom Cushing: Registration is now being taken for a new eight-week session held via Zoom. The new session will be Thursdays starting Jan. 7 from 10-10:30 a.m. Cost is \$40, payable to Portland Senior Center.

Medical Rides: The center is offering seniors and disabled rides to the doctor on a limited basis. Fee is \$5 per person. Two weeks' notice is requested. Masks are required.

Foot Care at the Center: The fourth Tuesday of each month, in the Nurses' Room on the lower level of the center. Upon entering and leaving the building hand sanitizer must be used and a mask must be worn. Fee is \$35 cash or check. Appointments run from 9 a.m.-3 p.m.; call the center to schedule one.

Hair by Alexa: Men's and women's haircuts will return once a month, once the senior center is open again. To schedule an appointment, call the center or call Alexa directly at 845-590-9700.

300th Anniversary Commemorative Items Available

The First Congregational Church of Portland will celebrate its 300th anniversary in 2021 – and to help mark this event, two items are for sale – a new book, *The History of the First Congregational Church of Portland*, and a Woodbury pewter ornament.

Founded Oct. 25, 1721, the church history is also the early history of the town that was incorporated in 1841. The ornament, meanwhile, was designed by church member and resident

artist Kearen Enright.

Ornaments and copies of the book will be available for sale Saturday, Dec. 12, from 9 a.m.-noon, at the church, 554 Main St. The book is \$20 and the ornament is \$12. Stop by the church and someone will be waiting for you at their fellowship hall door. You do not even have to get out of the car.

For more information, call Nancy Johnson at 860-342-4098.

Portland Library News & Notes

Portland Library, 20 Freestone Ave., has made the following announcements. Registration required unless noted. For more information and full program descriptions, visit www.portlandlibraryct.org or call 860-342-6770.

Library Hours: Monday through Thursday, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. and 2-6 p.m.; Friday, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. **Curbside:** Available after 5 p.m. most evenings Monday through Thursday. Also available Friday from 2-4:45 p.m. and Saturday from 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Call the library for more information.

Online services are always available, and telephone service is available during operating hours and until 5 p.m. Friday and 1:30 p.m. Saturday.

Returns: To avoid unnecessary handling of items, patrons are asked to return books and other items to the outside book drop. To request renewal of an item, patrons may call, go online or, when visiting the library, have the title noted and show your card to the staff.

Youth Programs: Online Storytime: Tuesday, Dec. 15, 10 a.m., via Zoom. Registration required; space is limited.

Homemade Holidays: Thursday, Dec. 17,

3:30 p.m., via Zoom. Students in grades K-5 will create Wood Slice Ornaments. Registration required for each week; space is limited. Supplies can be picked up in advance.

Christmas Storytimes: Tuesday, Dec. 22, at 10 a.m. and Wednesday, Dec. 23, at 7 p.m., via Zoom. There will be stories, songs and more. At the end of each program, work together on a craft. Craft kits will be available for pickup before the program. Registration required; space is limited.

Teen Event: Snowman Crafts: Monday, Dec. 16, 3:30 p.m., via Zoom. Registration required; space is limited. Supplies can be picked up in advance.

Adult Program: Mystery Lovers Book Club: Tuesday, Dec. 15, 1 p.m. *A Highland Christmas* by M.C. Beaton will be discussed. To join this virtual presentation, go to the library website and click on "Join remote meeting access through Zoom"; the ID and password to join the meeting are listed.

New Tool to Identify Home Energy Consumption: The Kill A Watt power meter can tell you the actual electrical consumption of small to medium electrical devices in your home. It will also help you discover the hidden or 'phantom' loads that are common when electrical devices are turned off. Library patrons are able to check out a toolkit just as they would check out a book.

Zion Lutheran Church

With COVID-19 cases increasing in Connecticut, Zion Lutheran Church will hold worship online only, for the foreseeable future.

The status of each Sunday's worship is posted on the church's website zionlutheranportland.com. A weekly email is also sent to those who register by sending an email to zion.lutheran@snet.net.

The online service is available for viewing Sunday mornings on YouTube; search "Zion Lutheran Church Portland CT." Worship bulletins are available at zionlutheranportland.com.

Children's Sunday School and confirmation classes are continuing on the first and third Sundays of the month. At this time, classes are held virtually. Parents should call the church at 860-342-2860 to register their children.

Sara Stall-Ryan is church pastor. For more information or if in need of pastoral assistance, contact the church at 860-342-2860 or zion.lutheran@snet.net, or visit zionlutheranportland.com.

Online Festival of Wreaths

The Portland Historical Society's ninth annual Festival of Wreaths is underway – and this year, due to COVID-19, it is an online sale of donated holiday decorations and wreaths, as well as historical society products.

People may view photos and written descriptions of the decorations and purchase them online for a set price. Most will list for \$20-\$35 but some may list for higher prices, depending on their size and decoration.

More than 25 wreaths – crafted by Portland residents, businesses and organizations – are offered. Photos are posted on Portland Historical Society's Facebook page and the link to the sale will be at www.PortlandHistSoc.org.

Proceeds from the sale aid the society's mission – to maintain the Ruth Callander House Museum of Portland History, to present programs for the community and to preserve Portland's history.

The safety of our patients and staff members is extremely important for us. All recommended COVID-19 safety measures are in place.



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Parks and Rec. News & Notes

Parks and Recreation is offering the following. To register or for full program descriptions, visit portland.recdesk.com or call 860-342-6757. For more information, call 860-342-6757 or email nfoley@portlandct.org or adionne@portlandct.org.

Memo: Remember to socially distance, wear masks, and bring your own hand sanitizer while visiting town parks or facilities. Playgrounds and outdoor fitness equipment are open for use, but they are not sanitized. Refer to the signs at all of the parks and playgrounds for more information.

Adult Programs: Tai Chi with Ken Zaborowski: Virtual Tai Chi: Wednesdays through Dec. 23, 9:30-10:15 a.m., via Zoom. Fee: \$7/class. A new Wednesday class, also 9:30-10:15 a.m., meets Dec. 30-Feb. 3, via Zoom. Fee is \$7/class or \$30 for the six-week session.

A new Saturday class will be held via Zoom Dec. 19-Feb. 6, from 10-10:45 a.m. each week. Fee: \$7/class or \$40 for the eight-week session.

Personal Euphoria Exercise Classes: Virtual classes held via Zoom start in January. Schedule is: Full Body Refresh: Mondays, Jan. 11-March 22, 8-8:45 a.m., fee is \$70 for a nine-week session; Barre: Mondays, Jan. 11-March 22, 5:45-6:30 p.m., fee is \$70 for a nine-week session; Pilates: Tuesdays, Jan. 12-March 23, 6-6:45 p.m., fee is \$80 for an 11-week session; High Interval Training: Wednesdays, Jan. 13-March 24, 7:45-8:30 a.m., fee is \$80 for an 11-week session; Tighten & Tone: Wednesdays, Jan. 13-March 24, 5:45-6:30 p.m., fee is \$70 for an 11-week session; Core Strength: Thursdays, Jan. 14-March 25, 6-6:45 p.m., fee is \$80 for an 11-week session.

Family Virtual American Sign Language Beginner Class: In this six-week course, learn the ASL alphabet and corresponding words including basic words and phrases such as colors, numbers, family members and more. Meets

Tuesdays, Jan. 12-Feb. 16, 6-6:45 p.m., via Zoom. Fee: \$70/Portland residents, \$80/non-residents.

Youth Programs: Virtual Home Alone Safety Class: Monday, Dec. 21, 4:30-6:30 p.m., via Zoom, for ages 8-13. Class size is limited to 15 to allow for optimal opportunities for participation. Fee: \$50 for Portland residents, \$55 for non-residents. There is a six-participant minimum.

Do-It-At-Home Doodlekits with Abrakadoodle: If a member of your household is interested in virtual art classes but is unable to commit to a weekly class, there are new DoodleKits. There are two separate DoodleKits for two separate age groups – Mini Doodlers for ages 3-5, and Doodlers for ages 6-12. Each kit comes with all the necessary supplies and instructions needed for five winter-themed crafts. Participants have the option of doing their crafts with Abrakadoodle over Zoom on Wednesdays at 5:15 p.m., but this is not required. Fee: \$55 for one DoodleKit (five crafts) or \$100 for two DoodleKits (10 crafts).

Virtual Happy Hoopin' With Bringthooopla: Thursdays, Jan. 14-Feb. 18, 4:15-5:15 p.m., via Zoom for ages 5-12. All participants receive a custom-designed and handmade Hoopla hoop. All hoops are weighted and sized by age and level. Fee: \$85/residents, \$95/non-residents.

Online Art Enrichment with Abrakadoodle: Wednesdays, Jan. 13-Feb. 17, via Zoom. Musical Masterpieces, for ages 3-5, meets 10-11 a.m., and Do Re Mi Music & Art, for ages 6-12, meets 4:15-5 p.m. Fee is \$70, and includes all art supplies.

Virtual Skyhawks Sports: The next wave of programs begins the first week of February; registration is underway. There will be Cheerleading (ages 6-9), Soccer Skills (ages 6-9), PhysEd Fun (ages 6-9), SoccerTots (ages 3-5) and HoopsterTots (ages 3-5).

First Congregational Church News

First Congregational Church of Portland is a member of the United Church of Christ denomination, and is an Open and Affirming congregation. It is located at 554 Main St. Weekly worship services are offered by church pastor the Rev. Jane Hawken and Music Director Kasha Breau on the church's YouTube channel (First Church of Portland, CT).

Sunday, Dec. 13, is the third Sunday of Advent. Each Sunday during Advent, a church family will be filmed in their own home with their family's Advent wreath. On Dec. 13, the Vibberts family will light the candle of joy on the Advent wreath. The worship service will be filmed in the sanctuary of the church.

All are invited to participate in the annual Christmas gift drive, sponsored by the Missions Board. If interested in purchasing a gift to be given to a family in need of some assistance this Christmas, contact Heather Faass via email at hfaass51219@gmail.com or by phone at 209-609-5083 and she will get you set up with a tag. Gifts will be distributed through the Portland Food Bank.

The Christian Education Board will sponsor a drive-thru "Christmas Light" parade Friday, Dec. 18, beginning at 6 p.m. Upon arrival at the church, families will be presented with hot chocolate and cookies, delivered car-side. Donations of adult gloves, mittens, hats and socks will be collected for the Streetfire Shelter in Middletown. Children are invited to make a non-breakable ornament to hang on the Christmas tree in the gazebo behind the church. Those attending will travel in their own cars to Hub-

bard Park in Meriden, to view the lights.

Although in-building activities are restricted at this time, Church School is being offered virtually and parents who wish to enroll their children in this well designed and enjoyable program may contact the Director of Christian Education Ann Labby by calling the church and leaving a message.

The annual Christmas Calm Service will be held virtually and made available on YouTube on Dec. 16. This simple service features a quiet observance of Christmas and focuses on seeking God's comfort and peace amid the busyness and stress of the season along with this year's burdens of the pandemic. Readings, prayers, hymns, and harp music played by Kasha Breau, the church's music director, will be featured. Candles will be lit in memory of loved ones or if someone is in need of prayer. By noon Saturday, Dec. 12, send Hawken or call the church office the name of a person you would like remembered or uplifted in prayer at the service.

Anyone wishing to be added to the mailing lists (both electronic and postal service) of this congregation is invited to send an email to first.church.pct@sbcglobal.net, or leave a message by calling 860-342-3244. For more information, look for the church on Facebook at The First Congregational Church of Portland, or visit www.firstchurchportlandct.org.



Giving Tree... This year, with so many people in need, Symmetry Physical Therapy is sponsoring a giving tree. All are asked to take a tag that you would like to donate and bring your gift to your next appointment or to the Symmetry office, which is located at 270 Main St., Suite B. You can also email your gift idea at: symmetry@symmetryusa.net, then stop down and leave at the front door if you prefer. All gifts will be presented to the Portland Food Bank. Non-food items are preferred. Pictured from left are Keith Arcari, PT, Kelly Coleman PT, Lynne Nursick, and Barbara Giove.

Free Holiday Photo Event

The Chatham Children's Connection, a local children's community organization, will host a free holiday photo event Saturday, Dec. 12, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m., at the town green gazebo behind the library.

Photos can be taken with or without Santa, and all social distancing guidelines will be in effect.

Anyone wishing to participate must email April Graves at agraves@chathamcc.org for a scheduled session time.

St. Mary Church Schedule

St. Mary Church, 45 Freestone Ave., celebrates Mass in person at the regularly-scheduled times: Monday at 8 a.m., Friday at 12:10 p.m., Saturday at 5 p.m. and Sunday at 8 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.

Masks or face coverings must be worn at all times. Pews are marked for social distancing. All high-touch surfaces on doors and in the assembly area are sanitized before and after each Mass.

Visit stmaryportlandct.org for details or call 860-342-2328.



Portland Dental Food Drive

Portland Dental Care, located at 595 Main St., is holding an annual food drive through the end of the year to benefit the local food bank.

All are welcome to call regarding drop-off of items. Portland Dental Care can be reached at 860-342-4502.

Mercy Honor Roll

The following students made the Mercy High School Honor Roll for the first quarter of the 2020-21 school year:

High Honors

Grade 12: Lily Herron, Madeleine Thompson; Grade 11: Ella Bankoski; Grade 10: Milana Koji, Gianna Low, Sarah McNickle, Michaela Miano, Julia Nadolski, Leah VanDeventer; Grade 9: Tiana Harley, Emily Murphy.

Honors

Grade 11: Caroline Carella, Heidi Gross; Grade 10: Isabella Cacace, Melina Ford, Lauren Kohs, Raya Morin; Grade 9: Clare Bankoski, Erin Spencer.

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The drive-thru event “Deck the Jeep and Trucks” will take place tomorrow, Dec. 12, from 4-8 p.m., at the Hebron Lions Fairgrounds on Route 85.

‘Deck the Jeeps and Trucks’ Light Show

All are invited Saturday, Dec. 12, from 4-8 p.m., to come see holiday lights at the Hebron Lions Fairgrounds displayed in a different way. The Hebron Lions have teamed up with the Nutmeg Jeepers and the Connecticut Jeep Beach Cruises groups to offer the drive-thru event “Deck the Jeep and Trucks.” Come drive through the vehicle light displays as vehicle owners compete against one another to see who decked the Jeeps and Trucks best.

The registration fee to compete in this event is \$10. To drive through and see the lights, admission is \$5 per vehicle. All proceeds raised will go toward the purchase of wish list items for children spending the holidays at the Connecticut Children’s Medical Center. This year, CCMC will not be able to collect toy donations from the public due to COVID-19, and that is why the Hebron Lions, Nutmeg Jeepers and the Connecticut Jeep Beach Cruises are offering this event. To make a donation or pre-purchase your admission, visit the Hebron Harvest Fair Facebook page or visit www.HebronHarvestFair.org.

Anyone interested in competing in the Deck the Jeeps and Trucks contest should fill out the registration form at www.HebronHarvestFair.org. Businesses are welcome to enter as well to promote their business in a festive way during this event.

Senior Center News & Notes

Russell Mercier Senior Center remains closed due to COVID-19 quarantine, but has announced the following. For more information and full program descriptions, call 860-228-1700, visit hebronct.com/town-departments/senior-center or search for Russell Mercier Senior Center on Facebook.

Holiday Hello Drive-Thru: Monday, Dec. 21, 1-2 p.m. Senior center staff will hand out treat bags, play holiday music and more, all while seeing the faces we have all missed so much. This will be a drive-through event, so no leaving your car; everyone will stay socially distanced and follow COVID-19 guidelines. RSVP so the senior center has enough treat bags. The rain/snow date is Tuesday, Dec. 22, also from 1-2 p.m. RSVP by Thursday, Dec. 17, at 3 p.m., by calling 860-228-1700 or emailing seniorcenter@hebronct.com.

Meals Available for Pick-Up: The senior center offers frozen congregate meals from CRT for pick-up. On Mondays you will receive four frozen meals, two milks, sides and snacks for a suggested donation of \$12 (\$3 per meal). Seniors must call to sign-up for each week’s meals by 3 p.m. the prior Thursday. Meals are for ages 60 and older, from any town, and are to be heated and consumed at home. Meals will be distributed outside and can be curbside pick-up. Pick-up times are 11:30 a.m.-12:15 p.m., but with prior approval an alternate time can be arranged. Delivery is also available. Each person will need to complete a Form 5, but senior center staff can offer assistance in filling it out. To sign up, call 860-228-1700 ext. 202 or email aroczniak@hebronct.com. Anyone picking up the meals must wear a mask and adhere to COVID-19 guidelines.

Energy Assistance Winter Heating Program: The senior center is taking applications for the Connecticut Energy Assistance Program (CEAP), which is designed to help offset the winter heating costs for a household’s primary

heating source. If the household’s primary heating costs are included in rent, the household may also apply for assistance. Benefits are available to households with incomes up to 60 percent of the state median income. A liquid assets test is an additional basic eligibility requirement. Due to the current COVID-19 crisis, all applications for energy assistance will be completed over the phone; there will be no in-person appointments. Call the center for more details.

Monthly Newsletter: Available at hebronCT.com; select “senior center” from the “town departments” menu click on the senior center page. You can also sign-up to have the newsletter emailed to you automatically each month; click the link on the senior center page and add your email address.

The Hebron Lions are part of the Lions Clubs International, a nonprofit service organizations focused on serving those in need. For more information on upcoming volunteer opportunities please contact the Hebron Lions at volunteers@hebronharvestfair.org.

Church Collecting for Homeless Shelter

The Church of the Holy Family is collecting items for the Windham Region No Freeze Hospitality Center, which provides year-round assistance to homeless adults.

The center is open for daytime services and overnight stays with limited space for 15 guests due to COVID-19. Additional “warming space” with 15 cots is located in a building nearby, with a shorter timeframe for overnight shelter only.

The shelter’s greatest need at this time is \$10-\$25 gift cards to Walmart and Stop & Shop to assist people who are at risk of becoming homeless or experiencing other crises. Call the number below to arrange pickup of the gift cards. Other great needs are: men’s (L,XL,XXL) and women’s (M,L) insulated winter gloves; paper towels, men’s and women’s deodorant, disposable razors, disinfectant wipes; men’s (L,XL,XXL,3XL) and women’s (M,L,XL) new or used (in good condi-

tion) sweatpants and sweatshirts; men’s boxer shorts (M,L,XL,XXL,3XL); women’s briefs (sizes 6-9); and men’s white crew neck T-shirts (L,XL,XXL,3XL); men’s and women’s white crew and low-rise socks and winter-weight wool-blend socks; non-latex gloves (large and extra-large sizes only); latex also accepted if non-latex unavailable); toilet paper; hand soap (pump bottles and refills); and earplugs and earbuds.

Place donations of goods in the designated collection box next to the church’s Cry Room. Place large quantities of donations in the church garage next to the Parish House; use the side door entrance. The church is located at 185 Church St. (Route 85) in Hebron.

For more information, or when dropping off donations in the church garage, call Monica or John McKerracher at 860-228-4211.

Gilead Congregational Church News

Gilead Congregational Church, an Open and Affirming Congregation located at Gilead Street and Meeting House Road, has announced the following. For more information, visit gileadchurchucc.org, email the church office at gcc@gileadchurch.net, or call Pastor Denise Esslinger at the church office at 860-228-3077.

Sunday Worship: This Sunday, Dec. 13, if the third Sunday of Advent, and worship will be livestreamed only, at 10 a.m. The church has implemented a new livestreaming system, and people can now watch on either YouTube or Facebook. For YouTube, go to www.bit.ly/GileadChurchUCC. Click on ‘subscribe’ to be notified of future livestreams or new videos. For Facebook, go to tinyurl.com/GileadChurchUCC. Recordings of services will be available on either platform after the service.

Advent and Christmas Services: Dec. 20, Fourth Sunday of Advent, worship, with Christmas Pageant, at 10 a.m. via livestream; Dec. 21, Blue Christmas Service of Healing and Hope, worship with communion at 7 p.m. on Zoom; Dec. 24, Christmas Eve, outdoor worship at 4:30 p.m. and candlelight worship at 7 p.m. via

livestream; Dec. 27, first Sunday after Christmas, A Service of Lessons and Carols, worship at 10 a.m. via livestream

Upcoming Events: Bible Study: Wednesdays at 9:30 a.m. on Zoom, led by the Rev. Bob Woodward. All are invited. The group is exploring and discussing the book of Exodus. For more information, contact the church office.

Advent Devotionals: Advent is underway and, in keeping with the church theme for the year, “Planting Seeds of Hope,” the church has “Hope-Full Living” Advent devotionals that are available for pick-up in a tub next to the Little Lending Library by the double doors to the church from the parking lot. To have one delivered, call or email the church office.

Blue Christmas Service: Monday, Dec. 21, at 7 p.m., on Zoom. This will be a service of comfort, healing and hope. Bring your fears, pain and grief and come for this time of prayer and reflection. The Zoom link will be provided closer to the date of the service.

Lord’s Bounty II Cookbooks: Cookbooks are still available. Cost is \$10. For delivery, call Margaret Gibbs at 860-384-4327.



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WPCA Responds to Selectman's Comments

By Sloan Brewster

Hebron's Water Pollution Control Authority is not a board of "ogres."

Or so said the authority's chair Clara O'Brien in a phone call Wednesday. O'Brien said members of the Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA) were upset with comments made by selectman John Collins at a Board of Selectmen meeting last month and want the truth out there.

Authority members thought some of those comments made them sound like ogres, O'Brien said.

Collins, at the board's Nov. 19 meeting, recommended changing the makeup of the five-member board and adding a selectman and member of the Board of Finance to the mix.

The recommendation came after he went door-to-door while campaigning to become a state representative and folks living around Amston Lake raised concerns about the recent sewer rate increase from \$350 for individuals to \$510, he said.

"The sewer fee – you can call it a fee, some people call it a tax – is being applied to these people by people who are not elected," he said at the Nov. 19 meeting. "I had my ear talked off by numbers of people about this upset, upset that it was, you know, sprung on them, they didn't have the money but also, just that it wasn't managed very well."

Collins said selectmen should be kept apprised of what the WPCA is doing, and that its composition should be revised.

"I think it's kind of broken," he said.

Selectmen agreed to discuss the possibility of changing the authority's makeup with Town Attorney Ken Slater.

At last Thursday's Board of Selectmen meeting, Slater said the changes could not be made without opening the Town Charter for possible revisions.

Typically, he said, the charter isn't opened for just one potential revision.

"But, just so you understand, they could take a look at the whole charter and come back to you and say, hey, by the way, we think this also should be changed," he said.

Selectmen would then be required to review all the new suggestions and decide if they should be vetted by town residents.

"It's not a super quick process," he said. "It is not a speedy process. The neighborhood of a year is a fair assessment."

Slater said the boards could instead appoint liaisons without voting privileges to the authority.

Reappointing Riley

Selectmen ultimately reappointed James Riley to the authority.

They had held off on the reappointment awaiting word from Slater and to find out if there were members who would choose to resign to make way for a selectman and/or finance board member to join.

All the current members wanted to remain on the board, a point that was reiterated in a letter penned by the authority and sent to selectmen.

"Most of us have been on this board for a long, long time," O'Brien said. "Riley used to work for MDC, so he's one of our most knowledgeable people on the board. Everybody brings something to the table who's on the board."

'Appalled' by Remarks

The letter also included WPCA members' concerns with remarks made at the November meeting, which they called "false, inaccurate, and misleading."

They said they "were appalled at the lack of respect shown to the WPCA."

One item of discussion that upset them was the \$7.6 million sewer upgrade project approved by voters in November of last year.

The subject was again discussed at last week's selectmen meeting, with Collins saying the sewer district should include a percentage of the costs in its budget and that residents not on the system should not be forced to brunt the bill.

"It's not fair," he said. "It's not fair at all from my point. It's never been fair."

That was not something the authority decided on its own, O'Brien said.

"The town manager and director of finance were involved with our referendum," she said. "It wasn't something we did ourselves."

O'Brien said the WPCA has met with the boards of selectmen and finance many times

over the past five or more years to discuss the upgrade, and has also met with Town Manager Andrew Tierney and Finance Director Elaine Griffin, who brought bond counsel to the meetings, she said. Tierney recommended going to referendum.

"This has been going on for a long time," O'Brien said. "We're far from incompetent. We've been meeting for years about the upgrades of this sewer system."

The idea for the users to pay a percentage was never raised, she said. "That was never discussed with us or said to us."

In addition, users already paid for the sewer when it was built and they were each assessed and mandated to pay \$8,000.

"It was our feeling that the users already paid for it once and the town benefits and the town owns it and that's why it went to referendum as it did," she said.

This week, the WPCA will be opening the bids and selecting a vendor for the upgrade project, O'Brien said Wednesday. The plan is to start building the infrastructure in the spring.

"So this board is going to be very, very busy monitoring the upgrade," she said. "To make sure nobody is wasting the town's money."

Hebron 2021 Revaluation

Hebron is scheduled for a town-wide revaluation for the Oct. 1, 2021, Grand List and has contracted with eQuality Valuation Services from Waterbury to assist in the process.

This revaluation is an update and will not require all properties to have a full inspection. Data mailers will be sent to all improved properties which will list details such as style of house, room count and special features.

The participation of owners is critical in this phase of the process, and the town asks people to review the data, make any changes that may need to be addressed, and return the forms. The goal is to ensure that the data is correct so accurate values can be applied to all properties.

For more information regarding the data mailers, or the process of the revaluation, contact the assessor's office during Town Hall hours at 860-228-5971 ext. 147.

Kindergarten

Registration for 2021-22
Gilead Hill School is registering eligible kindergarten students for the 2021-22 school year.

Parents/guardians of children who will be five years of age on or before Dec. 31, 2021, and are planning to have their child attend public school in Hebron, are asked to contact the Gilead Hill School office at 860-228-9458 by Friday, Jan. 15, to begin the registration process.

Registration packets will be mailed to parents/guardians and are asked to be returned to Gilead Hill School during school hours (7:30 a.m.-4 p.m.) prior to Friday, Jan. 22. Parents/guardians are required to return their registration packet completed along with your child's original birth certificate (which will be returned to you), a non-returnable photo and two proofs of residence (such as a utility bill).

Pre-kindergarten students (Peer Model Program or School Readiness) that attend Gilead Hill School at this time do not need to call for a registration packet.

Church of Hope News & Notes

Hebron Church of Hope, 1 Main St., holds worship Sundays at 9:30 a.m. Church of Hope is a biblically-driven Christ-centered church.

Worship is done in person and via a livestream on the church website. To see the guidelines, and get more information, on in-person worship during the COVID-19 pandemic, visit www.hebronchurchofhope.org.

The church office is closed until further notice. Pastor Jordan Brown is available to meet by appointment. Use the church website to set up a time.

The Red Barn is closed and not accepting donations at this time.

In-person Candlelight Christmas Eve services will be at 4 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. Dec. 24. Each service is capped at 100 people. Register on the church website.

For more information about Hebron Church of Hope, visit the website or look for the church on Facebook, Instagram or Twitter.



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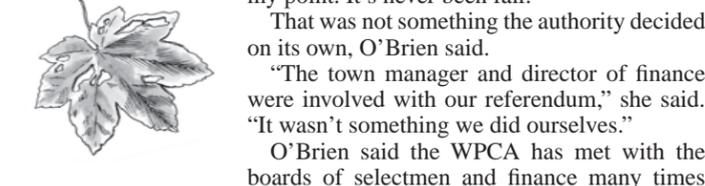
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Bacon Grad Realizing Journalism Dreams

By Karla Santos

Luke Hajdasz dreamed of being a journalist when he was a student at Bacon Academy.

And now, those dreams are coming true, as Hajdasz will in January start a job as a broadcasting news reporter in Alabama.

Hajdasz said he has lived in Colchester his whole life. He graduated from Bacon Academy in 2017 and will be graduating from the University of Connecticut this month with a degree in journalism.

Hajdasz starts his new venture in Alabama on Jan. 4. He will be working as a multi-media journalist – meaning he will do the job of a reporter, photographer and video editor all by himself – for WAAY-TV, an ABC affiliate in Huntsville.

After applying to jobs through an online platform, Hajdasz was interviewed and accepted the job offer at the end of October.

Hajdasz said that being able to secure a job in his field before even graduating was “fantastic.”

“Ever since high school I wanted to pursue journalism and pursue broadcast journalism specifically,” he said.

He added that the new job is a “step in the

right direction,” as this is what he has been working for through high school and college.

Hajdasz said a program at Bacon Academy helped him get an understanding of what working in journalism in real life would be like – and it reassured him he really wanted to be in the field.

He said that at Bacon he participated in an independent study, where he was able to shadow with multiple news personalities across New England.

“That was really the start of my whole journalism career,” he said. “I was very fortunate to have that opportunity through Bacon.”

Before making the decision to study journalism, Hajdasz said he liked the idea of being a television meteorologist.

He said he even went on tours of schools that had a meteorology program, but then he realized “news is more people-oriented.”

“You get to talk to a variety of different people and hear their stories and tell them to the public,” Hajdasz said.

He said he found the people-oriented side of news to be more appealing than the job of a meteorologist, which requires more time sitting

in front of a computer, studying graphics and doing math.

Hajdasz said one of the people that impacted him through his journey at Bacon Academy was Michael Mal, a teacher who helped him facilitate the visits to the newsrooms for job shadowing.

“That really got my feet wet in terms of meeting people in the industry and learning from people more first hand,” Hajdasz said.

Hajdasz also said Beverlee Johnson, a former public speaking teacher at Bacon, impacted him as well, helping him with performance skills.

Mal, who is involved in the Capstone program at Bacon, told the *RiverEast* this week that Hajdasz was an “exceptional student.”

“It was readily apparent that he found a career he was truly passionate about,” Mal noted. “With that being said, it is extremely rewarding to see that I was able to help Luke explore his passions, and find fulfillment in his work. As an educator that is the goal, help cultivate students’ curiosity in the hope that you help them find that spark.”

Mal explained that the Capstone program at Bacon is centered on letting students explore a personal area of interest.

“This project is a self-driven, authentic experience empowering students to apply the skills acquired over the course of their education, and to demonstrate an understanding of learning, community, and self,” Mal said.

He said that through the Capstone program, students complete 20 hours of shadowing and then create a final project that demonstrates what they learned.

“It is amazing to see the students are using their experience in Capstone to have success in their life after Bacon Academy, whether that be going directly into the workforce or college,”



Luke Hajdasz

Mal added.

Hajdasz said because he was also able to take a variety of college classes at Bacon Academy, he had enough credits to graduate a semester early from UConn.

He said it feels good being able to not only secure a job before his college graduation but also to not have to pay an additional semester of college expenses.

“That was fantastic from Bacon,” he said.

Hajdasz said Alabama is totally new to him, as he had never been there before. He said he visited recently to find an apartment.

“It seems great,” he said of Alabama, adding that the state should be able to accommodate a lot of what he likes to do in his free time – such as fishing, golfing and other outdoor activities.

Animal Shelter Food Drive

The East Haddam nonprofit organization Presents for Paws will hold its Holiday Shelter Food Drive Saturday, Dec. 12, from 7 a.m.-2 p.m., at John Gagnon’s Pet Resort, 227 Upton Rd., to collect items for shelter pets this holiday season.

Items needed: new/unopened cat or dog food, new/unopened cat or dog treats (no raw hide, please), and cat litter. Monetary donations are also appreciated; they are tax-

deductible and 100% of donations go to help shelter animals.

Presents for Paws is a non-profit organization located in East Haddam that collects and distributes supplies to area shelters, rescues and municipal pounds. For more information, visit the shelter drive, to make a monetary donation, or to become a volunteer, visit: www.facebook.com/presentsforpaws501c or www.presentsforpaws.org.

Wreaths Across America

This year’s Wreaths Across America ceremony will take place at Westchester Cemetery Saturday, Dec. 19 – and donations are sought.

At the ceremony, the 55 service members buried at the cemetery will be honored with the placement of live balsam veterans’ wreaths. The ceremony will begin at noon sharp, and masks are required. The cemetery is located off Route 16.

Donations are welcome. Each individual \$15 donation sponsors a wreath that will be placed

on the headstone. To sponsor a wreath and stay informed about event details, visit www.WreathsAcrossAmerica.org/CTWCCC. You

can also send your contribution to Wreaths Across America, c/o Linda Pasternak, 636 Westchester Rd., Colchester, CT 06415.

All interested in volunteering should register so they can be kept up to date on details for the day as it gets closer. Register to volunteer at www.wreathsacrossamerica.org/CTWCCC.

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Bountiful Baskets... Colchester Rotary Club's Thanksgiving Basket Drive came to a successful conclusion thanks to the contributions of many Colchester citizens. Sandy Churchill, manager of the Colchester branch of Liberty, Bank presented a matching as well as an additional contribution check at the distribution center at Town Hall. Also, the East Hampton Rotary Club provided additional helping hands to assist with basket distribution during the rainy weather. Many more volunteers helped, providing Thanksgiving baskets to 150 families. The Rotary thanked Colchester Cares, Noel's and Westchester markets, and all that donated. Pictured here are, from left, Nancy Riella of Nicole-Yester, Sandy Churchill of Liberty Bank, Evan A. Evans of Re/Max Home Team and Theresa Congdon, president of Colchester Rotary.

Abundant Life Church News & Notes

Abundant Life Church, located at 85 Skinner Rd., has announced the following pieces of news. For more information, call the church at 860-537-3082 or visit AbundantL.com. Abundant Life Church is a Christ-follower church that believes salvation through Jesus Christ.

Weekly Sunday Service: The church continues open door services on Sundays. Facial masks while roaming and social distancing guidelines are followed, including only allowing less than 50 attendees. Sunday School is now open at the church at 9:30 a.m., with the main service beginning at 10:30 a.m. Call the church if you would like to attend. The service is also broadcast live on Face-

book, beginning at 10:30 a.m., with a special children's program included. Go to www.facebook.com/groups/abundantLifeCT or look for the church on Facebook. For more information or if unable to connect, call the church at 860-537-3082.

Power of Prayer: Prayer is provided by a group of faithful members at Abundant Life. If you are in need of prayer for healing, financial issues, troubled family members, life-controlling habits, or any other need, call the church to be placed on its prayer list. You may also ask about the various days and times the prayer groups meet and come at that time.

January Children's Programs at Library

The following programs will be offered for children in January at Cragin Memorial Library are being offered for children. While the library is currently open, it is not hosting any in-person programming. Most of these programs will be conducted online. For more information, call the children's department at 860-537-7201.

The library has a list of available craft bags at the Children's Circulation Desk; supplies are limited and are on a first-come, first-served basis. The library is located at 8 Linwood Ave.

Baby Activity Videos: Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m., starting Jan. 6, on Facebook and YouTube. There will be book suggestions, baby bounces and more. Often, activity bags will be available to accompany the videos.

Sharing Stories: Mondays at 10:30 a.m., starting Jan. 4, on Facebook and YouTube. There will be stories, songs and more. A craft will be showcased, and bags will be available

for pick-up.
Exploring the Alphabet: Fridays at 10:30 a.m., starting Jan. 8, on Facebook and YouTube. Each week, explore a new letter of the alphabet, sing songs, practice writing and share books. A craft bag will accompany each video, bags can be picked up on Monday the same week as the video.

Other January Programs: Foodie Fun: Snowpeople S'mores: Saturday, Jan. 9, 10:30 a.m., for children and teens. Watch the video, pick up your ingredients bag, and create a snack of a melting snowperson.

3D Snowpeople Craft: Wednesday, Jan. 27. Grab a craft bag and create this winter project.

National Puzzle Day: Wednesday, Jan. 29, all day and for all ages. Grab a puzzle to take home and complete. Puzzles will vary between mazes, word searches and crosswords.

Project Graduation Raffle and Wreath Sales

Bacon Academy Project Graduation is selling raffle tickets for its December Calendar fundraiser, with prizes being awarded each day.

Total donated items in the raffle are valued at over \$1,000 and include gift cards to local businesses, gift baskets, cash prizes, holiday items and local artisan creations. Due to the strong response to this fundraiser, some days include more than one winner, so that raffle ticket holders have more than 31 chances to win.

Raffle tickets can be purchased via check, mailed to P.O. Box 393, Colchester CT 06415, or through Venmo @KathyLawrence2934. If using Venmo, email ba.projectgrad@gmail.com with ticket holder information. Purchases must include raffle ticket holder's name, address, email, phone and whether recipient is

over 21 years of age. The calendar with list of available prizes can be viewed at the www.baconacademyprojectgrad.org.

The mission of Bacon Academy Project Graduation is to enhance drug- and alcohol-free awareness by providing safe events for all graduating seniors of Bacon Academy. Project Graduation's most critical event is a graduation night party.

All Project Graduation events and initiatives to benefit BA seniors are entirely paid for through the fundraising efforts and contributions of Bacon Academy parents, students, businesses and community members. No tax dollars are ever used. For more information, visit www.baconacademyprojectgrad.org.

School Nutrition Program Update

Thanks to a USDA grant, all students and children under the age of 18 can get free breakfast and lunch. This will be in effect until the last day of school in June 2021.

Note: milk is included in every meal; however if a student wants to buy just a milk, the cost is 65 cents. For those interested in grab-and-go meals, which are also free, pick-up is at William J. Johnston Middle School from 12:30-1 p.m. for in-school learning days and 10-10:30 a.m. on distance learning days.

Note that grab-and-go meals will not be available during the winter recess, from Dec. 24-Jan. 1. Also, grab-and-go meals will not be available on days when students do not come to school because of inclement weather.

Any questions can be directed to Leanne Rahnheim, nutrition coordinator, at 860-537-9421 ext. 381 or Iranheim@colchesterct.org.

Ahavath Achim News

Congregation Ahavath Achim, 84 Lebanon Ave., has announced the following schedule:

Friday night Shabbat service, 6:30 p.m. on Zoom; Saturday, Shabbat morning service, 10 a.m., on Zoom; Tuesday, Kabbalah class, 5:30 p.m. on Zoom; Tuesday, Talmud class, 6:30 p.m. on Zoom.

There are daily prayer classes on Facebook Live, by Rabbi Ken Alter.

There will be a book club discussion on

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Office hours are 8 a.m.-noon Tuesday-Friday.

Mercy Honor Roll

The following students made the Mercy High School Honor Roll for the first quarter of the 2020-21 school year:

High Honors

Michele Grelotti, Grade 12; Calle Dennis, Grade 11; Tallulah Malz, Grade 9.

Honors

Ryan Snow, Grade 11; Sarah Lynch, Grade 10; Katherine Grelotti, Grade 9.

Honor Society Inductee

Brianna Poulin of Colchester was recently inducted into Phi Theta Kappa, the oldest and largest international honor society serving two-year colleges.

Poulin is a student at Manchester Community College.

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REF-12-20

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Senior Center News & Notes

Colchester Senior Center, 95 Norwich Ave., has announced the following programs and events. Most programs are on Zoom; to learn more about join them, or for full descriptions of any program, call the center at 860-537-3911 or email csc@colchesterct.gov. The center is online at www.colchesterct.gov/senior-center. More information about senior trips can also be found online.

Upcoming Programs: Learn to Sign with Ruth: Mondays, beginning Dec. 14, 11 a.m.-noon. This introductory course requires no previous experience and will teach you the basics of how to communicate using sign language.

Highlighting Colchester's History with CHS: Friday, Dec. 18, 10:30 a.m., via Zoom.

Coping with Pandemic Stress During Holidays

Holidays can be a stressful time for some people – particularly this year. So, all local seniors are invited to attend a virtual webinar Wednesday, Dec. 16, at 10:30 a.m., via Zoom.

Sara Walker from UCFS will share some strategies for coping with any added stress the pandemic may bring.

Register by calling the office at 860-537-3911.

The Colchester Historical Society will share a virtual tour of the Colchester History Museum, located right on Linwood Avenue. This session will be held on Zoom, with the link to join found on the Monthly Zoom Links table.

Farewell 2020 Celebration on Zoom: Thursday, Dec. 31, 10 a.m. Welcome in the New Year with goody bags, a year in review presentation, and laughs. Register by Dec. 24 to receive your "Goodbye 2020" gift bag.

Walking Group: Wednesdays, 10 a.m., weather permitting. Social distancing and masks required.

Weekly Zoom Programs: Exercise with Anne: Mondays and Thursdays, 9 a.m.; **Senior Yoga:** Thursdays and Fridays, 11 a.m.; **Sit-tercize:** Mondays and Thursdays, 10 a.m.; **Tai Chi:** Tuesdays, 9:45 a.m.

Parks and Rec. News & Notes

Parks and Recreation has announced the following. Registration required for all programs. For full descriptions and to register, visit colchesterctrec.recdesk.com/Community/Home. More info can also be obtained by calling 860-537-7297 or emailing parksandrec@colchesterct.gov. The Parks and Rec. office is located at Town Hall, 127 Norwich Ave.

From Soup to Nuts! COVID Community Cookbook: Cookbooks are \$18, with proceeds to pay for the Colchester Fireworks. Purchase a cookbook through the Parks and Rec. website, or stop by the Parks and Rec. office to buy one.

Virtual Vendor Fair: With most holiday fairs canceled this year, Parks and Rec. said it wanted to find a way to connect local artisans with the community as well as provide a way to shop locally from home. So, a PDF book of local artisans and home businesses has been

put together and can be viewed at tinyurl.com/y2mmgyqv. For those without computer access, call 860-537-7297 for assistance.

Dot Painting with Margaret Webster: Beginners 2 – the Transformational Spiral: Tuesday, Dec. 15, 7-10 p.m., via Zoom, for ages 12 and up. Fee: \$15/Colchester residents, \$20/non-residents. Registration required. Call Parks and Rec. for more information and a list of needed supplies.

Gingerbread House Contest: Gingerbread houses are on display throughout Town Hall until Dec. 18. All visitors to Town Hall will be able to vote for their favorite one. After Dec. 18, each house will be awarded a superlative award ribbon. The "Community Favorite" will be awarded to the house with the most community votes. For more information, call Parks and Rec.

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HOLIDAY HOURS

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Wednesday, December 23rd 7:00-5:00
Thursday, December 24th 7:00-3:00

CLOSED CHRISTMAS DAY



Happy Holidays!

LYME BITES

CT Lyme Riders is presenting the following great article for anyone who has a loved one, friend or family member that suffers from chronic Lyme disease, or just wants to understand more about this disease and the stress of holidays.

Facing the Holidays with Chronic Lyme

Author: Paula Jackson Jones • Orig Pub: 11/25/2017

Nothing reminds you of your illness more than when you're limited by the things that you can no longer do and the places that you can no longer go. And nothing highlights those limitations more than the holidays. Grieving the loss of holiday traditions, or feeling like you're letting your friends and family down by staying home or cutting outings short, can elicit so many difficult emotions that no one should have to deal with around the holidays.

No one ever thinks that something as tiny as a tick bite can change their life in so many ways, until it happens to them. I sit with people in person and on the phone who are struggling to understand this disease, struggling to make sense of their new normal, struggling to keep it together for their families. Struggling. It's something that chronically ill people do constantly. Everything is a struggle. Getting up in the morning, even getting through the day. Trying to plan events. Even something like going to the grocery store is taken for granted. I remember getting out and going to the store and running into people who would say things like "Oh, you look so good. You must be doing better" without realize just how much effort it took for me to pass for "good". How much energy it took just to get dressed and put on a good face and be seen in public.

While chronically ill people want to be a part of the holiday celebrations, they realize just how impacted they are by it all ~ sights, sounds, smells and overall exertion, that often exasperates their symptoms, that they feel the only choice they have is to stay home. I recall attending church services to sing carols and being overstimulated by the sounds, smells and lighting that I had to leave and go back home before a seizure was triggered. Holding a conversation was physically and mentally exhausting. Trying to focus on who was speaking to me, what they were asking and by the time I figured out my response, they were on to another topic. I often wondered what they thought, standing there in front of me ~ did I look as disconnected as I was feeling on the inside?

The holiday season is, and always has been, my favorite time of year and as I regained my health, I tried to re-engage with all my favorite holiday activities, but found that foods and over-stimulation were, and continued to be, a sensory trigger.

Something that I would ask of you all this holiday season ~ be kind and give grace to those suffering from chronic illness. Whether you understand their illness or not, understand this ~ they are doing their very best and that is all that can be asked of them. If they come, don't over quiz about what's been going on. Instead, welcome them into the group and make them feel as comfortable as you can. For one night, let them feel normal. Let them forget that they are ill. Understand that as the group chatter volume rises, that they may need to find a quiet reprieve to tamper down any rising symptoms. Don't be offended if they can't eat what you're serving. As much as we all love holiday goodies, chronic illness sometimes demands a change in diet to reduce symptoms during treatment. Maybe ask in advance what they can eat. Sugars and gluten are a no-no when putting together treats to give to them. Along with sounds, lighting can be a sensory issue for those suffering from neurological Lyme. Don't stare if your guest appears wearing sunglasses. I had someone approach me saying "What are you stoned? You must be to wear sunglasses at night" and I was so taken back and offended. Never judge what you don't understand.

Holidays are meant to be celebrated by families and friends, so I would ask that you please don't forget those who are chronically ill. They want to be a part of the celebration, but they know and understand all too well their limitations and they don't want to be a burden to their families, so they think staying home is the answer. Isolation is never the answer and causes more harm and damage mentally. Reach out in love, send cards, call before you visit but do visit. And if you bring a gift, leave out the sweets and gluten. Limit your use of perfume and keep the setting quiet. Limited the over-stimulation, keep the conversation light. Share what's going on with you and make them feel included. This will ensure a heartfelt and thankful visit and it will serve the one who is ill in ways that you may never understand.

This holiday season, remember those who are ill and not able to attend functions. Do your part, however small or grand, to make them feel remembered, missed and loved. This feeds their spirit and spirit is something that no disease can ever touch.

HOLIDAY SHOPPING GUIDE

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Westchester Church News

Westchester Congregational Church, located at 98 Cemetery Rd., holds worship services in-person Sundays at 10 a.m. Services are also available on Zoom.

Safety precautions are in place to protect against COVID-19; the pews are labeled for physical distancing, masks are required to be worn, hand sanitizer is available, and is no singing, although music is played.

Visit westchesterconchurch.org for Zoom login information.

Colchester Federated Church News

Colchester Federated Church is an Open and Affirming church located at 60 Main St. Pastor is the Rev. Lauren Lorincz.

The church remains closed to the public until further notice. The church has canceled in-person worship and Sunday School until disease rates decline in Colchester. Worship will be offered via Facebook Live at 9 a.m. Sunday mornings by a small worship team and Sunday School lessons will be shared virtually with families.

Virtual worship can also be found at www.colchesterfederatedchurch.org under the "Worship & Sermons" tab.

CYSS News and Notes

Colchester Youth and Social Services has announced the following. For more information and full program descriptions, contact CYSS at 860-537-7255 or youthservices@colchesterct.gov. Register online at www.colchesterct.gov/youth-social-services. Registration is required for every session of each program due to the current COVID-19 guidelines.

The Learning Lounge: Mondays-Fridays, 8:30-11:30 a.m., for grades 6-8. This program provides middle school youth space to complete their distance learning. Socially-distanced work stations and support will be provided. Limited availability.

Youth Uprise: Wednesdays, 12:30-1:30 p.m., at the Youth Center, for grades 9-12. High school students come together and discuss unity, diversity, civic engagement and making a change.

St. Andrew Church News

St. Andrew Catholic Church holds Sunday Mass Saturdays at 4 p.m. and Sundays at 8 a.m., 9:30 a.m., 11 a.m. and 5 p.m. The church is located at 128 Norwich Ave.

The Mass schedule for Christmas is: Dec. 24 at 4, 7 and 11 p.m., and Dec. 25 at 9:30 and 11 a.m. Tickets are required to attend Mass; call the office at 860-537-2355 to reserve them.

Also, since social distancing will remain in place, pews are sectioned off to maintain six feet, in all directions, between individuals and/or households. Available seating is clearly marked. Seating is limited to 100 people per Mass, due to social distancing and local regulations. The only entrance to the church will be on the parking lot side.

Parishioners should bring and use their own hand sanitizer. Also, facemasks that cover both nose and mouth are required of all attending public worship.

The dispensation from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass remains in effect until further notice. Christmas Masses at 4 p.m. Christmas Eve and 9:30 a.m. Christmas morning will be livestreamed.

For more information, call 860-537-2355 or visit www.standrewcolchester.org.



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December 12th & 13th
12:00-4:00PM

(Snowdates: Dec. 19th & 20th)

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Reader Forum • Reader Forum

★ *Letters cont. from page 4***We Want to Thank You!**

To the Editor:

The Colchester community continues to amaze us with how considerate, thoughtful, and giving its residents are. We are in the midst of the holiday season and the donations are pouring in. After such a tough year for everyone, the generosity continues despite the challenges faced by all.

Every year we are lucky to have the Boy Scout Food Drive, which is always overwhelmingly successfully. Each year, they bring in 10,000-plus pounds of food in just one day. This year, the drive took place on Saturday, Oct. 31, and has topped them all! The Scouts of Pack 13, Troop 13, Troop 72, Pack 109 and Troop 109 have really outdone themselves. This drive will keep the Food Bank going for 3-4 months during the hardest times of the year for families. We appreciate the efforts of the people who put together these events, and recognize the manpower in carrying this out. Thank you from all of the staff and clients at the Colchester Food Bank. We look forward to working with the Boy Scouts again next year.

We are currently accepting food donations Monday-Friday between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. A donation cart is located outside the front door for a contactless drop off. In the case of inclement weather, just give us a call and we will arrange for an alternate method. If you are interested in making a monetary donation to Social Services, it can be placed in an envelope and left in the drop box located outside of the front doors of Town Hall.

Since this pandemic began, the outpouring of support from our community has been overwhelming. We are incredibly fortunate to be part of such a thoughtful and generous group of people and businesses. Thank you.

Colchester Youth and Social Services**Look in the Mirror**

To the Editor:

In the month since the Presidential election, I was surprised at the relatively subdued reaction from the lefty contingent of letter writers. Quite frankly, I expected more chest-thumping from the handful of lobotomized CNN and MSNBC sycophants that grace the editorial page on a weekly basis. I'm genuinely disappointed in most of them...except Edmund Smith. Edmund is determined to deliver a message of hope and a renewed sense of humanity to all of us every week. Once you get past the anger, maliciousness, self-righteousness, and hypocrisy...his message shines through.

Who is paying Edmund to write his letters every week? George Soros? Why is Edmund always so angry? Why the personal attacks on... everybody that doesn't think like him? There are numerous facts that contradict his opinions, but they are countermanded by the liberal "de-bunking" machine. If you can't trust a liberal, who can you trust?

Can someone bring me up to speed on this strip club story? The last I knew, strip clubs are not illegal in the properly-zoned locale. And what is the reason for Edmund even broaching the topic of a now non-existent strip club? Was there illegality involved with this club? Or does Edmund have a moral crisis with the existence of strip clubs, like, say, someone might have a moral crisis about abortion or drug legalization? The real irony is that Edmund voted for Hillary Clinton, a spousal facilitator extraordinaire whose husband's sexual escapades went far beyond strip club standards. Edmund also voted for Joe Biden, whose son knows a few things about strip clubs and drugs, and quite possibly abortions.

I think Edmund should take a look in a mirror and renounce his affiliation with that psychological bastion of rainbows, unicorns, and magic beans known as liberal religion.

**Regards,
Ed Kozlowski – Colchester****Help the Trees**

To the Editor:

Emerald Ash Borer: Woodpeckers are known to feast on emerald ash borer larvae and can save trees, even forests, as long as the trees are not too far infested by the borer. To attract woodpeckers to "our" ash trees, we placed plant hanger posts under the trees and hang the woodpeckers' favorite suet (usually full of peanuts), attracting woodpeckers to these trees. These ash trees have so far remained healthy even while most ash trees in the neighborhood are, sadly, dead.

Some native wasps are also predators of emerald ash borer larvae. Instead of using chemical pesticides or any herbicides, insects in our yard are controlled by birds (seeking food, wa-

ter and habitat). Note: if in a bear-prone area, take in suet and bird feeders in evenings unless bears are hibernating.

Gypsy Moths: If gypsy moth caterpillars appear in the spring, get plastic wrap (the kind one stretches over a bowl of food) and wrap a band of plastic film snugly around tree trunks at a convenient height. Gypsy moth caterpillars need to walk up and down a tree each day to survive. The band of plastic wrap is too slippery for the caterpillars to walk over (the wrap should be snug enough so that they cannot walk underneath it). Result...the caterpillars cannot survive in the tree! This is inexpensive and, after placing the wrap, works effortlessly! (Be sure to remove the band of plastic wrap after the caterpillars are gone since plastic eventually encourages fungus.) Gypsy moths especially target oak and crabapple trees.

Trees take generations of human life to become mature so they can provide habitat and food, shade, buffer wind, retain soil and water, absorb great amounts of CO2 even as they provide oxygen. Trees need our help just as we need them.

Ann Zitkus – Hebron**Election Fraud? N-O-T**

To the Editor:

Sam Prentice is a frequent writer to the editor, but last week he was particularly guilty of basing his beliefs on 15-second sound bites.

His topic was election fraud, e.g. dead people voting, well that was O-N-E incident and if he had bothered to research it a bit he would have discovered that it was the wife of her dead husband who was voting as "Mrs." Some other false frauds: "3 trays of ballots in a ditch," in actuality it was 3 trays of mail, none of which were ballots; "thousands of non-citizens voting," there were a total of 19 in 2016; "thousands of discarded ballots," there were six discarded ballots in Luzerne County, Pa., that was a result of an error by a temporary employee; "thousands voting multiple times," it was Donald Trump himself who encouraged his base to send in an absentee ballot, then vote in person to "test" the system. Hardly any did this because election officials were quick to point out that if caught it was a felony; Dominion software switching of votes, there is no evidence that this happened.

Meanwhile, The Donald is still begging his base for contributions for an "Election Defense Fund." In actuality, most of the \$200 million collected so far is going into a "Save America PAC" that basically goes right into his pocket while he laughs all the way to the bank. Google "Election Defense Fund," Sam!

R. Thurston Clark – Haddam Neck**Electoral Votes**

To the Editor:

Article II of the U.S. Constitution clearly specifies how the president is chosen by Electors & how the votes for president will be counted.

The "3 U.S.C. § 7-The President § 7- "Meeting and Vote of Electors" states "The electors of President and Vice President of each State shall meet and give their votes on the first Monday after the second Wednesday in December..." which is Monday, Dec. 14.

The Biden-Harris ticket will receive Connecticut's seven electoral votes on Dec. 14 due to them receiving 59.24% of the vote to Trump-Pence 39.21%, according to unofficial results from the secretary of state's website.

State Sen. Matthew Lesser said the electors will meet at noon at the secretary of state's office on Dec. 14. He is not sure if it will be open to the public due to the COVID-19 pandemic. By Dec. 23, the electors' certificates must be delivered to the president of the Senate, who is Vice President Mike Pence. On Jan. 6, 2021, a joint session of Congress would count the votes and declare the results, according to the Congressional Research Service.

Frank LoGiudice – Portland**Church Dog**

To the Editor:

As a 40+-year member of St. Mary's church in Portland, our former parish priest Fr. Paul retired after seven years with us and left the state.

Fr. John is our new priest and he has a dog that he takes to Mass. After Mass, the parish members that I talked to liked the idea as I did. Fr. John walked his dog up and down the aisles and greeted everyone. The dog was very well-behaved and friendly.

At the last Mass he spent most of the time in his bed. I thought to myself this is the perfect therapy dog especially since a lot of us are experiencing stressful times. It was comforting just to have him there.

Last Sunday the dog was missing. Someone had complained to the diocese of Norwich and

Fr. John was told not to bring his dog to the Mass.

Whoever you are that complained, why didn't you call the rectory directly to work something out? After all there are several other churches and dozens of Masses you could choose to go to. Why don't you identify yourself and state your reason?

This is a therapy dog and gives people comfort to everyone, including myself.

Seems like you are trying to pull the welcome mat out from under Fr. John.

Richard H. Cote – Portland**Election Conspiracy Theory**

To the Editor:

Misquoting Biden and quoting him out of context (see the usual fact-checkers), Sam Prentice asserts monstrous election fraud. He presents no evidence and it's obvious why: because there is none. Conspiracy theories postulate a grand cabal out to deny Trump a second term: Republicans and Democrats, governors, legislators, election officials, postal workers, voting machine makers, polling workers, and, I'm guessing, Santa's elves. But I'll let you in on a little secret. There actually is a large group trying to oust Trump: the American people. Sorry about that.

It's not only that there's no evidence. The Trump campaign has repeatedly litigated these claims in court. His results: 1 win, 46 losses. Someone call Guinness Book: has any plaintiff lost so many cases in one month?

Speaking of one month, in 2016, fans here credited Trump for the post-election stock market bump. It was impressive, a one-month jump of 7.01% in. I'm wondering, do those same people credit Biden for the rise of 9.03% this past month?

Anyway, absent any evidence, those peddling huge election fraud are simply conspiracy theorists. As heard recently, "Don't laugh at kids for believing in Santa Claus; some adults believe Trump won the election."

**Sincerely,
Scott Sauyet – Andover****The Loser**

To the Editor:

Donald Trump has been (and is) the most incompetent, disastrous, dangerous "leader" in American history; a loser in more ways than one. Yet he still claims that he has won the election, despite overwhelming proof that he hasn't. By first refusing, thus delaying a smooth transition, it placed America in a dangerous situation at home and globally. Instead of focusing on bringing the pandemic under control in his last months as president, this small-minded, nasty megalomaniac is once again focused only on himself and doing anything he can to destroy his perceived enemies, namely anyone who challenges him.

Between bouts of ranting, sulking and golf, he falsely claims the voting system is "rigged" in favor of Democrats, and he is doing everything he can to undermine the foundation of our democracy: a fair and honest election. Meanwhile, the pandemic rages on with a record number of infections and deaths every day. Still Trump is doing nothing to try to control it. He wants to open up the economy. Okay. Well that can't safely happen while the virus rampages on. Get that under some semblance of control, and then America can recover physically, mentally, and financially.

What's truly stunning, though, is the large number of people, mainly Trump supporters, who cannot see what's happening right in front of them and come to the obvious conclusion that the pandemic is not an elaborate hoax – it's real. With 11.7 million people infected and sickened and 252,000 deaths so far, what more will it take to convince them to act to protect themselves, their family, and society at large? Since the current administration is doing nothing to curb the virus, it's up to individual citizens to do so. Wearing a mask is not a political statement; it's a no-brainer that will, and does, save lives.

**Thank you,
Maureen Heidtmann – East Hampton****A Divided Country**

To the Editor:

Christi Moraga submitted a letter last week expressing anguish and compassion for our divided country. I had a similar experience to Christi. When I saw the "No White Guilt" sign walking across that Route 2 overpass in Marlborough before Thanksgiving I realized the divisiveness we have had as a country since before 1776 had spoken again.

While I am a white man I do not feel guilt about the heinous crimes other whites committed since 1492 against indigenous peoples;

the enslaved and brutalized Blacks; and other persons of color. I am responsible for a better path though. I am responsible for uncovering the white supremacy biases I learned and unlearning them. I am responsible for working with those who put up the sign to find our common values as people and patriots. The USA has great aspirations, such as equality and justice for all, but the reality excludes millions with darker skin; those lacking money; and/or those with zero connections to people in power. These exclusions include many white men and women. It is my duty as a patriot to see us realize this country's unfulfilled aspirations, starting with my behavior.

Those with wealth and other forms of power create and manipulate our divisions, dividing us further as Christi Moraga said. I as a white man have had the privileges and am responsible for alleviating this suffering every way I can. I may not be guilty of crimes of the past or present I did not personally commit, but I am responsible for showing up to support those abused by a privilege-weighted way of living.

Life is too short to walk away from making this a better country, a better world, a compassionate one. Thanks, Christi, for the reminder.

Dave Porteous – Marlborough

Note: Porteous is a member of the Marlborough Charter Revision Commission but said he is speaking as an individual.

Thank You, Nancy

To the Editor:

After 30 years of service to the Town of Marlborough, Nancy Dickson will work her last day in the town clerk's office this week. The needs of the residents have always been Nancy's very first priority. If you've ever stopped by her office, you know she never forgets a name, she will always give you exactly what you are looking for, and you have likely heard one of her many funny stories. She has been a mentor to me for eight years, and a very dear friend to all of us at Town Hall. I will never claim to know as much as she does about town clerking, but luckily she has kindly promised to always take my calls.

Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 pandemic we cannot send her off in the style that she deserves, but she will be greatly missed and we are all thankful for the many years she has given our town.

**Lauren Griffin
Marlborough Town Clerk's Office****The Result is Undeniable**

To the Editor:

A letter from Sam Prentice in the Dec. 4 issue stated that the presidential election was illegitimate because of extensive voter fraud. He went on to quote alleged statements made by Joe Biden that supposedly indicate a certain pride on Biden's part for creating the greatest voter fraud in history. Mr. Prentice failed to cite any sources but, it's obvious that he reads every tweet that the occupant of the WH writes. He went on to say how the occupant was building massive leads on election night. If you followed the election closely, you know that there were expected leads by the occupant which later in the night and in the days that followed, dissipated and, in many cases, dissolved.

The truth is, Biden was quoted out of context. The specific sentence cited was only part of a statement made by Biden underscoring the fact that protection from voter fraud was the greatest in history. As he has many times in the past, Biden misspoke and said the word fraud rather than protection. And, by the way, the statement was made in the 19th minute of a 27-minute interview discussing voter fraud. Seriously, what candidate in his/her right mind would publicly brag about establishing a network of fraud?

The occupant has set a rather dubious record of lying to the American public over 20,000 times while in office and these statements were fact checked and proven to be lies. True to form, the occupant and his press secretary jumped on Biden's statement and immediately used it as proof that massive fraud existed. This has been the story for the past four years and the only thing it's accomplished is to make America the laughing stock of the world. The fact that more than 70 million people voted for the occupant to be reelected is, to me, a very sad statement highlighting the fact that people believe sound bites and tweets but never research the statements made.

Thankfully, the votes have been checked and rechecked and the result is undeniable... Joe Biden will be our 46th president. As Gerald Ford said when Nixon resigned, "our long national nightmare is over."

Harry Cion – Colchester

Marlborough • Marlborough

Local Convenience Store Owners Moving On

By Karla Santos

Azmat Jalil and Aqeela Azmat settled in Marlborough in 2002 as they were given the opportunity to run the 7-Eleven store in town – an opportunity that became 18 years of hard work and enabled them to send their three sons to college without any student loans.

Last week marked the end of that chapter for Jalil and Azmat, as they shut down the 7-Eleven store in Marlborough and will go run another store in Boston.

Azmat told the *Rivereast* last week that she and her husband are grateful because they were successful while living and doing business in Marlborough.

She said they ran the store with a lease and its term has expired. That's why the 7-Eleven company assigned the couple another store to run in Boston.

Azmat said the owners of the Marlborough 7-Eleven building have future plans of demolishing the building to build another business.

The owners of the property, which also includes the building of Three Fellas Pizza & Market, are the same owners of Connecticut Propane.

Danielle Gjonbalj, wife of one of the owners of the property, told the *Rivereast* on Wednesday that the owners will be making changes to the property but are not looking to release details yet. She said that the changes they are planning on making will "maintain the integrity and history of the town."

According to Sept. 10 meeting minutes of the Zoning Commission, an engineer representing the owners of the property, submitted an application for a special permit on the property. The

minutes state that "the applicant is looking to consolidate the existing use and pull the buildings off the existing property lines."

In addition, the minutes say that part of the proposal is to "put in two buildings" and "re-vamp the gas station."

Azmat, meanwhile, said that when they shut down the store, she left it while crying, as she spent a good portion of her life in there.

But overall, she and her husband are "happy" and they had a "good time" with the Marlborough community, she said.

"I really, really enjoyed" living in Marlborough, Azmat said. "This is a really good town, very nice people."

She said Marlborough became like her home because of the amount of time she and her family were able to spend there.

Azmat said her favorite part about doing business in Marlborough was that during holidays such as thanksgiving, all businesses closed, but their store remained open. The 7-Eleven store was open 24 hours, every day of the week.

"We are very happy to serve people," Azmat said, adding that customers, likewise, showed appreciation to them for their service.

Azmat said that for her and her husband serving people and meeting customers' demands is their motto.

While moving to Massachusetts is a new beginning for the couple, Azmat said that for them it's a good time for change, as Big Y is now near the store, bringing "a lot of competition."

The couple said they leave the store with a sense of achievement, because their work there enabled them to send their three sons to college without loans.



Azmat Jalil and Aqeela Azmat ran the 7-Eleven store in town for 18 years. Last week, the store closed, and the couple will be moving to Massachusetts to run another 7-Eleven. They said they enjoyed living and doing business in Marlborough.

Azmat and Jalil's children earned college degrees from the University of Connecticut and Central Connecticut State University.

"That's my achievement from my store," Azmat said.

Azmat and Jalil are originally from Pakistan. They moved to the United States 25 years ago, looking for better opportunities.

Previous to living in Marlborough, the couple lived in New York but they were not involved in the 7-Eleven business at that point, Azmat said. Jalil went to work and she was a stay-at-home mom.

The couple moved to Marlborough to run the store but they are now ready to start a new chapter in Boston while continuing to enjoy their family achievements. Their sons are now educated, married and with children of their own, Azmat said.

"I'm grateful that Aqeela and Azmat chose to settle, raise their family, and establish their business here," selectman Amy Traversa told the *Rivereast*. "They have become neighbors and friends of the community, participating in events and generously sharing many of their cultural traditions. I wish them continued success in their next chapter, and I will miss them both."

Historical Society News

Marlborough Historical Society has announced the following pieces of news:

Architectural Surveys: The society is conducting architectural surveys of the historic structures throughout the town. This will update the 1998 survey conducted by David Ransom. For more information, email mhs@marlboroughhistory.org.

2021 Calendars: Calendars are available for purchase either online at www.marlboroughhistory.org or at 17 School Drive. Cost is \$18.

Reflections Into Marlborough's History: Marlborough's complete 296-page history book is once again available for purchase. Cost is

\$50. More information is at www.marlboroughhistory.org.

Census Records: All census records from the 1800s are being digitized for easy research and referencing. As each decade is complete, they will become available online and hard copy.

Donations: Marlborough Historical Society is a nonprofit organization. To make a tax-deductible donation to aid in its historic preservation efforts, visit www.marlboroughhistory.org or mail to Marlborough Historical Society, P.O. Box 351, Marlborough, CT 06447.

Send Those Letters to Santa

A special box for all mail addressed to Santa Claus at the North Pole is located at the Marlborough Post Office. All boys and girls from Marlborough are invited to deposit their letters to Santa into this mailbox.

The postmaster reminds everyone to be sure to include a return name and address on the envelope or in the letter to Santa, as the big guy plans to answer each and every one of his letters – with the help of his special elves from Ambassador Girl Scout Troop 67813 and the local post office.

All letters should be deposited by the close of business on Monday, Dec. 14.

Christmas Tree Sales

The East Glastonbury Fish and Game Club will sell Christmas trees Saturdays and Sundays only, from now until Dec. 20, from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. each day. The club is located on Planeta Road in Marlborough, just off West Road.

All trees are \$30. Cut your own or ask for assistance. There will be members present to help you cut and load your tree. For more information, visit www.egfg.org.

'Virtual Giving Tree' for Food Bank

Marlborough Food Bank is looking to help local families and seniors who are currently struggling financially this holiday season, via a "Virtual Giving Tree."

Due to COVID-19 concerns, the lobby of Marlborough's Liberty Bank will be closed through the holidays. In lieu of the Liberty Bank Giving Tree, a "Virtual Giving Tree" has been established. If interested in making a donation, email Marlborough Food Bank at MFBXMAS@gmail.com. The food bank will help to match you with the wishes of a senior or family.

The food bank said gift cards for local grocery stores, restaurants, Walmart, Target, etc., as well as gas cards, are always welcome.

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Charter Commission Proposes Town Manager

By Karla Santos

The Charter Revision Commission announced on Tuesday during a public hearing that it is looking to propose a new form of government including a town manager and a five-member Board of Selectmen.

Making the change would entail a town manager search committee and a list of qualifications created by the current Board of Selectmen. If these changes are applied to the charter, there would be no residency requirement for the town manager.

The goal of the group is to have a draft report in the spring of 2021.

The Charter Revision Commission held a public hearing in which it had a presentation with an update on the project and an opportunity for questions and answers. After the presentation, only two members of the public participated in the question-and-answer portion of the meeting.

Co-chair of the commission, Robert Ragusa, explained that the purpose of the meeting was for the commission to share the progress it has made since its last public hearing, which was held in February.

One of the commission's proposed changes is to increase the number of people serving on the Board of Selectmen, making it a five-member board, instead of the current three. Ragusa said one problem with the current structure is that two selectmen can't meet outside a public meeting, and another problem is that two selectmen can vote on an issue without representation from the opposite party.

In addition, the commission is looking into

changing the town leader from an elected official to an appointed one – a town manager.

Ragusa said the problem with the current structure is that the town leader is an elected official with no qualifications required to run for office other than a residency requirement.

Ragusa gave a list of reasons why an appointed official would be more beneficial to the town.

"An appointed town leader is professionally trained to deal with the increasing complexity and demands of running a town," Ragusa said.

In addition, he said that an appointed official would have experience with grants, would be trained to improve town operations and would have experience with introducing cost-saving measures.

"The ability to problem-solve and innovate and share best practices leverages the opportunity that other town managers or town administrators, professional leaders have encountered over their work experience so that you are not necessarily reinventing the wheel," Ragusa said.

During the presentation, Ragusa also spoke of the differences between a town administrator and a town manager – including that an administrator would likely have less training and experience than a manager. He also noted that a town administrator would likely need to be "closely supervised" by a first selectman – thus requiring the first selectman to remain a paid position.

Other items the commission is considering changes to include the public bidding process, special appropriation limits, filling of vacan-

cies, transfers, code of ethics, maintenance of town properties and the removal of appointed members from boards.

Charter Revision Commission member Evelyn Godbout spoke about the bidding process and explained why it would be beneficial to update bidding requirements.

"When you are looking at numbers and you are looking at amounts to the formal bidding processes, these numbers were relevant in 1985," she said, explaining that that was the last year that bidding processes were revised on the charter. "They are not relevant in the current period of time."

Joe Blanco, also a member of the commission, spoke about a code of ethics. He noted that currently there isn't a code of ethics in the town charter but the commission is proposing to include one.

In addition, an ethics commission is also being looked at, Blanco said.

"That organization has the investigative authority for any types of complaints that might come in," Blanco noted. "It also would be responsible for training new personnel coming in with our ethics code."

Ragusa said that overall, the Charter Revision Commission has been working to propose changes that could "improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the town government."

In addition, Ragusa noted that the commis-

sion has been looking at identifying potential changes that would improve clarity in the charter and at modernizing "provisions in the charter to be consistent with Connecticut General Statutes or current preferred practices."

As part of the charter revision process, Ragusa explained that the commission has interviewed multiple leaders from Marlborough and other towns. The commission has also discussed changing the language of the document and it has taken into consideration feedback it received from the public hearing in February.

In January the Board of Selectmen formed the commission and assigned it three charges: to review the number of selectmen on the Board of Selectmen; to examine other forms of town government; and to recommend additional charter changes.

Ragusa noted that the town's charter has not been revised in its entirety in over 35 years. There was a revision made in 2002 but the recommended changes failed at referendum. He said that in 2018, voters approved two charter changes – establishing an annual budget referendum instead of a town meeting, and setting a 10-year mandatory charter review.

The commission is planning to hold another public hearing in February or March.

Congregational Church News

The Sunday worship service at the Marlborough Congregational Church is livestreamed every Sunday at 10 a.m. through the church website, mcc.marlconchurch.org, and follows the usual order of Sunday worship.

Weekly participants include church pastor the Rev. Bob Faulhaber, Carolyn Brodginiski, organist Dave Mulligan, and other musicians and participants from the church and community. All are invited to the weekly Zoom Coffee Hour that follows worship. A Message for the Children is given on select Sundays by Christian Education/Junior Youth Director Gwen Lawson.

The third Sunday of Advent will be celebrated Dec. 13 at 10 a.m. Faulhaber will lead worship. His sermon title is "Angels and Vir-

gins" based on Luke 1:26-38 and Isaiah 61:1-4. A ceremony of lighting the Advent wreath candles with words of joy, hope, love and peace will take place during the worship service during the four Sundays in Advent.

Sunday services are recorded and available for viewing on the church website later that same day. All previous worship services can be viewed through the webpage.

Phone messages are checked at Faulhaber's direct line at 860-295-0432 and at the church office at 860-295-9050.

Second Blessings Thrift Shop is planning to reopen in April, but is selling on eBay. New items are listed each week at bit.ly/MCCebay.

Red Cross Blood Drive

There will be an American Red Cross Blood Drive Wednesday, Dec. 16, from 1-6 p.m., at Fellowship Community Church, 24 South Rd.

To make an appointment to give blood, platelets or plasma with the Red Cross, download the Red Cross Blood Donor App, visit RedCrossBlood.org, call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767) or enable the Blood Donor Skill on any Alexa Echo device.

Marlborough Coat Drive

All are asked to donate clean gently-used or new coats and hats/scarves/mittens this holiday season. The Marlborough Democratic Town Committee is accepting coats outside of the Old Country Store at The Shops at Marlborough Barn on North Main Street and outside of the old Dunkin' Donuts.

Items will be donated to the Marlborough Food Bank and overflow will be sent to other charitable organizations.

Organizers thanked the food bank volunteers and the businesses participating.

Mercy Honor Roll

The following students made the Mercy High School Honor Roll for the first quarter of the 2020-21 school year:

High Honors:

Elizabeth Brown, Grade 11.

Honors:

Jessica Goduto, Grade 11; Samantha Magro, Grade 10.

Signs Available

The Marlborough Lions Club has "Be Kind" and "Peace on Earth" signs available, for \$10 each.

Signs can be purchased by calling Lions President Megan Lloyd at 413-687-5537 or Lions Treasurer Jean Paul Bolduc at 860-798-2054.

For more information, visit the Marlborough Lions Club Facebook page.



Forcible Entry Class... Recently, the Marlborough Volunteer Fire Department hosted a class for forcible entry. Instructors from New York Fire Department and Hartford Fire Department taught the class. In an emergency, first responders must be able to make entry as quickly as possible to save lives. New locking security systems possess certain challenges to fire personnel. The class was attended by 32 first responders from Marlborough, East Hampton, Glastonbury and state police.

Parks and Rec Programs

Parks & Recreation has announced the following. For full descriptions or to register, visit marlboroughct.recdesk.com and click on "programs," stop by the office at Town Hall, 26 N. Main St., or call 860-295-6203.

Youth Programs: Horseback Riding Lessons: For ages 5 and up. Lessons are private and are an hour; days and times are flexible. Fee: four lessons for \$175/residents, \$180/non-residents.

Kids Sewing – T-Shirt Memory Quilt: Saturday, Dec. 12, 10-11:30 a.m. Fee: \$43/residents, \$48/non-residents. All classes held virtually.

Adult Programs: Barre/Pilates – Mondays: Through Dec. 28, 5:30-6:30 p.m. Class instruction is virtual. Fee is \$15 per week to drop in.

Barre/Pilates – Wednesdays: Through Dec. 30, 6-7 p.m. Class instruction is virtual. Fee is \$15 per week to drop in.

Yoga – Mondays: Through Dec. 28, 6:30-7:30 p.m. Class instruction is virtual. Fee: \$15 per week to drop in.

Yoga – Tuesdays: Through Dec. 29, 9:30-10:30 a.m. Class instruction is virtual. Fee is \$15 per week to drop in.

Driveway Reflective Number Signs: Cost is \$35 each. Order forms are online and at Town Hall.



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All About Blinds Celebrates 50 Years in Business

By Jack Lakowsky

During the final months of its 50th year in business, East Hampton's All About Blinds has enjoyed what owner Sven Ramklint described as "an amazing rush" of sales.

"This was the best third [fiscal year] quarter we've ever had," Ramklint told the *Rivereast* on Monday.

Ramklint said although this year was not the venerable interior design firm's best, revenue was still exceptional and 2020 was "our third or fourth best year."

Brisk sales were not the case at the start of the pandemic, Ramklint said.

"We did no business for three months," said Ramklint. "I think it was mostly because people didn't know how to deal with [the pandemic]. We just worked on the showroom and caught up on paperwork."

Ramklint said he, his crew and his customers took the cautious route at the start of the pandemic, waiting to send workers into clients' homes until everyone had a better grip on what measures to take.

Then, as the weather cooled, orders to All About Blinds "broke loose." Customers from up and down the Route 66 corridor, Blinds' main service area, called for Ramklint's acclaimed services. The Better Business Bureau has for years rated All About Blinds with a coveted "A+."

Ramklint attributed the recent influx to strong customer loyalty, a factor for which he said he's "very lucky." Ramklint said word-of-mouth referrals has been Blinds' means of success since its inception in 1970.

Ramklint came to the U.S. from his native Sweden in 1963, moving to Chicago for graduate school. In the Windy City, he completed his studies, and it was there he fell in love with America.

"I always felt connected to the American lifestyle, the emphasis on personal freedom," said Ramklint. "I had a very good life in Sweden, my parents did well, and the easiest thing would have to be to stay. But once I experienced the freedom here, I never even thought about going back."

Ramklint said regulations in the U.S. are more business-friendly than in Europe, where, he said, "the state is very powerful."

"Here, you make your own life," Ramklint said. "I took to it easily; it was a breath of fresh air."

Ramklint said he will never "outgrow" his

connection to his homeland, and although he's been in America for nearly 60 years and most of his personal relationships are here, he sometimes still experiences a nostalgic "longing for the stones and grass where I played."

Ramklint said in his early career, when he lived in Wisconsin and worked in Chicago, Scandinavian textiles flooded the American market. Due to this newfound and prosperous trade, Ramklint's employer at the time began importing Scandinavian textiles. Ramklint would fly to his native country to select design collections and visit with family.

Ramklint said owning an interior design business was not in his plans as a young man. In 1966, he was hired by an interior design firm in Chicago, where he told his boss; "I'll do anything, but don't put me in draperies."

Ramklint said this was request was denied.

Back then, window treatment design and stock were limited to four types: traditional drapes, venetian blinds, roller shades, and shutters. Privacy and light adjustment were their only purposes, Ramklint said.

"Over the years, that has changed a lot," said Ramklint. "Window treatments are now very high-tech."

Many homeowners can through smart home or other technology control their treatments to their exact preferences of light and shade. Ramklint said products are now as utilitarian as they are attractive. One particular advancement Ramklint admires is the application of thermodynamics in designing window treatments, which saves customers money on their heating and cooling bills.

In some cases, high-quality window coverings are more efficient insulators than the glass itself, Ramklint explained.

Ramklint described a notable example of how controlling the minutiae of homes is right at customers' fingertips. Although he mostly serves the Route 66 corridor, Ramklint performed a one-of-a-kind job for a Chicago-based customer who was both a scientist and an attorney.

"He would get last-minute calls telling him he needs to fly to the Arctic right away for research," said Ramklint.

The customer wanted total control of his home while he was braving the tundra. Ramklint said the customer owned fine art and artifacts, prizes the scientist didn't want sullied by direct sunlight or temperature fluctuations.



Sven Ramklint has owned and operated All About Blinds for the past 50 years – and retirement is the furthest thing from his mind. "I don't see a reason to slow down," Ramklint, 83, said recently.

Ramklint did him one better.

"We set up a solar sensor with the [treatment's automatic] motors, and the house operated with or without him there, at maximum efficiency," said Ramklint. "It worked really well. He paid a fortune for that."

Ramklint said he wouldn't have fathomed such sophistication when he started his career.

"The industry has gone from such a narrow selection to being a big subgroup of interior design," said Ramklint. "Nowadays, every manufacturer of window treatments offers automatic versions."

Ramklint said high-tech treatments have decreased in price since entering the market. Whereas before they ranged between \$500 and \$700, now products can be bought for a few hundred dollars.

Adapting to changing products, technology, and demands is a skill necessary for any business owner. What remains the same for Ramklint, no matter how tech may change, is a commitment to excellent service.

"In our business, we have to work hard because we custom make everything," said Ramklint. "From design to fabrication to in-

stallation, there are a lot of chances to mess something up. We've always done whatever it takes for our customers, to deliver the work we said we would, which isn't always easy."

Fifty years has done little to drain Ramklint's energy.

"I don't see a reason to slow down," said Ramklint. "I'm 83 years old and I'm out there every day. I have a good crew who always does good work."

Ramklint said his sister "owned a very successful business in Sweden, and since she retired, she splits her time between a big sailboat and golf courses in Spain."

That leisurely life holds no attraction to him, however.

"I'll say to her, 'How can you stand not having anything to do?' And she'll say, 'How can you stand always having something to do?' I'm happy with my life, and I've managed to stay healthy," said Ramklint.

All About Blinds is located at 89 Main St., and can be reached at 860-267-8330. For hours, product offerings and other information, visit allaboutblinds2u.com

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Town Meeting Next Week

A special town meeting will be held via Zoom and at Town Hall, 1 Community Drive, on Monday, Dec. 14, at 6 p.m., to modify the scope of the high school renovation project.

This meeting is to consider and act upon a resolution to modify the scope of the \$51,695,000 appropriation approved at referendum held June 4, 2013 for costs in connection with renovations, improvements and additions to East Hampton High School to include the following work: (a) replacement of the entire tennis court surface, (b) replacement of the entire synthetic track surface surrounding the soccer field, (c) correction of water/drainage issues on a portion of the soccer field, (d) correction of sub-surface water, drainage, grading issues and irrigation and grass/sod replacement of the baseball outfield, and (e) such other work and improvements as are related thereto; and to authorize the Town Council to establish a building committee for the work.

There is no increase to the appropriation for the project, the town said. The meeting is

only on the specific inclusion of this work in the project activities.

In accordance with COVID-19 guidelines, Town Hall can accommodate approximately 50 people. If attending via Zoom, log in at least 30 minutes and up to an hour prior to the meeting to be checked in. Upon logging in, attendees will be in a "waiting room" until they are let in, whereupon they will be required to show their identification to the camera and to verify the attendee's address.

Only devices with a camera will be allowed to be used for voting attendees. Each device logged into the meeting via Zoom will receive no more than one vote per question.

Those wishing to listen to the meeting without voting can phone into the meeting using the Zoom phone in number and access code.

Zoom login information will be provided on the town website at www.easthamptonct.gov; click the link on the homepage calendar for the town meeting.

Fire Department Santa Runs

The escalating COVID-19 situation has necessitated some significant changes to the format of this year's Santa Runs sponsored by members of the East Hampton Volunteer Fire Department.

As always, Santa will be perched high upon a fire truck as he tours through the various neighborhoods in East Hampton but he will not be able to stop for pictures or to interact directly with the town's good little girls and boys of all ages, as he has in the past. Also, the number of evenings Santa will be visiting has been reduced from 11 to five, but all the streets and neighborhoods included in previous Santa Runs will be covered this year as well. The runs will begin at approximately 5:30 p.m. each night and will closely follow the itineraries shown below. Emergency responses or inclement weather may force a delay or cancellation of any particular evening's event and there will be no reschedules. Any changes to the schedule below and all updated information will be posted on the Fire Department's Facebook page as soon as practical.

Dec. 16 – Southeastern Section: Main Street (from Barton Hill to Colchester Avenue), Colchester Avenue, Dziok, Dale, Tallwood, Waterhole, Salmon Run, Comstock Trail, Brookside, Flatbrook, Olde Flatbrook, Tartia, Jacobson Farm, Harlan Place; Middletown Avenue (to Young Street), Young, Old Skinner, Old Chestnut Hill (lower), Carriage, Lena, Emily, Old Young, Taylor, Wildwood. Daniel Street, Wopowog, Brook Hill, South Main, finish at South Main and Colchester Avenue.

Dec. 17 – Southwestern/Cobalt Section: Skinner, Old Coach. Old Middletown Avenue, Alden's Crossing, Long Crossing, Chestnut Hill, Michael, Hog Hill, Charles Mary, William, Terp, Hog Hill to Route 151, Hurd Park Road,

Middle Haddam Road, Schoolhouse, Long Hill, Keighley Pond, High Point, Bates, Oakum Dock, Grist Mill, Depot Hill, Old Middletown Road.

Dec. 18 – Northwestern Section: Main Street (from Barton Hill to Route 66), Spice Hill, Tarragon (upper), Nutmeg, Tarragon (lower), Curry, Saffron, Arden, Champion Hill, Abbey, Anderson, Flannery, Cone, Childs Road (66 to Middle School), North Main, Hills Avenue, Fairlawn, Melburn, Laurel Glen, Sherry Drive, North Maple, Maplewood, Beechcrest, North Main, Christopher, West Drive, Bellwood Court, Edgemere Condos, Clark Hill, Waterview, Mountainview, Hilltop, Sunrise, Skyline, Highland, Tiffany, Midwood Farm, Stonegate, North Cone.

Dec. 19 – Village/Metro Section: Lakeview, Bishop Hill, Summit, Bevin Blvd, Barton Hill, Crescent, Steepleview, Oak Knoll, Maple, Forest Glen, Forest, Hyde Farm, Mary Ann Drive, Hayes, East Hayes, Childs Road (off Forest), Forest to Skinner, Edgerton, Chatham Fields, Huckleberry, Sunset, Cedar Ridge, Holly, Smith, Dogwood, Royal Oaks area, Arch, Viola, Flanders, Daly, Pecauset, Portage, Bear Swamp, Peach Farm, Whispering Woods, Town Line Drive, Orchard View, Flanders to Route 196, Walnut.

Dec. 20 – Northeastern Section: Old Marlborough Road, Poet's area, Lake Vista Drive, Edgewater Hill, Laurel Ridge, Indigenous Peoples' area, Lake Drive, Staeth, Aaron's, White Birch (lower), Ridgeview, White Birch (upper), Country Lane, Tammie Ann Dr., Berkshire, Chapman, Elmwood, Birchwood, Crestwood, Fernwood, Mott Hill, Brack Farm, Mott Hill to Lake Dr. Candlewood, Raymond, Pocotopaug Dr, Auburn Knoll, Island View, Blue Heron, Eastham Bridge, Seven Hills Crossing.

'Joy' the Donkey Comes to HNCC

This Sunday, Dec. 13, "Joy" the Donkey will be at Haddam Neck Covenant Church to help church pastor the Rev. Tom Cowger explain the meaning of the third week of Advent. All are welcome to join in the fun at Farmer M's Barn. "Joy" will share how to experience the joy of Christmas – even when everything else seems gloomy.

All through this time of preparation for Christmas, other barnyard friends will attend the Sunday services to help people better understand what Advent is all about. Invite any children you know to attend or watch online.

Also, plan to attend on Christmas Eve at 5 p.m. for a special treat.

All are welcome to worship at the church at 17 Haddam Neck Rd. each Sunday at 9 a.m., but call the church office at 860-267-2336 any afternoon Monday-Friday to reserve your space. Wear a mask. Your temperature will be taken at the door, and hand sanitizer is available. Safe distancing is practiced.

Worship is also broadcast on Facebook Live, at www.facebook.com/Haddam-Neck-Covenant-Church. The service is on YouTube about an hour after live worship.

East Hampton Library News & Notes

East Hampton Public Library, 105 Main St., has made the following announcements. For more information, call 860-267-6621 or visit easthamptonpubliclibrary.org or facebook.com/EastHamptonLibrary.

Library Hours: The library is open Monday-Wednesday, 10 a.m.-8 p.m.; and Thursday-Saturday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. All patrons age 2 and up are required to wear masks that cover their nose and mouth in the library and observe social distancing. If unable or unwilling to wear a mask, call the library to schedule a curbside delivery.

Stories and Songs: Online via Zoom. For ages 1-5 years. Wednesdays at 10 a.m. No registration required.

Virtual Afterschool Program: Middle School Funday: Monday, Dec. 21, 4 p.m., via Zoom, for grades 6-8. Together, make DIY Handwarmers. All materials will be available for pick-up next week. Registration required.

Take-and-Makes: Each month, the library debuts three take-and-make activity kits: one for teens, one for school-age children and one for the littlest learners. Reserve kits on the website and pick up in person or curbside. Registration begins the first of the month, and pickup begins the second Tuesday of the month.

Book Club: *Mr. Dickens and His Carol* will be discussed online via Zoom Tuesday, Dec. 15, at 6:30 p.m., and Thursday, Dec. 17, at 2 p.m. Copies of the book are available for checkout

at the circulation desk. Register online for the Zoom link.

Teen Book Drive: The library's Teen Advisory Board is sponsoring a community book drive to collect new copies of Nutmeg Award nominees for local teens in need. The board is asking residents to select a book off of one of two Nutmeg Award lists (Middle School Nutmeg Nominees or the High School Nutmeg Nominees), purchase a copy and drop it off at the library before Tuesday, Dec. 15. All donated books will be distributed to local teens in need by the East Hampton Food Bank and East Hampton Youth and Family Services.

Shop Local Holiday Raffle: For the third year in a row, the library will sponsor a Shop Local Holiday Raffle in the Village Center. For every purchase you make at a participating Village Center store, you'll receive a raffle ticket. Return the ticket to the library and you will be entered to win a gift basket stuffed with Village Center goodies and gift certificates. Raffle tickets will be distributed through Dec. 22, and the drawing will be Dec. 23. Entrant need not be present to win.

Let it Glow! 2020 Jingle Bell Parade: Download a map, load up your car, and tour the community to check out the best holiday lighting in town – and then vote on your favorite. Prizes will be awarded to winners. The competition runs through Dec. 23.

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Senior Center News & Notes

East Hampton Senior Center, 105 Main St., continues to be closed, although staff is available via phone (860-267-4426) and email (seniorcenter@easthamptonct.gov) through normal business hours: Monday-Thursday, 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m.; Friday, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. For the latest information, visit www.easthamptonct.gov/east-hampton-senior-center.

Online Program Registration: Register for programs online at MyActiveCenter.com. You will need your key-swipe tag number that you scan when you visit the center, as well as the phone number and email you used when originally registering at the senior center. Once registered for MyActiveCenter, you'll only need your email and password to get back in. Call the senior center for assistance.

Haddam Neck Covenant Church News

Haddam Neck Covenant Church, 17 Haddam Neck Rd., invites all to Sunday worship at 9 a.m. online at www.facebook.com/Haddam-Neck-Covenant-Church or in person with masks, social distancing and safety protocols. Pastor is the Rev. Tom Cowger.

Message Series: The message series is on Jesus' love for people and how living in that love can provide peace.

Advent. Each Sunday in Advent, the church's Puppet Ministry will feature one of the barnyard friends in Farmer M's barn to help Pastor Tom explain the meaning of Advent.

Bible Study: Cowger holds a Zoom study entitled "God's Peace and Prayers" every other Thursday from 7-8:30 p.m. The foundation of the study is the book *Armchair Mystic: How Contemplative Prayer Can Bring You Closer to God*.

Call the church office at 860-267-2336 for more information. Office hours are 12:30-4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Congregational Church News

The Congregational Church of East Hampton, UCC, located at 59 Main St., is holding in-person services in the church sanctuary Sundays at 10 a.m. Masks must be worn and social distancing practiced. People may also access the livestream service and past services via the church website, www.cc-eh.org.

Church School classes for pre-kindergarten through eighth grade are held during worship.

Teen Youth Group is normally held the fourth Friday of each month from 6:30-7:30 p.m., for students in grades 6-12; however, the December meeting will be one week earlier, on Dec. 18, due to the Christmas holiday.

The season of Advent is underway, with the lighting of candles on the Advent wreath each week until Christmas.

Pageant Sunday, Dec. 20, will be a special

Overly Stressed? Struggling? East Hampton Social Services, in collaboration with the senior center, is offering group therapy sessions via Zoom Wednesdays from 2-3 p.m. To sign up, contact the senior center at 860-267-4426 or register online. Individual therapy is also available by appointment through East Hampton Social Services at 860-267-9982.

Virtual Lunch Bunch: Every other Monday at 12:30 p.m. for an hour, via Zoom. Next dates are Dec. 14 and 28. Register online, or contact the senior center for an invitation.

Food Drive

The local Edward Jones branch is running a food drive to benefit the East Hampton Food Bank.

People are invited to drop off donations at the office, 204 E. High St. Suite 2, from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. The drive runs through Dec. 15.

Edward Jones provides financial services in the U.S. and, through its affiliate, in Canada. Visit edwardjones.com for more information.

Christ Episcopal Church News

Christ Episcopal Church, 66 Middle Haddam Rd. (mailing address: P.O. Box 81), Middle Haddam, conducts Morning Prayer Sunday at 10 a.m., with church school at 11 a.m. Both will be available on Zoom.

Special Advent services will be conducted at 6 p.m. Wednesdays, Dec. 16 and 23, via Zoom.

The Rev. Ann Perrott is Priest-in-Charge, the Rev. Joanne Neel-Richard handles Children's Ministry, and Martha Alimi is the music director.

For more information or if in need of pastoral assistance, call the church at 860-267-0287 or visit www.christchurchmiddlehaddam.com.

service presented by the youth.

On Christmas Eve at 7 p.m., there will be a service of lessons, music and candle-lighting, followed by caroling on the church lawn. Due to COVID-19, there will be a maximum of 70 people allowed to attend; contact the church office by noon Thursday, Dec. 24, to register to attend. People may also access the livestream service via the church website. Those who prefer not to attend the service in person, are still welcome to come for caroling on the church lawn immediately following the service, at 8 p.m.

For more information, visit the church website or call 860-267-4959 during office hours, Tuesday-Friday from 8 a.m.-noon. In case of pastoral emergencies, the Rev. Jim Latimer can be reached at 610-568-2480.

Send Those Letters to Santa

A special box for all mail addressed to Santa Claus at the North Pole is located at the East Hampton Post Office lobby. All boys and girls from East Hampton are invited to deposit their letters to Santa into this mailbox.

The postmaster reminds everyone to be sure to include a return name and address on the envelope or in the letter to Santa, as the big guy plans to answer each and every one of his letters – with the help of his special elves from Ambassador Girl Scout Troop 67813 and the local post office.

All letters should be deposited by the close of business on Monday, Dec. 14.

Helping Hands

Helping Hands, a ministry of Cornerstone Bible Church, is open the first and third Saturdays of each month. The ministry offers free gently-used clothing, household items, books, linens and more to community members in need.

Due to COVID-19, all must sign up for a time slot and wear a mask when entering. To register for a time slot, call 860-918-0784 or email jholm225@sbcglobal.net, on the Sunday before the open Saturday.

Helping Hands will accept donations only on the first and third Saturday of each month.

Virtual Auction

The Friends of East Hampton Public Library group is wrapping up its virtual auction to raise funds for library programming and more. The auction ends tomorrow, Dec. 12 at noon.

Visit www.Facebook.com/FriendsoftheEastHamptonPublicLibrary to view a photo album of all items up for auction and bidding guidelines. All bids should be emailed to EHPLFriendsAuction@gmail.com. Select items are on display in the library at 105 Main St., but all bidding will happen via email.

Residents Sought to Serve

The town continues to look for volunteers to serve on various boards, commissions and agencies.

Currently with vacancies are: Arts & Culture Commission, Brownfields Redevelopment Agency, Clean Energy Task Force, Conservation-Lake Commission, Design Review Board, Ethics Commission, Housing Authority, Inland Wetlands Watercourses Agency, Library Advisory Board, and Middle Haddam Historic District Commission.

Applications are available in the town manager's office at 1 Community Drive or at www.easthamptonct.gov.

Holidays for the Horses

East Hampton-based CT Draft Horse Rescue is holding a draft-size raffle basket fundraiser, to benefit its horses.

Tickets are \$5 for five tickets or \$10 for 12 tickets. Tickets will be available to purchase (in-person only) from 8-11:30 a.m. Saturday, Dec. 12, and Sunday, Dec 13, at the Drafty Donuts trailer on Route 66 in the Edgewater Hill complex next to the Educational Playcare.

The basket drawing will be held Sunday, Dec. 13, at noon.

Basket themes include 'Self Care,' 'Christmas Eve at Home,' 'Bird Lovers,' 'Bird Watchers,' 'Game Night,' 'By the Light of the Silvery Moon,' 'An Old-Fashioned Christmas,' 'Candyland,' 'CDHR Swag,' 'Let it Snow,' 'My Best Friend,' 'Holiday Baker' and 'Holiday Spirits.'

All baskets were created and donated by the CDHR volunteers and 100% of the proceeds goes directly to support the horses of the rescue. For more information, visit www.ctdraftrescue.org or www.facebook.com/ctdraftrescue.

Village Center 'Shop Local' Holiday Raffle

East Hampton Public Library and the Economic Development Commission have announced the third annual East Hampton Village Center 'Shop Local' Holiday Raffle.

Make a purchase at any participating Village Center store by Dec. 22 and receive a raffle ticket. Return the ticket to the library, 105 Main St., for a chance to win a gift basket stuffed with local items and gift cards. The drawing will be held on Dec. 23.

The merchants participating in the raffle include: Air Line Cycles, Center Package, Dexter's Tunes, Tales and Ales, ECO Coffee, Little Fish Gallery & Gift, Old Bank Flowers & Greenery, Red Door Boutique, Studio 13 and Willow.

Christmas Masses at St. Patrick

This year, reservations are required for all interested in attending the celebration of Mass Christmas Eve and Christmas morning at St. Patrick Church, as the church is adhering to strict reduced capacity and social distancing and mask requirements.

There will be vigil Mass at 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. Christmas Eve, and Holy Mass at 8 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. Christmas morning. Once capacity for all Masses has been reached, additional Masses may be added to accommodate extra participants.

Call the parish office at 860-267-6644 to reserve a spot.

Red Cross Blood Drive

There will be an American Red Cross blood drive at St. Patrick Church, 47 West High St., on Wednesday, Dec. 16, from 8:30 a.m.-6 p.m.

To make an appointment to give blood, platelets or plasma with the Red Cross, download the Red Cross Blood Donor App, visit RedCrossBlood.org, call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767) or enable the Blood Donor Skill on any Alexa Echo device.

Holiday Stuff-a-Cruiser

On Dec. 12, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m., the East Hampton Police Department will partner with Bethlehem Lutheran Church to hold "Holiday Stuff-a-Cruiser," collecting new, unwrapped and donated toys for local families who are in need this holiday season.

The event will take place in the church parking lot at 1 East High St.

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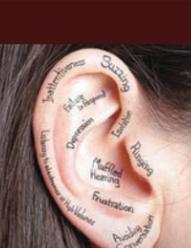
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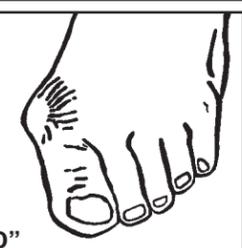
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Obituaries

Hebron

Ray E. Lanford

Ray E. Lanford, 57, of Hebron, passed away Friday, Nov. 27, at Hartford Hospital. He was the beloved husband of 34 years to Wendy L. Dippold Lanford.



Ray was born in Meriden Nov. 1, 1963, and was the son of Rachel Edwards Lanford and the late Paul Lanford. His hobbies included coin collecting, metal detecting, going to tag sales, fishing and doing everything for his grandchildren who were the lights of his life. Ray was always spontaneous and was the "life of the party."

He was father of Darla and Joseph Lanford, grandfather of Jeremy, Alex, Alana, Zoey and Joey, and brother of Dorothy Lanford and Karen Kaplan.

There was a walk through wake on Dec. 4 at North Haven Funeral Home, followed by a graveside service performed by the Rev. Bob Faulhaber at St. John's Cemetery in Wallingford.

Should friends desire to share condolences or make a donation for Ray's 5 grandchildren please visit his GoFundMe page, at <https://www.gofundme.com/f/ray-lanford-funeral-expenses>.

Andover

Jeanne B. Person

Jeanne B. Person, 89, of Andover, passed Monday, Nov. 30. It is with heavy hearts that we share Jeanne's passing. Jeanne was born in Phillipsburg, N.J., Jan. 10, 1931, to Alvin Lore and Sarah Piatt Lore.



Jeanne epitomized the word 'volunteer.' She was actively involved in 4-H work at the town and county level, organized a drug education program for Andover youth, worked with the Andover Volunteer Fire Department regarding CPR and first aid classes, was president of the Andover Elementary School PTA and served on the building committee for the gym/music room. Jeanne also volunteered at Manchester Memorial Hospital in various capacities, was a member of the Andover Economic Development Commission and the Ethics Commission, and was a founding member and an avid supporter of the Andover Farmers Market.

Jeanne's work life entailed serving as a special education driver for Andover schoolchildren, opening the mail department when J.C. Penney transferred the catalog headquarters to Manchester, serving as an agent for Argosy Travel, doing seasonal work as a clerk in the state tax department during peak periods and working at Manchester Memorial Hospital in hospitality. All of this she did while raising eight children.

Jeanne was also a member of the Hartford Jazz Society and the Connecticut Jazz Federation. She loved watching UConn women's basketball games and was a member of the Young At Heart Club. Jeanne enjoyed hiking and traveled to England and France with this group.

Jeanne was a wonderful mother – much loved by her children. She is survived by her children, Ross and Becky Person, Jesse and Nickie Person, Scott and Lauren Person, Steven Person, Kimberly Person, Stacey and David Forte and Kristin Person. Jeanne also leaves 11 grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren.

She was predeceased by her daughter, Karen Leigh Csaszar.

A graveside service was held Friday, Dec. 4, at the Townsend Cemetery in Andover. Due to the current health issues, there will be a celebration of her life at a later date at the Andover Congregational Church.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Connecticut chapter of the ASPCA, 359 Spring Hill Road, Monroe, CT 06468. Jeanne was an ardent supporter of all animals and leaves behind her precious cat, Yukon.

Holmes-Watkins Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements. To leave a memory or message of condolence, or to watch a recording of her graveside service, please visit www.holmeswatkins.com.

Marlborough

Victor Edward Preissner

Victor Edward Preissner, 95, of Marlborough, beloved husband to Ann (Connor) Preissner for 35 years, passed away peacefully at home. He always remembered Pearl Harbor Day each year and would remark on it. It is fitting that he left the world on that anniversary, Dec. 7.



He was a loving and kind husband, father, brother, grandfather, uncle, stepfather, and great-grandfather. In addition to his wife, he is survived by his son, Mark Preissner and wife Lynn; daughter Mary Fuller and husband Edward Wodzicki; and daughter, Lauren Roche. He leaves his grandchildren, Katie, Kristin, Kelly, Andrew, Matthew, Tara, Jack, Danielle, Edward and Nicole and their spouses, and nine great-grandchildren. He leaves his step-children, the Ladds: David, Christine, Jane, Mary Beth, Carol and Patrick and their spouses, as well as 15 step-grandchildren. He also leaves three nieces, Joan Ryan, Joyce Johnson and Janice Piazza and their husbands.

Vic and Ann grew up unknown to each other in Hartford's South End a block apart. Vic found humor in telling the story of how Ann's mother wouldn't allow her to go "down the street because there are fresh boys who live there." And then Ann married one of "those boys."

Vic graduated from Bulkeley High School in 1943 and was immediately drafted into the Army. Vic served his country proudly, eventually achieving the rank of sergeant during World War II. He landed during the invasion of Normandy on Utah Beach on June 13, 1944. Willing always to share his views on any war, and the current state of the world, he was a proud veteran. As a member of the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars as well as the Military Order of the Purple Heart, he is also a charter member of the WWII Memorial and WWII Museum, the U.S. Army Museum, and the Disabled Veterans of America. He was employed by the U.S. Postal Service for 35 years.

Vic was an avid reader, enjoying books and periodicals about history and the military. Fortunately, he maintained his strength, robust physique and mental acuity well into the last years of his full life. To know Vic is to know his patience with anything mechanical, his love of corny jokes, and his good nature. He will be fondly remembered as being comfortable accumulating old possessions, especially cars and car parts. He enjoyed travel, especially driving, crossing the U.S. twice. He and Ann flew on vacation to Europe many times. As he aged, and walking became more difficult, they took cruises to the Caribbean, Alaska and Canada.

He is predeceased by his first wife, Jeanne Quinn Preissner, in 1971 and his parents, Victor Emmanuel Preissner and Elfrieda (Bender) Preissner; his daughter, Beth Page; and sisters, Evelyn Kellerstrass and Marjorie Preissner; and a step-grandson.

Family and friends may gather at Rose Hill Memorial Park Rocky Hill Monday, Dec. 14, at 1:30 p.m., for a graveside service with military honors. Social distancing and facemasks are mandatory. A memorial of Vic's life will be held at a later date.

Donations in his memory can be made to the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation.

Please share online condolences, memories or photo tributes at Rosehillfuneralhomes.com.

East Hampton

Todd Earl Weber

Todd Earl Weber, 45, of East Hampton, passed away Monday, Nov. 30, at Middlesex Hospital after a courageous battle with COVID-19. The world has lost an amazing man and heaven has gained a beautiful soul. He was born Nov. 12, 1975, to Becky Weber of Portland and Bruce Morin of East Hartford.



He was the loyal loving husband and best friend to his wife of 17 years, Amy McLean Weber of East Hampton; and son to his adored mother, Becky Weber, in which their unbreakable bond of mother and son will live on forever. He is survived by his sister Tracey and her

husband John Heller, niece Eillie and nephew Nolan of Portland; mother-in-law Bonnie McLean, father-in-law Robert McLean, sister-in-law the late Kelly McLean, all of East Hampton. Todd is also survived by his aunt Charlotte Smith, cousin Ashley and husband Scott Tobey and two children, Isla and Lillian.

Todd's childhood began in East Hartford, alongside his beloved grandparents, the late Earl and Nancy Smith. After moving to Portland at age 5, Todd went on to graduate from Portland High School in 1994 and completed an associate's degree at New England Institute of Technology, to which he began a successful 20 year career in Security Integration. Todd was extremely dedicated and ambitious in his career aspirations landing him as a vice president of operations with Setronics Corporation.

When it came to family and friends, there wasn't anything Todd wouldn't do. His magnetic personality, infectious laugh and love of life attracted so many to him – fondly known as Web, Web Dog, Webbie, Uncle Web or Uncle Todd. To know Todd was to know that he was the ultimate jokester and self-proclaimed comedian. He loved and adored his beautiful Labrador retrievers, Bruschi and Bailey.

Todd grew up as an accomplished athlete playing soccer, basketball and baseball, which led him into coaching Little League. He also played with the OWLS Golf League, Men's Softball League and would never miss a New England Patriots or Boston Red Sox game. Beyond sports, Todd enjoyed live music events, tailgating, frequent family gatherings and any excuse to get together with friends.

His lasting impression will remain in our lives and forever in our hearts.

Friends called at Portland Memorial Funeral Home at 231 Main St., Portland, on Friday, Dec. 4. Funeral services and burial were private.

In lieu of flowers, please donate online to the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation.

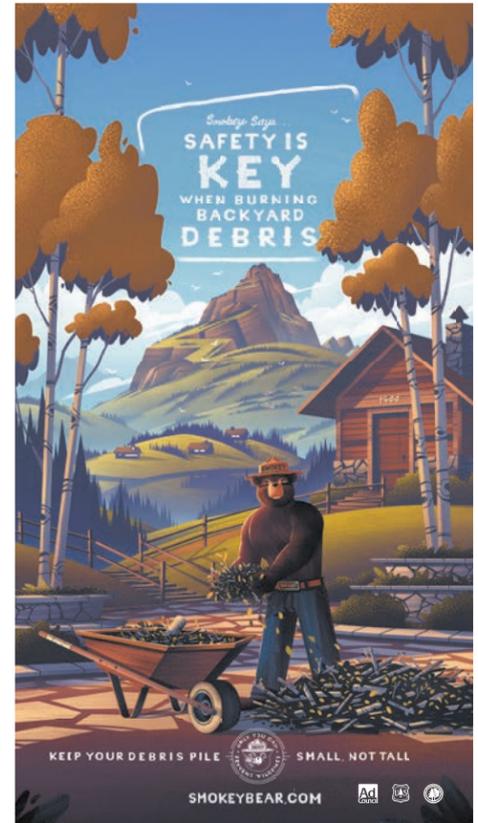
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OUR 29TH YEAR!!!



Obituary Policy

Riverast will publish obituaries free of charge if the deceased person is a resident or former resident of any of the towns we circulate in.

Charges apply for obituaries of persons who were not residents.

Contact the advertising director at (860) 633-4691 for rates.

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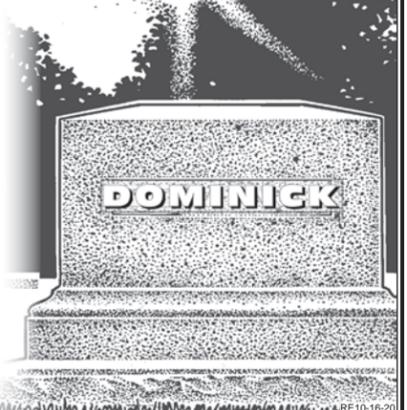
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Cover Story • Cover

★ **SnoFolk cont. from page 1**

the driveway to St. Peter's Episcopal Church on Church Street.

"Midnight's Medley," by Greenleaf, is on the Hebron Green, on the south side of Route 66, between the American Legion and Something Simple Café. Themed winter, spring, summer and fall, it has snowflakes, flowers and falling leaves.

Greenleaf, who also painted an Adirondack chair and is known for carvings of deceased celebrities in pumpkins, said he joined the painting challenge at Podell's behest.

"I think I'm on the town's rolodex for artists," he quipped.

He said he changed his initial design after he started to something "cool, seasonal and classy." Rather than viewing it as a snowman, he said it was a general piece of art.

"I didn't want the carrot, the hat, the scarf," he said. "I thought mine was more like a monument. Three stacked spheres."

Ironically, Greenleaf's favorite SnoFolk has the carrot and scarf. He said he likes Reinwald's knitting creation because it's colorful and geometric.

"Tapped-in to Nature" by Paul Hanusch depicts maple sugaring and stands in front of the fire station on Route 66.

"Nutmeg's Nature" by Shannon MacGrogan-Ellis, on the southwest corner of Gina Marie's parking lot, is painted with state emblems, including the state bird, fish and flower.

"Sr. Peter Maximo," by Christiane O'Brien, near the northeast corner of Liberty Drive and

Route 66, in front of 104 Main St., is wearing a top hat and glasses and has a white background with colorful spiral and feathered shapes and flowers.

"Storyteller," by Maggie Kendis of Lebanon – the sole non-Hebron resident participant – is on the southwest corner of the driveway into Ted's Supermarket. It depicts children listening to a storyteller.

Last Sunday, TTCP held a dedication ceremony and artist meet-and-greet outside the Old Town Hall.

About 50 people attended and walked about checking out the SnoFolk, Podell and Town Manager Andrew Tierney said.

"They're very colorful, so they really catch the eye," Podell said of the SnoFolk.

All the finished SnoFolk, except for Podell's, are up for cash prizes in a contest for the most creative, the most interesting story and people's choice.

Judging the contest will be Podell, Hughes and local artist Michele Sinkez.

Podell said TTCP's next project will be a PechaKucha, a Japanese word that means chat, in which speakers give short 17-minute talks on various topics. Since this continues to be an era of social distancing, her plan is to hold the event virtually and is aiming for in January or February.

"Then, before you know it we'll have the Fourth of July and Make Music Day," she said.

As are most, Podell said she is hoping "to get back to something somewhat normal next year."

Regional • Regional • Regional • Regional • Regional • Regional

Green Named Ranking Member of Public Safety Committee

Incoming House Republican Leader Vincent Candelora on Friday announced his appointment of state Rep. Robin Green (R-55) as Ranking Member of the legislature's Public Safety and Security Committee.

Green, of Marlborough, was recently re-elected to her third term in the state House of Representatives. The 55th Assembly District covers Andover, Hebron, Marlborough and Bolton.

"Robin Green has a quiet strength and determination that makes her a natural leader," Candelora said. "In addition, Robin is one of the few legislators who has actually taken many of the training programs that the Public Safety Committee oversees in her early desire to serve the public in another way – as a police officer. Since she has been in Hartford, you can find her digging deeper to understand complicated issues and that is exactly what is needed to weigh all the concerns about our public safety community partners."

He added, "Whether it is listening to our first responders or weighing the concerns of communities across Connecticut – I know Robin will dig in and be a good listener, but act in the best interest of public safety for all of our residents and those that protect us."

The legislature's Public Safety and Security

Tri-County American Legion Baseball

The Tri-County American Legion baseball program has opened registration for those interested in participating in tryouts for its summer 2021 teams.

Serious players who will be between the ages of 13-19 next year – and who have a parent residing in Andover, Colchester, East Haddam, East Hampton, Hebron, Lebanon and Marlborough – are eligible.

Specific dates for the winter workouts and tryouts are still being finalized based on current health protocols, but the deadline to register is Dec. 15.

Connecticut has approved a 13U division for 2021, which means the program can have 19U, 17U, 15U and 13U options for competitive area players this summer, depending on interest.

Interested players can pre-register at www.tclgion.com or contact GM Len Lampugnale at Lampugnale@comcast.net or at 860-295-0437 to receive more information.

rity Committee has cognizance over the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, the state police, and the state-wide organized crime investigative task force. In addition, it oversees municipal police training, fire marshals, the fire safety code, the state building code, and legalized gaming.

"I believe the role of Ranking Member on the Public Safety Committee is a tremendous responsibility," Green said. "I'm returning to the legislature this November with a clear message from my constituents: to support our police, firemen and emergency services first responders who protect and serve our communities. I plan to get to work immediately on the Public Safety Committee to make sure they have the resources they need to keep us safe."

For the 2019 and 2020 legislative sessions, Green was appointed by outgoing House Republican Leader Themis Klarides to serve as Ranking Member of the legislature's Children's Committee. She joined the Human Services and Higher Education and Employment Committees and also became a member of the Women's Caucus.

Christmas Bird Count

The 46th annual Salmon River Christmas Bird Count will be held Sunday, Dec. 20 – despite COVID-19.

The Mattabesek Audubon Society's 10 team captains will continue to lead their groups into the field to count as many birds and bird species that they see. Organizers said they are always looking for new people and our team captains enjoy sharing their wisdom with birders of all experience levels.

For those unable to get out, and whose homes lie within a 15-mile radius centered around the Comstock River Covered Bridge in Colchester, the Audubon said it hopes you will keep an eye on your backyards and birdfeeders throughout the day and night of Dec. 20 so your data can be included in the final tally.

If interested in participating in the bird count, head to Mattabesek Audubon Society's website at www.audubon-mas.org or send an email to co-compilers Sharon at rsdell@comcast.net or Doreen at dajezek@gmail.com.

Regional • Regional • Regional • Regional • Regional • Regional



On Oct. 18, the CT Chain Links Mountain Bike Team (grades 5-12) concluded its 2020 mountain bike race season at the 508 International course in Charlton, Mass. The bikers are shown here at the starting line.

Youth Mountain Bike Team Wraps Season

On Oct. 18, the CT Chain Links Mountain Bike Team (grades 5-12) concluded its 2020 mountain bike race season at the 508 International course in Charlton, Mass.

The CT Chain Links is part of the New England High School Cycling Association (NE-HSCA) and completes in cross country-style mountain bike races against 23 other teams from Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Vermont. The Chain Links placed second overall in both the High School and Middle School team competitions.

Individual honorable mentions for series overall in their respective categories are Rachel Fournier (1st overall), Jake Muldoon (2nd overall), Lukas Haas, (2nd overall), David Lapierre (2nd overall), Justin Green (3rd overall), Jack Celio (4th overall) and James Celio (4th overall). Individual results for the 508 International

race in their respective categories were Jake Muldoon (3rd place), Justin Green (2nd place), Christian Montoya (15th place), Jack Ciaglo (19th place), Partick Woble (27th place), Jack Celio (14th place), Rachel Fournier (1st place), Caleb Arbuckle (18th place), Lukas Haas (2nd Place), Ben Fournier (31st place), David Lapierre (3rd place), James Celio (5th place), Eli Spinelli (7th place), Julia Fournier (9th place), Anya Haas (15th place), and Sam Haas (24th place).

The CT Chain Links is comprised of kids from Colchester, Hebron, Marlborough, Glastonbury, Old Lyme, Waterford and others. The team is supported by Sunshine Cycle and Run of Colchester, and ride leaders/assistant coaches are Matt Ciaglo, Mark Muldoon, Ethan Spinelli and Travis Haas.

The 2021 season kicks off in April.

LEGALS

TOWN OF COLCHESTER LEGAL NOTICE

The Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a virtual public hearing on December 15, 2020, at 7:00 P.M. to hear and consider the following petition:

Jay R. Einhorn - Bulkeley Hill Road – Appeal of Enforcement Order (2020-03) – To appeal the decision of the Zoning Enforcement Order regarding the conduct of an unpermitted commercial activity on Bulkeley Hill Road (Map 03-11, Lot 043), Rural Use District.

At this hearing interested persons may be heard and written communications received. A copy of this petition is in the Planning and Zoning Department, Town Hall, 127 Norwich Avenue, and may be inspected during regular business hours (8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday).

Zoning Board of Appeals
Laurie Robinson, Chair

2TB 12/4, 12/11

TOWN OF COLCHESTER LEGAL NOTICE

The Historic District Commission will hold a virtual public hearing on December 21, 2020, at 7:00 P.M. to hear and consider the following petitions:

1. Town Green Improvement Project – Certificate of Appropriateness (2020-02) – To implement the improvements of the Community Connectivity Program grant including renovation of the main path, erection of a new bus shelter and installation of new lights, benches and trash receptacles on the Town Green.

At this hearing interested persons may be heard and written communications received. A copy of this petition is in the Planning and Zoning Department, Town Hall, 127 Norwich Avenue, and may be inspected during regular business hours (8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday).

Historic District Commission
Ellen Sharon, Chair

2TB 12/11, 12/18

ADVERTISERS

The Glastonbury Citizen and The Riverast News Bulletin will make every effort to see that all advertising copy is correctly printed. The publisher assumes no liability or financial responsibility for typographical errors in advertising, but will reprint, without charge, that part of an advertisement in which an error may occur, provided that a claim is made within 5 days of publication. The liability of the publisher on account of errors in or omissions from any advertisement will in no way exceed the amount of the charge for the space occupied by the item in error, and then only for the first incorrect insertion. Also, the publisher takes no responsibility for statements or claims made in any advertisement, and will upon request, reveal the name and address of the person or persons responsible for placing any display advertisement, political or otherwise, except for "blind" box ads. The Glastonbury Citizen Inc. reserves the right to reject advertisements which it deems unsuitable for its publications. Every effort will be made to verify the legitimacy and propriety of all ads for the protection of our readers. *The Citizen* will take requests for specific placement of ads and will try to accommodate everyone's requests. *The Citizen* cannot guarantee specific placement.

Legal Notice of Action Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission

The Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission of the Town of Andover at their regular meeting held on December 7th, 2020 received the following applications:

•IWWC 20-35: Kevin and Catherine Shea, 436 Lake Road (Andover, CT), application to construct an approximately 2200 sq ft house within the 200' Andover Lake Upland Review Area. Site visit scheduled for December 12th at 9:00am.

•IWWC 20-36: Eric Loteczka and George Correia, 26 Old Farms Road (Andover, CT), application to construct a wetlands crossing for a proposed driveway and new house construction. Site visit scheduled for December 12th at 9:30am.

The Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission of the Town of Andover at their regular meeting held on December 7th, 2020 approved the following applications:

•IWWC 20-32: Jeff Miner (Agent) on behalf of Richard Riskey (Owner), 85 Lakeside Drive (Andover, CT), application to construct a new lake wall along Andover Lake.

•IWWC20-27: Ruby Puerto and Nahin Puerto, 129 Hebron Road (Andover, CT), application to install an inground pool with associated 15' x 12' utility shed, a septic system, and construct a 26' x 32' 2-car garage with accessory 1-bedroom apartment within a 100' Upland Review Area.

1TB 12/11

ADVERTISERS

The Glastonbury Citizen and Riverast News Bulletin will make every effort to see that all advertising copy is correctly printed. The publisher assumes no liability or financial responsibility for typographical errors in advertising, but will reprint, without charge, that part of an advertisement in which an error may occur, provided that a claim is made within 5 days of publication. The liability of the publisher on account of errors in or omissions from any advertisement will in no way exceed the amount of the charge for the space occupied by the item in error, and then only for the first incorrect insertion. Also, the publisher takes no responsibility for statements or claims made in any advertisement, and will upon request, reveal the name and address of the person or persons responsible for placing any display advertisement, political or otherwise, except for "blind" box ads. The Glastonbury Citizen Inc. reserves the right to reject advertisements which it deems unsuitable for its publications. Every effort will be made to verify the legitimacy and propriety of all ads for the protection of our readers. *The Citizen* will take requests for specific placement of ads and will try to accommodate everyone's requests. *The Citizen* cannot guarantee specific placement.

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- ❑ \$18.00 per week combination rate, 20¢ for each additional word for insertion in both the *Citizen* and the *Bulletin*.

Please make checks payable to: *The Glastonbury Citizen* (We regret we cannot take ads over the phone)

LEGALS

TOWN OF PORTLAND PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION LEGAL NOTICE OF DECISION AND LEGAL NOTICE PUBLIC HEARING

Notice is hereby given that at the December 3, 2020 Regular Meeting of the Portland Planning & Zoning Commission the following action was taken:

TO CONTINUE THE PUBLIC HEARING TO DECEMBER 17, 2020 FOR PZC Application #20-03: 34 Gospel Lane. Request to construct a 110 foot by 130 foot salt process and storage building and 2.1 acre salt storage area, with site grading required for the storage area. Application and property of MJS Realty Ventures, LLC. Assessor's Map 31, Lot 25 and 26. Zone IP.

At this hearing interested persons may appear and be heard and written communications will be received. A copy of this application is available for review on the Town of Portland Website: www.portlandct.org

Dated at Portland, CT. this 7th day of December 2020
Robert Ellsworth, Chairman

1TB 12/11

MIDDLE HADDAM HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION MEETING Thursday, December 17, 2020 6:30 pm via Zoom call LEGAL NOTICE

Public Hearing will be held to consider the following:

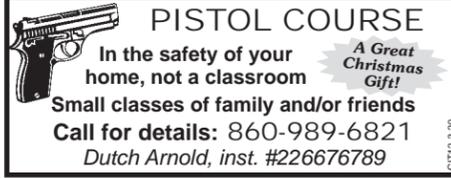
Application 543 for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 29 Middle Haddam Road to include demolition of single story residential - style house (circa 1930s) and existing multi-bay garage (circa 1950s) to allow for construction of previously approved single-story 2800 sf addition - for applicant Marc Zgorski (Cobalt Healthcare).

The foregoing application is available for public review at the East Hampton Building Department. At this hearing interested persons may be heard and written communications will be received.

Dated: December 9, 2020
Regina Starolis, MHHDC Clerk

1TB 12/11

ANNOUNCEMENTS



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MECHANIC NEEDED FOR AUTO SHOP IN MIDDLETOWN under new ownership. ASE certification a plus but not required. Welding experience a plus. Must have your own tools. Immediate hire! Call George at 203-624-0105

LIQUOR STORE ASSOCIATE: need energetic person who can relate to people, handle money, lift inventory and place onto shelving. Honesty a must. References required. 860-712-5775.

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Collector of Revenue Town of Portland, CT (EOE) Deadline: January 6, 2021

Qualifications: Associates Degree in accounting, finance or public administration + 3 years progressively responsible relevant experience or equivalent comb. education/experience. Work involves collecting current and delinquent taxes; prepare tax bills; arrange payment plans; mail lien notices; balance tax collection rate books with Assessor's grand list; review, interpret and implement relevant laws, regulations, and ordinances; record keeping, assist citizens; prepare reports and reconcile with the Finance Dept; oversees water & sewer usage and assessment collections; supervises Revenue Collection Assistant. Must have good knowledge, skill and ability of tax collection and accounting principles and practices; of tax collection laws, regulations and ordinances; considerable skill in business math. Must obtain CCMC certification within reasonable period of time. Subject to pre-employment drug/alcohol testing and criminal history background check. 35 hours weekly (flexible hours); starting \$64,707; union position, full benefits package. Submit application & resume to: First Selectwoman's Office, P.O. Box 71, Portland, CT 06480-0071

1TB 12/11

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Provide basic housekeeping including laundering and changing of bed sheets and towels, cleaning bathrooms and kitchens, dusting, mop and vacuum floors, etc.
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Please send resume to mcorso@colebrookvillage.com.

CT12-3-20



SCHOOL CUSTODIAN:

Marlborough Elementary School is accepting applications for a 12 month custodian position to work M-F. Flexibility required in terms of shift schedule. Excellent benefit package available. Prior experience with custodial work, maintenance, cleaning equipment preferred. Applicants should submit a letter of interest, application and resume to Dr. David Sklarz, Superintendent, Marlborough Elementary School, 25 School Drive, Marlborough, CT 06447 or electronically to coelmer@marlborough.k12.ct.us

Application deadline: 12/23/20. For application call 860-295-6220 or print one from website, www.marlborough.k12.ct.us (District, Employment Opportunities, Non-Certified Employee Application) EOE

1TB 12/11

Andover School District Speech Language Pathologist – Part Time

The Andover School District is seeking qualified candidates for the position of part-time Speech Language Pathologist, 2.5 days/week, for the remainder of the 2020-2021 school year. CT state certification required. Application is available online at www.andoverelementaryct.org and should be sent along with letter of intent, resumé, copy of CT certification, transcripts and 3 letters of reference to:

Andover Elementary School
35 School Road
Andover, CT 06232

ATTN: Holly Maiorano, Special Education Director
[Or send via email to: maioranoh@andoverelementaryct.org]

3TB 11/27, 12/4, 12/11

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for Assisted Living Community in Hebron CT

Looking to hire compassionate CNAs for an Upscale Senior Living Community.
Third Shift Part Time and Full Time available.
You must enjoy working with senior citizens and giving outstanding customer service.
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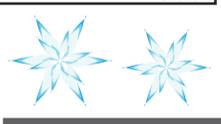
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