



RIVEREAST

News Bulletin

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

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Plaque Presented... When the Board of Education was not able to continue with the summer lunch program at Chatham Court this past year, the Portland Housing Authority (PHA) spoke with local business owners about how they could help – and Sarah’s on Main rose to the occasion. On Dec. 13, the Chatham Court Board of Commissioners, along with the PHA, presented Dan Weeden (owner of Sarah’s on Main) with a plaque expressing sincere appreciation for his service; without him and Performance Food Group from Springfield, Mass., PHA said the summer lunch program would not have been made possible. One hundred lunches were packed each week by Sarah’s on Main staff. Pictured from left are tenant commissioner Jasmin Nunez, PHA executive director Allen Harrison, and Sarah’s on Main owner Dan Weeden.

Belltown Zone Change Defeated Once Again

by Jack Lakowsky

The East Hampton Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC) again denied an application to change the zone of three properties at the corner of Main Street and Route 16 from residential to commercial.

The zone change has again drawn a large amount of local attention. About 50 residents submitted letters of opposition, and hundreds signed petitions opposing the change.

Many residents spoke in the Jan. 5 meeting. The gas station’s owner, Atlantis Marketing, sought the zone change as a step in expanding the store, increasing square footage to about 4,500 ft., adding more pumps and a fast-food drive thru.

Last year, when the commission voted on the company’s original application, a majority of members voted in favor of the application. Because 70% or more of residents within a 500 ft. radius of the site signed an opposition petition, a supermajority of PZC needed to approve the application.

The same policy was triggered this go-round, with many adjacent residents signing a petition against the change.

Last week, PZC vice chair Kevin Kuhr and chair Ray Zatorski voted “yes” to the zone change, while members Meg Wright, Angelus Tammaro, Rowland Rux, Roy Gauthier and Jim Sennet voted “no,” defeating the application a second time.

It appears residents’ concerns won over the commission. Many voiced a range of issues, including extra traffic, light pollution, ground pollution, litter, and extra strain on Belltown’s

already troubled water system. Residents also said whether this application is truly different from Atlantis’ first one is uncertain. Town policy requires denied applicants to wait at least a year before refileing their material again.

Atlantis attorney Scott Jezek said there are several differences. A major point of contention last year was Atlantis’ proposal to raze a historic building on the property, the Strong House, a decrepit brick building north of the gas station.

In a December PZC meeting, Jezek said the Strong House will be left alone. Neither he nor Atlantis presented plans to restore the multi-family housing structure, saying the company welcomed any parties who wanted to fix it up and put it to use.

Project engineer Mark Smith also named some proposed structural changes, including reconfiguring the arrangement of the gas pumps to take up less space and a larger planted area.

Smith said they reduced the building’s proposed sized by 600 feet.

“We’ll upgrade the site to modern standards,” said Smith.

Jezek said the site has dispensed gas since World War II. He said the state changed zoning laws in the early ‘90s, and that this is the only reason the zone changed to residential. He said the law was imperfectly applied and mis-zoned many properties across Connecticut.

Jezek said a zone change would be consistent with the spot’s historic use.

In both the previous and this application, residents were asked to sign a petition. *See Belltown Zone Change page 22*

Robin Green Won’t Seek Another Term

by Sloan Brewster

State Rep. Robin Green (R-55), who has represented Andover, Hebron and Marlborough in the state General Assembly since 2016, has decided not to run for a fourth term.

Instead, Steve Weir, a Republican from Hebron, will seek to win election this November.

Green, a Marlborough resident who made the announcement this week, spoke to the *Rivereast* on Tuesday. She said moving into her sixth year as state representative, she has “had wonderful support” from the towns in the district, which includes areas of Andover, Bolton, Hebron, and Marlborough.

“It’s a big decision,” Green said of opting out of running again. “I’ve been thinking about it for the last couple months.”

Green said her decision to move on was about having a personal and family life and – as owner of Discovery Zone Learning Center with facilities in Marlborough, Hebron and Colum-

bia – a fulltime job.

With 3,000 bills going through the legislature per year, the job is a big commitment, Green said. During sessions, legislators meet six times per week and the days can be exceedingly lengthy, starting at 10 a.m. and stretching often to between 1 and 3 a.m. the next morning.

“Even at 2 o’clock in the morning the building is a hustle bustle and it just over stimulates your brain,” she said.

Green said another representative said it best, comparing the time legislators spend together during session and their sudden departure from one another when it’s over to being on a cruise ship and feeling as though they will never see each other again.

Since COVID, things have changed, however with virtual meetings and public hearings, including the one on religious exemptions for vaccines, which went for 24 hours.

“You don’t see the people; you don’t see the body language,” Green said. “That’s what’s so different is that you feel like, you kind of feel like you’re a person in a bubble.”

Still, she said, the change lets people who want to be involved jump into the hearings “from the comfort of your home” during a time slot instead of having to stay in the legislative building for the entire meeting.

Green said in thinking about who could take over the seat, Steve Weir, of Hebron came to mind. In 2020, Weir ran against, and lost to, state Sen. Cathy Osten for the 19th Senate District seat.

Green said she talked to Weir and he agreed to seek the seat in the next election.

“He is boots-on-the-ground ready to go,” Green said.

Weir, in a phone call Tuesday, said he was *See Robin Green, page 3*

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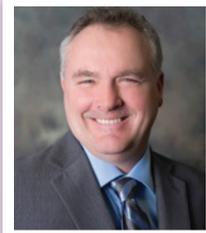
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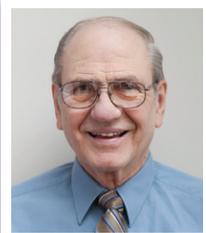
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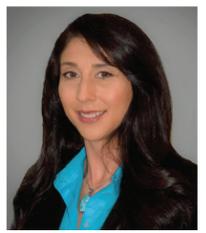
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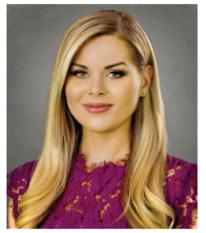
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From the Editor's Desk

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

After an unexpectedly extended stay in Alabama, I'm back.

As Sloan Brewster told you all in this space last week, I had some.....delays returning home after my Christmas vacation with my parents (who retired to Alabama a few years back). I was one of the thousands of folks who saw their flights canceled after Christmas. Not because of the weather, mind you, but because of COVID. Too many pilots and other flight crew members fell victim to the disease and, well, there just weren't enough folks to operate the planes.

My return flight home got canceled not just once, but three times. I was set to return Sunday, Jan. 2, then that got pushed to Monday, Jan. 3, and then that got pushed to Tuesday, Jan. 4. When the Tuesday flight was then canceled, I just decided to stay there the rest of the week. The *Rivereast* is put to bed Wednesday evenings, so I'd already missed the week anyway. Sloan was okay with finishing out editing for the week – I knew she would do a good job, as she has in the past – so I decided to take a few days off from the futile rescheduling, and see if things were any better on Sunday.

As it turned out, they were, and I was able to fly home Sunday without incident.

Truth be told, while it was a little frustrating having multiple flights canceled, and while it was unfortunate to miss work (big kudos not just to Sloan but also to *Rivereast* publisher Kevin Rarey for being so understanding during this whole mess – not a lot of bosses

would've been the same), what happened to me was hardly the worst thing in the world. As my parents advance in age – both are in their 70s now – I'm grateful for any time with them I can get. And as these past two years have driven home, none of us is guaranteed a tomorrow. You have to take these precious family moments when they come.

It felt especially good as I had lost Christmas 2020 with my family. With COVID very much a thing, and with vaccines still months away, it was, as my brother put it, "A Very Zoom Christmas" that year. Yes, the video conferencing app allowed us to at least see each other's faces Christmas morning – but, as the last two years have also made clear, Zoom is hardly a substitute for the real thing.

This year, though, I had the real thing – and I didn't at all mind having that time extended.

Speaking of COVID: um, yeah, things got pretty bad here while I was down south. The positivity rate was already at a worrisome 9 percent when I left on Dec. 23, and then it just skyrocketed, hitting close to 25 percent by the time I flew back. Hospitalizations also soared, and will likely top 2,000 before long; it may have even done so by the time you're reading this Friday.

I followed the Connecticut news closely on my phone, and saw that, as the numbers climbed, towns quickly scheduled events to distribute masks and take-home tests to residents. I was happy to see this happening in so

Editor's Desk continued on page 5

Bulletin Board

For some time now, I have been a bit perplexed by the great demand among state motorists for low number Connecticut license plates. This may come as a surprise to you, but apparently, the lower the number on your license plate, the more important you are—or appear to be...or maybe think you are.

Plates with three digits or less mean you are very special; plates with four digits mean you are somewhat less special; and plates like mine, with a convoluted string of letters and numbers that look like a bowl of alphabet soup puked up by a colicky baby, mean you're not special at all.

Alas, despite my mother's protestations, I've always suspected as much, but I never thought it would be posted on my car for all the world to see.

In fact, these low number plates are darn hard to get, because once people get them, they keep them—even going so far as to pass them down from generation to generation like treasured jewelry or the gene for flatulence.

How far will people go to get one? Former CT Motor Vehicles Commissioner Lou Goldberg once claimed he was approached by an attractive woman who offered to spend the night with him in exchange for a low digit plate. She wanted to give it to her boyfriend.

I've heard of such offers being made in exchange for getting somebody out of prison, but for a license plate? Sadly, we'll never know how the boyfriend would have viewed this enduring symbol of her not-so-monogamous devotion as Goldberg turned her down (which indicates to me that either 1) The man has moral fiber, 2) he's an idiot, 3) perhaps the supplicant wasn't as desirable as he later claimed or 4) she intended to spend the night playing Scrabble).

Traditionally, many of these special plates have been bestowed as political rewards to individuals who have carried favor with the powers that be. As such, they proclaim to the world, "I am connected to the people that matter," which is sort of like telling the playground bully he'd better back off because your uncle knows jiu jitsu.

Or, if the plate is handed down from generation to generation as is often the case, it may actually mean, "I may not amount to much, but someone in my family used to have influence." The latter tends to be more obvious when the plate is attached to a rusty 16-year-old Toyota with mismatched hub caps. It's harder to spot posers who lease luxury cars.

If, like me, you can't help but wonder about the great passion for these low number plates (apparently there are hundreds of requests for the things), a former commissioner of the State Department of Motor Vehicles once explained it like this: "People will do anything to get these things so they can get that look from a passing car," he said.

It seems to me there are more effective ways to get a look from a passing car. Seriously, if you need attention that badly, try sticking a fluorescent "Legalize Incest" bumper sticker on your trunk or drag your daughter's old Chatty Cathy doll behind the car on a rope.

On the other hand, though I don't really understand the passion for these low number plates, the revelation that other people desperately want them makes me want one too. It's a lot like when you bring an old kitchen chair to the dump and then you end up bringing it back home again because some guy was standing there waiting to snatch it up as soon as you tossed it. Oh, am I the only one that does that?

The problem with these low number plates is that you'll never be Number One unless you get plate number 1. If these special plates are so important to you, it can't help but gnaw at you that as, say, No. 343, you're somewhat less important than No. 342. As one of my more competitive sons (the one who didn't go into social work) once informed me when I congratulated him on finishing second place in a contest, "Second place is just another way of saying 'first place loser.'"

I would like to say he takes after his mother, but the fact is, I deserve that number 1 plate and I believe I have a significant part of the local driving public on my side. The other day, admiring the scenery, I drove several miles up the road at 25 mph, leading an ever-growing procession of cars behind me until I got to the two-lane highway where they were able to pass. I would estimate that at least 60 percent of those red-faced, screaming drivers gestured at me, clearly indicating with their finger that they thought I was indeed Number One.

And I suspect that anyone with a low number plate who reads this column will heartily agree.

Jim Hallas

Rivereast Hours of Operation

The offices of the *Rivereast News Bulletin* and *Glastonbury Citizen*, located at 87 Nutmeg Lane, Glastonbury, are open Monday through Wednesday, from 9 a.m.-4 p.m., and Thursday from 9 a.m.-2:30 p.m. The *Rivereast* can be reached any time via email at bulletin@glcitizen.com.



Local Business Honored... On Jan. 5, state Rep. Irene Haines (R-34), right, and state Sen. Norm Needleman (D-33), left, presented a citation from the Connecticut General Assembly to Jean Maheu (center), current owner of All About Blinds and longtime friend of the late Sven Ramklint – the founder of the East Hampton business – celebrating over 50 years of service in this community and beyond.

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Riot or Unrest

To the Editor:

An article in a local newspaper stated that "the death toll from Kazakhstan unrest hits 164, officials say. 164 people were killed in a week of protests that marked the worst unrest since the former Soviet republic gained independence 30 years ago. Some of the buildings were set on fire. The ministry earlier reported more than 2,200 people sought treatment for injuries and about 1,300 security officers were injured."

Note that this was a "protest." Let's compare it to the "Riots of Jan. 6, 2020." In those "riots," two people died and a few hundred were arrested for unlawfully entering the senate buildings.

I don't know which was worse, the "riots" or the "protests."

Wake up, America! If things don't change soon, we may be reading about a revolution!!

Frank Blume – Colchester

Zone Change

To the Editor:

On Jan. 5, the East Hampton Planning and Zoning Commission decidedly defeated the Atlantis Marketing proposal to change zoning on Main Street. The 5 to 2 vote against this proposal reflected the community's opposition to this proposed zone change.

I wish to thank the many people involved in fighting this proposal. The Village Center merchants trying to preserve the center feel banded

together and submitted a powerful letter in opposition. Fifty letters from residents in opposition versus one of support. Not one person speaking in favor of the change. These are the factors that gave the commission clear direction.

Most of all I wish to thank the commission for doing the right thing and sticking with the town's plan of conservation and development.

For the time being, this has been stopped but East Hampton must maintain its vigilance. Atlantis will likely be back again a third time trying to impose themselves on the town and only us the residents can stop them.

Kenneth Dodson – East Hampton

Shamelessly Ignorant

To the Editor:

Renamed 'Let's Go Brandon', the former Trump store near Walmart returns. They borrowed the phrase born during NASCAR driver Brandon Brown's interview, where piggish fans chanting 'F—k Joe Biden' made the reporter quip he was hearing 'Let's Go Brandon.' Ironically, perched inside the store window is a prominent 'Support Your Police' sign. It was Trump troglodytes assaulting and injuring hundreds of Capitol police while attempting to nullify Biden's victory that bested Trump by more than 7 million votes. Imagine Democrats rejecting 7 million Republican votes come the 2024 election.

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

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Kevin Rarey, Publisher

Mike Thompson, Editor

Staff Reporters:

Sloan Brewster, Asst Editor—Hebron, Andover & RHAM

Jack Lakowsky—East Hampton & Portland

Diane Church—Colchester & Marlborough

Josh Howard—Sports Editor

Art Department

Jeanne Giovann, Julie Kristoff

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Advertising Representatives:

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Subtracting every 2020 Republican vote from Wyoming (-193,559) and Alaska (-189,951) would create a 54-46 Democratic-majority Senate. Only progressive or moderate judges would be getting lifetime seats then. Continue invalidating every Republican vote in Montana, Idaho, North Dakota, South Dakota, Mississippi, West Virginia, Kentucky, Nebraska, and Arkansas and create a 70-30 Democratic Senate. Still shy of 1 million votes, Democrats strategically nullifying multiple Republican politicians who won close races could create an 80-20 Senate. The House would be even more staunchly Democrat and Biden easily reelected.

This imaginary hypothetical will do nothing to dissuade rabid Republicans in multiple states, currently creating ways to invalidate future Democratic votes. Trampling the American vision of every 'Founding Father'; unified in their mission to create an unjust totalitarian state; emboldened with the knowledge they have more guns, Supreme Court justices, military and police on their side; they can taste victory. The Capitol attack was their initial Kristallnacht and Fort Sumter. 'Let's Go Brandon' their symbolic Swastika and Confederate flag. Fox News their Goebbels. They fantasize the 'silent majority' sheepishly yielding. I see it standing immovable with the Constitution and majority rule.

The 'enemy from within' is in our neighborhoods and agitating. Shamelessly ignorant, they know not what they do.

Edmund Smith – Andover

was to disrupt the nuclear family. This goal seems diametrically opposed to the elevation of Black people, as 90% of all young men in the U.S. prison system come from single parent households.

Instead of hiding from our masculinity, men need to reclaim it, taking it away from the macho stereotypes and chauvinist behaviors, re-discovering our place as provider and protector, and celebrating the differences that make men and women unique but complementary.

Colin McNamara – Marlborough

Doing the Right Thing

To the Editor:

I want to thank the members of the East Hampton Planning and Zoning Commission for doing the right thing and choosing the welfare of the citizens of East Hampton over that of an out-of-town business conglomerate, by denying the residential to commercial zone change application along Main Street and Route 16 at the commission's Jan. 5 meeting. Your countless hours of service on the commission are valued and appreciated. I hope the decisive 5-to-2 vote denial sends a strong message to developers that East Hampton will not condone spot zoning.

Thank you also to the many residents that supported this neighborhood by signing the petition, writing letters and speaking at the meeting.

Sincerely,

Irene Kuck – East Hampton

Colchester Circus Clowns

To the Editor:

Well, Colchester voters, you elected a bunch of clowns and now you have a circus for a town government. For anyone who did not log in, or listen, to the selectmen's meeting on Thursday night, Jan. 6, it was a perfect show of just how juvenile our current first selectman behaves.

He rudely interrupted just about every speaker, comment of the evening, nearly into the next morning. Is that how you get your way? Start an evening meeting of volunteers with over 20 items on an agenda then run it very late into the night, adjourning at 11:55 p.m.?

Seems he is following the lead of his Fuhrer, Ex-POTUS I.Q. 45, with no concept of how to govern, or Robert's Rules of Order, and just wants to rule as though a king, an autocrat. He seems to think, like Ex-POTUS I.Q. 45 that he rules in an autocracy, and not a democratic system.

It seems the current first selectman entered into an illegal contract, against the town charter, with an unapproved, questionable attorney, and without first getting approval from the entire Board of Selectmen. He seems to not want to follow procedures. The town has attorneys of

record. So why did this first selectman hire outside approved talent. He claims to have saved the town money; however, seeing he alone signed this contract without approval of the entire board, he should reimburse the town for what he, alone, authorized.

For further information, see the *Rivereast News Bulletin* article written by Diane Church, Dec. 24, 2021, Mike Egan's letter in the Reader Forum, Jan. 7, 2022, and the recording of the Jan. 6 meeting on the town's website.

Tricia Heldmann – Colchester

Lack of Leadership

To the Editor:

The current COVID data, as of 1/06/2022, has Colchester's reported positive case count increase to 162, which is nearly double from the previous week's report of 84. These new numbers reported the day of the BOS meeting in which the issue of a mask mandate in our town for town buildings is brought forward. With this risk to the health and safety to our community and the ability for our town to continue functioning without interruption for our citizens, BOS member Denise Turner made a motion that would mandate masks in town buildings until the date of Feb. 3, 2022, when it would be reevaluated at the next BOS meeting.

Despite the motion being passed by a vote of 3-2, First Selectman Bisbikos stated he would not enforce any mask mandate. The first selectman claimed he had the only authority to institute such a mandate, and he would not do so. The Governor's order allows for municipal

Government to enact mask mandates, thus our municipal government in Colchester is run by the rules of our Charter. In the Charter sections C402 A, H, K, and C403E gives the BOS the authority to put a mask mandate in town buildings.

First Selectman Bisbikos has violated the town charter by not ensuring all laws and ordinances governing the town are faithfully executed, per charter section 301D.

The lack of leadership regarding this COVID surge is reckless. To choose a stance that is more about politics than the health and well-being of the Colchester community is truly disheartening.

Krista Kardys – Colchester

Dystopian Proposals

To the Editor:

The Hebron Democratic Town Committee (HDTC) and Desegregate Connecticut believe that Hebron is predominantly white because of zoning laws. This is patently untrue. Even Sara Bronin of Desegregate Connecticut has acknowledged that it is property tax reform and not zoning changes that is most needed.

There was a time in the 1990s when lower taxes made Hebron more affordable, which catalyzed an influx of diverse families. Walking door-to-door, I met people of every color who lamented tax increases as unaffordable. Any progress in promoting diversity or a more just community was eliminated when, from 2010 to 2020, property taxes increased by more 60 percent and the number of Black Americans resid-

See Letters, page 10

Embracing True Masculinity

To the Editor:

The idea of "toxic masculinity" and its linking to patriarchal family structures is a recurring theme in our current culture. The media hosts a smattering of psychologists and fourth-wave feminists to inform us that masculine energy is abhorrent in a woke society, but they never give much air time to strong male advocates. America is currently experiencing an explosion of single motherhood, with 57% of all millennials being single mothers. The U.S. currently is home to the most single parent households of any country in the entire world.

When it comes to child-rearing, children end up paying the price when two parents are not present. The statistics on the subject are clear. Children raised in single-parent households are more likely to grow up in poverty, develop emotional/psychological/addiction issues, and end up in the prison system. Historically speaking, men provide and protect a family, while women nurture and care for children, imparting values. With the dissolution of the stay-at-home parent, young children are more alone than ever before while the federal government is able to earn tax revenue on two incomes instead of one, raising your children in government schools from an earlier and earlier age.

The destruction of the nuclear family seems to be a primary goal of both the government as well as the woke agenda. The BLM movement specifically said one of their primary objectives

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many towns across the state, but I couldn't help but wonder: if everyone seems to be in agreement masks are important – and I agree, they absolutely are – then why isn't there a statewide mask mandate?

I know Gov. Lamont isn't going to issue one. And while that disappoints me, as I've written in this space a few months ago (when it became clear Lamont wasn't going to bring back mask mandates), it's not surprising. There's an election coming up in November, and masks continue to – absurdly – be a divisive issue.

So, Lamont has left it up to the towns. Some have gone ahead and reissued mask mandates, but many have not. And even when towns do reinstate them, there can be complications. As you'll see in today's *Rivereast*, the Colchester Board of Selectmen voted last week to bring back a mask mandate in town buildings, but First Selectman Andreas

Bisbikos has already said he won't enforce it, which seems....a questionable approach, to put it mildly. I mean, why bother having a Board of Selectmen at that point?

And, as was on display last fall, when there's a town-by-town approach to mask mandates, it just leads to confusion. It can be tough to figure out where you need to mask and where you don't. (I'm of course of the opinion you need to mask no matter what town you're in – but it's been abundantly clear these past two years that too many folks only mask when they're told.) It would just be easier, for everyone, if Lamont would bring back a statewide mandate.

Masks work. It's a fact that science has proven time and time again. And I implore Lamont to bring back the statewide mask mandate that worked so well last year.

See you next week.

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Upcoming Senior Center Trips

The Colchester Senior Center is planning the following trips for 2022. Reservations should be made in person at the senior center, 95 Norwich Ave. Trips are available to senior center members and an adult guest, and are on a first-come, first-served basis; space is limited. Call the senior center at 860-537-3911 for more information.

Chicken Restaurant, Casino: Thursday, March 24, departing at 10:15 a.m. This is a trip to Wright's Chicken Farm in Rhode Island for lunch, followed by a stop at Twin River Casino. Cost is \$92/person.

Trip to See Jesus Christ Superstar: Sunday, April 3, at the Thomaston Opera House. There will be a pre-show lunch at the Black Rock Tavern and a reserved orchestra seat for the show. Cost is \$107/person, payable by cash or check.

New York Botanical Gardens: Wednesday, April 20. The day will start in Little Italy, featuring lunch at Ann & Tony's Restaurant (choose from Chicken Marsala, Veal Parmigiana or Eggplant Parmigiana, with salad, dessert and coffee or tea), then a trip to the gardens, to explore over 50 collections that are located throughout the 250 acres. Bus will depart at 7 a.m. and return at 8:30 p.m. Cost is \$129/person.

New York City Day Trip: Monday, May 9. Bus departs at 7 a.m. Start your day at the 9/11 Museum, which serves as the country's principal institution concerned with the

events of Sept. 11, 2001. You will have time to view both the museum and the twin reflecting pools. Spend some time in the afternoon at Chelsea Market for lunch on your own. Ascend to the top of the World Trade Center. Return in Colchester will be approximately 9:15 p.m. Cost is \$130/person, payable by cash or check.

Foster's Downeast Clambake: Wednesday, May 25. Bus departs at 8 a.m. for Foster's, located in York, Maine. The menu will consist of award-winning clam chowder, steamed clams and mussels, Maine lobster, sweet corn on the cob, red bliss potatoes, rolls and butter, and Foster's own blueberry crumb cake. Alternative meal choices are barbecue chicken and a vegetarian option. There will be a stop at Portsmouth, N.H., on the way home for some shopping. Return to Colchester at 7 p.m. Cost is \$119/person, payable by cash or check.

Atlantic City: June 7-9. Stay two nights at Resorts Casino Hotel, located on the northern end of the Boardwalk, overlooking the Atlantic Ocean. Enjoy the resort's newest addition: Jimmy Buffet's Margaritaville. This tropical-themed casino section now offers a 5 O'clock Somewhere Bar, Landshark Bar & Grill, and Coffee Shop. The trip includes a \$25 slot credit and two \$20 meal credits. Cost is \$325/person double occupancy, payable by cash or check only.

Fire Calls

From Dec. 19-Jan. 1, the Colchester Hayward Fire Department responded to 102 calls: 89 emergency medical calls, 12 fire/fire-related calls, and one motor vehicle crash (a single-car crash). Calls included:

Fire: fire alarm, seven; structure fire, three (including one Marlborough call); smoke investigation, one; service call, one.

CHFD provided mutual aid multiple times, including to Marlborough, East Haddam, East Hampton and Salem, and received it multiple times, including from Gardner Lake, Hebron and Yantic.

Medical: sick person, 14; fall injury, nine; cardiac distress, six; difficulty breathing, 13; lift assist, seven; mental disorder, three; back pain, two; abdominal pain, three; seizure, four;

injured person, six; bleeding, two; unconscious, seven; alcohol disorder, three; allergic reaction, one; stroke, three.

CHFD also offers free CO checks, and car seat safety checks and installations by appointment only; call the department at 860-537-2512 to schedule one. Reflective address marker signs are also available to order in blue or green, vertical or horizontal; cost is \$12. Forms are available at the firehouse, 52 Old Hartford Rd., or online; go to colchesterct.gov, click on 'departments' and select 'fire department.'

Note: The Department of Emergency Management conducts tests of the emergency sirens throughout town, on the first Saturday of every month between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. These are just tests.

Ahavath Achim News

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

Friday night service, 7 p.m., Zoom; Shabbat morning hybrid service, 10 a.m.; Tuesday, Talmud class, 6:30 p.m., and Kabbalah class, 8 p.m. on Zoom.

There are daily Facebook Live classes on Ken Alter Facebook on the meaning of mitzvot (commandments).

Coming soon: Conversational Hebrew. For more information, call 860-537-2809. Office hours are 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Monday; 10:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Tuesday; 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Wednesday; and 9 a.m.-noon Friday.

Kindergarten Registration

Kindergarten registration for the upcoming 2022-23 school year is now open. Children who reside in Colchester and will be age 5 by Jan. 1, 2023, are eligible to register for the full-day program.

New registrations must be completed online, at www.colchesterct.org. Select the "for families" tab and on the drop-down menu, click on the tab for "Registration and Residency". Complete and submit the pre-enrollment form and then follow the necessary steps outlined on the website.

Parents and guardians will need to make an appointment with the Board of Education office once all required online enrollment forms are completed.

Call 860-537-7267 to make an appointment. Registration appointment hours are Monday through Thursday from 10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. A list of required documents can be found on the website.

Fire Department to Benefit from Program

The Colchester Hayward Volunteer Fire Department has been selected by local Stop & Shop store leadership as the benefiting nonprofit in the Stop & Shop Community Bag for the month of January.

In the program, for every purchase of a \$2.50 reusable Community Bag at the Colchester Stop & Shop, 99 Linwood Ave., a \$1 donation will be sent to CHVFD.

Westchester Church News

Westchester Congregational Church, 98 Cemetery Rd., holds worship Sundays at 10 a.m. Masks are not required for those who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19. The services are also available on Zoom; visit westchestercongregation.org for login information.

The church has a small white wooden Blessings Box in its lower parking lot, with non-perishable food items and other items. All are welcome to give or take a few items.

For more information, email westcongregation@gmail.com, visit the church website, or look for the church on Facebook.

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Grant to Fund Film on Late Resident

Connecticut Humanities recently awarded a \$24,999 Implementation Grant matching grant to the Garde Arts Center in support of the production of the documentary film *Henny and Hannover*.

The movie will highlight the life of the late Henny Simon, a survivor of the Holocaust and a refugee from Hannover, Germany, who came to America and shortly after arriving in America bought a chicken farm in Colchester. After years of silence, Simon began to speak in public schools, colleges, and universities about her experience, often doing it with her late-in-life companion Ben Cooper, a World War II veteran who helped to liberate the Dachau concentration camp.

If you wish to share information about Henny Simon or Ben Cooper, contact film producer Jerry Fischer at jerryfischer49@gmail.com.

The Eastern CT Cultural Coalition's Funding Booster Program provided technical support and helped prepare the grant application. Shannon Saglio, former social studies teacher and now districtwide technology instructional coach at East Lyme High School who worked for years with Simon, was thrilled with the award and said, "This documentary is an important project. Henny and Ben's story is a reminder to all about the importance of being an upstander in our communities. Their story of courage, perseverance, empathy and love will touch all those who watch, a message so needed during these trying times. I am thrilled that CT Humanities is supporting it and look forward to its broadcast, local showings, and use in schools throughout the region and the state."

The film will be produced by Fischer, a southeastern Connecticut resident who produced the film *Harvesting Stones* for CPTV in 2017 and is co-directed and filmed by award-winning National Geographic photographer, documentarian and cinematographer Todd Gipstein. The production team includes Andreas Mink of *Aufbau*, the German-Jewish magazine;

Dana Kline of the Fortunoff Video Archive for Holocaust Testimonies at Yale University; Susan Schwartz of ABC News; and Yehuda Beinon and Dvora Burstyn in Israel. Advising the film are Pit Klein, German Public Radio, ret.; Stephen Naron, director of the Fortunoff Archive; Anne C. Schenderlein of the Freie Universität, Berlin; and Karen L. Uslin of the Defiant Requiem Foundation. Cooperating with the film are government officials in Germany, Frank Fischer of the World Jewish Congress, and professors Jefferson Singer of Connecticut College and Laurence Tribe of Harvard University.

The film will premiere in 2023 at the Garde Arts Center and will be aired on CPTV.

Tax-deductible donations to support the film can be made to the Garde Arts Center with a memo "dedicated to *Henny and Hannover*" by mail to the Garde Arts Center, 325 State St., New London, CT 06320 or online at gardearts.org. Indicate in the "additional comments" that the donation is for *Henny and Hannover*. More information can be obtained at the film's website, HennyTheMovie.org or by writing to info@hennythemovie.org.

Connecticut Humanities (CTH) is an independent, nonprofit affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities. CTH connects people to the humanities through grants, partnerships, and collaborative programs. CTH projects, administration, and program development are supported by state and federal matching funds, community foundations and gifts from private sources. Learn more by visiting cthumanities.org.

The Garde Arts Center, southeastern Connecticut's nonprofit home for the performing arts, cinema and education, was founded in 1985 to save, restore and operate the historic (1926) Garde Theater and adjacent properties as a regional cultural gathering place and economic catalyst in the heart of downtown New London.



State Sen. Norm Needleman (D-33) joined with Lt. Gov. Susan Bysiewicz, state Rep. Brian Smith and Colchester officials last week to announce a \$2.5 million grant to help fund construction of the new town senior center.

State Grant Approved for New Senior Center

State Sen. Norm Needleman (D-Essex) recently joined Lt. Governor Susan Bysiewicz, Colchester legislators and local Colchester officials to announce a \$2.5 million state bonding grant to help finance the construction of a new senior center.

Approved Dec. 21, state bond funding will be used to help offset the \$9.5 million construction of a 14,650-square-foot senior center building at the corner of Lebanon Avenue and Louis

Lane in Colchester.

The existing senior center will relocate from its current 5,600 square foot location to the new facility, which will be near downtown. The new center will feature a variety of activity spaces including a cafe, game room, arts and crafts classroom, library/lounge, conference room, multi-purpose rooms, and more than 2,200 square feet dedicated to a fitness center.

CYSS News and Notes

Colchester Youth and Social Services has announced the following. For full program descriptions or more information, contact CYSS at 860-537-7255 or youthservices@colchesterct.gov. Register for programs online at www.colchesterct.gov/youth-social-services.

Youth Action Council: Thursdays, 2:15-4 p.m., for grades 7-12. As a member of the council, students will have the opportunity to engage with town leaders, travel to regional conferences, create activities for teens, and more. Register online.

Half Day Hooray: For children in grades K-5. On professional development-shortened days, Half Day Hooray takes place right at the child's school and includes STEAM-related

performances, hands-on activities, take-home crafts and more. Each session is \$10. Register online. Schedule is: Feb. 18: Funky February; March 24: March Madness; May 27: Last Blast.

Youth Center Activities – Drop-In: 2-4 p.m. Mondays and Wednesdays, for grades 6-8. During Drop-In, kids can have a snack, read/do homework, play pool, air hockey, video games or basketball, work on crafts, and more. Students will receive instructions for online registration at their first visit; they must be registered online to attend again.

After School Adventures: Tuesdays, 2-4 p.m., through the end of the school year. Grades 6-8 are invited to the Youth Center after school for fun activities and even some trips.

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BOS Pass Mask Mandate, But Bisbikos Declines to Enforce It

by Diane Church

Although Colchester's Board of Selectmen approved a mask mandate for town buildings, it will not be enforced anytime soon.

Democratic Selectman Denise Turner introduced the idea at the Jan. 6 Board of Selectmen meeting, which was held via Zoom. Turner asked First Selectman Andreas Bisbikos, a Republican, if there were any plans for a mask mandate.

Bisbikos replied, "People have to have personal responsibility. You can make a motion and pass a mask mandate but I will not enforce it."

Other selectmen weighed in. Selectman Rosemary Coyle, who is also a Democrat, said, "I think our employees and the public deserve protection. The town charter says we can pass ordinances to protect the health and safety of the town. We want to keep the town working and open. It will protect staff and people coming in. This is the right thing to do."

Republican Selectman Jason LaChapelle –

who missed an in-person Board of Selectmen meeting in December because a family member had COVID-19 – said he agreed with Bisbikos.

"Our citizens are not stupid," he said. "I have faith in our citizens. People in our town are generally good and care about each other."

But opinion was not entirely divided along party lines. Deborah Bates, a Republican, sided with the Democrats, saying, "At work people are dropping like flies. They're not dying; they're getting COVID. We have to protect our community. I feel strongly about this."

Coyle, Turner and Bates crafted a motion to reinstate an indoor mask mandate for all town buildings effective immediately regardless of a person's vaccination status. The mandate would remain in effect until Feb. 3, at which point the Board of Selectmen would re-evaluate the issue based on the current COVID situation. The motion also strongly recommended that businesses also institute an indoor mask mandate regard-

less of vaccination status.

The motion passed 3-2 – with Coyle, Turner and Bates in favor of it and Bisbikos and LaChapelle opposed.

Still, Bisbikos said he plans to ignore it. "I encourage people to be healthy," he said.

"I am vaccinated. I wear a mask. But I can't get behind a mask mandate. No way."

After the meeting, Turner explained why she brought up the mandate.

"I work in a nursing home," she said. "I see what COVID does. Andreas posts the numbers from the Chatham Health District every week. If he's not concerned, that's another problem."

Turner also said she and Coyle will look into getting a legal opinion if the COVID numbers

are not declining significantly by the end of the month.

"The Board of Selectmen passed it. I don't know if there is something we can do legally," she said. "A legal opinion might say that he has to enforce it."

Coyle said she believes the board has an obligation to pass the mask mandate.

"The Board of Selectmen oversees all town departments," she said. "The board may also pass emergency ordinances affecting life and health. Also, if employees get sick and we have to close, that affects business."

Indeed, the town charter states in part that the "Board of Selectmen shall administer all personnel policies concerning town employees."

Senior Center News & Notes

Colchester Senior Center, 95 Norwich Ave., has announced the following. For full descriptions, call 860-537-3911, email csc@colchesterct.gov, or visit www.colchesterct.gov/senior-center. Items marked with a (CC) are held via conference call.

Monday, Jan. 17: Senior center closed for Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

Tuesday, Jan. 18: 9 a.m., Making Memories; 9:45 a.m., Tai Chi; 10:30 a.m., Book Club; 12:30 p.m., Pinochle; 1:30 p.m., Bingo.

Wednesday, Jan. 19: 9 a.m., Walking Group meet-up at the Air Line Trail in Amston; 9 a.m., Making Memories Program; 10 a.m., Adult Coloring, Sit & Be Fit; 11 a.m., Welcome the New Year with a Bang! Luncheon; 1:30 p.m., Line Dancing.

Thursday, Jan. 20: 9 a.m., Exercise with Anne; 10 a.m., Sittercize, Wii Bowling; 10:30 a.m., Live Well (CC); 11 a.m., yoga; 12:30 p.m., chair massage.

Friday, Jan. 21: 10 a.m., Sit & Be Fit, Zentangle Workshop; 10:30 a.m., Choral Group; 11 a.m., Yoga, Lunch Bunch to Fenn-Again's; 1:30 p.m., Bingo.

Upcoming Programs: Zentangle Workshop: Fridays in January at 10 a.m., with instructor Jamilah Zebarth. Each class is \$25 and includes materials; sign up for as many classes

as you like. Registration is limited.

What's Next for the New Senior Center? Wednesday, Jan. 26, 10:30 a.m. Director of senior services, Patty Watts, will lead this Q&A session all about the future of the new building.

AARP Tax Aide Appointments: Fridays, Feb. 11-April 1, by appointment only. AARP Tax Aide Counselors will be available by appointment to assist people with free tax preparation assistance. Call Susan at the senior center to schedule an appointment. Space is limited.

Experience China: Tuesday, Feb. 1, 10 a.m. Celebrate the Chinese New Year and learn about contemporary life in China. This special presentation will include pictures from both the rural countryside and cities of the largest Asian country. Sample some authentic Chinese food and even learn how to use chopsticks. Fee is \$9 per person. Register by Jan. 25.

Heart-Healthy Lunch & Learn with Chestelm: Wednesday, Feb. 2, 11:30 a.m. Following presentation on diet and lifestyle choices, all will be served a lunch of turkey chili, cornbread, crunchy cabbage salad with peanut dressing, apple bread pudding and a bottle of water. This is a free program; however, registration is required. Sign up by Wednesday, Jan. 26. Space is limited.



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Ladies Guild 2022 Trips

Saint Andrew's Ladies Guild is planning several trips for the group and has opened the reservations to the community. Trips for 2022 are:

May 11-13: See Sight and Sounds Theatre's new show, *David*. Trip includes transportation, two nights' hotel, two breakfasts, two dinners, sightseeing and admissions per itinerary, including a ride on the Strasburg Railroad and visiting an actual Amish home. Cost is \$585/person double.

Aug. 14-15: See and hear the Boston Pops on Old Cape Cod, cruise Hyannis Harbor and visit the JFK Museum. Cost is \$409/person double, and includes transportation, hotel, one breakfast, one dinner, sightseeing and admissions.

Sept. 3-18: Trans-Atlantic Cruise, visiting Copenhagen, Norway, Iceland, Greenland. Price starts at \$2,999, and includes air transportation to Copenhagen. Travelers must follow the protocols set-in-place by the travel company.

For more information, call Barbara Gozzo at 860-537-0179 or Cathy Russi at 860-887-9621.

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ad COUNCIL

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 office is open Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. The office can be reached at 860-537-5189 or cfc06415@gmail.com.

Worship services are Sundays at 9 a.m.; masks required. For those wishing to worship from home, the service will be broadcast via Facebook Live each Sunday at 9 a.m. Worship videos are at www.colchesterfederatedchurch.org under the Worship & Sermons tab. Updated information is also on the church's Facebook page.

Ukrainian Catholic Church News

All are invited to worship each week at St. Mary Ukrainian Catholic Church, 178 Linwood Ave. The church offers Eastern Rite Divine services. Church doors are open for Divine Liturgy on Saturdays at 4 p.m. and Sundays at 9 a.m.; the Sunday service is bilingual.

For more information, call the church at 860-537-2069.

Abundant Life Church News & Notes

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

Sunday Services: Sunday School is at 9:30 a.m. and the main service is at 10:30 a.m. There is also Children's Church available for ages 4-11. All are welcome. The main service is also broadcast live each week on Facebook. Visit www.facebook.com/groups/abundantlifeCT or look for the church on Facebook. For more information, call the church.

Power of Prayer: If in need of prayer, call the church to be placed on the prayer list. You may also ask about the various days and times the prayer groups meet and come at that time.

Sunday School: Sunday School is held during worship from September through June. Children in grades pre-K through 8 are welcome. The nursery is located just off the sanctuary. Visit the church website to register youth for Sunday School.

Twelve-Step Meetings: AA meets in the church library Monday-Wednesday and Friday at noon and Thursday at 10 a.m., and at 7:30 p.m. Mondays and Wednesdays. On Saturdays at 9:30 a.m., Al-Anon meets in the Jerusalem Room and AA meets in the Stage Room.

Boy Scout Troop 72: Meetings are held in the Stage Room every Monday at 7 p.m.

Book Club to Meet

The Cragin Book Club at the Cragin Memorial Library will meet Monday, Jan. 31, at 6 p.m., at the library, 8 Linwood Ave.

This month the club will read *Waiting for the Night Song*, by Julie Carrick Dalton. Copies are available for checkout at the Adult Circulation Desk. For updates on the program, sign up at tinyurl.com/cmlbookclub

This program is free and open to the public. For more information, call the library at 860-537-5752.

Christian Life Chapel News

Christian Life Chapel, located at 392 S. Main St., holds worship in-person at 10 a.m. Sundays. Follow the church on Facebook for the livestream.

For more information, call Pastor Don Rivers – the church's bi-vocational pastor, who also serves as president for "Racing with Jesus Inc." – at 860-398-9119 or visit christianlifechapel.org.

Dean's List

Maile Blumberger of Colchester made the fall 2021 Dean's List at Coastal Carolina University in Conway, S.C.

Blumberger is a nursing major.

Town is Getting a Free Flagpole

by Diane Church

Chris Wilmes of Getaway House Machimoodus is donating a 25-foot flagpole to the town.

"He reached out to other towns but they didn't want it," said Colchester First Selectman Andreas Bisbikos. "I think it's good. It's in very good condition. Now we have a spare flagpole in case one breaks, or we can use it at the new senior center. It would be foolish of us not to accept it."

According to its website, Getaway is a national company that rents out small cabins in quiet areas for people who want to get away from the stress of daily urban and suburban life. The cabins are spread apart enough to allow privacy. Getaway House Machimoodus, in Moodus, is one of its newer locations. It is the only Connecticut location.

The precise location of the 45 cabins is not disclosed, but the nearest amenity, just two minutes away, is Machimoodus State Park.

Beside it is Sunrise State Park, once home to Sunrise Resort. Wilmes did not return a phone call seeking additional information.

Wilmes said in an e-mail to Bisbikos that his construction crew will take the pole down but the town has to make arrangements to have it picked up.

The Board of Selectmen briefly discussed the flagpole at its Jan. 6 meeting before approving it unanimously.

Selectman Rosemary Coyle wondered if there was any downside to accepting the donation, while selectman Debbie Bates asked where they would be storing it and if there were any insurance issues.

"I can't believe we're debating this," said Bisbikos. "If there is an issue we can donate it."

Selectman Jason LaChapelle said, "It's a free flagpole."

President's List

Colchester residents Ariana Golias and Hayden Dubiel made the fall 2021 President's List at Plymouth State University in Plymouth, N.H.

Dean's List

Sarah Brigandi of Colchester made the fall 2021 Dean's List at Plymouth State University in Plymouth, N.H.

Dean's List

Colchester residents Haylee Skoog and Liah Brown made the fall 2021 Dean's List at Lasell University in Newton, Mass.

Dean's List

Olivia Berard of Colchester made the fall 2021 Dean's List at Bob Jones University in Greenville, S.C.

Berard is a sophomore nursing major.

President's List

Zachary Berard of Colchester made the fall 2021 President's List at Bob Jones University in Greenville, S.C.

Berard is a senior criminal justice major.

Dean's List

Sean Baldyga of Colchester made the fall 2021 Dean's List at Stonehill College in Easton, Mass.

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★ *Letters cont. from page 6*

ing in Hebron decreased five-fold. The HDTC now promotes relaxed zoning that will bring apartment buildings and gas stations not only to the Horton property, but to mini-town centers, for example on West Street and Hope Valley. (Yes, really.) They propose bulldozing the 90-acre Horton property to build a municipal complex with possibly some affordable housing units. As a result, property taxes will soar, making the town unlivable not only for people we hope to attract, but also for the seniors and less well-off people who already live in Hebron. These dystopian proposals do nothing for social justice, but they will certainly ruin the town.

The HDTC has never had much to say about local social justice or environmental justice issues. In fact, their leaders opposed Phase II of the Social Justice and Equity committee. They have been silent on unjust town employment issues, against resolutions condemning the Jan. 6 insurrection, for unsafe artificial turf, and for a town Forest Management Plan whose sole purpose is to log town lands. Is it any wonder that the HDTC has been crushed repeatedly in local elections?

John Collins – Amston

\$50 Million

To the Editor:
The first thing that came to mind, while reading about Hebron’s \$50 million development, was Steve Austin and *The Six Million Dollar Man*. “We can make him better than he was... better, faster, stronger.” Kinda like the new Village Square watershed plans in Hebron. “Better

than it is. Cleaner. Safer. More efficient.” You can bet that Steve Austin wasn’t forced to lay in a hospital bed for 11 years awaiting surgery. Nope; Steve was a valuable member of the force. And so is our watershed.

Ahh, the ‘70s. We grew up on ecology. Woodie Owl, “Give a Hoot don’t Pollute,” Smokey the Bear, “People start forest fires, people can stop them,” and our treasured Native Americans pleading with us to stop polluting the land. As a kid, it was a good time. As a nation, we banded together to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels. Jimmy Carter led the way. Thermostats were turned down, cars made smaller, sweaters kept the chill off and our country explored alternative heating, cooling and building practices. Ideas that would spread globally and take off everywhere but here. Imagine the stress today if we suddenly returned to odd and even gas days.

Imagine what \$50 million looks like. What does it smell like? What can it buy? What can it erase? Can we really dismantle a watershed and expect it is going to function as well or better than before?

Man can burn books, steal art work, and pave over his lands and his past, but our childhood values will remain. Our instincts inherent at birth remain. Our principles will too. Sadly, Superman is not coming to defend our principles or our watershed and neither is Steve Austin; we will have to do this ourselves.

Jean Tulimieri – Amston

Will Stand Up for Town

Dear Colchester Residents:
I’ve served this community for many years, focusing on issues and making decisions based

on facts and the rules outlined in state statutes and our charter. I’ve worked with my colleagues on the Board of Selectmen in a bipartisan fashion to accomplish many things for our community – like building a new senior center, passing the fire apparatus referendum, and renovating the WJMS.

At the Jan. 6th meeting of the BOS, I brought forth a motion to remove Attorney Luis Medina, hired by First Selectman Andreas Bisbikos to represent the town defendants in the Rudko lawsuit for two reasons. First, the town charter (C-302C and 402B) requires the BOS to approve all contracts, settlements, and the First Selectman did not receive BOS approval. Secondly, Colchester should not be represented by an attorney that has been disciplined many times and disbarred (State of CT, Judicial Branch, attorney/firm lookup - <https://www.jud.ct.gov/attorneyfirm inquiry/AttorneyFirmInquiry.aspx>). The reputation of our town and the integrity of our election process should be defended at all costs – false accusations need to be corrected and the facts provided clearly to the judge and the public. This did not happen under Medina’s representation.

The second motion was to ask the town attorney, Shipman and Goodman, to provide a clarification memo to the moderator, the registrars of voters, the town clerk, the BOS, and the first selectman on the Rudko recount. The purpose is to provide everyone with the same information and make sure there are no questions about the stipulated agreement and the election officials’ responsibilities in a recount. Both motions passed.

The BOS is guided by the town charter, approved by the electorate of this town. I will always stand up for our town and its citizens.

**Respectfully,
Rosemary Coyle – Colchester**

Note: Coyle is a member of the Colchester Board of Selectmen, but said she is speaking as an individual.

Aquifacts

To the Editor:
Take a moment, go to Google and search “Hebron Connecticut Wetland Soils and Watercourses.” Click on Map No. 3, from the 2014 Hebron Plan of Conservation and Development. As you know, Route 66 runs between Marlborough and Columbia, with Route 85 intersecting it near the center of the map. Just south of this spot sits a small road named, Kinney Road. Located at 17 Kinney Road is the 88+-acre “Horton property” and watershed where our town plans to put in a large municipal/industrial/housing complex.

Now search for Hebron Connecticut Aquifer Protection Zone. Click on Map No. 2. Note where this land sits in relation to all these wetlands, wetland soils and the Aquifer Protection Zone. It is easy to see just how close this land really is in relation to the Zone. Keep in mind that the land in question gently slopes directly towards the aquifer. Water knows no boundaries and its primary goal is to seek the lowest point, and in this case, that is the aquifer.

These maps and the videos at Kinney Road Matters on Facebook show the volume of water that passes through the Kinney Road watershed. Based on the slope and location of these 88+ acres, one can easily surmise that nearly all the water passing over and through this parcel will quickly reach our marsh/aquifer. Hebron’s Raymond Brook Marsh and Aquifer still boast some of the cleanest water in eastern Connecticut. This clean water supply is something to be

proud of, something to protect and something to share with future generations.

While water advocates worldwide ask for donations to defend our need for clean water, Hebron is asking residents for \$50 million to dismantle our watershed which will, in turn, threaten our water. There is only one question. Why?

**Sincerely,
Kevin J. Tulimieri – Amston**

Appalled by Letter

To the Editor:
I was appalled that the *Rivereast News Bulletin* chose to publish a letter by a Colin McNamara last week. This letter was filled with outrageous and hateful conspiracy theories, and misinformation to outright lies about COVID vaccines. My point is not that there are misguided individuals who have created or been lead to believe these lies, but that your paper chooses to publish this dangerous type of letter.

Would your paper print seditious letters? Slanderous letters? Outright hate letters? What is your journalistic responsibility in the maiming, financial devastation, and death of those who read this type of letter and think that it’s valid on any level?

I’ll not even give the appalling claims made in his letter the dignity of individual responses, but this misguided individual feels that he knows what is best for everyone, yet fails to enlighten us about any expertise whatsoever that he possesses. Medical providers are sick of unvaccinated individuals spouting untruths such as these as an excuse for not being immunized, then overburdening the medical system and complaining about the harried and costly care they receive when (not if) they become sick.

I myself have no expertise in editing newspapers, but I do expect a moderate level of ethical standard in the publications I read, especially in my community newspaper. Other news media outlets have finally found the moral conviction needed to require that life-threatening misinformation and lies be screened for dangerous content. Letters like this should be omitted just as you would other harmful or damaging content, or at the very least be immediately followed by the appropriate disclaimers.

**Dan Mussen, Physician Associate
Colchester**

Main will Remain Residential

To the Editor:
The voice was strong and clear in the Town Hall of East Hampton on Jan. 5th in the vote against spot zoning. I want to thank our Planning & Zoning Commission for their hard work and for volunteering their time to design our town’s future. This challenging work is often unseen by many until it impacts their home or business. The last meeting demonstrated resolve and commitment to the policy of our town’s and state’s Plan of Conservation and Development. Our PZC voted overwhelmingly against spot zoning.

Members of the commission and the public shared that the plan for a very large gas station at the top of the hill of Main Street would be detrimental to the watershed. Commission members and the public also cited that the increased traffic due to a drive-thru was a major safety concern. A main consideration to deny this proposal is that a zone change is forever, and once changed, any commercial business could be built there. East Hampton will not

See Letters, page 15

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Marlborough • Marlborough

Congregational Church News & Notes

Sunday worship and programs at Marlborough Congregational Church, 35 South Main St., are suspended until Jan. 31, with in-person and livestream worship resuming at 10 a.m. Sunday, Feb. 6. The livestream can be accessed at mcc.marlbconchurch.org.

Sunday School: A message for the children from Christian Education Director Gwen Lawson will be livestreamed at 11 a.m. through Jan. 30. Sunday School will resume Feb. 6.

Mission Support in January will go to Marlborough Food Bank. Donations to missions or for any other giving may be sent to the church at P.O. Box 57, Marlborough, CT 06447 or placed in an offering box on a Sunday.

day.

AA: Meets downstairs in the Great Hall Wednesdays with two meetings, noon and 7:30 p.m.

Second Blessings Thrift Shop: The shop will reopen Friday, Feb. 4, at noon, with new merchandise for the spring. The shop sells year-round through eBay at bit.ly/MCCebay.

General Info: Worship services and programs are open to all. The church is an Open and Affirming faith community. For more information about the church or its programs, call the church office at 860-295-9050 or Pastor Bob Faulhaber's direct line at 860-295-0432.

St. John Fisher Church News & Notes

St. John Fisher Roman Catholic Church is located at 30 Jones Hollow Rd. Pastor is the Rev. Thomas J. Sas, John McKaig is deacon emeritus and the pastoral assistant is Holly Bangham. The church office can be reached at 860-295-0001; hours are Monday-Thursday, 8:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. People are asked to call before heading over or connect via the phone or email at stjohnfisher30@yahoo.com.

COVID-19 Protocol: For the fully vaccinated, masks are optional. For the unvaccinated, masks are required. Call the office for more information.

Weekend Masses: 4 p.m. Saturday and 8:30 and 10:30 a.m. Sunday. All are welcome. **Weekday Mass:** Monday-Thursday, 8:30 a.m.

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament: Sundays, 4-4:45 p.m.

Community Outreach and Service: Food drives are held the second full weekend of each

month for Marlborough Food Bank; you may also bring food or household donations directly to the Marlborough Food Bank Monday and Tuesday mornings. Sandwich-making and collection continues on the last Thursday of the month for St. Vincent de Paul in Middletown. Seasonal outreach to benefit the Community Garden to benefit the Marlborough Food Bank and various giving programs to support area organizations continue. Other scheduled service opportunities can be found on the church website, www.stjfisher.org.

Other Programs and Offerings: For more information on such programs as faith formation for children, youth and adults, youth group, RCIA or Knights of Columbus, call the office, visit the church website, or look for the church on Facebook (Saint John Fisher Roman Catholic Church).

Richmond Library News & Notes

Richmond Memorial Library, located at 15 School Drive, has reopened its building to the public, but curbside pickup is still being offered. For more information and full program descriptions – and to inquire about available curbside printing services – call the library at 860-295-6210 or visit richmondlibrary.info.

Building and Curbside Hours: Monday-Thursday, 10 a.m.-8 p.m.; Friday, 10 a.m.-6 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Meet Polly the Penguin: Polly the Penguin is new to Marlborough and has been visiting the library. She gets a little curious at night when staff go home and goes exploring, oftentimes getting lost. From now through February, kids are invited to help find Polly. Each Monday she will move to a new location. If you find her, you'll earn a prize.

Senior Center News and Notes

Marlborough Senior Center, 17 School Dr., is open for activities. Call 860-295-6209 for the center's hours and more information. The senior center has announced the following:

Transportation: Transportation to the senior center, shopping, medical and non-medical appointments will be offered each day from 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m., with a 36-hour advance reservation. Masks are required as well as appropriate distancing. **Assistance** is offered each day from 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

The **Food Bank** is located at 3 Willhenger Drive (860-295-6008) and is open every Tuesday from 10 a.m.-noon and 3:30-5:30 p.m. It is open to qualified residents in need of food. Transportation for seniors and/or physically challenged individuals is available; call the senior center if needed.

Parks and Rec Programs

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

Youth Programs: Kids/Family Sew – Fleece PJs: For all ages. Monday, Jan. 17, 5:30-7 p.m., at Marlborough Senior Center. Participants must have their own machine. All supplies are included. Fee: \$43/residents, \$48/non-residents.

LEGO – Pokemon Engineering: For grades K-2. Tuesdays, Jan. 18-Feb. 22, 3:15-4:45 p.m., at Marlborough Elementary School. Fee: \$120/residents, \$125/non-residents.

LEGO – Pokemon Master Engineering: For grades 3-6. Thursdays, Jan. 20-Feb. 24, 3:15-4:45 p.m., at MES. Fee: \$120/residents, \$125/non-residents.

Artventureswithkids: For grades K-4. Thursdays, Jan. 20-Feb. 24, 5:45-6:45 p.m., at Marlborough Senior Center. Fee: \$132/residents, \$138/non-residents.

Mad Science: For grades K-6. Mondays,

Jan. 24-March 21, 3:15-4:15 p.m., at MES. Fee: \$150/residents, \$155/non-residents.

Adult Programs: Barre/Pilates: Mondays through Jan. 31, 5-5:45 p.m. Fee is \$15 per week to drop in. Class instruction is virtual or in person.

Yoga Mondays: Through Jan. 31, 6-7 p.m. Fee is \$15 per week to drop in. Class instruction is virtual or in person.

Yoga Tuesdays: Through Jan. 25, 9:30-10:30 a.m. Fee is \$15 per week to drop in. Class instruction is virtual or in person.

Pilates/Barre: Wednesdays through Jan. 26, 5-5:45 p.m. Fee is \$15 per week to drop in. Class instruction is virtual or in person.

Zumba: Thursdays through Feb. 10, 6:30-7:30 p.m., at MES. Fee is \$10 per week drop-in fee.

Adult Sew 101 – Learn Your Machine: For ages 16 and up. Monday, Jan. 24, 5:30-7 p.m., at Marlborough Senior Center. Participants must have their own machine. Fee: \$38/residents, \$43/non-residents.

Holiday Closing

The offices of Marlborough Town Hall, Senior Center and Public Works Department will be closed Monday, Jan. 17, for Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

Dean's List

Mary O'Neil of Marlborough made the fall 2021 Dean's List at the University of Vermont. O'Neil is a professional nursing major in the College of Nursing and Health Sciences.

Arts Center Membership Drive Underway

The Marlborough Arts Center announces that its annual membership drive for 2022 is underway. Memberships are valid from January through December each year.

The center is a regional nonprofit organization which includes all the towns in the Marlborough area. Artistic and cultural activities are offered throughout the year, including fine art shows, classes and musical presentations.

Funds collected for membership are a vital part of keeping the Arts Center running. Membership forms can be downloaded from www.marlbrougharts.org, printed and submitted with a check to Marlborough Arts Center, 231 North Main St., Marlborough CT 06447. The Arts Center phone number is 860-467-6353.

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East Hampton • East Hampton

Superintendent Suggests Close to 4% Budget Hike

by Jack Lakowsky

Superintendent of East Hampton Schools Paul Smith proposed a 3.75% budget increase to the Board of Education on Monday, an increase of about \$1.2 million.

The 2022-23 district budget proposal totals \$34.3 million. The current year's budget is about \$33.1 million.

Smith said this year, he and his administration focused on ensuring the budget accomplishes the district's goals.

In his pitch to the board, Smith said the proposal focuses especially on student mental health and math skill development.

Federal stimulus dollars will also help the district meet its needs and aspirations, Smith said.

"This is the third year kids are affected by the pandemic," said Smith, going on to paint a picture of the pandemic's lengthy duration.

"If you're in eighth grade now, you did not have a normal middle school experience at all," said Smith. "If you're in sixth grade, you went through Center School not experiencing everything [it offers]. If you're a high school junior, you've never had a normal high school experience."

Smith said in 2022-23, the schools are going to try and bring back some normalcy. Smith said the pandemic has caused educators to "re-invent what we do."

Smith's request included a new district psychologist. The mental health needs of students have grown since the pandemic's onset, accord-

ing to Smith.

The psychologist, if approved, would be funded by federal money, including from the American Rescue Plan.

To help alleviate a high student-teacher ratio, one teacher will be moved from teaching fourth grade and reassigned to teaching third.

Last year, Smith introduced two math specialists, funded by stimulus dollars. Smith has repeatedly said the district wants to improve student math scores. He said East Hampton students' SAT math scores were lower than multiple nearby districts.

During last year's election cycle, East Hampton Republicans – who now hold majorities on both the school board and Town Council – often said they don't want federal monies to fund staff positions.

In a Tuesday follow-up, Smith told the *Rivereast* this opposition is because of a misperception that, once outside funds dry up, taxpayers would then incur that burden.

"That's not accurate," Smith told the *Rivereast*. "We're pledging to fund these math specialists and the psychologist through grant funds and when [money runs] out, if we can't afford to keep them, they won't become part of the budget."

Smith said federal funds are to be used over three years, and it's in this period schools must meet the increased needs the pandemic is causing.

"We're not required to maintain funding

those positions," said Smith.

The budget also calls for replacing outdated statistics textbooks. The current books make antiquated references, including to dial-up internet, a technology most current high school seniors are too young to remember.

In his budget document, Smith listed items requested but that he didn't approve. Smith denied many staff proposals, including more psychologists, a kindergarten paraeducator, a full-time library media specialist at the middle school, another language teacher at the high school and an added family/consumer sciences teacher, also at the high school.

Funding Chromebooks for students is a major driver of the budget hike. Smith this budget year, Chromebooks will be included in the school board's budget, not in the town's capital budget as they were before.

The upcoming year's new Chromebooks, given to students as they enter the youngest grade of each school, will cost the district close to \$100,000.

Smith said the district had a one-one student/Chromebook ratio before the pandemic and that, especially during and after it, "there's no moving back from Chromebooks."

Salaries are up as always, about 2%. Smith said the district negotiated some of the lowest contractual increases among a subset of 40 towns.

According to Smith's weekly update to the community, the school board will continue reviewing the budget, ultimately voting on whether to adopt it at its Feb. 28 meeting. After that and following any changes, the budget will go to the Board of Finance and the Town Council for final approval.

Senior Center News & Notes

East Hampton Senior Center, 105 Main St., is open. All participants should pre-register for programs prior to the event, online at myactivecenter.com or by calling 860-267-4426 or emailing seniorcenter@easthamptonct.gov. Senior center hours are Monday-Thursday, 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m.; Friday, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Masks are required for all, regardless of vaccination status. Visit the senior center online at www.easthamptonct.gov/east-hampton-senior-center.

Lunches: Served at the center to ages 60 and up on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. Call the center to reserve a meal or sign up online. Reservations for the next day's meal are due by 11 a.m. the day before. Masks are required; however, once you have your meal and are seated you can take off your mask. Meals are free, though a \$3 donation is requested.

Weekly Activities: Registration is required for all of the following; to do so, contact the center. **Quilting Group:** Mondays, 9 a.m. **Mex-**

ican Train Dominoes: Mondays, 9:30 a.m. **Bible Study:** Tuesdays, 1 p.m. **Bingo:** Tuesdays, 1-2 p.m., in person and via Zoom. **Setback:** Thursdays 1:15-3:15 p.m. **Game Day:** Fridays, 10 a.m.-noon – space will be available and open to Mahjongg, cribbage, Mexican Train and setback players. Registration required. **Textile Group:** Fridays at 1:30 p.m.

Writing Our Lives to Open Our Hearts: Thursdays, 10:30-11:30 a.m., or every other Wednesday (next date Jan. 5), at 9:30 a.m. Meet outside, weather permitting. In case of inclement weather, it will be inside, with masks recommended. Register online.

Volunteer Shopping: The center has a program where a volunteer will shop for you. Call in your list to 860-267-4426 or email it to Jewling@easthampton.gov. The shopper will call you before the drop-off to let you know the cost of the groceries. You can write out a check for the amount, payable to the Town of East Hampton. The volunteer will drop off the groceries at your door and pick up the check in a pre-arranged designated spot.

Dean's List

Jared Reed of East Hampton made the fall 2021 Dean's List at the College of Saint Rose in Albany, N.Y.

Reed is majoring in biology.

Haines to Host Virtual Forum

State Rep. Irene Haines (R-34) will host a virtual public forum later this month, for constituents to ask questions about the 2022 legislative session, hear her legislative priorities, and submit their own ideas about potential legislation.

The event will take place via Zoom Saturday, Jan. 29, from 10-11 a.m. Those who would like to attend may visit us02web.zoom.us/j/83961361260 at the time of the event, or find the event link at www.RepHaines.com.

For more information or if you cannot attend, contact Haines at Irene.Haines@cga.ct.gov or 860-240-8700. The 34th District covers East Hampton, East Haddam and a portion of Colchester.

EHACC Accepting Capstone Grant Applications

The East Hampton Arts & Culture Commission is accepting applications from East Hampton High School seniors for two \$250 grants to support an annual East Hampton High School capstone project.

The grant will help support two student's proposed capstone project, a multifaceted assignment that serves as a culminating academic and intellectual experience for students. Capstone projects may take a wide variety of forms including a long-term investigative project that culminates in a final prod-

uct, presentation or performance.

Applicants for the grant will be invited to present their capstone project idea to commission members at an agreed-upon commission meeting. Deadline to apply is Feb. 1.

Applications are available at www.artsforeasthamptonct.org and can be submitted to arts@easthamptonct.org, or can be mailed/dropped off at the town manager's office at the East Hampton Town Hall, 1 Community Drive.

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Haddam Neck Covenant Church News

Haddam Neck Covenant Church, located at 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. Pastor is the Rev. Tom Cowger. The message is The Light of Christ. Refreshments are served after the service.

Puppet Ministry: Each Sunday, the church's Puppet Ministry features Digger the Dog and friends from Farmer M's Red Barn to help Cowger explain the message topic.

Bible Study: The Zoom Bible Study meets every other Thursday from 7-8:15 p.m. The next study will be Jan. 20. This is an interactive study of compassion as seen in Jesus.

Office Info: The office can be reached at 860-267-2336; hours are Monday-Friday, 12:30-4:30 p.m. The church website is at www.hncovenantchurch.org. Check WFSB-TV Channel 3 for information on church closings due to weather.

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Close Cherishing College Basketball

by Josh Howard

Thomas Close, a senior at Eastern Connecticut State University (ECSU), is a Belltown basketball legend. The 2018 East Hampton High School graduate scored 1,485 points, earning All-State three times as a four-year starter at the high school.

The hardwood prodigy continued his passion at the next level, joining the Warriors in Willimantic and picking up where he left off in high school.

“It’s been great. I came in as a freshman super excited to join a winning program,” Close said of his college experience. “I’ve made a lot of friendships. My love of basketball has grown even more than I could have imagined here.”

Following a reserve role as a freshman, Close became a starter as a sophomore and has never relinquished that role.

This winter he is averaging a career-best 12.5 points per game, as the Warriors are aiming to capture a Little East Conference (LEC) title for the first time since 2018.

That same year, Close was a senior in high school where he helped lead East Hampton to an undefeated regular season. The team’s winning extended into the Shoreline Conference (SLC) tournament where the Bellringers won their first SLC championship, defeating Cromwell in a 58-54 thriller on March 8, 2018.

“To this day that is one of my favorite moments of my basketball life because it was with the kids that I’ve known since kindergarten. It was great for all of us,” said Close, who scored a team-high 17 points in the win.

Close added that he and his teammates at Eastern still talk about the glory days of high school, “There’s so much freedom and you’re playing with the kids that you grew up with.”

He hopes this season ends with that same conference championship feeling. The Warriors have been on the cusp of a conference crown twice in the past three seasons, but have lost on both occasions.

During his freshman year at ECSU, the Warriors fell to Keene State in the LEC championship game. The following season (2019-20) they were again eliminated from conference contention by Keene State and during last year’s COVID-abbreviated season (2020-21), Keene State again ousted Eastern in the LEC tourney.

“We’ve been talking about that since day one,” Close said about winning a conference championship. “Not that rankings mean anything, but in the preseason rankings we got ranked sixth. We already knocked off two of the teams that were ranked ahead of us. We know what we have here and we’re definitely going for a championship.”

Keene State has been a nemesis to Eastern in recent years, but it hasn’t been all bad. Close played the hero in the 2020-21 regular season finale, as ECSU defeated the New Hampshire-based Owls in dramatic fashion when Close canned a three point shot with 2.3 seconds left in overtime as the Warriors won 85-83. The win wrapped up an undefeated home record (5-0) for the Warriors during the shortened season.

Because of that truncated season, in which the Warriors only played nine games, Close and the rest of the college athletes were granted an exemption to play an additional college season. This means that Close will have a fifth year of eligibility next year, which he says he will take advantage of.

Coming from a small town, college basketball has been a bit of an adjustment for Close. In high school, he was the undisputed No. 1 option. Once he got to the next level, he was forced to adapt his game.

“In high school I would have the ball in my hands 24/7 and now I’m a two guard, so I really had to work on my shot over the years. In high school I would dribble drive and get to the rim because guys were shorter in Shoreline, but now I’m playing against a team like Keene State that has two guys that are 6’8”, so I’ve really transformed my game into more of a shooter,” said Close. “I’m the type of person that will do whatever is best for the team. Playing the two has been great, it’s expanded my game.”

Close has spent countless hours crafting his game and perfecting his picturesque jump shot, which looks effortless on the court.

His scoring average has gone up in each of his four seasons and his shooting percentage has followed. He also credits his coach, Bill Geitner, with shaping him into the player he’s become in college.

“I came into school super shy and as I’ve gotten older I’ve grown out of that and he’s helped. He’s helped me a lot with confidence and getting to the right spots and the overall experience,” Close said of Geitner, who has been coaching at ECSU for two decades and won over 60% of his games during his tenure. “We’ve become super close. We can talk about anything; basketball, class, family.”

During the pandemic, gyms were closed and competitive basketball was temporarily halted.

The family-oriented Close leaned on his loved ones for support in more ways than one.

His mother, Susan, and sisters, Megan and Riley, offered emotional support and would go outside and rebound for him as he shot jumpers.

“We have a super close relationship,” Close said of the family. “My mom and my grandma [Patricia] don’t miss a game at home. They are at every game sitting in the front row. Looking over and seeing them there means the world to me.”

This winter, ECSU has won eight of nine games at home, compiling a record of 9-4. They have 10 regular season games remaining, including a pair against Keene State, which could go a long way in determining seeding for the LEC tourney, which starts Feb. 22.

February’s tourney is another chance for Close and the Warriors to bring a conference championship home to Willimantic.

Despite the loss, Close fondly recalled the atmosphere of the LEC championship game his freshman season and yearns for another shot at the title, saying, “I want to get back there so bad.”

Conference championship or not, Close will finish up his degree in Sports Management this



Thomas Close, a 2018 East Hampton High School graduate, is averaging 12.5 points per game for the Warriors basketball team at Eastern Connecticut State University this season.

year and focus on his minor in coaching during his fifth year at Eastern.

After his playing days are over, the former Bellringer said he will keep basketball in his life, whether it’s through coaching or as a grad assistant.

Because for Close, basketball will always be

life. “It means everything to me,” he said. “It’s a getaway from problems. I might have a bunch of homework that I am stressing about, but I go to practice and I’m in a different world. It’s been a passion for me and it’s created so many friendships.”

President’s List

Daniel Bendzinski of East Hampton made the fall 2021 President’s List at Bob Jones University in Greenville, S.C.

Bendzinski is a senior ministry and leadership major.



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Teen Beach Paint Party... In collaboration with East Hampton Social Services, Epoch Arts will offer a free Beach Paint Party to students in grades 6-12 on Friday, Jan. 28, from 4-6 p.m., at Epoch, 27 Skinner St. Teens will create an original beach scene painting to take home. Space is limited; to reserve a spot, email rachel@epocharts.org. Pictured is a scene from Epoch's last paint party with Social Services.

EHACC Accepting Grant Applications

The East Hampton Arts & Culture Commission is accepting grant applications from East Hampton organizations and individuals with programs and/or projects designed to enrich the lives of town residents through the arts. Deadline to apply is April 1, to arts@easthamptonct.org.

There are two \$500 grants available to be awarded to individuals or organizations residing in East Hampton. The commission reserves the right to award a grant to an individual or organization it determines will have the most potential impact of arts and/or culture on the town. Incomplete forms will be denied; applicants can resubmit.

Criteria for awarding grants: The artistic and

organizational quality of the organization and/or project and its likelihood of continuing viability or success; and the organization's or project's accessibility and service to the East Hampton community. Grant recipients must credit the East Hampton Arts and Culture Commission on all press releases, posters, print advertising and programs.

An interview may be requested of the candidate prior to awarding the grant. An update of your progress will be required six months post-award date and a final report will be required one year post award date.

Applications are available at www.artsforeasthamptonct.org.

Dean's List

Sara Roberts of East Hampton made the fall 2021 Dean's List at Stonehill College in Easton, Mass.

Dean's List

Angela Buonocore of East Hampton made the fall 2021 Dean's List at Lasell University in Newton, Mass.

Tax Preparer Wanted

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CT Draft Horse Rescue Capital Campaign

CT Draft Horse Rescue (CDHR) is asking folks to join the effort to 'Raise the Barn' at its East Hampton farm, Autumn Ridge.

A 10,080-sq. ft. barn has been donated and funds are needed to bring the barn to Autumn Ridge and begin construction. The barn plans include: 42 stalls modified to a floor plan to suit farm needs, a medical stall, a vet/farrier treatment area, a feed room, meeting/classroom area, wash stalls, and bathrooms.

The Kaman Family Foundation has pledged \$100,000 when CDHR reaches the challenge amount of \$100,000 between now and the end

of February. Currently, the CDHR has taken in all of the horses it can safely accommodate; however, more horses are in need of care and are currently on a waiting list. Donations toward this Capital Campaign will help CDHR build a versatile barn. To donate, go to www.ct-draftrescue.org/raisethebarn.

CDHR is an all-volunteer 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization located in East Hampton that is dedicated to saving the lives of draft horses that were bound for slaughter, in addition to victims of starvation, neglect or abuse.

Parks and Rec. Selling Hockey Tix

Parks and Recreation is selling tickets to the Saturday, Feb. 26, Hartford Wolfpack game at the XL Center. Face-off is at 7 p.m.

Tickets are \$18 each. To purchase, call 860-267-7300 or visit easthamptonrec.com.

Middle School Volleyball Registration

East Hampton Middle School student/athletes in grades 7 or 8 who are interested in playing for the boys or girls volleyball teams can register on the website FamilyID.com.

Athletes must have a physical within a 13-month period in order to participate. Girls volleyball will be offered to the first 60 girls who register. Deadline registration is on Monday, Jan. 24.

For more information, contact EHMS athletic director Michael Mercaldi at 860-463-6837.

Bethlehem Lutheran Church News

Bethlehem Evangelical Lutheran Church holds live in-person services Sundays at 10:15 a.m. All are welcome. Enter via the front door and ushers will assist you. There is also a livestream link will be at the church's Facebook page, at www.facebook.com/BethlehemEH.

Christ Episcopal Church News

Christ Episcopal Church, 66 Middle Haddam Rd., Middle Haddam, holds Sunday services at 10 a.m. each week, both in person and via Zoom. Church school meets during the service time, in the parish hall.

The Rev. Ann Perrott is priest-in-charge, the Rev. Joanne Neel-Richard oversees the children's ministry, and Stuart Duncan is the music director. For more information or if in need of pastoral assistance, call 860-267-0287 or visit www.christchurchmiddlehaddam.com.

KoC Spaghetti Dinner

The Knights of Columbus Belltown Council 6190 at St. Patrick Church in East Hampton will sponsor its semi-annual spaghetti and meatball dinner Friday, Feb. 11, from 4:30-7:30 p.m., at the church parish center, located at 47 West High St.

Takeout and dine-in meals will be offered. Meal prices are \$12 for adults and \$11 for seniors. Children 5 and under eat for free. The meal will include a salad, bread, dessert, coffee, tea, soda, water and punch drinks. Proceeds will support local charitable programs. Raffle prizes and musical entertainment will be offered as well.

The Knights of Columbus will also collect non-perishable food items for the East Hampton Food Bank. Contact Jim Radavich at 860-319-9288 or email jradavich@yahoo.com for additional information.

Dean's List

The following East Hampton residents made the fall 2021 Dean's List at the University of Vermont:

Marissa Jedziniak, a music education major in the College of Education and Social Services; Emilia Winquist, a mathematics major in the College of Arts and Sciences; and Tyler D'Anna and Isabella Siewert, who are each business administration majors in the Grossman School of Business.

Congregational Church News & Notes

The Congregational Church of East Hampton, UCC, located at 59 Main St., holds in-person services every Sunday at 10 a.m. For the fully vaccinated, mask-wearing is not mandatory; those not fully vaccinated should continue to wear masks and practice social distancing. All are encouraged to wear a mask when indoors at the church. All services can be accessed via Zoom by going to the website at cc-eh.org.

Nursery care is available during Sunday services for children under 3 years old.

For more information about CCEH and its activities, visit cc-eh.org or call the church office at 860-267-4959 during office hours, Monday-Thursday, 8 a.m.-noon. In case of pastoral emergencies, Rev. Jim Latimer can be reached at 610-568-2480.

Amy Meisner was diagnosed with MS in 1997. For someone who has always danced, MS would seem like the end. But for Amy, it means the start of a new chapter. She'll never leave the floor, still dances from her wheelchair, and is a great choreographer. Embracing Amy's undying passion, the National MS Society teamed up with LaTonya Swann to create an entirely new and inspired dance experience through virtual reality. See their experience and find out how you can share yours at WeAreStrongerThanMS.org.

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★ Letters cont. from page 10

support spot zoning. I am so thankful to the residents of East Hampton who voiced their opposition, and to the Commission who overwhelmingly agreed to save our residential and historic neighborhood.

Thank you so much, Ryan and Heidi Bothamley – East Hampton

All Residents, Please Read

To the Editor:

For your own safety – did you shovel your front steps off after the 10+ inches of snow we just had? Most of you will say ‘no.’ Why not?

Even though you do not use the front door to enter your house – you need it to escape from your house. If there was a fire it might be the only way out.

If it is not shoveled – could it be piled up with snow and ice? How will your children – parents – yourself get out?

If you need the police or fire department’s help how will they get into your house. They

don’t enter via the garage door – they head to the front door.

If it has snow/ice piled up in front of it they would need to “shovel” that away before they could enter. Wasting time that should be used to help you.

Please take the time after every snow storm to shovel all your entrances to your home – it could mean life or death.

Also – remember that if there is snow on your vehicle(s) it is required by law that you remove all of it. By removing snow it could save a life – no snow hitting the car behind you – which might have a family member in it.

Thanks for reading this and I hope it will remind you to be safe.

Carol Barton – Andover

Withholding History

To the Editor:

I was recently at a social gathering where I encountered an acquaintance who said she’d

See Letters, page 27

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Source: CNBC/BLS.GOV

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Church Purchases Land for Affordable Housing

by Sloan Brewster

St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Hebron is taking on affordable housing.

The Rev. Ron Kolanowski, pastor at St. Peter's, said in the fall the church purchased a parcel of land on Church Street with the intention of building affordable homes there.

According to movoto.com, the 16.5-acre parcel, located near St. Peter's, was sold on Nov. 3 for \$200,000.

Sold by James Celio of Century 21 AllPoints Realty, the developable lot is south of the center of town with sidewalks, natural gas, and sewer connections, according to the description. Residentially zoned, the lot has approximately 390 feet of frontage along the road, is lined by a stone wall and trees and borders the Jeremy River.

Kolanowski said last March during a lunch meeting with Town Manager Andrew Tierney, he learned that there was a need for mixed use and affordable housing in town and "filed the information in his brain."

He later learned from Celio that the Horton family was looking to sell the Church Street land.

By coincidence, one of Kolanowski's neighbors in Mansfield, where he lives, is architect Kathy Dorgan, who designs affordable housing. He said he paid her a visit and after they spoke, she walked the property and told him she could envision an affordable housing development there.

Asking himself how he could come up with \$200,000 to buy the land, the priest approached the church with the idea. Besides having the space for housing, the church could use the land to increase parish parking, he said he pointed out. Currently, church members have to park across the street.

"It's very, very dangerous to walk across," he said.

Next, he said he spoke with Superintendent of Schools Thomas Baird, who said the district needs overflow parking for Hebron Elementary School, which is also next to the parcel. The school will be able to use the church lot for that, the priest said.

The church also has the need to expand its cemetery, which would be yet another perk to owning the property, Kolanowski said. Also, the

church could put in an exterior barn-like building and have room for a tent to hold large weddings.

There's even space for community gardens, he said.

In addition, Kolanowski said he spoke with the town about preserving some wetlands along the river.

"They bought into it right away," he said. "Those were the kinds of core ideas."

After passing on the ideas to the congregation, Kolanowski said he and his spouse put a few thousand dollars in the kitty and set a challenge for the church to raise more. Then they went on vacation.

When they returned, the kitty had more than \$42,000, he said. "So people were into the vision."

Before long, the church had raised \$80,000 and then a parishioner offered to make an investment and the church was able to buy the land.

Between the new parcel, 22 acres of open space across the street from the church, the three and a half acres where the church, parish hall and cemetery sit and the three acres where the rectory is, the church now owns 45 acres in the center of town, Kolanowski said.

After the land was purchased, Dorgan held a session, taking congregants then through visual exercises, in which they envisioned walking through the different parts of the church property to discuss how it is currently used and what their vision for it in 10 years is.

"The saddest part for many of us was to [envision going] into the cemetery, because 10 years from now most of us will be in that cemetery," Kolanowski said.

Donna Jolly, co-chair of Hebron Coalition on Diversity and Equity (CoDE), hopped on board to help the congregation, writing a grant application to the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving.

The \$9,900 grant will cover education and initial planning for the project, Kolanowski said. He said the design would fit with the town's rural character.

"The whole point is to make it feel that's its native to the area," he said. "Integrate it into the heart and style of the community."

Dorgan said the plan was for an environmentally, socially and economically friendly development.

"Father Ron and his congregation have been very clear that, as they develop the parcel, they want to do something that is really principle-based development," she said. "Something that builds a good community around the church and for the town, for future residents."

She said the grant from the Hartford Foundation also helped bring onto the project Elizabeth Torres, an expert in finances, funding sources and community feasibility and Ralph Knighton, a developer and former planner for the city of Hartford.

There will be public meetings to make sure the community is involved in the process, Kolanowski said. Groups, including the Connecticut Housing Authority will be added to the mix to help find the resources and funding for the development.

Character is a crucial piece of the project, Dorgan said.

"That's important to everybody. Everybody that I've talked to values the rural character of Hebron and is looking towards something that reflects that," she said. "People want high quality that reflects history."

She said the community will be involved in the design and the process will include looking at existing buildings and talking to people about what they like and do not like in the town.

"We'll work very hard to get a lot of feedback from folks, and particularly young people," she said.

Jolly said she also wrote a grant application to the state Department of Housing, but that has not yet been approved. First, she said, the department wants to "have a conversation" with the church about the details of the plan.

Jolly said CoDE supports the project because it wants to bring more housing opportunities

to town. The group, she said, sees the lack of affordable housing in the town as a barrier to creating a more diverse community.

From a personal perspective, Jolly said she has lived in Hebron for 37 years and raised two children in the town.

"I love Hebron, it's beautiful. I certainly benefited personally but all along and definitely when my children were in school, I realized that our community is very white. That is a disadvantage, especially to our children," she said. "They're living in a community that does not represent the world."

Jolly also said that according to state guidelines, 10% of housing in towns should be affordable, and Hebron currently has less than 3%.

She said there are people, including young professionals, teachers and town employees, who work in the town but can't afford to live there.

"Right now, we are dependent on the large houses on large lots, not a lot of choices," she said. "I'd like to change that."

Tierney said town officials are in the process of reviewing a survey on affordable housing that went to residents and was completed Sunday. Once that is done, officials will begin developing the town's affordable housing plan, which is mandated by the state and will update the Plan of Conservation and Development.

"We're going to wait to see what the plan looks like before we move forward," he said. "And if we can help Father Ron, we will."

Based on the way the project has thus far fallen together, including that Dorgan is a neighbor, Kolanowski has his own ideas on who is really helping getting it moving.

"I am convinced from a theological perspective God wants all this to happen in Hebron," he said.

Church of the Holy Family News

Masses are celebrated at The Church of the Holy Family, 185 Church St. (Route 85), as follows: weekend Masses are on Saturday at 5 p.m. and on Sunday at 9:30 a.m.; weekday Masses are on Tuesday at 7 p.m. and on Thursday at 6:30 a.m. The church highly recommends that masks be worn by those attending Mass.

Visit holyfamilyhebron.org for more information. The church office can be reached at 860-228-0096.

Church Collecting for Homeless Shelter: The church collects items for the Windham Region No Freeze Hospitality Center, which provides assistance to homeless adults. Critical needs: men's solid color T-shirts and knit or "traditional" boxer shorts (M,L,XL); women's briefs (sizes 5-9); cough drops; individually wrapped snack bars; men's stick deodorant; 13- and 33-gallon trash bags; and shower shoes (men's M,L,XL flip-flops – great need, available online). Additional needs: men's pullover sweatshirts and hoodies (M,L,XL); men's heavy winter gloves (L,XL); disposable razors; earbuds for phones; paper towels; disinfectant spray cleaner; laundry detergent pods (no liquid); paper towels; and toilet paper. Place donations of goods in the designated collection box next to the church's cry room. Place large quantities of donations in the Cry Room. For more information, call Monica or John McKerracher at 860-228-4211.



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Portland • Portland

Selectmen Approve Funding for Water/Sewer Upgrades

by Jack Lakowsky

At its Jan. 5 meeting, the Portland Board of Selectmen approved using \$1.1 million of the town's American Rescue Plan (ARP) money to fund water and sewer infrastructure work.

This will use up most of the town's \$1.37 million allotment, though the town will eventually receive another similar installment of stimulus funds.

Bob Shea, head of the town's public works department, said water and sewer infrastructure repair is among the preapproved uses for the federal money.

Shea said he's marked \$600,000 to improve a water main beneath Russell Avenue. The exist-

ing Russell piping is 100 years old and made of asbestos cement.

He said the main has failed many times over the years and has cost the town thousands in repairs.

The Russell water main doesn't connect to Main Street, Shea said, instead ending at Coe Avenue. A goal of ARP-funded work will be to close this loop.

Shea said fire protection in that area is limited because the pipe doesn't connect to Main.

Failures are costly, Shea said. When the pipe fails and springs leaks the town pays "for every gallon that flows out of the ground.

"We lose hundreds of thousands of gallons before we can even get to it," he said.

Shea said repairing the Russell main will save the town a lot of money and will remove the century-old asbestos pipe.

Shea said repair work is also dangerous to crews. He said Portland's workers ably handle patchwork repairs, but new infrastructure is needed to ensure sustainability.

After pipe work, the road will be repaired and repaved, providing new roadway for up to 20 years, Shea said.

Shea said about \$400,000 will go to work at the Coe Avenue wastewater pump station. The facility was built in the 1970s, Shea said, and hasn't had improvements since 1990, when it flooded.

Shea said the station processes nearly 500,000 gallons of sewage per day.

The public works director said the station's piping is outdated and in a poor state. He said pipes are corroded, and the station's electronic equipment is outdated. There's also groundwater infiltration, he said.

The money will be used to improve station

efficiency, replace electronics and install a new propane tank, and, a new emergency power system.

Shea said these are far from the only water/sewer issues the town faces, but they are the most pressing. Shea said he has a map of the town's pipe systems in his office. The town's problem areas are marked with a great many pins, Shea said.

In a Tuesday call, First Selectman Ryan Curley said sadly, a million does not go as far as one would hope.

Despite this, Curley is optimistic, saying "this is certainly a step in the right direction.

"This has a major public safety aspect, but it mostly has to do with cost savings," Curley told the *Rivereast*.

"Breaks are so costly; it costs time and labor to repair those. If we get repairs and maintenance to of the way, we can focus on growth in Portland," said Curley.

Curley praised Shea and the town's public works crews for their work, and for their recommendation of using American Rescue Plan money to fund it.

Mid-Winter Chocolate Fest is Back

The Women's Fellowship of the First Congregational Church in Portland will host its 24th Mid-Winter Chocolate Fest Saturday, Feb. 12, in the church Fellowship Hall, 554 Main St.

Due to the ongoing pandemic, this year's festival will have a new look and time. The festival will now be held from 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m. People are encouraged to sign up for a shopping time slot, as the number of people allowed in at a time will be limited. To register, go to www.firstchurchportlandct.org.

The Chocolate Mousse Café will be a take-out-only booth, where one can purchase a variety of desserts, such as the Double Truffle "Black Beast." The Baked Goods Booth will offer a variety of breads, muffins, bars, cook-

ies and pies in both chocolate and non-chocolate flavors.

At the Candy Booth there will be an assortment of items, including English toffee, candy-coated pretzels, chocolate-covered cherries, candy rose bouquets, and lollipops of various shapes and sizes. The Valentine's Craft Booth will have gift mugs and small gift baskets for all ages. Jewelry and greeting cards will also be available. New this year will be a combination Craft/Grab bag for the young to take home.

Snow date is Sunday, Feb. 13, from 1-4 p.m. Admission is free and masks are required. For more information, call the church at 860 342-3244 or visit the church website.

First Congregational Church News

First Congregational Church of Portland, located at 554 Main St., has announced the following pieces of news:

Sunday morning worship is currently taking place in-person in the sanctuary, and masks are required. Services are livestreamed for real-time viewing, and are available on the church's YouTube channel for later viewing. In the event that changes to this schedule are necessary due to increased COVID precautions, details will be available on the church website, www.firstchurchportlandct.org.

On Jan. 16, the 10 a.m. service will include an honoring of the work and life of Martin Luther King Jr. The Rev. Jane Hawken's sermon is titled, "Precious in God's Sight." Under Kasha Breaux's direction, the choir will sing, "We Bear the Imprint of Your Face."

Church school lessons are available on Zoom

St. Mary Church News

St. Mary Roman Catholic Church is located at 45 Freestone Ave. The church office can be reached at 860-342-2328. Office hours are 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Monday-Friday. For more information, visit www.stmaryportlandct.org. Pastor is the Rev. John Antonelle. Masks are strongly recommended.

Weekend Mass: 5 p.m. Saturday and 8 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. Sunday. The 10:30 a.m. Sunday Mass is livestreamed each week; visit the parish website for more information.

Weekday Mass: Monday and Tuesday at 8 a.m., and Friday at 12:10 p.m.

Confession: Saturday at 4-4:45 p.m., or call Antonelle for an appointment.

Other Programs: For information on faith formation programs, baptisms, blessings of marriages, Knights of Columbus, the St. Mary Ladies Guild and more, call the church office.

videoconferencing.

First Church Nursery School has openings in its preschool program. The 3-year-old program runs Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9-11:30 a.m. and the 4-year-old program runs Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 9-11:30 a.m. Contact Amy Jahnke at 860-342-1111 or 1stchurchnurseryschool@gmail.com for more information.

First Congregational Church of Portland is a member of the United Church of Christ, and is an open and affirming congregation, welcoming everyone.

To join church mailing lists (both email and regular mail), email first.church.pct@sbcglobal.net or call 860-342-3244. For more info, look for the church on Facebook at The First Congregational Church of Portland, or visit www.firstchurchportlandct.org.

Trinity Episcopal Church News

Trinity Episcopal Church, located at 345 Main St., invites the community to celebrate each week. Worship is at 9:30 a.m. Sunday School is held during the service.

Children ages 4-12, baptized and unbaptized, are welcome to attend Church School. Lessons and activities are aimed at encouraging the children to think outside of themselves and about the community at large.

Masks are required for all, vaccinated and unvaccinated, while inside the church. More information is at trinitychurchportlandct.org.

The church is open for prayer and meditation on Fridays from 2-4 p.m.

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

Zion Lutheran Church News

Zion Lutheran Church, located at 183 William St., invites all to worship. Sara Stall-Ryan is pastor.

Sunday worship services with Holy Communion are held in-person at 9 a.m. The church continues to follow CDC recommendations with masks required. For those who prefer virtual services, a recording of the service is posted on YouTube by 9 a.m. the following Monday morning.

Sunday School classes are held the first and third Sundays of each month, from 10:15-11 a.m., in person or, if circumstances necessitate, online via email. To register your child, call Sylvia LeShane, Sunday School director, at 860-342-0658.

Adult Bible Study continues the second and fourth Sundays in January and February. The focus of this study will be season one of the series *The Chosen*, using the book *What Does It Mean to Be Chosen?*

The community is welcome to participate in all worship services and special events. For more information about any church activities, or if in need of pastoral assistance, call 860-342-2860, email zion.lutheran@snet.net or visit zionlutheranportland.org.

Parks and Rec. News & Notes

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

Tai Chi for Long Life: With Ken Zaborowski, at the Buck-Foreman Community Center. Wednesdays through Jan. 19, 9:30-10:15 a.m., or Saturdays through Feb. 5 (no class Dec. 25 or Jan. 1), 10:30-11:15 a.m. Fee is \$7 per week to drop in. Contact Parks and Rec. if interested in drop-in registration. Both classes may transition to virtual classes using Zoom if the weather gets too cold.

Kids Blast: Parks and Rec. is taking applications for this afterschool program for Portland kids in grades K-6. The program is based at Brownstone Intermediate School. Applications are at portland.recdesk.com. For more, call Andy Dionne at 860-342-6757.

Art Enrichment Programs with Abrakadoodle: Doodle Art Studio: Thursdays, Jan. 20-Feb. 24, at Buck-Foreman Community Center. Mini & Twoosy Doodlers (Ages 2-5): 10:30-11:15 a.m.; Doodlers (Ages 5-14), 4:15-5:15 p.m. Experience art from the top of the head to the tips of the toes.

DoodleKits: Order some DoodleKits from the Parks and Rec. website. Bring the gift of art to a creative child. Orders will be accepted until 8:30 a.m. Dec. 20, and a pre-Christmas delivery is guaranteed.

Adult Drop-In Volleyball: Wednesdays at Gildersleeve School, 565 Main St. Competitive

Play is 5-6:30 p.m., and Non-Competitive Play is 6:30-8 p.m. Participants may enter the building through the side doors nearest to the gym; a sign should be posted. Create an account at portland.recdesk.com to receive program information via email blast. Note: All participants are required to wear masks during play.

Adult Drop-In Basketball: 30+ Men's Drop-In Basketball takes place from 7:30-9 p.m. Tuesdays at Portland Middle School. Women's Drop-In Basketball takes place from 7:30-9 p.m. Mondays, also at PMS. Masks must be worn indoors by all individuals at all times, regardless of vaccination status. All participants will fill out a drop-in waiver before participating.

GGLeagues: Esports in Portland is back for the winter season. There will be *Madden*, *Mario Kart 8*, *Fortnite*, *Rocket League* and *Super Smash Brothers* leagues for three different age groups. Compete against other gamers in Connecticut for a chance to be crowned state champion and win a champion shirt and medal! Check the Parks and Rec. website for instructions on how to register.

Personal Euphoria: Registration is underway. There will be Pilates, barre, core strength, meditation, and tighten & tone classes. There will also be a Lunch and Learn Workshop Series as well.

Inner Circle: Check back soon for information about the youth martial art programs with Inner Circle.



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Portland Basketball Persevering Through Pandemic

by Josh Howard

Just like every team in the state, the boys' basketball team at Portland High School is experiencing the trials and tribulations of an uncertain winter sports season.

The Highlanders started with a 65-58 victory over Westbrook behind 20 points, seven rebounds, and a pair of blocks from Eli Evison.

It was an ideal start for head coach David Bradbury, who is in his second year leading the Highlanders.

"This is an entirely new group at the varsity level," said Bradbury, who graduated nine seniors a year ago. "They are extremely talented and we have some great size. I think we can be a great team, we just have to fit some pieces together."

Following the season-opening win, the team dropped the next two games and had a pair of games canceled due to COVID-related reasons during the winter break.

Bradbury said the team struggled defensively and the offense was stagnant in the losses, adding, "I think the boys were getting used to each other. The team looked lethargic, the game was very slow and monotonous, and it's not the tempo I want these boys to play with. I want them to push, go have fun and play basketball. I want them to learn how to play the game the right way."

The team has responded by winning two of three after the holiday break, defeating

Coginchaug 62-43 and Hale Ray 63-43.

"I like what I see now and it was evident in the game against Coginchaug," added Bradbury. "The boys are really starting to push in transition and defensively we picked it up with our assignments and executed on that end."

In the home win over Coginchaug on Jan. 4, the Highlanders were clicking on all cylinders.

Junior Joe Ruszyk led the way with 14 points, five rebounds, and three assists. Jake Thompson chipped in with 11 points and Evan Johnson added 10 points and seven rebounds. Harrison Collins and Evison each added nine points to complete a balanced attack.

"The more guys we have touching the ball, the better. We want to play a great brand of team basketball and push the ball. We want to play with a great pace and put the guys in a position to succeed," said Bradbury.

Evison, Thompson, and Johnson are Bradbury's senior captains. Collins, a junior, is also a captain.

"The senior captains are a great bunch. They are fantastic, responsible seniors and they set great examples," said Bradbury. "Having those three seniors have been pivotal. They have helped us pivot on the fly."

Bradbury added that the team is taking a "one game at a time" approach and believes the pieces are in place for a solid season. The team's next home game is against Shoreline Conference rival East Hampton on Fri. Jan 21 at 7 p.m.



Pictured from left are Portland High School boys' basketball captains Harrison Collins, Eli Evison, Jake Thompson, and Evan Johnson.

Portland Library News & Notes

Portland Library, 20 Freestone Ave., is open, with no appointments needed. Wireless is available. Registration required for the following programs unless noted. Masks required for those over the age of 2. For more info and full program descriptions, visit www.portlandlibraryct.org or call 860-342-6770. The library is also on Facebook and Instagram.

Hours: Monday through Thursday, 10 a.m.-7 p.m.; Friday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Curbside Delivery of requested items continues; call the library, or reserve items online and you will receive a notice or call when your materials are available.

Holiday Closing: The library will be closed Monday, Jan. 17, for Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

Youth Program: Alien Invasion! Winter Reading 2022: Visit the library in January and February and, each time you check out materials (up to once per day), your alien will advance to another planet. Visit all eight planets and win a prize. Also on your visit, grab a square to color and help unlock scenes of alien adventures at the library.

Online Storytimes: Weekly storytimes will remain online for the winter session, via Zoom. A take-home craft will be available each week for anyone who wants to come pick one up. Registration is required and can be done through the website calendar or by calling the library. A Zoom link will be sent each week in advance of the program. **Preschool Storytime** is Tuesdays at 10:30 a.m. Jan. 18-Feb. 22, and **Storytime for Toddlers and Tots - Mother Goose on the Loose** is Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m. Jan. 19-Feb. 23.

Explore the Marvel Universe: Thursdays at 3:45 p.m. Jan. 27-Feb. 10. Kids in grades K-5 can attend this online program that celebrates all things Marvel, including trivia, crafts and more. All materials will be supplied and available for pickup before each program. A Zoom link will be sent in advance of the event. Registration is required and space is limited.

Family Craft Night: Personalized Snowman Family: Wednesday, Jan. 19, 6:30 p.m., via Zoom. This activity has steps that are ap-

propriate for all ages, but a parent or guardian must be with children to help with supervision. Supplies may be picked up in advance of the program and a Zoom link for instruction will be sent within 24 hours of the event. Registration is required and space is limited.

Food Explorers: Four-Fold Quesadillas: Thursday, Jan. 20, at 3:30 p.m., in-person at the library, for grades 5 and up. This snack will be nut free, but may contain dairy products. Masks will be required when not eating and prep stations will be socially distanced. Each person will make their own portion. Registration is required and space is limited.

Teen Paint Party: Saturday, Feb. 5, noon, for grades 5 and up. Help celebrate Take Your Child to the Library Day. Instructor Pamela Hanks created the artwork for the library's alien-themed Winter Reading program and she'll show how to paint an alien of your own. Registration is required and space is limited.

Adult Programs: Book Clubs: Mystery Lovers Book Club: Tuesday, Jan. 18, 1 p.m. *The Thursday Murder Club* by Richard Osman will be discussed. **First Thursday Night Book Club:** Feb. 3, 6 p.m., in person and via Zoom. *These Ghosts are Family* by Maisy Card will be discussed. **T.A.B. (Talk About Books):** Tuesday, Feb. 1, 1 p.m. *Mrs. Lincoln's Dressmaker* by Jennifer Chiaverini will be discussed. **Portland Forum:** Call the library or visit the website for updates on a January event planned in partnership with the Portland Afghan Refugee Resettlement Group and a February event planned in partnership with Portland Social Justice Coalition.

Decoding the Mysteries of Cats: Tuesday, Feb. 1, 6:30 p.m., via Zoom. Stephen Quandt, recently the feline behavior coordinator for the Animal Care Centers of NYC, presents this program that explains cat behavior from the perspective of evolutionary and adaptive forces that help shape their lives. Registration requested.

Knifty Knitters: Saturdays 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. This is a weekly knitting circle where people gather to knit while sharing ideas and tips. All are welcome - including beginners.

Little League Registration Open

Registration is open for Portland Little League's spring 2022 season and winter clinics. PLL offers baseball and softball programs for players ages 5-14.

Visit www.portlandlittleleague.com to register. Registration for the winter clinics end Feb. 12, and for the spring season ends March 1.

Methodist Church News

Portland United Methodist Church, located at 381 Main St., holds in-person worship Sundays at 9 a.m. All are invited. Masks required for those not fully vaccinated.

Historical Society Annual Meeting Goes Virtual

The Portland Historical Society will host its annual meeting for election of officers and the executive board Sunday, Jan. 30, at 2 p.m., via Zoom. All are invited.

To register, email Portlandcthistory@gmail.com by noon Saturday, Jan. 29. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting. Registrants may attend the meeting by connected device or by dialing in using a telephone.

After a brief update to the membership on society activities, Kim Fischburg of Norwich - a new member - will present a short program on Portland history.

Grace and Mercy Church News

Grace and Mercy Family Ministries Church, 13 Waverly Ave., has announced a modified Sunday worship service schedule. Through August, the Sunday morning worship service will begin at 10 a.m.

Second-Hand Prose Bookshop

The Friends of the Portland Library group has puzzles, games, CDs and DVDs, as well as fiction, romance, teen and children's used books, in the Second-Hand Prose Bookshop at Portland Library, 20 Freestone Ave., during regular library hours.

Books are 50 cents for paperbacks and children's books, \$1 for trade paperbacks, and \$2 for hardcover. DVDs and CDs are 50 cents each disc and puzzles and games are \$2 unless marked otherwise. FPL also has "I Love CT Libraries" reusable bags on sale for \$1 each. See a sample at the front desk and purchase them from the library staff.

All proceeds benefit programs funded by the Friends, such as the library's Museum Pass Program, children and adult programs, and the library's DVD collection.

Based on the COVID-19 safety guidelines provided to the library by the Chatham Health District, the FPL Executive Board has canceled the Read and Recycle program's book collection previously scheduled for Saturday, Jan. 15.

Visit www.friendsofportlandlibraryct.org for more information or email questions to friendsofportlandlibrary@gmail.com.

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Brainerd Place Progress Plods Along

by Jack Lakowsky

Last week Dan Bertram, manager of Demarco Constructors and the ongoing (and decades-long) construction at the Brainerd Place development at the corner of Main and Marlborough streets, said work is “proceeding, but slowly.”

Bertram updated the town’s Board of Selectmen last week.

The project has languished for many years. “It’s moving slowly, but it’s moving,” said Bertram.

Bertram said he’d love to say everything’s ducky with the project. Instead, he said a “wave” of COVID-19 has gone through workers, hampering progress.

“Thankfully no one is severely sick, but it’s incredibly disruptive,” said Bertram.

Bertram was in the meeting to request a month’s extension of the company’s deadline to file a permit.

In a Dec. 14 Economic Development Commission (EDC) meeting, Bertram said work is about a month behind, according to meeting minutes.

In a late December phone call following up on the EDC meeting, town Development Planner Mary Dickerson told the *Rivereast* Brainerd developers recently paid the Department of Transportation about \$1.7 million dollars

“That [payment] had to be posted to start work,” said Dickerson.

Dickerson said developers recently assigned the town a full-time coordinator/liaison, a person also working at the site’s superintendent.

Dickerson said they plan to spend “roughly the next five years as our contact for the project.”

Dickerson said working with the coordinator is a sign of progress.

Dickerson said when weather permit, visible construction, not just the current phase of demolition, should begin within a few months.

According to 2021 documents from Atlantic Realty, the goal is to build a 94,000 sq. ft mixed use project with 57,000 sq. ft. of retail, restaurant, office and fitness space, as well as 240 apartments.

Starbucks is set to open when the site goes live, according to EDC minutes.

In other local development news, a new burger and milkshake restaurant opened last weekend at 870 Portland-Cobalt Road (Route 66).

Burger Heaven and Smooth Acai seems to have opened ahead of schedule. According to EDC minutes, it was slated to open in late January.

Dickerson told the *Rivereast* she’s particularly excited about this business because of their gluten free options-Dickerson is allergic.

Burger Heaven didn’t have a phone number

at htis writing, but customers can order online.

Dickerson said the restaurant sources its beef locally.

Dickerson shared several more economic updates with EDC.

The new Dairy Queen location, Dickerson said, opened in October and is deciding on when to have a grand opening.

In December, the Quarry Ridge restaurant held its grand opening, adding to the recent and upcoming restaurant openings.

Also on Portland-Cobalt Road, the Gulf gas station is requesting to expand services to include a deli counter.

Portland Dental Care, at 255 Main St., will grow to a three-dentist practice after this year.

Don’t Leave Food Donations at Senior Center

Portland Waverly (Senior) Center is asking residents who have donations for the Food Bank to please not leave them at the center when the Food Bank is closed. The Food Bank is open only on Mondays and Thursdays, from 9 a.m.-noon.

Also, the senior center does not accept donations for the center itself, as it is out of space.

Needleman, Carpino to Hold Virtual Office Hours

State Sen. Norm Needleman (D-33) and state Rep. Christie Carpino (R-32) will hold virtual office hours Tuesday, Jan. 18, from 5:30-7 p.m., allowing Portland residents to speak with their elected leaders ahead of the start of the 2022 legislative session.

Constituents can sign up to speak directly with Needleman and Carpino by visiting appoint.ly/s/House.Republicans/CarpinoNeedlemanOfficeHours. Upon registering, Carpino’s office will send constituents a Zoom link that will include instructions on how to log in and meet with the legislators virtually.

The 2022 legislative session will start in February, and continue through the first week of May.

Read & Recycle Canceled

The Friends of the Portland Library will not be collecting used items as planned on Saturday, Jan. 15. Its next scheduled collection is Saturday, March 26, at the library; people may bring gently-used books, DVDs, CDs, puzzles and games. Sales of these items benefit library services. In addition to the ongoing book sale at the library, an annual book sale is scheduled to take place in October.

Portland Preschool Screening

Connecticut public schools are responsible for identifying children who are eligible to receive special education services. Valley View School will conduct a preschool screening Friday, Jan. 28, for children ages 3-4. The screening is designed to answer any questions or concerns about a child’s development as well as identifying children who may be eligible for the preschool selection process.

During the screening your child will meet with members from our preschool team and participate in a variety of activities. These activities assess different developmental areas including cognition, communication, fine and

gross motor skills and social interaction. During this time, the parent/caregiver will meet with another member of the team to discuss their child’s adaptive and personal social skills.

Following the screening you will receive a letter stating your child’s results. In order for your child to attend Valley View’s preschool program they must participate in the screening process. Peer role models are determined on a year-to-year basis.

For more information and to schedule an appointment, call Valley View School at 860-342-3131.

Senior Center News & Notes

The Waverly Senior Center, 7 Waverly Ave., is open Monday-Thursday, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., and Friday, 8 a.m.-noon. For more information or to register, call 860-342-6760.

No Food: Food is not allowed in the senior center at this time. All food programs are on hold until further notice; all programs are subject to change. Check the center’s Facebook page to see daily updates, or call ahead.

Programs Moved to Next Month: The following programs have been rescheduled to begin in February: Line Dancing with Joel; Tuesday Evening Music; Third Thursday Dinner and Music; Bi-Monthly Lunches. The New Year’s Eve party will now become a Valentine’s Day event scheduled for Monday, Feb. 14, at 11:30 a.m. All those who were registered for the NYE party have been transferred to the Valentine’s event. A max of 30 people is allowed. Verizon Wings is rescheduled for April, as well as Teacup Raffle Bingo.

Beginner Exercise Tap Class: With Alicia Currier. There will be a free trial class Tuesday, Feb. 1, at 1:30 p.m. This class can be seated or standing. After the free class, people may sign up for more classes at \$5 per class.

Seated Yoga: Try this class free Wednesday, Feb. 2, at 11:30 a.m. This class will be held Wednesdays with instructor Judy Thompson. There is no fee; just a free will offering if you are able. Register by Jan. 29.

Qi Gong with Lisa: This class on improving movement and balance will be held Wednesdays in February from 1-2 p.m. The four-week session is \$40. There must be seven students to run this class.

Tai Chi with Lisa: This session consists of four weeks on Tuesdays starting in February from 6-7 p.m. each week. The fee is \$40 for the 4-week session. There must be at least seven students to run this class. Masks and social distancing are required.

Medical Rides: The center provides seniors and disabled with rides to the doctor. Cost is \$5/ person round trip. Two-week notice requested. Masks required.

Cans-4-A-Cause: Drop off washed cans and bottles in a bin in the rear parking lot of the center. For details or to volunteer, email Jeff Myjak at myjakjeff@gmail.com.

Foot Care: Held at the center on the fourth

Tuesday of each month. The fee is \$35, cash or check. Call the center to make an appointment.

Free Hearing Screening: The second Tuesday of each month at 11 a.m. with Virginia Duclos of “All Ears” in Portland. No registration is necessary.

Caption Call: This free federal funded program is a telephone service that offers aide with hearing and visual dictation/closed captioning. The program will be presented by Allyson Silver at the Center on Monday, Jan. 24, from 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Snow date is Jan. 27. Call the center to register.

Chatham Health Home Workshop: Topics will include Chronic Disease and Diabetes Management. These classes are held from the comfort of your home via a conference call. Free materials will be provided in advance. Call the center to register prior to Jan. 24. The actual calls/class will be held in February.

Special Events: Elder Justice Hotline: This info session with attorney General William Tong and state Rep. Christie Carpino (R-32) will be rescheduled for a later date.

Dulcimer Lessons: Tuesday, Jan. 25, at 7 p.m. Local musician/songwriter Carolyn Brodinski will teach people how to play this American folk instrument. Dulcimers will be provided for all participants. The fee is \$10, and seating is limited to 12 students – unless you are a couple and don’t mind sharing. Register by Jan. 21.

Weekly Schedule: Mondays: Light Aerobics, 9:30-10:30 a.m.; Bingo, 1-3 p.m.; **Tuesdays:** Bears on a Journey, 9:30-11 a.m. – making fleece teddy bears for cancer patients; Watercolor Lessons: 9:30 a.m.-noon – email bivenne@yahoo.com to register (new session started Sept. 11); Coupons for Troops, 11:30 a.m.-4 p.m. – cutting coupons for local military families; Stretch & Flex: 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. – seated exercise using small hand weights; setback, 1-3 p.m.; **Wednesdays:** Light Aerobics, 9:30-10:30 a.m.; SyncoCize Exercise, 10:15-11 a.m.; line and ballroom dance lessons, 10:30 a.m.; Social Duplicate Bridge, 12:30-4 p.m. on the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month; Setback, 1 p.m.; **Thursdays:** Line & Ballroom Dance, 10 a.m.; Knit & Stitch, 10 a.m.; Mahjongg, 12:30-4 p.m.; Scrabble, 1-4 p.m.; **Fridays:** Light Aerobics, 9:30-10:30 a.m.

Late last year, the Portland zoning commission approved construction of a large indoor gun range and sports facility. This project drew much attention from opposition and supporters. The building will go up at 1390 Main St.

The commission attached a number of conditions to the project’s approval.

In the early stages of trying to operate in town is a new smoke shop, proposed to open in the same plaza as Burger Heaven.

Dickerson also shared that several restaurant’s, including Melilli Caffé on Main Street, have had to temporarily close or reduce hours due to spread of COVID-19 among staff.

Police News

1/6: Jeffrey Gibson, 53, of 22 Dolores Rd., was arrested and charged with third-degree assault and violation of a protective order, Portland Police said.

Resident Graduates

Brooke Unikewicz, daughter of Larry Unikewicz and the late Maureen Reilly, earned her master’s degree in social work from Fordham University in the fall 2021 semester.

Dean’s List

Ava Bankoski of Portland made the fall 2021 Dean’s List at Assumption University in Worcester, Mass.

Bankoski is a member of the Class of 2023.

Dean’s List

Meghan Flynn of Portland made the fall 2021 Dean’s List at Stonehill College in Easton, Mass.

Dean’s List

Alexandra Stevas of Portland made the fall 2021 Dean’s List at Lasell University in Newton, Mass.

Dean’s List

Tyler Bordonaro of Portland made the fall 2021 Dean’s List at Coastal Carolina University in Conway, S.C.

Bordonaro is a finance major.

Residents Graduate

Portland residents Karen Kelly and Devin Aresco graduated in December from the University of New Hampshire.

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Cover Story • Cover

★ *Belltown Zone Change cont. from page 1*

idents decried the change as spot zoning.

Ken Slater, a municipal land use attorney representing a long list of residents, said based on case law, spot zoning is legally impermissible. Slater defined spot zoning as reclassifying “small bit[s] of land.”

“Spot zoning is bad public policy,” Slater told the commission.

Slater said changing the property’s zone was the goal of both applications, effectively making them the same.

Slater said the commission should look to the future and consider what would happen if Atlantis sold the property to a retailer intending to build something larger.

“By right, someone could put in a building up to 24,000 square feet,” Slater said.

Jezeq has frequently said the change would align with the town’s Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD), saying the plan says the Route 16/Main Street area is a priority for development.

Slater said in his research of the POCD, he found it calls for the area in question to host professional offices or residences, not industrial or commercial operations.

Noel Sanborn, a Main Street resident, felt Jezeq implied that because the Strong House is a multi-family home, it would be appropriate to have a big gas station right next door.

“My partner and I grew up in multi-family

homes, and we did not deem ourselves unvaluable,” said Sanborn, saying there’s no reason to rezone the area.

Sanborn added trash from the Citgo already gets onto her yard.

Mark Sherwood, of Route 16 and a previous PZC member, said a larger business would draw more traffic-and so, more accidents.

Resident Stuart Ringuist said when he moved to town, his well had to be dug deeper than planned because of the town’s strained water table and said in the past business applications have been denied based on their water footprint.

Several locals pointed out the additional gasoline on-site could contaminate groundwater.

Commissioner Angelus Tammaro said a bigger operation would pose a “risk to the health and safety of the town.”

“Several people mentioned gas entering groundwater,” said Tammaro.

Tammaro said the location is unsuitable for a bigger building and added he doesn’t think the POCD supports the application. He said opposition was compelling, saying their information should dissuade the commission.

Heidi Bothomley, who organized a supplemental petition of those outside the store’s immediate radius-garnering 200 more signatures-said based on the number of signees on this round’s petitions, opposition increased by 52%.

Portland • Portland

Schools Ask for 3% Budget Increase

by Jack Lakowsky

Portland Superintendent of Schools Charles Britton presented to the town's Board of Education a 2022-23 budget increase request of 3.11%, totaling \$22.9 million.

The current operating budget is about \$22.2 million, a difference of about \$700,000.

Britton made his presentation in a Tuesday workshop. Nothing in the budget is finalized, and Britton said every year, budgets change after the first workshop.

The request is higher than the last few budgets, all of which came in at between 2% and 3%.

For years now, Portland has been bereft of a track at Portland High School. It is unusable, deteriorated and needs total replacement.

Board member Meg Scata said the track is not just a loss to students, but to the whole community. People use the track for exercise and recreation.

The track is a frequent topic in town government meetings and Facebook forums. In the recent town elections, both Democrats and Re-

publicans promised to make its repair a priority.

Because of the state the track is in, said board member Dave Murphy, waiting any longer would cause the situation to spiral out of control.

A 2020 estimate put a price tag of about \$500,000 on track repair, a price that has risen about \$50,000 with inflation, Britton said.

Murphy said this price has spiked since he joined the board six years ago, rising roughly \$50,000 each year.

All this attention considered, Britton did not include a request to fund work on capital items like the track.

Two years ago, a vendor identified extensive infrastructure needs in the district. Repairs are estimated to cost \$28 million over the next 5-10 years.

To begin this huge task, Britton and the board formed a committee to study the facility work. Britton said he was not comfortable including a request for capital needs and won't be until this committee finishes its work.

The urgency surrounding the track, however, means it must be addressed before the committee finishes.

To get the ball rolling, Britton has a complex plan.

Some time ago, the district received a \$169,000 Connectivity Grant from the state. Britton wanted to use this for the track, but the money is for tech investments.

Schools used the grant to fund new classroom tech, like replacement Smartboards. This move, Britton said, saved a lot and allowed him to reduce his request from 3.5% to 3.1%.

With the remaining \$80,000 of the grant, schools hope to buy next year's crop of new Chromebooks. It won't cover all they need to replace, according to district technology director Eric Martin, but it will bite out a big chunk.

Britton then explained that, due to staff and bus driver shortages, the schools have realized a significant savings. He did not attach a specific figure for end-of-year savings, but said if high

enough, it will encourage him to approach the town for help.

Britton said, if savings on tech and labor match half the cost of the track, he will go to the town's government for help.

"If we collaborate, we have a chance to get this done," said Britton, adding there's no time to allow for the lengthy bonding referendum process.

Britton said, though not guaranteed, expedient work could see a new track put in during summer.

On upcoming Facilities Committee work, Britton floated a few options, including reducing the district to three or four schools.

District salaries are up about 3%, or about \$285,000. Britton said there are no teacher's position on the chopping block. The salary increase includes a request for a new assistant principal shared between the secondary schools.

The board resumed budget talks Thursday, after this story went to print.

Regional • Regional

Standout Athletes of the Week

by Josh Howard

Here are the *Riverast* Standout Athletes of the Week for the week of Jan. 3-9:

Shawn Laverty- Portland High School (Indoor Track): Laverty ran a personal-best 12:47.23 to win the 3200 meters at the Shoreline League Meet in New Haven on Jan. 5. The senior, who was running the event for the first time, was followed by teammates Meghan McPhee, who also ran a personal-best (12:30.05) to finish second, and Abbey Pickel, who finished third. Laverty also won the 1,600 meters at the event, besting second-place finishers Aggie Hunt of Lyme-Old Lyme by over 12 seconds.

Liam Calhoun, Ben Risley, Ryan Russo, and Cam Rhodes- RHAM (Indoor Track): Another running record at RHAM has been shattered, this time by the 4x800 Raptors relay foursome at the seventh annual Wintergreen Invitational at the Moore Field House in New Haven on Jan. 5. Calhoun, Risley, Russo, and Rhodes combined to run a blaz-

ing time of 8:43.40, breaking the record and beating runner-up Gilford by over 23 seconds.

Drew DiStefano- East Hampton High School (Basketball): DiStefano scored 22 points as the Bellringers ousted North Branford 72-45 at EHHS on Jan. 6. The senior guard also added 13 in a 72-53 road win at Haddam-Killingworth on Jan. 4. The pair of wins improved East Hampton to 3-2 this season.

Carson Brown- Bacon Academy (Wrestling): Brown finished third in the 152 lb. bracket at the Casey Dean Yates Invitational at Lyman Memorial High School on Jan. 8. The sophomore won a decision (4-1) over Stonington's Cooper Light in the consolation round. The Bobcats finished eighth overall as a team, besting six other schools.

To nominate someone for an Athlete of the Week or with any questions or comments on sports-related topics, email Josh Howard at joshhowardsports@gmail.com

UConn Dean's List

The following area students made the fall 2021 Dean's List at the University of Connecticut:

Amston: Joshua Bulkovitch, Brendan Davis, Christopher Epps Jr., Noah Herington, Apaulo Krawic, Bethany Loto, Maya Paprocki, Jonathan Roberts, Brandon Salman, Taryn Simon.

Andover: Aurora Buswell, Blake Gaines, Carson Gaines, Leah Geiger, Jakub Jandzinski, Nathan Keeney, Andrew Perkins, Maya Preibisz-Kamat, Nicholas Xenophontos.

Cobalt: David de Siqueira Campos McLaughlin.

Colchester: Cameron Deslaurier, Taryn Formanek, Claire Galarneau, Andrew Gannon, Sierra Jennings, Ryan Konon, Matthew Laliberte, Luke Maynard, Brady Noniewicz, Grace Palmer, Paul Perkins, Dillon Rakowski, Jessica Savage, Ariana Spearin, Joan Tremblay, Madison Zuckerman.

East Hampton: Ryan Adams, Adam Berkenstock, Irisa Burchsted-Glynn, Carter Chase, Peyton Debowsky, Jim Gooch, Tomas Lopes,

Nathan Nye, Colin Piteo, Manu Ponnala, Brooke Roussel, Rylee Thomas, Jacquelyn Yorker, Abigail Young.

Haddam Neck: Alison Chase.

Hebron: Nicholas Albino, Rylee Bane, Kathryn Beard, Anthony Bogue, Joshua Desjardins, Katherine Malgioglio, Nick Malgioglio, Walker Melzen, John Oei, Julia Pearson, Ethan Raymond, Nicole Rogers, Alexa Samuelson, Katharine Santella, Emma Triantafyllou.

Marlborough: Evan Alfano, Rachel Antonelli, Lauren Bula, Nicole Catarino, Dana Chmielewski, Erica Deskus, Reileigh Fleher, Ian Gechas, Phoenix Holden, Erin Hughes, Madeline Kotsios, Tara Monge, Austin Moreland, Mahid Qureshi.

Portland: Tomasz Baliga, Rachel Bernard, Gracie Berthiaume, Madison Bond, Bettina Burke, Justin Coe, Zachary Foster, Sarah Kohs, Keira Kopchyak, Quinn Moynihan, Morgan Tammara, Rebecca Tripp, Avery Turecek, Hunter Woitowitz, Reagan Woitowitz.

Volunteers Sought for Tax-Aide Program

For many years, the senior centers in Colchester, Hebron, Marlborough, Columbia, East Hampton and East Haddam have hosted the AARP Tax-Aide Program, which provides free income tax preparation services for residents of these towns and surrounding communities.

Organizers of the program are looking for people to join the Tax-Aide volunteer team. You don't need to be an accountant or tax professional; volunteers come from a variety of backgrounds. Training and support are provided.

To volunteer, go to aarpfoundation.org/taxaidevolunteer or call 1-888-AARP-NOW (888-227-7669). If you'd like additional information before signing up, call your local senior center to be connected with a local Tax-Aide volunteer.

Green to Host Virtual Town Hall

State Rep. Robin Green (R-55) will host a virtual town hall-style meeting via Zoom this morning, to hear from her constituents prior to the start of the 2022 legislative session, which will begin Feb. 9.

Green invites residents of Andover, Bolton, Hebron and Marlborough to join her on Friday, Jan. 14, from 10-11 a.m.

The focus of this event will be to hear directly from constituents to better understand the issues and concerns that are most important to them.

To attend, go to us02web.zoom.us/j/86372315498.

Those unable to attend may also contact Green at Robin.Green@housegov.ct.gov or 800-824-1423.

COVID-19 Prevention Partner Drawing

The Chatham Health District is announcing a "COVID-19 Prevention Partner Drawing". Licensed restaurants and hair or nail salons are invited to enter into a drawing to have their 2022 annual license fee waived or refunded. All a business has to do to enter the drawing is adopt a new policy or practice aimed at reducing the burden of COVID-19 on the community, the health district said.

The Chatham Health District covers Colchester, East Hampton, East Haddam, Hebron, Marlborough and Portland.

All submissions will be evaluated by Cha-

tham Health District for their potential impact on COVID-19 transmission, and if determined to generally meet the intent of the program, will be entered into the drawing. Up to 30 restaurants and 10 salons will be randomly drawn as winners. Winners will be distributed proportionately based on their license category and the number of entries received.

Area Kids Sought for Biking Team

Area boys and girls from grades 5-12 are invited to join the Chainlinks youth mountain biking team. For more information, email chainlinks@neyouthcycling.com or see www.neyouthcycling.com.

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RiverastNewsBulletin



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TO DRIVE?**

**BUZZED DRIVING
IS DRUNK DRIVING**



Obituaries

East Hampton

Elaine Sweet

Elaine Julia Adams Sweet passed away peacefully Tuesday, Jan. 4, at the beautiful age of 86.

To know our mother was to love her and everyone did love her. Her bubbly optimistic spirit was infectious, and she will be missed by all who were lucky enough to be graced by her presence.

Elaine was a native of Maine and fiercely proud of it! She often spoke fondly of her memories there. Elaine was quite outspoken and never ceased to amaze us with her desire to speak the truth (with or without profanity).

Elaine has been referred to as "a hot ticket," "a spitfire," "the life of the party," "a lovely lady" and "a joy to be around."

She leaves behind her loving and incredible companion of 11 years, fondly known as Mr. Bob. Elaine also leaves behind her three daughters, two sons-in-law, 10 grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren. Elaine was proud of her family and left a legacy that mere words can never fully encompass.

A celebration of Elaine's life will take place in the spring.

In lieu of flowers, any donations to St. Jude's would be welcome.



Portland

Peter Strycharz

Peter Strycharz, 72, of Portland, passed away Tuesday, Jan. 4. He was born in Middletown on Jan. 25, 1949, to the late John and Lottie Strycharz. He was predeceased by his son Jason and brother John Strycharz. Peter worked as a master machinist at Pratt & Whitney in Middletown until his retirement in 2012.

Peter is survived by his wife of 49 years, Carla (Estabrook) Strycharz; son, Nathan and his wife Emilie; and his beloved grandchildren, Maxwell and Teagan. He is also survived by his brother Robert and his wife, Carol Strycharz of Newington; sister-in-law, Carol J. Strycharz of Portland and many nieces and nephews.

He was an accomplished wood turner and enjoyed gifting his bowls and pens to friends and family. There wasn't a baby or dog that didn't love him.

According to his wishes, there will not be any services.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Humane Society of Newington.



East Hampton

Patricia Anne Butler



Patricia Anne "Pat" Butler, 60, of East Hampton, passed from this life Sunday, Jan. 9, after a lengthy battle with MS. She was born in Putnam to Eleanor (Morelli) and the late Walter W. Butler Sr.

Pat graduated from Quinebaug Valley Community College with a degree in human services and spent many years as a caregiver in various roles in elder care.

Always smiling and giving of herself for others, she enjoyed everything about angels, visiting with friends and collecting Willow Tree figurines. Her favorite saying was "No matter where you go, there you are!"

She is survived by her mother, Eleanor Butler; brother, Wally Butler; nephew, Donovan Butler and his wife Katrina, niece, Christine Butler, and their mom, Carol Butler. She was predeceased by her dad, Walter.

Pat's family will receive relatives and friends Saturday, Jan. 15, from 10 a.m.-noon, at the Potter Funeral Home in Willimantic. Her funeral service will follow at noon. Cremation will be according to her wishes.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in her honor to the Connecticut MS Society, 659 Tower Avenue, First Floor, Hartford, CT 06112.

For an online memorial guestbook and a link for the livestream option for her service, please visit www.potterfuneralhome.com.

Lebanon

Lewis Gordon Bradley

Lewis Gordon Bradley, 91, of Lebanon, formerly of Coventry, passed away Thursday, Jan. 6, with his devoted daughter, Doris, at his side. Lewis was born in Hartford on Nov. 19, 1930, the second son of Raymond and Alice (Devine) Bradley Sr.

At the age of 16, Lewis began his career as an apprentice electrician. At 17, he enlisted in the U.S. Navy as an electrician mate third class stationed at the New London Subbase, until his honorable discharge in 1952. Following his service, he worked briefly at Pratt & Whitney as a printing press operator. In 1953 he became a union electrician with IBEW Local No. 35 until his retirement in 1987 as a master electrician.

While on leave in the summer of '49 at the family home on Coventry Lake, he met the love of his life, Marion English Lovell. They married May 2, 1953 and resided in Coventry for 31 years raising four children. Lew moonlighted as a printing press operator at the *Coventry Broadcaster* for many years. In 1984, they built their retirement home in Lebanon where they became active member of the Goshen Congregational Church. Sadly, after 67 years of marriage, Marion predeceased him on Feb. 28, 2021.

Lew was a proud Korean War veteran joining the American Legion Post 52 of Coventry and then Post 180 of Lebanon. He held a high standard for himself and obtained his GED at age 65. Lew was a very active volunteer. He became a mason in 1948 and was past master at both Uriel Lodge No. 24 of Merrow and Wooster Lodge No. 10 of Colchester. Lew was a Roadrunner for the Sphinx Shriners of Newington; with Marion by his side, they transported children for treatments at the Shriners Hospitals in Springfield and Boston. Lew and Marion were members of Climax Chapter No. 98, OES for over 50 years. Lew also belonged to the Sojourners, the Knights Templars, the Scottish Rite, the Old Bastards Club, and too many other Masonic organizations to list, as well as the FFA. He will be remembered as a hardworking man devoted to his wife, family, faith, and country.

He is survived by his two brothers, Albert



and Glenn (Ann) Bradley of Coventry; sisters-in-law, Sally and Betty; his children, Charlotte Richardson of Bristol, James Bradley Sr. and wife Kathy of Lebanon, and Doris Carilli and her partner Bruce Kuper of Hebron; his grandchildren, Mark Carilli Jr., Marion George, Robin Jordon, Sam Richardson, James Bradley Jr. and Gordon Bradley; as well as nine great-grandchildren and numerous friends and extended family.

In addition to his wife and parents, he was predeceased by his son, Lewis Bradley Jr.; his two brothers, Raymond (Jr.) and Charles and sister-in-law Julie.

The family would like to thank the staff at Mansfield Center for Nursing, especially Manny, for all the love, respect and care they gave Lew.

Calling hours will be today, Friday, Jan. 14, from 4-6 p.m., at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. A memorial service will be held at the Goshen Hill Church, 157 Church Rd., Lebanon, on Saturday, Jan. 15, at 10 a.m., followed by burial with full military honors at the Goshen Cemetery on Church Road, Lebanon, at 11 a.m.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations can be made in Lewis' name to the Goshen Hill Church and MCNR-Recreation Department 100 Warren Circle, Storrs, CT 06268 or any Masonic charitable organization.

East Hampton

Nancy Cooper

Nancy (Kernan) Cooper, 76, passed away peacefully Saturday, Dec. 25. She was predeceased by husband Henry Cooper and parents George and Lillian (Bashand) Kernan.

Nancy touched everyone she met, whether with her infectious laugh or giving nature. She could light up any room with her passion for life and could make a friend out of anyone. Family and friends were the most important thing in Nancy's life. She loved to spend her summers with her family at the family camp property in the Adirondacks. You could find her watching the boats on the water, laughing with her family around the fire requesting ice cream.

She is survived by her daughter, Lisa Cooper-Smith of East Hampton; son, Edward and Julie Cooper of East Hampton; granddaughters, Caitlin Smith of South Windham, Kristina Smith and fiancé James Valenti of Meriden; brother, Richard Kernan of Albany, N.Y.; and sister, Dorothy Kernan of The Villages, Fla.

Burial will be private in the spring at Pine Grove Cemetery, Charlton, N.Y.

In lieu of flowers, Nancy wanted donations to be made to: Vasculitis Foundation (nonprofit), P.O. Box 28660, Kansas City, MO 64188 www.vasculitisfoundation.org.

To leave online condolences, please visit www.spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.



Marlborough

Stephen Douglas Murray

Stephen Douglas Murray, formerly of Marlborough and Stafford Springs, passed away Tuesday, Dec. 28, after a long battle with Parkinson's disease. He was 59.

Steve was born in Concord, Mass., to Kenneth and Susan (Otto) Murray and graduated from Nashoba Regional High School in 1980. After earning his bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from Boston University in 1984, he settled with his young family in Connecticut to work for Pratt & Whitney in East Hartford. During his career, Steve contributed as an inventor on multiple patents.

Steve was a man of countless interests, who preferred to be outdoors. He enjoyed coaching his children's sports teams, hiking, playing the guitar, and tinkering with anything mechanical. In retirement, he became a certified master gardener and practiced yoga. He loved hunting and fishing in Vermont, his favorite place on earth.

In addition to his mother, Steve leaves behind three children: Rachael (Keshav) Strogoff, Heather Rossitto, and Michael (Emanuele) Murray; their mother, Rebecca Murray; and grandchildren, Masho, Avery, Redeit and Mya. He also leaves behind siblings, Beth (Brian) Pallotta, Russell (Paula) Murray, Kevin (Brook) Murray, John (Tanya) Frazier, Heather (Donat) Premont, Debbie Hickory, and Adam Murray. "Stevie" was a beloved member of a large clan of Murray cousins, including his partner in crime Bobby of South Windsor, and a mischievous and fun uncle to many nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his father and his stepmother, Margaret Murray.

The family will be holding a memorial event

at 12:30 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 30, at the American Legion in Vernon.

In lieu of flowers, donations in Steve's memory may be made to the Parkinson's Foundation, www.parkinson.org.

Middle Haddam

John Parker Smith

John Parker Smith, of Sweden, Maine passed away Friday, Dec. 31, due to complications related to COVID-19. He was born in Middletown June 24, 1939 to Louise B. and Leroy R. Smith, both deceased, and was raised in Middle Haddam.

John lived a very active and productive life. After graduating from East Hampton High School in East Hampton in 1957, he enlisted in the United States Air Force for four years and was forever proud of serving his country.

While stationed at Hickam Air Force base, in Hawaii, as a jet mechanic, he also worked part-time at the base snack shop. This experience whetted his appetite for the food service business. After leaving the Air Force in 1961, John started his restaurant career in earnest with Friendly Ice Cream Corporation as a night janitor at a shop in Middletown. A hardworking and diligent employee, John was promoted to the manager training program and upon graduation was assigned to the Friendly Ice Cream shop in Swampscott, Mass. From there he went on to open and then manage one of the highest-volume shops in the Friendly chain at the Burlington Mall in Burlington, Mass. In 1970, John was promoted to the position of district manager in western New York. In total, John spent 21 years at Friendly Ice Cream, the last eleven of which were at the company headquarters in Wilbraham, Massachusetts. He served in the corporate executive ranks as the Manager of Trainee Development. After retiring from Friendly's in 1984, he and his wife, Marilyn, purchased and operated the Spurwink Country Kitchen Restaurant, a high-volume, seasonal restaurant in Scarborough, Maine.

After selling the Scarborough business in 1987, John and Marilyn moved to Fryeburg, Maine. Needing a break from the day-to-day of running a restaurant, John became a licensed real estate broker and Marilyn a licensed realtor. John founded a brokerage business, a real estate development venture, and a hospitality management consulting business which helped private owners and served as a court-appointed receiver for financial institutions. All in all, over the course of his life John renovated and developed over 12 different properties and ran or consulted for various hospitality businesses throughout the state of Maine. John was a member of the board of directors of the Maine Restaurant Association and was an officer and four-year board member of the Greater Bridgton Lakes Region Chamber of Commerce, also serving as treasurer for three years.

The same zeal which John brought to his professional endeavors he also brought to his hobbies – hot air ballooning and motorcycling. During the early 1980s, John became licensed by the FAA as a commercial pilot in hot air balloons, piloting his SKIMMER balloon up and down the east coast. In 1983, John and Marilyn shipped the SKIMMER to France, to participate in the international bicentennial celebration of man's first flight, in 1783 in Annonay, France. He was one of six pilots from the United States to fly an American registered hot air balloon at this international celebration.

In his later years, John was very active in motorcycling and kept one of his many Italian Moto Guzzis garaged at his brother David's house in Germany. This afforded him the opportunity to spend a number of visits over the years touring Europe, with particular emphasis on riding in Germany, the Swiss Alps and Italy, always with Maine license plates on his Moto Guzzi. For fifteen years, he served as the Maine State Representative for the Moto Guzzi National Owners Club. After logging close to 100,000 incident-free miles on Moto Guzzis, in 2007 he decided to leave motorcycle touring and switch to less risky pastimes, such as reading, crossword puzzles, writing and building the more complicated Lego toys which he would give away to others.

Beyond the details of John's biography, his most defining characteristic was his love for people, demonstrated by his devotion to his family and his desire to help others through a myriad of philanthropic activities and community volunteer service. The true patriarch of the family, John worked tirelessly to take care of



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Obituaries

his wife, son, daughter, siblings and nieces and nephews. Even in retirement, it was his full-time job!

John's generosity extended beyond his family. He was always interested in helping others and giving back to the communities in which he lived. While living in Wilbraham, Mass., he was active in counseling jail inmates on decisional training, and while living in Fryeburg, he was very active in the newly formed Fryeburg Cemetery Committee, created to bring the town's cemeteries back to their original, well-maintained condition. He was an ardent supporter of Harvest Hills Animal Shelter, and while living in Sweden, he was a member of the town Planning Board and a member of the Board of Selectmen. He also served on the Sweden Fire Department Building Committee, was a member of the Sweden Road Committee, and an organizer of the first Sweden Town Cemetery Committee. The work of this committee resulted in the Town of Sweden being awarded special recognition by The Maine Old Cemetery Association.

Finally, John never took off his "Manager of Trainee Development" hat. He always said he was a "full-time student in the university of life," and he was intensely committed later in life to helping others by sharing the lessons he learned. John spent hours writing and publishing four booklets aimed at teaching young people how to handle their personal finances responsibly and also teaching people how to advocate for themselves in terms of health care.

John was predeceased by first wife, Linda R. Breece, who died in 1973, and his sisters, Susan F. Johnson and Sally L. Smith. He is survived by his loving wife, Marilyn H. Smith of Sweden, Maine; his brother, David L. Smith and his wife, Karen of Burnsville, Minn., and his sister, Elizabeth S. Treadway of East Hampton. He is also survived by his son, Alan F. Roy and his wife, Jennifer A. McGeorge of Winthrop, Mass.; daughter, Jennifer J. Roy of Lovell, Maine; and grandchildren, Peter E. Roy of Somerville, Mass., and Michael G. Roy of Beverly, Mass., and Mariah D. Magee of Lovell, Maine, along with many cousins, nephews and nieces. John is also survived by Martha McLean, his friend and indispensable right-hand person, the many local folks he loved, and the many friends he made over the years all around the country and Europe. Despite the distance, they remained forever in his heart.

Funeral arrangements are being handled by Chandler Funeral Home in Bridgton, Maine with burial at a later date at Webber Pond Road Cemetery in Sweden, Maine. For those interested, donations can be made in John Smith's memory to the Lakes Environmental Association in Bridgton, Maine, the Bridgton Community Center, and the Sweden Historical Society.

East Hampton

David Laurence Lamson

David Laurence Lamson, 78, of East Hampton, beloved husband of G. Fridel (Knudsen) Lamson passed peacefully surrounded by family Thursday, Dec. 16, at Lawrence Memorial Hospital. Born June 14, 1943, in Framingham, Mass., he was the son of the late David R. and Ruth E. (Brown) Lamson.

David retired from Pratt & Whitney after 33 years as an Inspector. He was employed part-time at Carefree Small Buildings since 1999. David was a past cubmaster of Pack 75 in East Hampton and enjoyed sailing and flying Cessna aircrafts. He was an active member of Colchester Bible Baptist Church, where he was a head



usher and choir director for many years. David loved his savior, the Lord Jesus, in whose arms he is now in. He will be missed by all who knew him, especially his wife and family.

Besides his wife Fridel he is survived by his daughter, Alea Wall of East Hampton; his sons, David Christopher Lamson (Elizabeth) of Missouri, David Wayne Morgan (Katrinka) of Moosup, Peter Morgan (Melissa) of Avon, brothers Steve Lamson of Middletown, Scott Lamson (Fran) of FL, sisters Judy Fredriksen (Len) of Florida, Beverly Corson (Roy) of Oregon; eight grandchildren, Courtney, Wayne, William, David Jeffrey, Brianna Chase, Dalton Edward, Lance Unruh, Carver Dudley; and six great-grandchildren, Kyari, Ivy, Teagan, Barrett, Lincoln and Remington.

He is predeceased by a son, Keith Edward Morgan, and son-in-law, Kevin E. Wall.

Funeral services were held Tuesday, Dec. 28, in the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton. Burial followed in Lake View Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Colchester Bible Baptist Church, located at 38 Chestnut Hill Rd., Colchester, CT 06415.

To leave online condolences please visit www.spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Hebron

Diane P. Campbell

Our family sadly regrets that Diane P. (Waters) Campbell of New London, formerly of Somers and Hebron, passed away unexpectedly in mid-December 2021. Born March 10, 1964, Diane was a very special daughter, sister, mother, grandmother, aunt, niece, cousin and friend.

She was a gifted artist who, like her mother, loved to sketch animals, especially horses. She loved animals all of her life, particularly her first horse Sweetheart, who she loved to race through the fields of the family farm. She even taught her to rear up like Trigger from *The Lone Ranger*. She went on to adopt many animals, including several horses, dogs, cats and birds. She was a practicing Wiccan, with a true spiritual love for nature and the outdoors.

Diane was a very caring and thoughtful person who always made people feel special with her kind voice and comforting words. You could always turn to her when you were down. Her uplifting words and genuine sweet personality would always help. She had a very endearing nature, immediately creating a camaraderie with anyone she met.

Diane is survived by her parents, Harold and Kathy Waters of Hebron; her daughter, Lisa Waters-Hodge of Manchester; son, Mark Piotrowski and his wife Loren of East Longmeadow, Mass.; son, Matthew Campbell and his wife Cathryn of Fort Campbell, Ky.; son, David Campbell of Somers; son, Michael Campbell of Fort Riley, Kan.; sister, Sharon Waters of Wethersfield; sister, Janice Duprey and her husband Craig of Marlborough; sister, Michele Waters and her fiancé Dan Moard of Hebron; as well as 11 grandchildren.

A celebration of her life for family and friends will be held at Carmen Funeral Home in Windsor Friday, Jan. 21, from 4-6 p.m., with a private interment occurring in the spring.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in her memory to Protectors of Animals (poa.org), ASPCA (org) or The Humane Society of the U.S. (hsus.org).

Diane is greatly loved and will be sorely missed.



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

★ Letters cont. from page 15

read a letter to the editor I'd submitted to the *Rivereast* in which I had described the impact my Black, second-grade Sunday School teacher had on me and ruminated about some issues surrounding "Critical Race Theory." She said she had not known about the "Tulsa Massacre" and felt this episode in American history had been withheld from her. I told her that I, too, had been unaware of this event until recently. We discussed how this lack of historical knowledge might have affected us and serves to keep us uninformed as citizens. We are both white.

There continues to be considerable debate about "CRT" being a topic of discussion. It seems that it is to be confined to an ivory tower level. An argument has been that to bring it up before then might have a deleterious impact on the fragile psyches of young white children. They might experience a sensation of guilt, unwarranted privilege or something and implode?

I cannot remember what grade I was in when I learned about the purposeful introduction of smallpox-infested blankets to Native Americans. I do remember my reaction to this duplicitous, ostensibly kind gesture as one of horror. I suppose I felt sadness, but more recall outrage at this example of man's inhumanity to man.

The sad thing is that I might have been shielded from this episode in American history and wouldn't be any the better for my ignorance – only worse; Tulsa, as well.

Jon Raddatz – East Hampton

'Save Kinney Road'

To the Editor:

I object to the proposed construction of a public works facility on Kinney Road. In an effort to educate us voters, I suggest that the selectmen and/or the Kinney Road residents mark or map out the proposed building site. Those of us who don't live in that lovely, quiet neighborhood would benefit from a tour of the site, in order to appreciate how the public works facility could negatively impact this very special, pristine natural resource.

Sue Custance – Hebron

Unfortunate Mask Editorial

To the Editor:

Hard to say which was the most unfortunate part of last week's editorial on masks: the reasoning, the timing, or the research.

When you were with your loved ones over the holidays, did you sneeze in their faces? No. You turned your head, grabbed a Kleenex, or coughed into your elbow. These are three reasonable actions, and wearing a mask when in proximity to others is a fourth.

Yes, we all want to ditch our masks. But now, while COVID cases are skyrocketing? Our hospitals are barely hanging on, and our stressed-out health care workers will not thank you for promoting risky behavior.

Data shows that wearing a mask reduces the chance of transmitting COVID. The continued mask diligence of our teachers, staff, and students is a big part of the reason why COVID outbreaks are rarely traced back to schools.

Can we please just do what works?

Sincerely,
Andy Bauer – Portland

A Huge Success

To the Editor:

This year's Adopt A Family Holiday Giving was a huge success!! What an amazing turnout of donated toys we received this year! We can't thank you enough for the donations and the companies who did toy drives this year. We were able to help four families we adopted this year and it put a huge smile on their faces and ours too.

Portland Fire Dept. Co.1 would like to thank the following:

Colla Signs, Bud's Cafe, Gotta's Farm, Quonset Surplus Store, Jarvis Airfoil Portland, Guilmette Automotive, Water and Sewer Specialties, Winchester Cafe, Portland Dental Care, Thompson Landscape, Portland Transmission, Valli Construction Co., Quality Welding, Clear Blue Water Systems, Portland Memorial Funeral Home, Gildersleeve Spirit, Precision Plastic Products, Schultz Electric, DiMauro Oil Co., Magic Mirror Hair Salon, Yankee Boat Yard and Marina, Portland Automotive, Water-view Dental, Brownstone Barbers, Jeff Myjak Cans 4 A Cause, Rosella and Odie Mirabito Oil Co., Portland Vet, Portland Care and Rehab, Specialty Lighting.

Thank you to my holiday wrappers, Wayne, Beverly, Matt, Rose, Josh and Stepheno, and to my delivery crew too.

Have a Safe and Healthy 2022,
Portland Fire Dept. Holiday Delivery

Unconditional Love

To the Editor:

When a child dies, a parent is still tied to that child. Souls, tied together across universes. It doesn't matter the age when they passed. It doesn't matter how long ago it happened. It doesn't matter – none of it. Their souls are forever tied.

That's the love of a parent. That's the love that is more powerful than death. That's the heart that breaks and keeps breaking until their arms are filled again. It knows no discrimination based off of age, health or time; it just is, and it always will be. Their souls are forever tied, and there's nothing that can break them.

That's the beauty of unconditional love.

Catherine K. L'Hote – East Hampton

The Truth Will Prevail

To the Editor:

Are you sick and tired of all this yet? How many booster shots will it take to "flatten the curve"? Lies from the government, from the CDC... the "statistics" that focus only on how many unvaccinated people are in the hospitals, but don't tell you at all how many unvaccinated actually get treatment and recover. And what about drilling down on why the vaccinated are really in the hospital? What were their symptoms? Are they admitted to the emergency room if they have a headache and sniffles? Actually, according to an article on wfsb.com, people are overcrowding the emergency rooms with cold symptoms and calling 911 for COVID tests.

There is no definitive truth to anything these days, and any time someone questions "authority," they are deemed as uncooperative and a conspiracy theorist. Conspiracy theory defined in Wikipedia: "an explanation for an event or situation that invokes a conspiracy by sinister and powerful groups, often political in motivation." Any of those two groups I mentioned above sound familiar?

Pat Schmidt – East Hampton

Kraken – Powell

To the Editor:

There were 64 court cases claiming voter fraud. The GOP lost all but one (a minor technicality). Apparently, you can lie to the American people under the First Amendment, but when it comes to the courts and donations, you better have proof. Powell and other attorneys were ordered by a federal judge this month to pay \$175,000 in sanctions to Michigan officials they unsuccessfully sued in an effort to overturn the state's 2020 presidential election results. The judge referred to some of the claims as downright "fantastical."

Annie Steinbrecher – Marlborough

Toys for Tots

To the Editor:

I want to shout out a big thank you to everyone who donated a toy or toys to this year's Marine Corps Toys for Tots toy drive. You people made it a huge success.

Thanks go out to the following: Bud's Café – Amy, Laurie, Sue, Wendy and all your customers who dropped off toys; Rick's Gang at the VFW Portland Post – you're always there to help; Mike Olayos, Portland Public Works – it was your first time collecting toys and you did a great job.

This program only works because so many people have the spirit of giving and I can honestly say you made a lot of kids happy this Christmas. Over 51,000 toys were distributed this year.

Again, thank you and I salute you all.

Jim Soder
Middlesex County Commandant
Marine Corps League

The early stages of communication disorders are easier to spot when you know the signs.

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AMERICAN SPEECH-LANGUAGE-HEARING ASSOCIATION

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Volunteer Positions Available — Day & Evening Hours:

- **East Hampton & Wethersfield facilities**
Dogs: walking; clean & feed; socialization
- **East Hartford facility** – Cats: clean & feed; socialization; medical & placement teams

Please call **860-569-0722** or visit **www.poainc.org**

LEGALS

COLCHESTER CONSERVATION COMMISSION WETLANDS AGENT APPROVAL

Pursuant to the CGS Section 22a-42a (c)(2) the following application has been approved by the duly authorized agent of the Conservation Commission of the Town of Colchester. Number: WA2022-382
Applicant: Jary & Penny Standley
Location: 341 Windham Ave.
Activity: Shed w/in URA
Jay Gigliotti
Authorized Agent

1TB 1/14

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LEGAL NOTICE MARLBOROUGH ZONING COMMISSION NOTICE OF ACTION

The Marlborough Zoning Commission at its meeting of January 6 2021, took the following action:
APPLICATIONS CONTINUED; PUBLIC HEARING SCHEDULED:
APPLICATION #Z-15-21 Amendment to Article Two Zones Section A, Amendment to Article Four Definitions, & New Article Ten J - Lake Terramuggus Watershed & Shoreline Overlay District Overlay District. A public hearing is continued to February 3, 2022.
APPLICATION #Z-19-21 – Graphik Sign Solutions, LLC / Schwartz Real Estate (Applicant / Property Owner) – Building Signs 5 South Main Street. A public hearing is scheduled for February 3, 2022.
APPLICATION #Z-20-21 – Marlborough Associates LLC – Zone change for lots known as tax assessors map 6, block 10, lots 18B, 16, 18A, 17B&C and 2 private roads from Design Business Industrial to Residential. A public hearing is scheduled for February 3, 2022.
APPLICATION #Z-22-21 – Marlborough Zoning Commission – Zone change from General Industrial (GI) to Residential (R) – properties located at 61/63 South Main Street, 77 South Main Street & 81 South Main Street. A public hearing is scheduled for February 3, 2022.
APPLICATIONS APPROVED WITH AN EFFECTIVE DATE OF JANUARY 20, 2022:
APPLICATION #Z-21-21 – By the River LLC – 370 Jones Hollow Road (Applicant/Property Owner) – amendment to application #Z-15-03 Residential Care Home – to increase occupancy to 12 residents.
APPROVED 2022 CALENDAR
KEVIN ASKLAR, ZONING COMMISSION CHAIR
Dated at Marlborough, CT this 10th day of January.

1TB 1/14

LEGALS

TOWN OF PORTLAND PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION LEGAL NOTICE OF DECISION

At the January 6, 2022 meeting and in accordance with Zoning Regulation Section 7.3.7, the Planning & Zoning Commission took the following actions with regards to proposed improvements within the Town Center Village District (TCVD) Overlay Zone:
APPROVED side property line fencing for 218 Main Street as proposed by the applicant and recommended by the TCVD Design Consultant. Application of Michael Cannata. Property of Estate of Michael Cannata. Assessor's Map 19, Lot 47, Zone B-3, Village District Overlay.
Dated at Portland, CT, this 11th day of January 2022
Robert Ellsworth
Chairman Planning & Zoning Commission

1TB 1/14

Legal Notice Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission

At their regular meeting, the Andover Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission **APPROVED** the following applications on January 11th, 2022:
• **Permit Application IWWC 21-26:** Todd Perkins, 1 Lakeside Drive- Rebuilding and re-mortaring existing stone wall on shoreline of Andover Lake.
• **Permit Application IWWC 21-28:** Donald DuBois, 37 Boston Hill Road- Placing a temporary bridge over a stream and placing corduroy in an intermittent stream channel for an approximately 24-acre timber harvest of dead and dying oak and ash trees.
The above decisions may be appealed to the Andover Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission pursuant to Section 12.2 of the Town of Andover Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Regulations, available at www.andoverconnecticut.org.

1TB 1/14

TOWN OF COLCHESTER LEGAL NOTICE

The Planning and Zoning Commission will hold a virtual public hearing on January 19th, at 7:00 P.M. to hear and consider the following petitions:
NIANTIC BAY GROUP LLC – Resubdivision (2021-015) – 347 Cabin Rd – 24 lot Resubdivision pursuant to CGS 8-30g. At this hearing interested persons may be heard and written communications received. A copy of this petition is in the Planning 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).
Planning and Zoning Commission
Joseph Mathieu, Chair

2TB 1/7, 1/14

TOWN OF EAST HAMPTON PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION NOTICE OF ACTION

The East Hampton Planning and Zoning Commission held a regular meeting on January 5, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. at the Town Hall, Eaton Smith Council Chambers Room 107 and via ZOOM Virtual Meeting to consider the following:
A. Application PZC-21-022: Atlantis Marketing, 1&5 Colchester Ave and 157 Main St. for a Zone Change from R-2 to Commercial. Map 07A/ Block 56/ Lots 21, 22, 24 - Denied
B. Amendment to Zoning Regulations - Sections 2.2, 4.1.B, 4.2.B, 4.3.B, 4.4.B and Addition of Section 8.4.O and 8.4.P to allow for Home Occupations and Home Based Businesses – Tabled to February 2, 2022
C. Enact Opt-Out Provision for Accessory Dwelling Units as Provided for in Section 6(f) of Public Act 21-29 in order to continue using Section 8.4.M – Accessory Dwelling Units. – Tabled to February 2, 2022
Ray Zatorski, Chairman

1TB 1/14

LEGAL NOTICE TOWN OF ANDOVER ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

The Andover Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a Public Hearing at 7:00 p.m., Wednesday, January 19th, 2021 to solicit comment on the application of Shashank Kamat, 12 Brown Drive. The applicant is seeking relief from Section 11.2 of the Andover Zoning Regulations so as to construct a 10' x 20' garden shed. More specifically, the applicant is seeking a reduction in the front yard setback from 50' to 38' and the side yard setback from 25' to 8'. The meeting will be held on a web-based platform (ZOOM) and can be accessed at Andoverct.org – go the calendar section. Comments/questions will be entertained during the hearing or written comments can be submitted to the Building and Land-Use Office a minimum of 24 hours prior to the meeting. Additional details can be found on the Zoning Board of Appeals web page of the Town of Andover's web-site (andoverct.org) or by visiting/contacting the Building and Land-use Office at (860)742-4036, ext. 4 or 17 School Road.
If you need access to a public computer for the meeting please contact the Building and Land-Use Office at the aforementioned phone number.
Jim Hallisey
Zoning Agent

2TB 1/7, 1/14

LEGAL NOTICE PARTY-ENDORSED CANDIDATES FOR TOWN COMMITTEE AT-LARGE

A certified list of 40 Republican party-endorsed candidates for the town of East Hampton for election as Members of the Town Committee At-Large is on file in my office at 1 Community Drive, East Hampton, Connecticut and copies are available for public distribution. The number of Town Committee Members to be elected, under party rules, is 45.
A Primary will be held March 1, 2022 if 11 candidacies (which is at least 25% of the number of town committee members to be elected by such party in the municipality) are filed in accordance with §§9-382 to 9-450, inclusive, of the General Statutes, by persons other than party-endorsed candidates, not later than 4:00 p.m. of January 26, 2022, provided the number of such candidacies plus the number of endorsed candidates, exceeds the number of town committee members to be elected. (If the number of opposing candidacies filed is reduced to less than such 25%, no primary will be held.) Petition forms, instructions, and information concerning the procedure for filing opposing candidacies, may be obtained from Lori Wilcox, Republican Registrar of Voters, 1 Community Drive, East Hampton, Connecticut 06424.
Kelly Bilodeau, CMC, CCTC
Municipal Clerk of East Hampton

1TB 1/14

LEGAL NOTICE PARTY-ENDORSED CANDIDATES FOR TOWN COMMITTEE AT-LARGE

A certified list of 39 Democratic party-endorsed candidates for the town of East Hampton for election as Members of the Town Committee At-Large is on file in my office at 1 Community Drive, East Hampton, Connecticut and copies are available for public distribution. The number of Town Committee Members to be elected, under party rules, is 40.
A Primary will be held March 1, 2022 if 10 candidacies (which is at least 25% of the number of town committee members to be elected by such party in the municipality) are filed in accordance with §§9-382 to 9-450, inclusive, of the General Statutes, by persons other than party-endorsed candidates, not later than 4:00 p.m. of January 26, 2022, provided the number of such candidacies plus the number of endorsed candidates, exceeds the number of town committee members to be elected. (If the number of opposing candidacies filed is reduced to less than such 25%, no primary will be held.) Petition forms, instructions, and information concerning the procedure for filing opposing candidacies, may be obtained from Theresa Latimer, Democratic Registrar of Voters, 1 Community Drive, East Hampton, Connecticut 06424.
Kelly Bilodeau, CMC, CCTC
Municipal Clerk of East Hampton

1TB 1/14

LEGAL NOTICE Town of Andover

A certified list of 16 Democratic party-endorsed candidates for the Town of Andover for election as Members of the Town Committee At-Large is on file in my office at 17 School Road - Andover, Connecticut and copies are available for public distribution. The number of Town Committee Members to be elected, under party rules, is 20.
A Primary will be held March 1, 2022, if 5 candidacies (which is at least 25% of the number of town committee members to be elected by such party in the municipality) are filed in accordance with §§9-382 to 9-450, inclusive, of the General Statutes, by persons other than party-endorsed candidates, not later than 4:00 p.m. of January 26, 2022, provided the number of such candidacies plus the number of endorsed candidates, exceeds the number of town committee members to be elected. (If the number of opposing candidacies filed is reduced to less than such 25%, no primary will be held.)
Petition forms, instructions and information concerning the procedure for filing opposing candidacies, may be obtained from Linda Derrick, Democrat Registrar of Voters, 17 School Road – Andover, Connecticut
Carol H. Lee
Town Clerk of Andover, Connecticut

1TB 1/14

LEGAL NOTICE Town of Andover

A certified list of 11 Republican party-endorsed candidates for the Town of Andover for election as Members of the Town Committee At-Large is on file in my office at 17 School Road - Andover, Connecticut and copies are available for public distribution. The number of Town Committee Members to be elected, under party rules, is 30.
A Primary will be held March 1, 2022, if 8 candidacies (which is at least 25% of the number of town committee members to be elected by such party in the municipality) are filed in accordance with §§9-382 to 9-450, inclusive, of the General Statutes, by persons other than party-endorsed candidates, not later than 4:00 p.m. of January 26, 2022, provided the number of such candidacies plus the number of endorsed candidates, exceeds the number of town committee members to be elected. (If the number of opposing candidacies filed is reduced to less than such 25%, no primary will be held.)
Petition forms, instructions and information concerning the procedure for filing opposing candidacies, may be obtained from Wallace Barton, Jr., Republican Registrar of Voters, 17 School Road – Andover, Connecticut
Carol H. Lee
Town Clerk of Andover, Connecticut

1TB 1/14

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The Glastonbury Citizen & The Rivereast News Bulletin

Email your Classified Line Ad to sandy@glcitizen.com and call with your credit card number.

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BUYING ANTIQUES & OLD STUFF. Costume jewelry, pottery, bottles, crocks, jugs, toys/games, glassware, silver plated items, signs, typewriters, sewing machines, bar items, tools, radios, clocks, lanterns, oil lamps, knives, hunting, fishing, military, Masonic, fire dept. and more. Donald Roy 860-874-8396.

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EMPLOYMENT

Per Diem Firefighter/EMT Wanted

The town of Colchester is looking for a per diem Firefighter/EMT to cover weekends and occasional weekdays. This position responds to both natural and man-made disasters and/or emergencies. It also provides for the protection of life and property by combating, extinguishing, and preventing fires and providing emergency medical assistance and transport. It includes mitigating hazardous materials incidents, and providing technical rescue. Incumbents are expected to perform the full range of duties of a Firefighter/Emergency Medical Technician, be a team leader and interact in a positive and productive manner with volunteer members. Qualifications include State of Connecticut certified Emergency Medical Technician, State of Connecticut Fire Fighter II Certification, State of Connecticut class B license or "Q" endorsement, and qualification of department apparatus within six months of employment.
High school diploma or G.E.D equivalent. Must be at least 18 years of age.
The application and job description are available at www.colchesterct.gov. Interested candidates should submit application, cover letter and resume to:
Office of the First Selectman
127 Norwich Ave Suite 201
Colchester, CT 06415
Or by email to: rfuller@colchesterct.gov

1TB 1/14

ADVERTISERS

The Glastonbury Citizen and Rivereast 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.

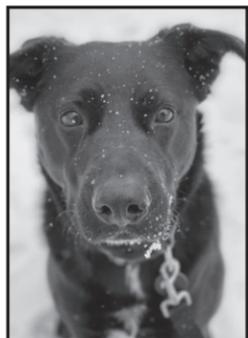
"Pet of the Week"



but would be fine on his own. Freddie and his siblings tested positive for Feline Leukemia. Feline leukemia virus (FeLV). Contact POA for more info on Freddie and FeLV.

Freddie, 5 months, is a sleek, confident king of his realm. Friendly and vocal, he'll climb right up on your shoulder and tell you all about his day. He gets on really well with his brother, Johnny, but would be fine on his own. Freddie and his siblings tested positive for Feline Leukemia. Feline leukemia virus (FeLV). Contact POA for more info on Freddie and FeLV.

I'm **Bella!** I am a 7 year old German Shepherd / American Pit Bull Terrier mix. What can I say, I am a super mutt! I am a perfect 70 lbs! I am soooooo ready for my forever home! I am super sweet and have "the Shepherd lean" down pat – I LOVE attention and especially enjoy being brushed! Tennis balls are the best part of my day!



CRE1-14-22

For more information on adopting **CATS** or **DOGS**, call **860-569-0722**
VOLUNTEERS & FOSTER HOMES NEEDED – For information call: 860-569-0722

Protectors of Animals, Inc.
144 Main St., Unit O, E. Hartford, CT 06118

A non-profit, all volunteer animal rescue organization, rescuing abandoned, abused and impounded cats and dogs.
Check us out on our website – www.poainc.org

EMPLOYMENT

E2 ELECTRICIAN / APPRENTICES WANTED with residential experience. Call John 860-214-4045 or email gardelec@frontier.com

CAR WASH ATTENDANT WANTED. Part time or Full Time. Call 860-531-9182

Dr. Donna Aiudi will no longer be practicing at Dermatology Associates of Eastern CT as of January 31, 2022

Help wanted: weekend mornings - personal care, household duties etc. \$16.00/hr. Call 860-537-3243

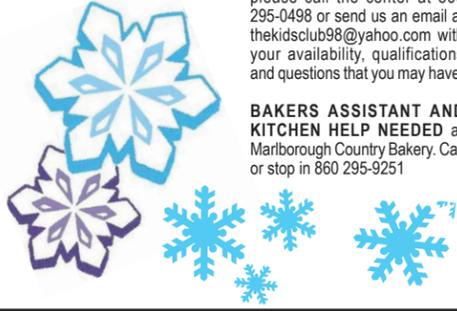
PT DISHWASHER NEEDED at Marlborough Country Bakery. Call or stop in 860 295-9251

COLCHESTER WINE AND SPIRITS IS LOOKING FOR PART TIME LIQUOR STORE CLERK. Stop in person to apply at store, 99 Linwood Avenue, Colchester.

CUSTODIAL/CHURCHSEXTON ESSENTIAL DUTIES: Inspects and cleans sanctuary, classrooms, fellowship hall, offices and rest rooms. Removes rubbish from premises for proper disposal. Maintains and orders supplies. 10 hrs weekly. Mandatory background and drug testing required. Previous custodial experience plus Churchoffice@saintmarkglastonbury.org

THE KIDS CLUB CHILD CARE CENTER IN MARLBOROUGH IS LOOKING TO IMMEDIATELY HIRE 2 PART TIME EMPLOYEES. One position is for M-F 7:00AM.-12:30PM, the other one is M-F, 3:00-5:30. Those interested must be flexible, dependable, be able to lift at least 20 pounds and have experience working with children ages 3 months to 5 years. If interested in learning more about the position please call the center at 860 295-0498 or send us an email at thekidsclub98@yahoo.com with your availability, qualifications and questions that you may have.

BAKERS ASSISTANT AND KITCHEN HELP NEEDED at Marlborough Country Bakery. Call or stop in 860 295-9251



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 Lynn Gardiner 860-729-1215 lyngardiner5@gmail.com	 Jay Gigliotti 860-235-3570 jgigliotti.cga@gmail.com	 Diane Gombieski 860-977-4857 gombieski@snet.net	 Matthew Gworek 860-882-8650 mgworekrealty@gmail.com	 Brian Hamel 860-878-2667 hamelrealestate@gmail.com	 Jim Harrington 860-966-9966 jim@harrs.com	 Ela Heselton 860-305-8852 elaheselton@gmail.com	 Jeff King 860-710-1323 jeffkingrealtor1@gmail.com	 JP Landrey 860-559-5340 jplandrey@comcast.net	 Wendy Lang 860-338-7776 wendylangct@gmail.com	 Sandra Lindstrom 860-334-5815 sandrallindstromrealtor@gmail.com
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 Kristy Paquette 860-837-3131 krispaq@gmail.com	 Kara Pedersen 860-575-5904 karapedersenct@gmail.com	 Filipe Pereira 860-990-9103 filipe@wemanagect.com	 Jennifer Pettine 860-573-3789 jenpettine@gmail.com	 Alex Pike 860-930-4164 alexpike@gmail.com	 Lea Poresky 860-368-9437 leaporesky@gmail.com	 Caitlin Reilly 203-667-7436 caitlinreillyct@gmail.com	 Lauren Reis 413-896-3126 laurenreisrealtor@gmail.com	 Barbara Royea 860-334-8714 BarbaraLovesHomes@gmail.com	 Koreen Ryan 860-250-6799 koreenryan1@gmail.com	 Kristina Segura 860-639-1681 seguractrealtor@gmail.com
 Jamie Smigel 860-759-9310 jamiesmigel.ct@gmail.com	 Tania Sones 860-918-5100 sonesrealtor@gmail.com	 Stacy Soracchi 860-534-0333 stacysoracchi@gmail.com	 Robin Tayles 860-367-3795 robinrealtor888@gmail.com	 Michael Varni 860-335-7380 michael@harrs.com	 Daniel Walsh 860-841-0183 danwalshsells@gmail.com	 Candy Webb 860-377-7510 candywebbrealtor@gmail.com	 Cieara Yanaros 860-754-7048 ciearasellct@gmail.com	 Gladys Yeager 860-944-9772 gladysyeager@sbcglobal.net		

Carl Guild, Broker / Owner
 131 New London Tpke., #215 Glastonbury
 41 West High Street, East Hampton
 121 Broadway Colchester
 860-539-5373 | carlguild@gmail.com
 www.CarlGuild.com