



RIVEREAST

# News Bulletin

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

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**Dancing the Year Away...** It's an annual tradition at East Hampton Public Library to ring in the new year on New Year's Eve – at noon! Kids are shown here on the final day of 2019, getting down to tunes from Turtle Dance Music, as they waited for balloons to fall from overhead at the strike of noon! Happy New Year from all of us at the *Rivereast News Bulletin!*

## EHHS Hoops Coach Shoves Student

By Jack Lakowsky

During a Dec. 20 game against Valley Regional High School, East Hampton girls' basketball coach and district athletics director Shaun Russell shoved a player hard enough to send her stumbling across the court.

A concerned parent shared a recording of the game with the *Rivereast*.

Russell, apparently angry over a player assuming an incorrect position, shoved the teen-aged girl across the court. In the recording, the player nearly loses her footing, pitching forward, recovering quickly.

Despite the Bellringers' strong lead – about 20 points – Russell was pacing courtside visibly anxious.

There was no apparent reaction from the crowd or from the students commenting.

A parent who requested anonymity said they feel the district is trying to keep this quiet because Russell has a successful coaching record, with hundreds of game wins, three consecutive shoreline conference championships and undefeated seasons. In 2021, he was named Shoreline Conference Coach of the Year.

Last year, Russell achieved 400 wins as coach. He has led the school's athletics for nearly 20 years, coaching the team for 25 seasons. The win over Valley got the Bellringers to a 3-0 season.

In the 2020-21 season, Russell coached an undefeated season that ended in a Shoreline Conference title.

This year, his wife was appointed vice principal of East Hampton High School.

"In the two years I've been here, I've known Shaun to be always willing to help out anyone, anywhere, any time," East Hampton High School Principal Eric Verner told *Middlesex*

*County Sports* last year.

"But you watch him coach, especially this year, and you realize how happy he is to be with the kids on the court," Verner said. "He cares so much about these kids. It's not about the wins with him, it's about the kids getting better and having a good experience. It's all about the players who have played for him over the years."

The anonymous parent told the *Rivereast* that, as a result of the Dec. 20 incident, Russell was briefly suspended. However, the *Rivereast* was unable to confirm any consequences, as neither Russell nor East Hampton Superintendent of Schools Paul Smith responded to request for comment on this report.

The video, which as of Wednesday was nearing 1,000 views, is on Valley high school basketball's YouTube channel.

In a similar incident just last week, in Ohio, a high school boys' basketball coach resigned after shoving a student during practice.

The shoving incident caps off an eventful calendar year for East Hampton schools, a mixed bag of triumphs and trials.

This year saw a rift open between the East Hampton Town Council and the East Hampton school board, with councilors writing letters openly questioning school procedures and, earlier this year, council chair Mark Philhower, during discussions of hiring armed guards for the town's lower grade schools, warned school officials to request a bare bones budget, a comment Smith would later tell the *Rivereast* he found inappropriate.

Throughout much of the year the district was the center of much debate over hiring more

*See Coach Shoves Student, page 8*

## Top Local Sports Moments of 2022

By Josh Howard

As 2022 draws to a close, here are the top 22 local sports moments of the year. From state titles to individual achievements, it was a year of many successes.

### 1. Bellringers Volleyball Wins It All

East Hampton girls' volleyball won the program's first state title, defeating Hale Ray at East Haven High School to win the Class S state championship on Nov. 19. The championship triumph ended a historic season for the Bellringers, who won their final 18 matches of the season, capturing both a conference and state title along the way. Senior captain Jordan Murphy was named the tournament's Most Valuable Player during a season in which she led the team with 262 kills this season, including 60 over the four state tourney games. Murphy, along with her sisters Jenna and Amber Mur-

phy, and Chelsea Woods earned all-conference during the historic season.

### 2. Heslin Siblings Make History

On Feb. 27, Emma and Jackson Heslin of Marlborough became the first siblings to win a high school wrestling state championship on the same day. They also became the first brother-sister combo ever to be crowned State Open wrestling champions by the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference (CIAC). Emma Heslin also became the first female wrestler at RHAM High School to capture a state championship by winning the State Open in the girls' 99-pound division. Jackson Heslin, a freshman at Xavier High School in Middletown, won the boys' 120-pound bracket as Xavier won the State Open championship as a team.

### 3. Another Volleyball Triumph for RHAM

The girls' volleyball team at RHAM High School won a state championship, defeating Woodland to capture the Class M title at East Haven High School on Nov. 19. It was the program's second straight state championship and ninth title since 2007. Ally Hadley was named the tournament's Most Valuable Player and joined Sarah West, Lani Fecho, Neve Tyler as all-conference recipients.

### 4. Anderson Phenomenal in Poll

Bacon Academy freshman Riley Anderson was named the Class S Swimmer of the Year after breaking the school record in the 50 freestyle and finishing first at the Class S championships with a time of 23.20. Anderson ended her first year in the high school pools with a State Open championship triumph in the 50 freestyle, best-

*See Top Local Sports Moments, page 21*

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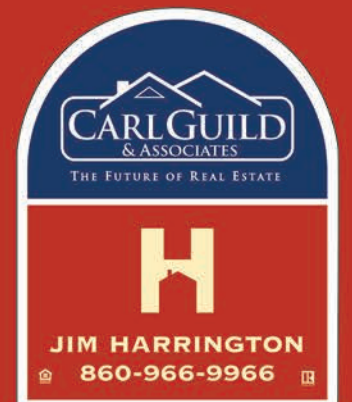
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RE4-8-22

MIDDLESEX HEALTH WELCOMES

# Crescent Street OB/GYN!



Middlesex Health Crescent Street OB/GYN's medical providers include (Left to right) Julie Flagg, MD; Carla McLeod, MD; Laura Bony, MD; Anne Bingham, MD; Carly Bendzans, CNM; and Elizabeth Fabrizi, APRN

Crescent Street OB/GYN has joined Middlesex Health. As a result, Crescent Street OB/GYN now has a new name — **Middlesex Health Crescent Street Obstetrics and Gynecology**. The practice will continue to operate offices at 49 Crescent Street in Middletown and 3 E. Hampton Road in Marlborough. Its Guilford office has relocated to 1353 Boston Post Road in Madison.

For more information about Middlesex Health Crescent Street Obstetrics and Gynecology, visit [MiddlesexHealth.org/CrescentStreetOBGYN](http://MiddlesexHealth.org/CrescentStreetOBGYN).

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## NEW YEARS EVE BASH 2023

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Fresh made pasta stuffed with assorted grilled artichokes hearts, spinach, with a gorgonzola cream sauce

##### VEAL PARMIGIANA

Breaded cutlet of milk-fed veal, pan-fried, topped with fresh tomato sauce, and a layer of whole milk mozzarella cheese. Served with linguini

##### BAKED CHILEAN SEA BASS

Fresh Chilean sea bass baked with EVOO, sherry wine, lemon, and topped with Caribbean style relish(mango, pineapple, sweet corn, onions, red and green peppers, jalapeno peppers, and cilantro)

##### PRIME RIB DINNER

12 oz. Black Angus prime rib of beef cooked to perfection, with a side of au jus and horseradish sauce

##### BLACKENED SEAFOOD RISOTTO

Fresh sea scallops, salmon, sea bass and shrimp blackened to perfection with our own cajun spices served over Italian rice with fresh spinach, asparagus, olive oil, shallots, rosemary, light cream and parmesan cheese

##### FORNARELLI'S LEMON CHICKEN

Fresh chicken breast, lightly dipped in an egg batter sautéed with white wine, lemon juice and butter sauce

##### POLLO PARMIGIANA

Fresh breaded chicken cutlet, pan-fried and topped with a fresh plum tomato sauce and a layer of melted whole milk mozzarella cheese. Served with linguini

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RE12-30-22

Andover • Andover • Andover • Andover • Andover • Andover • Andover • Andover • Andover • Andover • Andover • Andover • Andover • Andover • Andover

### Vendors Sought for Fundraiser

Andover seniors will hold their annual fundraiser to support the luncheon program Sunday, Feb. 5, at the Andover Elementary School (AES), 35 School Rd. If you would like to be a vendor, cost is \$20 for one table or \$30 for two tables. Bakers and other helpers are also welcome. If interested, call Cathy Palazzi at 860-916-6122.

### 175th Committee Selling Items

All are invited to purchase T-shirts, cookbooks, ornaments or calendars from the town's 175th Committee. All money raised will support the events planned for May and June 2023. Contact Cathy Palazzi at 860-916-6122 for more information. Items may also be purchased at Town Hall.

### Senior Citizen News & Notes

The following items have been updated for Andover seniors, veterans, and disabled. If you want to attend any events, call senior coordinator Cathy Palazzi 860-916-6122 to register.

**Shopping Dates:** Tuesdays. Willimantic: 1/3, 1/17, 1/31; Manchester: 1/10, 1/24. Masks are available on all vehicles.

**Senior Luncheons:** Fridays, Jan. 6 and 20. Reservations required by 1/4 for the 1/6 lunch and by 1/18 for lunch on 1/20.

**Movie:** Wednesday, Jan. 11, 1 p.m. Call Palazzi for a ride.

**Rides to Fundraiser:** The annual senior fundraiser will be Sunday, Feb. 5, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m., at the Andover Elementary School gym, and rides are available by calling Palazzi. There will be a bake basket and raffle tables, and pizza will be available for purchase at 12:30 p.m.

**Rides to Food Pantry:** The bus is now available for the Food Pantry on Mondays at 5 p.m. and for the Wednesday Foodshare or food pantry – all of which take place at Andover Congregational Church.

**Rides to all town events,** town meetings, referendums or board meetings, and all medical appointments, are available by calling Palazzi. All seniors, veterans and disabled are welcome. If you have a caregiver, they may come with you.

**New Seniors Welcome:** New seniors are welcome to all events. Call Palazzi for all luncheon reservations and transportation needs. Call Judy Knox at 860-643-6824 to join Young at Heart, call Georgia O'Brien at 860-742-9947 for all trip information, and call Sue Schmidt at 860-604-1057 for all movie information.

Regional • Regional • Regional • Regional • Regional • Regional • Regional

### Tax-Aide Foundation Seeks Volunteers

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.

Tax-Aide is the nation's largest free volunteer tax program, offered in conjunction with the IRS.

The Tax-Aide program is looking for people

to join its 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](http://aarpfoundation.org/taxaidevolunteer) or call 1-888-AARP-NOW (888-227-7669).

For additional information before signing up, contact your local senior center and they will connect you with a local Tax-Aide volunteer.

### ECSU Students Wrap Semester

The following area students recently concluded their first semester at Eastern Connecticut State University. Unless noted, all are first-year students.

**Amston:** Skylar Popp, a junior who is majoring in criminology and sociology; Tyler Piascik, majoring in art; April Breen, a junior majoring in computer science; Daniel Slayton, a junior majoring in accounting; Charlotte Pintavalle, a senior majoring in psychology; Marisa Mangio, a sophomore who is majoring in history and social science.

**Andover:** Ashley Moore, majoring in English and early childhood education; Tyler Cottrill, majoring in exploratory social sciences; Gianella Miano, majoring in exploratory arts and humanities; Amanda Moore, majoring in psychology; Chase Nelson, majoring in political science; Duncan Page, majoring in history; Arianna Vernola, majoring in exploratory – undecided; Amanda Pedro, a junior majoring in business administration; Derek White, a junior majoring in theatre and performance media; Olivia Rojek, a sophomore majoring in biochemistry.

**Colchester:** Taryn Beisel, majoring in music and English; Sandra Geis, majoring in psychology and early childhood education; Madison Simone, majoring in liberal studies and elementary education; Thomas O'Brien, majoring in history and secondary education certification; Avery Denker, majoring in business administration; Luca DiStefano, majoring in physical education; Aiden Gyngell, majoring in computer science; Scott Kardys, majoring in music; Anastasia Korzhoff, majoring in music; Vincent May, majoring in communication; Christopher Stephenson of Colchester, majoring in data science; Aidan Zimmitti, majoring in business administration; Alex Turner, a junior majoring in new media studies.

**East Hampton:** Kylie Shoenfelt, majoring in business administration and early childhood education; Nicholas Beaulieu majoring in business administration; Zachary Crotty, majoring in exploratory – undecided; Bailey Lombardi, majoring in psychology; Jennifer Tripp, majoring in political science; Christopher Kourtzidis, a junior majoring in communication; Madison

Goff, a sophomore majoring in psychology.

**Hebron:** Maggie Chanski, majoring in sociology and early childhood education; Anna Beard, majoring in political science; Samantha Guppy, majoring in psychology; Morgan Lavalley, majoring in psychology; Ingrid Taute, finance; Jeremy Velez, majoring in communication; Christina Brault, a junior majoring in accounting.

**Marlborough:** Bradley D'Amico, majoring in English and secondary education certification; Patrick Lynch, majoring in data science; Emily St. Amand, majoring in biology; Emily MacCluggage, majoring in psychology; Emily Boyd, a junior majoring in health sciences.

**Portland:** Zachary Doncet, majoring in business administration; Eli Evison, majoring in exploratory – undecided; Caiden Hettrick-Rivera, majoring in finance; Lindsey King, majoring in business administration; Kayla LaMalfa, majoring in health sciences; Caitlynn Robertson, majoring in exploratory STEM; Jake Thompson, majoring in business administration; Emily Bshara of Portland, a junior who is majoring in Communication.

### Congregational Church News

Andover Congregational Church, UCC, located at 359 Route 6, invites all ages to worship Sundays at 10 a.m. The service also streams live on the church's Facebook page (First Congregational Church, Andover, CT). For more information, call the church office at 860-742-7696, email [andoverctchurch@gmail.com](mailto:andoverctchurch@gmail.com) or visit [www.andoverctchurch.org](http://www.andoverctchurch.org).

**Children's Church:** Sunday school is provided.

**No Service This Sunday:** There will be no worship service this Sunday, Jan. 1.

**Food Pantry:** Mondays from 5-7 p.m. Bring your own bags. The **Foodshare Van** comes to the church every other Wednesday from 9-9:30 a.m.; next date is Jan. 4. The senior food pantry is open the opposite Wednesdays, also from 9-9:30 a.m.; next date is Jan 11.

**AA Meetings:** Saturdays and Mondays, 7 p.m.

**Sonshine Stampers:** Thursday, 9:30 a.m.

**Faith Sharing with the Movies:** Tuesdays at 11:30 a.m.

**Bingo and Baskets:** Friday, Jan. 20, 5:30 p.m.

### Senior Transportation Info

Andover Senior Transportation is available for free to all Andover seniors, all veterans, and all disabled. A caregiver may accompany any person that requires assistance or if under the age of 21.

The transportation service picks people up at their home and takes them to their medical appointment; the driver then waits for them and returns them home.

For all transportation appointments, call Cathy Palazzi at 860-916-6122.



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## From the Editor's Desk

# Observations & Ruminations

By Mike Thompson

And so it is that we've come to the end of another year. There are just two days left in 2022. For some, it's been a great year; for others, a terrible one. And still for others – maybe the majority of people – it's been somewhere in between.

But, regardless, it's over, and on Sunday we get to start a whole year anew.

The occasion has me in a reflective mood – especially after the events in my life of the past few weeks. When I sat down to write this column, I thought about sharing some of the stranger news stories of 2022; after all, longtime readers of this space know I love me some weird news. But instead, I think I'll share with you all some particularly impactful quotes I've found on the end of one year, and the start of another. Enjoy.

\*\*\*

"Celebrate endings—for they precede new beginnings." —Jonathan Lockwood Huie

"Cheers to a new year and another chance for us to get it right." —Oprah Winfrey

"Don't live the same year 75 times and call it a life." —Robin Sharma

"Write it on your heart that every day is the best day in the year." —Ralph Waldo Emerson

"The magic in new beginnings is truly the most powerful of them all." —Josiyah Martin

"The first step towards getting somewhere is to decide you're not going to stay where you are." —J.P. Morgan

"Tomorrow is the first blank page of a 365-page book. Write a good one." —Brad Paisley

"I like the dreams of the future better than the history of the past." —Thomas Jefferson

"Your present circumstances don't determine where you can go. They merely determine where you start." —Nido Qubein

"It is never too late to be what you might have been." —George Eliot

"Life is about change; sometimes it's painful, sometimes it's beautiful, but most of the time it's both." —Kristin Kreuk

"I hope that in this year to come, you make mistakes. Because if you are making mistakes, then you are making new things, trying new things, learning, living, pushing yourself, changing yourself, changing your world. You're doing things you've never done before, and more importantly, you're doing something." —Neil Gaiman

"An optimist stays up until midnight to see the new year in. A pessimist stays up to make sure the old year leaves." —William E. Vaughan

"You are never too old to set another goal or to dream a new dream." —C.S. Lewis

"You can get excited about the future. The past won't mind." —Hillary DePiano

"The New Year is a painting not yet painted; a path not yet stepped on; a wing not yet taken off! Things haven't happened as yet! Before the clock strikes twelve, remember that you are blessed with the ability to reshape your life!" —Mehmet Murat ildan

"Each day is a new beginning, the chance to do with it what should be done and not to be seen as simply another day to put in time." —Catherine Pulsifer

"Be at war with your vices, at peace with your neighbors, and let every new year find you a better man." —Benjamin Franklin

"If you're brave enough to say goodbye, life will reward you with a new hello." —Paulo Coelho

"Although no one can go back and make a brand new start, anyone can start from now and make a brand new ending." —Carl Bard

\*\*\*

And, that's it. I wish all of you a happy, healthy, and peaceful 2023.



**Christmas at Colebrook...** The residents of Colebrook Village, a senior living facility in Hebron, participated in a Christmas service on Dec. 22. The Rev. Ron Kolanowski, of St Peter's Episcopal Church, also in Hebron, presided over the worship service. Traditional carols were sung as the service hymns, accompanied by pianist Jason Castonguay. At the end of the Mass, Castonguay, also a soloist, sang "O Holy Night," accompanying himself on the piano.

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

## Thanks to Businesses

To the Editor:

The seniors at Chatham Acres and Bellwood would like to thank all of you, the East Hampton Village Businesses, for the wonderful gift bags. It put a big smile on everyone's faces. Thank you again.

**Happy New Year,  
Shelley Grendzinski  
Tenant Commissioner for  
Bellwood Court and Chatham Acres**

## Stop Gaslighting Us

To the Editor:

The Hebron Public Works saga continues. The town now admits it their plan to build a frivolous "state-of-the art" facility that "other towns will envy" is in limbo. They refuse to bring it to referendum because it will be defeated. (They seem not to understand how democracy works.) The selectmen lack courage and independent thought to stop it. One selectman laments "we have lost the narrative" as he parrots the town manager: "no Plan B, no Plan B." Worse, the town management and selectmen have lost the trust of the town. It is hard to sell a project that destroys Hebron's heritage, increas-

es taxes for a generation and is just plain stupid.

Gaslighting its citizens has now become town policy. There is not a single believable answer in the town's latest Response to Public Comments (<https://hebronct.com/town-departments/public-works/building-project/>). Instead of telling taxpayers the truth, their answers are massaged to hide the facts. For example, using Gaslighting101, they state that "...assertions being made that the Town is considering in the near future proposing to construct a new Town Office Building and a new Public Safety Building are not correct or accurate." Really? Until recently, the town's website showed the Public Works project as "Municipal Complex – Phase I" suggesting more buildings to come. When the town first proposed the Horton property, the town planner sent an email to the PBC stating they wanted "...to develop a concept on the rear of the Horton property as a potential municipal complex, not only for the PW site, but for potential sites of other town-owned buildings..." (PBC minutes, 5/10/2016). Additional buildings are shown in the PBC report.

Now, the town has decided to engage an expensive public relations firm to push their false narrative. How pathetic.

**John Collins – Amston**

## Bulletin Board

I presume many of you may be pondering New Year's resolutions this week as we prepare to bid farewell to 2022.

I am told that making an annual list of resolutions is an old New Year's tradition that dates back to the ancient Romans. The Roman tradition was to promise the god Janus (the patron deity of new beginnings) that they would behave better over the coming year than they had in the past year.

As we know, the Roman Empire is no more, so obviously something went very wrong. Perhaps too many of her citizens made the mistake of resolving to be nicer to the barbarian hordes in the delusion that barbarians were actually goodhearted guys, though maybe a little rough around the edges. (Our own leaders might want to keep this error of judgment in mind as they try to cozy up to certain countries that make no bones about wanting to see us all dead.)

Whatever your promise, if you plan to make one this year, there's a good chance you'll fail to keep it. *The Journal of Clinical Psychology* once did a study that indicates only 46 percent of us manage to stick to a resolution for six months. This compares to a four-percent success rate for people who make no resolutions at all, according to *The Journal*. I'm not sure how you can have a four-percent success rate in keeping a resolution you never made—unless input from career politicians has skewed the results.

In my younger, more idealistic days, I used to make nearly impossible resolutions. For instance, I once resolved to make more of an effort to pick up my odiferous socks off the floor. That lasted about two days (when I finally changed my socks). Other resolutions can have unforeseen consequences. While living as a carefree bachelor many years ago, I resolved to stop leaving crumpled up fast food wrappers all over my apartment. I abandoned that promise two weeks later when I realized the cockroaches were starving.

You may see a pattern here.

None of my resolutions were as creative as those put forward some years ago by *USA Today* writer Bill Mann, who suggested resolving to 1) Collect airsick bags from every major airline and 2) To "make this a cleaner world by emptying the ash trays at my local bus station." You probably wonder if this guy's crazy. I, on the other hand, wonder if we might be distant cousins or something.

Another writer, one Patrick Kiger, offered his heartfelt suggestions for approaching the new year. These included (with my interpretations): "Trust Your Instincts" (for instance, don't travel on airplanes); "Stop Procrastinating" (if you're already on an airplane, get off now!); "Learn to Take Risks" (get back on the airplane); "Forgive Someone" (after all, the stewardess wouldn't have called security if you didn't try to force your way back on the plane as it started to take off); "Tip Generously" (you never know when you might be having dinner in that same detention center in the future); and "Learn One New Thing" (getting tasered isn't as much fun as you might think).

Actually, I stopped making New Year's promises some years ago, mostly because I am now practically perfect in every way. I did, however, approach my wife this year to ask if she planned to make any resolutions.

"Why?" she asked.

"Because if you're having difficulty, I'd be happy to offer a few suggestions," I replied expansively.

So, as it turns out, I do have a New Year's resolution for 2023 and beyond.

I hereby resolve that I will never ever attempt to offer such assistance ever again, so help me God.

**Jim Hallas**

## Riverast Hours of Operation

The offices of the *Riverast News Bulletin* and *Glastonbury Citizen*, located at 87 Nutmeg Lane, Glastonbury, are open Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m.-4 p.m., and can be reached at 860-633-4691. The *Riverast* can be reached any time via email at [bulletin@glcitizen.com](mailto:bulletin@glcitizen.com).

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

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

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RIVEREAST

## News Bulletin

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**Your Town Council**

To the Editor:  
We are not cutting spending but, curtailing spending.

We are experimenting with a new (to East Hampton) process to determine "bottom lines." We will discipline ourselves in the same fashion you make choices as to which groceries to buy weekly at the super market.

We are aware of the crippling effects of a property tax increase.

We are sensitive to the needs and wants of the community and its' people.

We are making a true effort, on the resident's behalf, to be responsible for the spending of your hard-earned dollars.

We pay the same tax as you so we feel the same pain too.

We are available for your suggestions and comments and will listen earnestly and act on your behalf.

We are your Town Council.

**Alison Walck – East Hampton**

*Note: Walck is a member of the East Hampton Town Council.*

**Phonies and Hypocrites**

To the Editor:  
Edmund makes it so easy. My rebuttal letters almost write themselves. Edmund "Mr. Science" Smith really needs to distance himself from the sixth-grade mentality that dictates his world perspectives and communication skills. Edmund, you can call me any name you wish. It's your prerogative. But, when you resort to spelling errors to get your point across in an attempt to look like a tough guy, that even makes me embarrassed for you.

Also, when you call somebody a derisive name, it helps to use a name that links the individual to that name. For example, take "Mr. Science." You were a grade school science teacher (cringe-worthy, I know, but let's continue) with a history of writing letters based on your scientific acumen. My opinion is that your letters are borne out of arrogance, myopia, hypocrisy, and inaccuracy (all progressive liberal staples). Hence, the nickname "Mr. Science." See the connection? Science teacher...crappy science acumen...ergo "Mr. Science". Understand the flow? No? Give it a minute. Conversely, T.Ed "Unibomber" Kozlowski is... "turdish". But if that is what leaked out of your head, so be it. It's a free country (for Democrats anyway). Maybe you can explain to all of us the connection between me and Ted Kaczynski other than the "ski."

And Edmund...what are you doing buying gasoline?!!!! One of the *Rivereast's* staunchest climate change/open border/spotted owl progressive liberals driving a hydrocarbon burning, CO2 emitting vehicle? What's next? Are you going to start raising cattle? You haven't purchased an electric car and upgraded your garage with a charging system? Mayor Pete said "Just do it"! And Mayor Pete wouldn't steer you wrong. Haha...see what I did there, Mr. Science? "Steer" you wrong? A reference to driving and cattle...get it? I didn't think so.

And \$2.79/gallon. Putin Price Reduction.

Phonies and hypocrites.

Regards,  
**Ed Kozlowski – Colchester**

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**Eversource, You Did it Again**

To the Editor:  
On Friday, Dec. 23, we lost power at 5:30 a.m. We called Eversource on Dec. 24 to report the outage and was told it would be restored by 11-11:30 that day. No one came. Constantly called all day Saturday no one would give us a definite time. Finally a rep told us between 5-5:30 that day; again, no one came. Called again that evening was told definitely by 11:45 that night. No one came.

Found out that there were two customers left in Portland without power; one might have been us. The other customer was about five minutes away. Their solution: go to a shelter. We have a dog and shelters don't allow dogs. Were we suppose to leave our dog all in a cold house to die? My husband and I are both elderly (70s and 80s) the temperature was in the 40s inside and outside, no food, no water, everything was ice cold.

Finally, on Sunday, my husband called in the morning and was told the power would be on by 12. It came on by around 11. The temperature was around 34 inside and outside.

Is this how you treat customers especially the elderly and then ask for a 50% increase in our electric bills? Shame on you, Eversource; it's not right but you don't care as long as you make a profit.

**Beverly Ostrow – Portland**

**Colin and COVID**

To the Editor:  
Children sometimes see familiar images in clouds overhead, but they do not then announce that Kermit the Frog is God. Adults post images of Jesus that appear in their lattes or potato chips, as if anyone knows what Jesus looked like. Some New Englanders insist Eastern cougars live here after a fleeting glimpse of a coyote or bobcat, but wildlife biologists are unmoved, needing actual evidence.

Now along comes Marlborough's Colin McNamara. Last week, using his Qanon telescope, he spotted a "4th Reich through the 4th Industrial Revolution" coming at us in the near future. He is alarmed how the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic followed so closely upon the 2019 live role-playing exercise 'Event 201' which tested how a COVID-like pandemic starting in South America would play out. If we were all like Colin and connecting random dots, we might also be alarmed when fire departments practice firefighting in controlled burns. Or emergency medical responders roleplay how a mass casualty event might be handled. In both cases, no one gasps in horror and cries out "My God – look what evil these arsonists and mass murderers are preparing to do!"

Colin further worries the table is being set for another even more deadly pandemic, warning us that Boston University created a COVID

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variant that killed 80% of mice. What Colin left out is that the mice were genetically engineered to be extra susceptible to COVID, and they were given huge initial doses of the virus, far exceeding what a human would ever encounter. Scientists study disease so they can prepare for and even prevent pandemics, just like firefighters and medical responders practice to serve, save, protect and prevent. But Colin does not trust the government. He forgets it is "We the People" that elected the 'government.'

**Edmund Smith – Andover**

**A Quick Thank You**

To the Editor:  
I just wanted to send a quick thank you to all the people at the Andover Town Hall and Public Works department who went out of their way to not only clean up after the storm but also their work before, during, and after to make sure residents were updated and knew what resources were available to them.

The townwide alert system reached out to residents via text message a day prior to the storm to prepare everyone for what was coming, and how to report road and power hazards as they occur. Following the storm, with multiple power outages reported throughout Andover, the town sent out texts, phone calls, and Facebook posts to make residents aware of what was being done, a reminder to check in on your neighbors, as well as an offer for shelter at the town hall and even offered a ride if necessary. Having a large-scale power outage 48 hours before Christmas is far from ideal, but the town (especially the town administrator) went above and beyond in my opinion to make sure everyone stayed safe and informed.

It is great to be a part of such a strong, caring community. Thank you again to everyone who worked to keep us safe and informed.  
Happy New Year!

**Steven Fuss – Andover**

**Dedication Unmatched**

Dear Colchester Residents:  
On Thursday, Dec. 22, a meeting to prepare for Storm Elliot took place with the following individuals: John Jones (public works director), Steven Hoffmann (fire chief), Sean Shoemaker (emergency management director), and myself. The team assessed the storm, prepared

for the worst, and they gave us their best. Of the surrounding communities, we were the first to open a warming shelter for their town. Our restoration success rate exceeded surrounding communities because our public works department cleared the roads to allow Eversource access to faulty power lines. We thank our public works department and first responders for a job well done.

Yet, there were members and surrogates of the Democratic Town Committee being overly negative. I was criticized for closing Town Hall and only keeping limited staff. Not only was I advised by the public works director and emergency management director to make the call; I believe in keeping my employees safe. One individual claimed that our interim public works director was not qualified for the job. John Jones is the best public works director we have had in a very long time. He and I have already addressed some of the failures of the previous administration.

My administration has allocated the most for tree removal and trimming (\$100K) than any prior administration. John Jones and I have identified not only the need, but the liability associated with the lack of progress over the years. Hundreds of trees have already been removed and trimmed. Recently, we identified a Town Hall oil tank that was facing DEEP violations, which could have been easily avoided if the previous administration had inspected it.

Politically motivated attacks done by keyboard warriors will not diminish the efforts put forth by our wonderful team.

Sincerely,  
**Andreas Bisbikos  
Colchester First Selectman**

**2022 Reflections**

To the Editor:  
As 2022 reaches its nadir, it's a good time for reflection. The world is not the same as it was. Relentless viruses, inflation, recession, energy costs, Ukraine's war and Hebron's own civil war make 2022 unequivocally different.

Hebron's civil war has pitted the "stewards of the town...agents of the people" against the electorate, promoting a BOS Public Works agenda over neighborhood concerns. Abraham Lincoln's definition of democracy as a rule "of the people, for the people and by the people"

*See Letters, page 6*

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★ Letters cont. from page 5

seemingly no longer exists in Hebron. Town leaders have abandoned American representative government by excluding town citizens from the decision-making process.

Fortunately, there are still democracy's advocates in Hebron. Kevin and Jean Tulumieri stand out for their efforts to preserve Hebron's environment and history, by posing significant questions for consideration. For over a year, the Tulumieris have written editorials and attended meetings to save their neighborhood. They have been honest, informed, and polite, but have been perceived as a threat by the-powers-that-be earning them the moniker "the f\*\*\*ing neighbors" Sadly, the town has turned this gerundive phrase into a future tense action plan!

Failing to act as responsible representatives of Hebron's voter, the BOS have brought Hebron to a critical flashpoint. Considering hiring a spin doctor to sell rather than educate citizens, while spending money for a plan without voter approval violates the public's trust. Unbiased information needs to be made public. The Tulumieris have exhibited exquisite restraint and respect while trying to educate townspeople about potential environmental and historic concerns. They are responsible citizens rendering valuable service to Hebron both now and in the future. In an age of uncivil civics, the Tulumieris provide a model for all, especially the BOS.

Hopefully, 2023 can see a return of American Democracy and reason to end this current civil war.

John Baron – Hebron

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Not a Billionaire

To the Editor:

Now joining the race to indict Trump, Tax Fraud. There was a very shady charitable deduction claim for \$500,000 and said it was cash. No receipts. Just cash. \$70,000 in one year to "style his hair." There were cash gifts and transactions declared as loans. The presidential salary he repeatedly said he wasn't going to take? He took it. Every cent. Trump wrote off his \$130,000 hush money payment to Stormy Daniels on his taxes as a "business expense." Trump's tax returns were not under audit. In fact, they were supposed to be. The IRS had started an audit of just one of Trump's tax returns while he was serving as President. Charles Rettig, the Trump-appointed IRS Commissioner, and Steve Mnuchin, Secretary of the Treasury, were running the IRS like a corrupt arm of Donald Trump's criminal enterprise. The IRS put James Comey and Andy McCabe under intense audit during Trump's presidency. Obama and Biden's were audited each year, per mandatory audits after Nixon's VP, Spiro Agnew, was found taking in bags of money. No wonder Trump wanted to keep his taxes hidden. Not a Billionaire. Not even close.

2015 Income: \$-31,736,841 Federal Taxes: \$641,931

2016 Income: \$-32,190,169 Federal Taxes: \$750

2017 Income: \$-12,819,400 Federal Taxes: \$750

2018 Income: \$24,395,093 Federal Taxes: \$999,466

2019 Income: \$4,443,503 Federal Taxes: \$133,445

2020 Income: \$-4,694,058 Federal Taxes: \$0

Annie Steinbrecher – Marlborough

Picture This

To the Editor:

"Picture this, a day in December. Picture this, freezing cold weather..."-Blondie

On a cold day in 2034, you bundle up for a walk in the Raymond Brook Preserve. But as you attempt pulling in, Kinney Road is gone. All you see is a floating grid. Sitting there, absorbing reality, it dawns on you. Remember 2021-2022? The intense anger thrown at opponents of the big development? Remember the town maps of Kinney Road that showed nothing? No wildlife habitats, middle stream, historic stonewalls, laneways, foundations from the 1800's, mill sites, ancient trees, prime farmland or soils, no GA water, nothing but a white void on paper.

Your thoughts return to the Sept. 19, 2022 Land Developer meeting where 50 minutes were spent telling people the complex had been moved, left, then right, then left, then center. The same meeting where concerned citizens were publicly insulted and privately you were told the middle stream, on Kinney Road, did not exist.

Maybe these people were onto something. Maybe Gene Roddenberry and Gene Dolgoff had been to Hebron in the 1960s. Maybe Kinney Road doesn't actually exist. Never did. Maybe, Kinney Road and all her unheard residents were merely holograms. Nonexistent people living in a nonexistent ecosystem cut off from the rest of Hebron. The elephant, Horton, heard the hoo on a dust puff, on a clover flower top. However, on a Holodeck, the doors are shut, no one hears you scream. The reality exists until the computer malfunctions.

So, if we built a highly pollutive, industrial complex, hidden from view, above a nonexis-

tent stream, on land with nothing vital to offer, was it so wrong to poison nonexistent people's well water?

Backing the car onto Church Street, you head home to ask your wife. #save17

Jean Tulumieri – Amston

Crucial Vaccine Update

To the Editor:

Many seniors are risking hospitalization and death by missing out on the latest COVID-19 "bivalent" vaccine boosters. These booster vaccines have been available since Sept. 2, 2022, and dramatically increase protection against the latest strains of COVID infection.

Earlier boosters gave some protection, but are not as effective against current strains. The most recent data posted on the Centers for Disease Control website last Friday send a clear message. People aged 80+ are three times as likely to die of COVID-19 if they have had the initial two vaccines without the new bivalent booster (even if they have had an older booster), compared to those who have had the bivalent booster. Unvaccinated people age 80+ have over 14 times the COVID death rate of those who are vaccinated and have had the bivalent booster. For seniors aged 65 to 79, the bivalent booster vaccinations also gave much more protection than older boosters.

Thankfully, the CDC reports that 63.1% of Middlesex County residents aged 65 or over have had their bivalent booster vaccines. If you haven't yet, please consider getting your bivalent booster immediately. You can arrange vaccinations through your pharmacy or medical office. (Note: bivalent boosters are recommended for everyone 6 months and older, but are especially important for all seniors and those with medical conditions that also give them high risk of severe COVID-19 infections).

A reminder: over a million Americans have died from COVID-19 infections. The New York Times last Friday reported an average of 422 daily COVID deaths over the past two weeks – a rate exceeding 154,000 deaths a year. Covid is still present and dangerous, and infection rates are increasing; the bivalent booster may save your life.

Eric Rosenberg, MD, FACP Retired Internal Medicine and Geriatrics Physician

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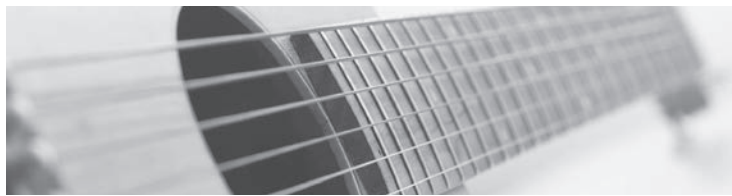


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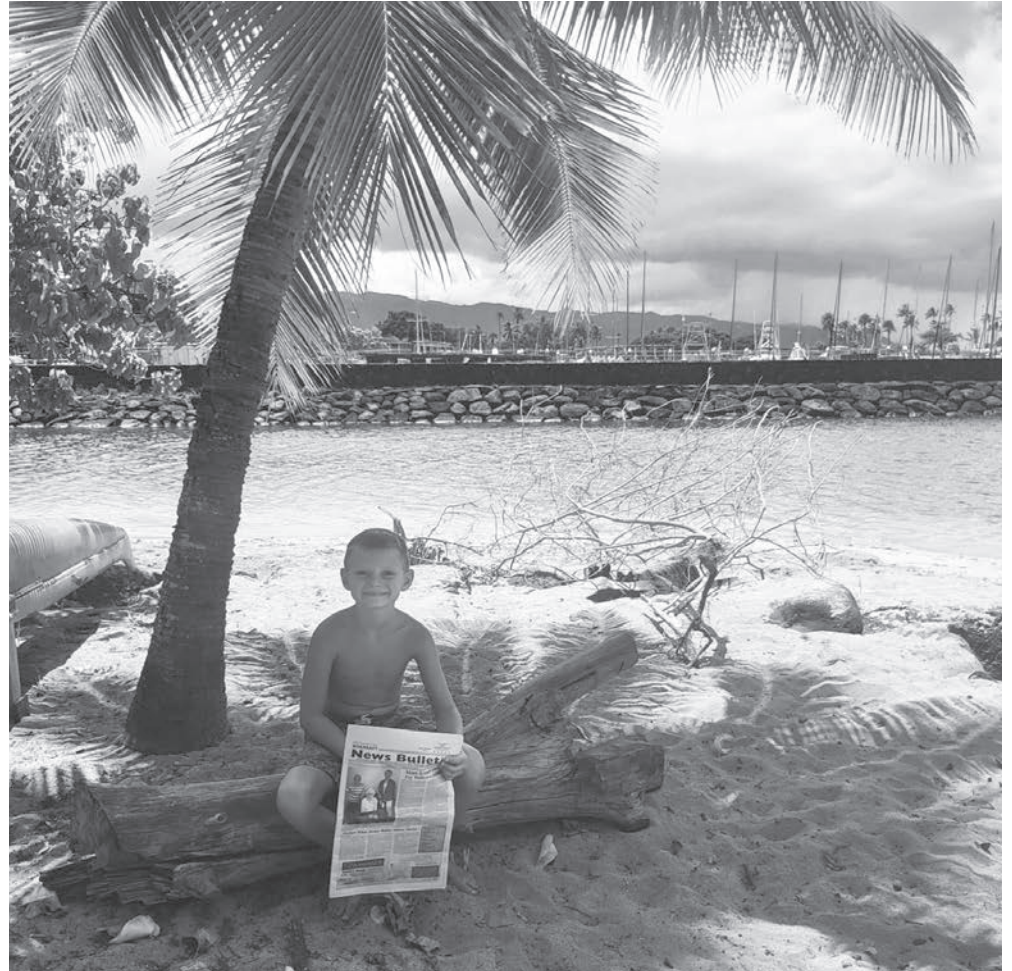




**The Eagle Has Landed...** Enola and Vernon Boyce of East Hampton visited the site of the launching of the Double Eagle II in Presque Isle, Maine. It was the first successful transatlantic hot air balloon crossing, leaving Presque Isle, Maine on Aug. 11, 1978, and landing in Miserey, near Paris, France, on Aug. 17, 1978.

## Where in the World is the *Rivereast*?

Hey! Are you taking a vacation or a day trip soon? Bring the *Rivereast* along with you, snap a picture with it, and email the photo and your address to [bulletin@glcitizen.com](mailto:bulletin@glcitizen.com).



**Hello Hawaii...** The Kennedy family of Columbia were recently in Oahu, Hawaii – specifically, the North Shore. Pictured is 8-year-old Hunter Kennedy enjoying life on the beach!



**Lovely Lighthouse...** Karen Hartenstein of Marlborough is pictured with the *Rivereast* at the Grand-Anse Acadian lighthouse near Caraquet, New Brunswick. Hartenstein recently returned from a two-week road trip through eastern Maine and three Canadian provinces, including five days on Prince Edward Island during Hurricane Fiona.



**The Paper Goes to Puerto Plata...** Brian and Sharon Kujawski of East Hampton recently took a vacation to Puerto Plata, in the Dominican Republic.

# Where in the World?

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# During Storm, Thousands Lost Power

By Jack Lakowsky

Marlborough Emergency Management Director Todd Gianetti, along with his crews and Eversource's, had the town mostly recovered from last week's storm within a day and a half. Fallen trees and power lines blocked seven roads at one point, and about 35% of homes – nearly 2,700 customers, according to Eversource's website – lost power, Gianetti told the *Rivereast*.

As of Wednesday, all power had been restored in Marlborough, according to Eversource, though there were still dozens of outages across Connecticut.

"There were quite a few big pieces" that needed cleaning up, he said. On Wednesday, crews were still working to clear some left-over debris.

After restoring the majority of power to residents, there were still "quite a few stragglers" needing attention.

Not all of the outages occurred at the storm's peak, but afterwards, when weakened trees or power lines fell. The invasive emerald ash borer, Gianetti said, worsened things. The bugs kill trees they infest, making them more likely to fall.

"It wasn't the storm of the century or anything; we just have a lot of weak trees," he said.

To better get information to the public in real time, Gianetti said that, at some point, local emergency management will have its

own webpage, which will have contact information and where local warming centers are located.

Eversource, Gianetti said, was "on top of things."

In other parts of the state, some residents did not share that experience.

A Ridgefield woman told *CT Insider* Eversource stopped by a day after the storm to assess the situation, but "even though someone was here and acknowledged that they could see the problem, the [help] ticket has still been canceled and reopened."

"We understand how difficult it is to be without power, especially with the extreme cold and on a holiday weekend," Jamie Ratliff, a spokeswoman for Eversource, said in an email to *Insider*.

"Our crews continue to work tirelessly to complete the restoration for those customers still without power," she wrote. "These final outages often require extensive repairs that are labor-intensive and time-consuming."

Statewide, Eversource said in a release Sunday it had reconnected most of its customers across the 149 communities it serves in Connecticut. Work over the weekend included the restoration of power to more than 201,000 customers "despite freezing temperatures and hazardous winds." More than 1,100 crews were deployed across the state.

## Congregational Church News & Notes

Sunday worship services at Marlborough Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, located at 35 S. Main St., are at 10 a.m. Childcare for infants and toddlers is provided downstairs in the nursery; however, children are always welcome at the worship service.

**Faith Formation (Bible Study)** is led by Pastor Bob Faulhaber and meets Thursdays at 10:30 a.m. upstairs in the lounge. All are welcome.

AA meets downstairs in the Great Hall Wednesdays with two meetings, one at noon and another at 7:30 p.m.

**Sunday, Jan. 1:** Holy Communion will be served, with worship led by the Rev. Val Seaver, who is starting her ministry this day as the

church's full-time settled pastor. Communion is open to all, regardless of church affiliation, including children, with parental guidance. The bread used is gluten-free.

**Second Blessings Thrift Shop:** Closed until Feb. 3, to set up for late winter and spring selling. Donations will be accepted in January; call the church office to make arrangements. The shop also sells items 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 on the church or its programs, call the church office at 860-295-9050.

## 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 stjohfisher30@yahoo.com.

**COVID-19 Protocol:** For the fully vaccinated, masks are not required. For the unvaccinated, masks continue to be encouraged. 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.

**Family Faith Formation:** This is a new program to focus on active faith formation within the family is underway for families of kindergarten through middle school students; registration is required on the church's Faith Formation website and will close at the end of September.

**Confirmation Community:** The church's active 9th- and 10th-grade confirmation pro-

gram continues. Registration is required as well.

**Adult Worship Choir:** Meets Wednesdays from 5:30-7 p.m. All are welcome to join. More information can be found on the church website.

**Community Outreach and Service:** Food drives are held the second full weekend of each month for Marlborough Food Bank; you may also bring non-perishable 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. The Community Garden to benefit Marlborough Food Bank continues to supply fresh produce each week and volunteers are always welcome. Other scheduled service opportunities can be found on the church website and are scheduled monthly.

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

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★ *Coach Shoves Student, cont. from page 1*

armed security, talks kindled in the wake of the Uvalde mass school shooting. After lengthy, bitter, and sometimes deeply personal debate, schools went ahead with hiring the guards, and the council agreed after shaving about \$20,000 grand from the position's proposed salary.

In November, East Hampton police responded to East Hampton Middle School after receiving reports of a student allegedly pulling a knife on another student. Police said after investigating they charged the juvenile with second-degree threatening and breach of peace.

It was the second instance this calendar year of an East Hampton student being accused of threatening behavior. In the spring, a student reportedly made racist, antisemitic, homophobic and violent threats against students and a teacher on Snapchat.

In response to the spring threat, Smith told the *Rivereast* on Tuesday schools are bringing in to speak to middle school.

More recently, some local teens tore up high school property with their cars.

Wins for the district include the high school girls volleyball team winning their first state championship and work finishing on the high school's new athletic fields. Local voters also resoundingly passed the district's current budget and approved a multimillion-dollar roof replacement at the middle school.

In his introduction on the district's athletic department webpage, Russell writes:

"We believe our students should understand that the time spent in high school athletics is worth the commitment and sacrifice they put forth and that the benefits for participants are both social, and emotional and physical. It is a commitment to foster and offer programs that create lasting positive impressions on our student-athletes and create feelings of pride in being a 'Bellringer for Life.'"

### Correction

A story last week on a Marlborough Board of Education meeting misattributed questions about the role of the school resource officer at Marlborough Elementary School to board member Angela Colontino. They were actually asked by school board member Anna Holden.

The *Rivereast* regrets the error.

### Historical Society Calendars Available

Marlborough Historical Society has announced 2023 calendars are now available. This year's theme is 'Historic Newspaper Articles.'

The cost is \$20 and can be purchased online at www.marlboroughhistory.org/store or by mail at MHS, P.O. Box 351, Marlborough, CT 06447. All proceeds go to support preservation initiatives and upcoming events by the Marlborough Historical Society.

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### Residents Sought to Serve

The Marlborough Board of Selectmen is seeking residents who are interested in serving on the town's various boards and commissions.

While applications are accepted at any time for all boards and commissions, the selectmen are providing notice and encouraging residents to apply to fill current vacancies on the following boards and commissions:

Economic Development Commission (two alternates); Conservation Commission (alternate); Water Pollution Control Authority (two alternates); and Nature Trails and Sidewalks Commission (alternate).

Those interested in applying can complete

the application form at marlboroughct.net; the link for the form is at the bottom of the page on the left-hand side.

In accordance with the town charter, and based on the current composition of the various boards and commissions, party affiliation or other qualifications may or may not be considered when appointments are made. People who are unaffiliated and those who belong to minor parties, as well as Democrats and Republicans, to apply.

Residents are welcome to attend any of the public board and commission meetings to learn more.

### 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.

**Monday, Jan. 2:** Senior center closed in observance of New Year's Day.

**Tuesday, Jan. 3:** Grocery Shopping, 8:30 a.m.-noon; Quilling, 9 a.m.-noon; Meals-on-Wheels, noon.

**Wednesday, Jan. 4:** Not Just Quilters, 9 a.m.-2 p.m.; Assistance, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.; 8-Ball Pool, 10 a.m.-noon; Meals-on-Wheels, noon; Congregate Meal, noon. It's Nationalyoury Soup Day! Menu: New England clam chowder, oyster crackers, potato crumb fish/tartar sauce, rice pilaf, green and yellow squash, fruited yogurt; setback, 1-4 p.m.

**Thursday, Jan. 5:** Tai Chi, 10:30-11:30 a.m.; blood drive, 1-6 p.m.

**Friday, Jan. 6:** 8-Ball Pool, 10 a.m.-noon; Assistance, 10 a.m.-noon; Commission on Aging meeting, 11 a.m. at Town Hall; Congregate Meal, noon. Menu: orange juice, barbecued

pulled pork, sweet potato wedges, seasoned spinach, frosted cake.

**Congregate Meals:** All meals are served with milk, bread and margarine. Suggested donation: \$3 or what you can afford.

**Transportation:** Available Monday through Friday, 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Transportation available to the senior center, shopping, and medical and non-medical appointments. A 36-hour advance registration is required. Masks are also required, as well as appropriate distancing.

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

**Weather-Related Closings/Late Openings:** In instances of inclement weather, tune to WFSB-TV 3 or NBC Connecticut for the latest.

### Parks and Rec Programs

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

**Youth Programs: Netto Indoor Soccer:** Indoor soccer for fifth- and sixth-graders. Games will begin week of Jan. 9, and will be played after school on Mondays and Wednesdays at Marlborough Elementary School. Games will conclude at 4:30 p.m. Fee for this program is \$75 and participants will receive a T-shirt.

**Sparkling Spinners:** Tuesdays, Jan. 3-March 15, 4:15-4:55 p.m., for ages 3-5. This is a pre-ballet, creative movement class, held at Dance Dynamics in Hebron. Registration fee is \$150.

**Tiny Twirlers Dance Class:** Thursdays, Jan. 5-March 16, 5:15-5:45 p.m., or Saturdays, Jan. 7-March 18, 9-9:30 a.m., for ages 2-3 with caregiver. Children will be introduced to basic dance moves, work on their motor skills, and develop a sense of music. Class held at Dance Dynamics in Hebron. Registration fee is \$130.

**Hip-Hop/Jazz:** For ages 9-11. Thursdays, 6:45-7:30 p.m., from Jan. 5-Feb. 16. Class held at Dance Dynamics in Hebron. Registration fee is \$129.

**Funky Tumblers:** For ages 4-7. Saturdays, Jan. 7-March 14, 11:15 a.m.-noon. This is a basic tumbling and hip-hop class, held at Dance Dynamics in Hebron. Registration fee is \$146.

**Lego: Winter Wonderland Engineering:**

For grades K-4. Tuesdays, Jan. 17-Feb. 28, 3:15-4:445 p.m., at MES. Fee: \$120/resident, \$125/non-resident.

**Acrylic Landscape Painting:** For grades 1 and 2. Wednesdays, 3:30-5 p.m., Feb. 1-29, at MES. All materials are provided. Students are encouraged to bring a snack. Fee is \$90/residents, \$95/non-residents.

**Adult Programs: Zumba:** Thursdays, 6:30-7:30 p.m., at MES. Cost is a \$10 drop-in fee each week.

**Adult Tap:** For ages 18 and up. Tuesdays, Jan. 5-March 16, 8-8:45 p.m., at Dance Dynamics in Hebron. Registration fee is \$180.

**Self-Defense:** For ages 16 and up. Thursdays, Jan. 5-Feb. 9, 7-7:45 p.m., at Champions Karate in Colchester. Registration fee is \$80.00.

**Adult Drop-In Volleyball:** Thursdays, 8-10 p.m., at MES. Fee is \$5 per week to drop-in. Session runs through June.

**Adult Drop-In Basketball:** Sundays, 8-10 a.m., at MES, for ages 18 and up. Fee: \$5 per week. Session runs through March.

**Dog Obedience - Polite Dog Manners:** Tuesdays, Feb. 7-March 14, 5:30-6:30 p.m., at Marlborough Senior Center. These are beginner-level classes for dogs 5 months and older. Fee: \$120/resident, \$125/non-resident.

**Trips: New York Rangers vs. New Jersey Devils:** Saturday, Jan. 7, 1 p.m., at the Prudential Center. Trip includes charter bus, tickets to the game (lower bowl seating). Registration fee is \$235. Bus leaves from Glastonbury Park and Ride.

**UConn Huskies vs. St. John Red Storm (Men's Basketball):** Saturday, Feb. 25, noon. Trip includes charter bus to Madison Square Garden, tickets to the game and free time in New York. Fee is \$109 for baseline seats or \$140 for sideline seats. Bus leaves from Glastonbury Park and Ride.



**And the Winner Is...** Rob Gnocchi of Marlborough was the winner of an 8,000-watt Generac portable generator, which was recently raffled off by the Marlborough Lions Club. The generator has features such as a pushbutton electric start, hours counter and 120V/240V outlets. Gnocchi will also receive the services of an electrician to install a circuit breaker panel interlock and the cabling needed to hook up the generator. The drawing took place at Blish Park on Dec. 17. Fundraisers such as this enable the Marlborough Lions to support local charities and services along with services provided to peoples throughout the world. For further information on how you can become a Lion please call Marlborough Lion President Megan Lloyd at 413-687-5537.



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# Schools Chief Prepares Budget Proposal

By Michael Sinkewicz

The RHAM Board of Education reviewed a variety of items during a meeting earlier this month that will likely impact the 2023-24 budget proposal.

Superintendent of Schools Colin McNamara, who took over as head of schools during the summer, is embarking on his first budget season in the district.

During the regional school board's Dec. 19 meeting, McNamara said there were "many factors influencing" the 2023-24 budget.

Specifically, he stated that inflation will have a "significant impact" on the district.

McNamara updated the board through a slideshow presentation, which included status reports for different areas of the district and a timeline for the budget proposal moving forward.

At the beginning of the presentation, McNamara shared that although enrollment at both RHAM schools is decreasing, it's dropping at a slow rate.

This year, there are 369 students in grades 7-8, down from 397 in 2021. For grades 9-12, enrollment dropped to 823 to 819.

Projecting into the future, the district expects to reach a low point for enrollment in 2026-2027 before increasing once again.

Starting in November, the superintendent began meeting with school leaders to review department needs and develop the budget book. Following the December meeting with the education board, there will be subcommittee meetings before McNamara makes his budget presentation to the board on Jan. 23.

Currently, the public hearing and special school board meeting to set the referendum

amount is scheduled for April 3, with the annual budget meeting penciled in for May 1. The budget referendum would then be on May 2.

McNamara identified a variety of objectives in planning the budget. Some of these include supporting the academic and social emotional learning needs of students, as well as sustaining schools that provide opportunities for different career paths after graduating.

There are a number of factors impacting how the schools will achieve their goals. Due to inflation, many costs are expected to increase going forward, McNamara said.

For example, the price of diesel fuel, natural gas, Eversource delivery fees and software will likely rise.

Another potential factor influencing the budget is aging equipment and technology. McNamara identified a baby grand piano and replacing SMART boards as two items in this section.

For special education, there will be a decrease in magnet tuition, because of student transfers or from students returning back to RHAM. However, there will likely be an increase for transportation costs due to fuel costs and from a driver shortage.

Although the final number may change, currently, McNamara is budgeting for an increase in health insurance. He also shared that there are contractual obligations that are increasing.

As far as proposed changes, McNamara suggested moving a couple grant funded programs and positions into the operating budget. He proposed removing a family consumer science position and adding an instructional coach/curriculum coordinator.

McNamara gave an update on the capital bud-

get, as well. For 2022-23, the capital improvement budget was \$504,619 – a 68% increase from 2021-22. Overall, the combined operating and capital budget was a 1.22% decrease from 2021-22.

During the meeting, the board also unanimously agreed to enter into a contract with EASTCONN to develop a strategic plan for the district.

Ideally, the plan would align the goals at all levels of the district, form the board level, to faculty, to students.

McNamara stated that the district is aiming to have a three-year plan by the start of the 2023-24 school year. Entering into the new contract would cost around \$17,000, he said.

Diane Dugas, director of K-12 and reading and learning at EASTCONN, gave a brief presentation to the board, explaining what would go into crafting the plan and how it should act

as a "north star" for the district.

"The purpose of a strategic plan is to serve as a roadmap," she said. "It should guide your decisions as a board moving forward."

Next month, focus groups of students, parents and community members will potentially be formed to help identify what the district should emphasize moving forward.

"What are the district's strengths? What are its weaknesses?" Dugas expressed.

Michael Morris, chairman of the education board, stated that receiving faculty input will also be crucial.

"If we don't have that buy-in, then it's almost a wasted exercise and I would hate for that to be the case," he said.

If the district fails to receive a consensus from the majority of the key stakeholders, specifically the faculty, then the plan will likely be ineffective, he said.

## 'Welcome 2 Reality' Social Media Presentations Planned

Welcome 2 Reality, a Connecticut-based company that provides a variety of services to children and families, will give two 45-minute presentations early next year that are designed to increase awareness and strengthen skills in responding to vulnerabilities of individuals related to social media, internet safety, and media literacy.

The presentations are sponsored by AHM Youth & Family Services' Coalition for a Healthy & Empowered Community.

Topics to be discussed include: internet safety, cyberbullying, media marketing and advertisement, music's impact on values and behavior, and the desensitization of violence via video games. Risk factors associated with social media and technology will be identified and reasonable alternatives that can lessen people's overexposure to these outlets will be provided.

Parents and caregivers of children and teens are invited to attend.

The first presentation, "Social Media and Our Youth," will be Tuesday, Jan. 31, 2023, and will cover the benefits/drawbacks, interpretation, legal ramifications of social media and how to be responsible with social media. The second presentation, "Support for Parents and Caregivers," will be on Tuesday, Feb. 28, and will discuss strategies how to monitor technology use at home; giving structure and support with clear

boundaries; giving access or freedom in increments. Parent concerns will be addressed on topics such as internet addiction, addictive technology (cell phone, fear of missing out – a.k.a. F.O.M.O.), video-gaming and overstimulation.

Each presentation will be from 7-8 p.m. via Zoom. There is no cost to attend but space is limited to 40 registrations. To register, email AHM Prevention Coordinator Jenn Boehler at jenniferb@ahmyouth.org. Note: if registrations do not exceed 15 people, the presentation will be canceled.

For additional information, visit [ahmyouth.org/chec-coalition-committee](http://ahmyouth.org/chec-coalition-committee).

## Cocoa With a Cop

AHM Youth & Family Services is hosting Cocoa With a Cop on Saturday, Jan. 7, from 9-11 a.m., at the Marlborough Country Bakery, 8 Independence Drive, Marlborough.

All are invited to come mingle with local officers, receive a stress-relieving police car, and get a free mug (while supplies last).

This event is sponsored by AHM's Coalition for a Healthy & Empowered Community (CHEC) and paid for by the Drug-Free Communities Grant. For more information, visit [ahmyouth.org/programs-services/prevention-programs](http://ahmyouth.org/programs-services/prevention-programs) and follow AHM CHEC on Facebook.

## Family Resource Center Winter Programs

The AHM Family Resource Center will offer the following winter programs for young children and families starting in January. Registration is online at [ahmyouth.org/programs-services/family-resource-center](http://ahmyouth.org/programs-services/family-resource-center). Financial aid is available for families who qualify; email Tressa Giordano for details at [tressag@ahmyouth.org](mailto:tressag@ahmyouth.org). For more information about any of these programs, visit [www.ahmyouth.org](http://www.ahmyouth.org), contact Becky Murray at 860-573-1260, or contact Laura Beeler at 860-228-0871 or [laurab@ahmyouth.org](mailto:laurab@ahmyouth.org).

children age birth-5 and adults. Cost for the eight-week program is \$125/family. This is an early childhood music program facilitated by a trained music teacher with singing, movement, rhythm and instruments.

**Fun with Dinosaurs:** Mondays, Jan. 9-Feb. 27, 9:30-10:30 a.m., for children ages 1 ½-5 and adults. Younger siblings are welcome. There will be dinosaur activities, books, games and a snack. Cost is \$45/family for the six-week session.

**Parenting Workshop:** Tuesdays, Jan. 17-31, 7:30-8:30 p.m., via Zoom. Appropriate for parents with children of all ages. Topics to be covered include using encouragement, naming emotions, reasoning, involvement, communication and humor. Class participants will receive the book *E.N.R.I.C.H. Your Relationship with Your Child* by Dr. Debbie Krue-negel-Farr. Krue-negel-Farr is a parent coach, consultant, and educator with a Ph.D. in research, human development and family studies. She also previously worked in Hebron as the AHM Family Resource Center coordinator. This workshop is free but registration is required; to do so, email Becky Murray at [beckym@ahmyouth.org](mailto:beckym@ahmyouth.org).

**Play and Learn Groups:** Thursdays, 10-11:15 a.m., from Jan. 12-March 16, at Gil-ead Hill School in Hebron, for children age birth-5 and adults. The program includes crafts, free play with materials in the Family Resource Center, (trucks, train table, play kitchen, puzzles, dress-up and more) circle time, snack, and information about parenting and child development. All enrolled families will be offered a free developmental screening for their child. Cost is \$70/family for the 10-week session.

**First Steps in Music Class:** Wednesdays starting Jan. 18, 9:30-10:15 a.m., at the AHM building, 25 Pendleton Drive, Hebron, for

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## Soccer Registration Deadline Approaches

Portland Soccer Club's winter soccer registration is open through Thursday, Jan. 5. Sign up at [clubs.bluesombrero.com/portlandsoccerclub](http://clubs.bluesombrero.com/portlandsoccerclub). The season will run Jan. 7-March 11.

The club is offering two indoor soccer experiences this winter. They are:

**U6-U8:** Birth year 2015-17. Cost is \$40. Players will participate in one-hour Futsal sessions on Saturdays (at 1 or 2 p.m.) at Gildersleeve School.

**U9-U14 Indoor Soccer and Futsal:** Birth

year 2008-2014. Cost is \$50. Players will participate in one-hour sessions of either futsal on Saturday (Gildersleeve School), or indoor soccer on Sunday (Oakwood indoor soccer facility in Glastonbury, field number 3), or both in some weeks. Times for futsal on Saturdays are 2 p.m., 3 p.m. or 4 p.m. Times for Sunday indoor soccer are 4 or 5 p.m.

Futsal is a fast-paced, passing- and foot-skill-oriented game. Dedicated futsal Goals and a heavier ball are used.

## Watch *Elf*, Have Maple Spaghetti

St. Mary Youth Group in Portland invites teens in grades 7-12 to come Saturday, Jan. 7, at 6 p.m., to watch *Elf* and try some of his favorite foods.

If you always wanted to try spaghetti with maple syrup, this is the place to be. For those less sugar inclined, there will also be marinara sauce. Since elves try to stick to the four main food groups of candy, candy canes, candy corn

and syrup, there will also be plenty of those to enjoy.

The movie will be shown in the Parish Hall at the Church of St. Mary on 51 Freestone Ave. Teens and their families are also welcome to come for the Teen Mass at 5 p.m.

Registration is not required but welcome. For more information, contact Sandy Franco at 860-395-8498 or [SFranco@comcast.net](mailto:SFranco@comcast.net).

## Parks and Rec. News & Notes

Parks and Recreation is offering the following. To register or for full program descriptions, visit [portland.recdesk.com](http://portland.recdesk.com). For more information, call 860-342-6757 or email [adionne@portlandct.org](mailto:adionne@portlandct.org).

**Adult Drop-In Programs: Volleyball:** Wednesdays at Gildersleeve School. Non-competitive play is 5-6:30 p.m., and competitive play is 6:30-8 p.m.

**Men's Drop-In Basketball:** Tuesdays, 7:30-

9 p.m., at Portland Middle School. Watch for details on Women's Drop-In Basketball, coming soon.

**Kids' Blast After School Program:** Mondays-Fridays, 3-6 p.m., at Brownstone Intermediate School, for grades K-6. Cost to attend is \$18 a day. There are currently openings for January, purchase a Kids' Blast membership on the Parks and Rec. website, email [adionne@portlandct.org](mailto:adionne@portlandct.org) or call 860-342-6757.

## Portland Library News & Notes

Portland Library, 20 Freestone Ave., has announced the following events. Registration required for all programs unless noted. For more info, to register, and for full program descriptions, visit [www.portlandlibraryct.org](http://www.portlandlibraryct.org) or call 860-342-6770. The library is also on Facebook and Instagram.

**Hours:** Monday through Thursday, 10 a.m.-8 p.m.; Friday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Masks are optional.

**Holiday Closings:** The library will be closed Saturday, Dec. 31, through Monday, Jan. 2.

**Youth Programs: Drop-In Playdates:** Tuesdays and Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m., Dec. 20 and 21, for ages birth through 5 and their caregivers. This will be an hour of socialization and open play with story room toys. No registration is required.

**Save the Date – Read & Recycle:** Saturday, Jan. 14, from 10 a.m.-noon. All are welcome to bring in gently used books, DVDs, CDs and puzzles.

**Winter Reading Challenge: Smitten with Mittens:** Monday, Jan. 9 through Friday, March 3. This year's theme is inspired by Jan Brett's picture book version of the classic folk tale "The Mitten." Visit the library on or after Jan. 9 and get a mitten to color and hang on our bulletin board. Each time you check out materials in January and February (up to once per day), the library will add a new winter animal to your mitten. Once you've added all eight animals from the story, you will have completed the challenge and will win a small prize.

**Special Events: Save the Dates:** Wednesday, Jan. 25: Mitten PJ Storytime and Activities; Saturday, Feb. 4: Take Your Child to the Library Day; Friday, Feb. 10: Family Fort Night and Nocturnal Animal Hunt; Tuesday, Feb. 21: Readers' Theater: *The Mitten*; Saturday, Feb. 25: Wildlife in Winter program from White Memorial Conservation Center.

**Winter Storytimes:** Registration required. The schedule is: Preschool Storytime, Tuesdays at 10:30 a.m., Jan. 10-Feb. 28; Storytime for Toddlers and Tots: Mother Goose on the Loose, Wednesdays at 10:15 a.m. or 11:15 a.m., Jan. 11-March 1.

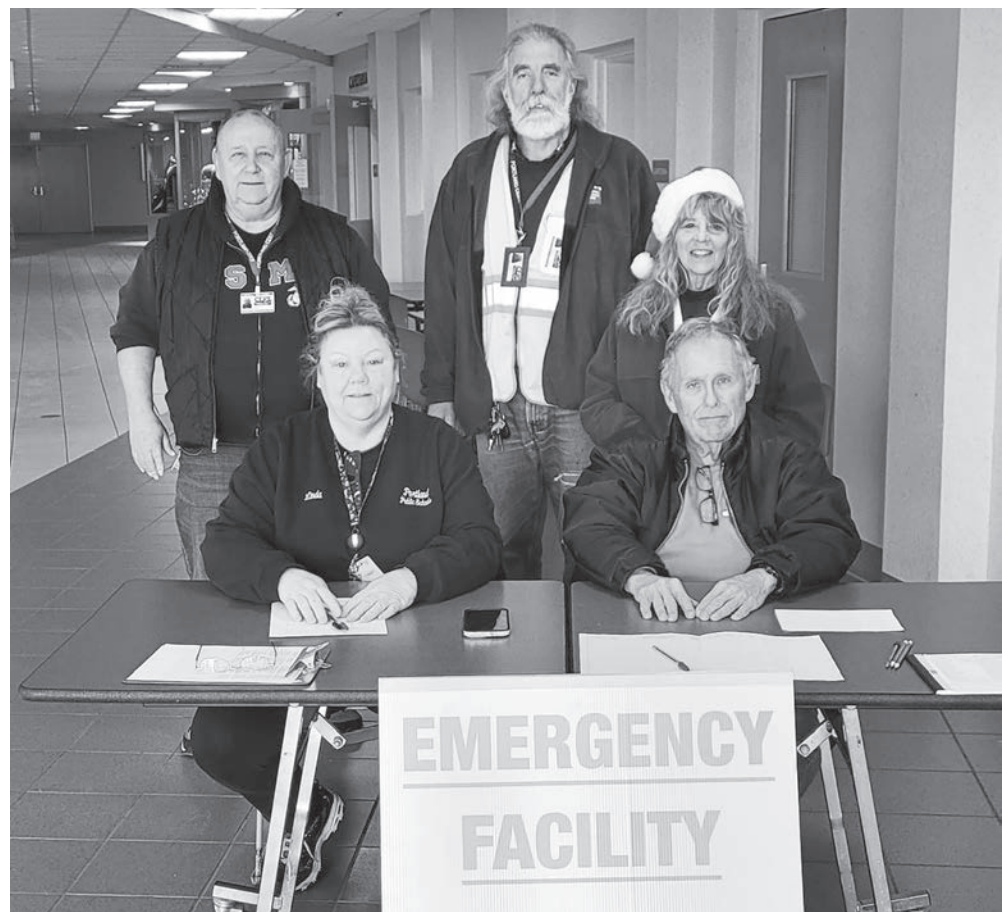
## Holiday Book Store

The Friends of the Portland Library Holiday Book Store is open through the end of the month in the Second-Hand Prose Book sale area at the Portland Library during regular library hours.

The sale features a variety of used books, puzzles, children's books, holiday books, games and DVDs.

All proceeds benefit programs funded by the Friends, including the library's DVD collection, Museum Pass Program and a variety of children's, family and adult programs held throughout the year.

Visit [www.friendsofportlandlibraryct.org](http://www.friendsofportlandlibraryct.org) for more information or email questions to [friendsoftheportlandlibrary@gmail.com](mailto:friendsoftheportlandlibrary@gmail.com).



Last week's rain and wind storm led to nearly 300 power outages in town. Pictured here, emergency volunteers help out at the high school warming center.

## Hundreds Lose Power in Storm

By Jack Lakowsky

According to the first in a series of updates from Portland First Selectman Ryan Curley, last week's Christmas weekend storm caused nearly 300 outages in town.

Curley posted regular updates to his office's Facebook on Christmas Eve.

Curley and Portland Public Works director Ryan O'Halpin kept in contact with Ever-

source, at one point "pressing" them to the Penfield Hill/Fox Run area. Eversource got to that area around 3 p.m.

The town opened a warming shelter at Portland High School for anyone needing warmth, an outlet to charge their phone or take a hot shower.

Many outages, about 250, were in the Old Marlborough Turnpike area.

## Senior Center News & Notes

The Waverly Senior Center, 7 Waverly Ave., is open Monday-Thursday, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., and Friday, 9 a.m.-noon. For more information or to register, call 860-342-6760.

**Food Bank Donations:** People donating for Portland Food Bank are asked to not leave Food Bank donations at the senior center unless the food bank is open. The food bank is open Mondays and Thursdays from 9 a.m.-noon. Also, the senior center does not need any donations directed toward the center; please only leave donations for the food bank, and only during food bank hours.

**Next Week's Programs: Monday:** Senior Center closed for New Year's holiday. **Tuesday:** Bears on a Journey, 9:30-11 a.m. – making fleece teddy bears for cancer patients; donations are sought of light fleece, one yard or more for making teddy bears for cancer patients throughout Connecticut. If you would like to donate, call 860-342-0809; Watercolor Lessons return Jan. 17 from 9:30 a.m.-noon (to register, email [bivenne@yahoo.com](mailto:bivenne@yahoo.com)); Stretch & Flex: 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.; Coupons for Troops, 11:30 a.m.-4 p.m.; setback, 1 p.m. **Wednesday:** Light Aerobics, 9:30-10:30 a.m.; SyncoCize Exercise, 10:30-11:30 a.m.; Chair Yoga, 11:30 a.m.;

Social Duplicate Bridge, 12:30-4 p.m., multi-purpose room; Tai Chi Qigong, 1 p.m. **Thursday:** 9 a.m., Knit & Stitch; 11:30 a.m., Stretch & Flex, Mahjong, 12:30 p.m.; Scrabble, 1 p.m. **Friday:** Light aerobics, 9 a.m.

**Blood Pressure Clinic:** 10:30-11:30 a.m. on the first Monday of each month (unless the first Monday is a holiday; then the clinic is the following week).

**Free Hearing Screenings:** The second Tuesday of each month at 11 a.m., with Virginia Duclos of "All Ears" in Portland. No registration is necessary.

**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](mailto:myjakjeff@gmail.com).

**Volunteer Drivers Sought for Meals-on-Wheels:** The senior center is currently recruiting volunteer drivers to help deliver meals to the homebound Monday-Thursday. The delivery usually takes about an hour. For full details, call Alexis at 860-342-6761.

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On Nov. 20, the Middlesex Land Trust sponsored a two-mile hike on the 147-acre Atkinson/Gardner property in Portland.

**MxLT Holds Portland Hike**

On Nov. 20, the Middlesex Land Trust (MxLT) sponsored a two-mile hike on the 147-acre Atkinson/Gardner property in Portland. MxLT is attempting to purchase the property with a closing date of June 2023. The trust needs to raise approximately \$100,000 in additional funds in order to complete the deal.

The hike route followed an old quarry road before departing it to climb up and through an old abandoned granite quarry. John LeShane shared his knowledge of trees and the history of the property. The quarry walk was followed by a stroll around a 10-acre beaver pond before returning to the quarry road and the cars parked

at the Fireman's Grounds, donated for use by Company No. 3 Firehouse.

An optional hike to the Great Hill lookout, only a half mile from the starting point drew five hikers for the incredible view from Great Hill.

Anyone interested in supporting the Atkinson/Gardner property purchase can contact David Brown, executive director of the Middlesex Land Trust, at 860-343-7537, or make a donation to Middlesex Land Trust, 27 Washington St., Middletown, CT 06457, attention "At/Gard Project."

**Zion Lutheran Church News**

Zion Lutheran Church, located at 183 William St., offers in-person worship Sundays at 9 a.m. Masks are optional.

A recording of the service is posted to YouTube on Mondays by 9 a.m. Bulletins for the service are posted each week at zionlutheranportland.org.

Sunday School meets the first and third Sunday of the month at 10:15 a.m., following worship. Ages 3 to 16 are welcome.

Adult Bible study takes place on the second

and fourth Sunday of the month, following worship at 10:15 a.m. The focus is on season two of the television series *The Chosen*. Anyone may join at any time. Call the church for details.

The community is welcome to participate in any or 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. Sara Stall-Ryan is Pastor.

**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.



The Middlesex Hospital Vocal Chords will begin rehearsals Tuesday, Jan. 17, for its spring concert, which will take place in April at Portland High School.

**Vocal Chords Seek Tenors, Basses**

The Portland-based Middlesex Hospital Vocal Chords, under the direction of Samuel Tucker and accompanied by an orchestra, is looking to expand its tenor and bass sections.

No auditions are necessary. Rehearsals begin Tuesday, Jan. 17, at 6:45 p.m., at Msgr. Fox Parish Hall, St. Francis Church, 10 Elm St., Middletown, for the upcoming concert on Saturday, April 29, at 7 p.m., at Portland High School. New members will be accepted through Jan. 31.

This community-oriented group has been performing concerts for 32 years, showcasing a variety of musical interests. Currently, the Vocal Chords' 85 members hail from all parts of Connecticut and all different walks of life. You do not need to be affiliated with Middlesex Health in order to join.

For more information, visit vocalchords20.org, look for the group on Facebook or call 860-342-3120.

**Trinity Episcopal Church News**

Trinity Episcopal Church, located at 345 Main St., invites the community to celebrate each week.

Bible Study starts at 8:30 a.m. each Sunday. Worship is at 9:30 a.m. Sunday School is in session and held during the service. Children ages 4-12 are welcome to attend Church School.

All who are vaccinated may remove their masks. All who are not fully vaccinated are asked to wear their masks.

The church is open for prayer and meditation on Fridays from 2-4 p.m., and there will also be a gathering in the church office at the same time, for Anglican Prayer beading. No prior beading experience is required. All are welcome.

**New Year's Services:** Saturday, Dec. 31, New Year's Eve Zoom service at 11:45 p.m.; see the church website for details. Sunday, Jan. 1: New Year's Day service at 10 a.m.

Check out more information, the church's calendar of events, donate, or listen to past sermons at www.trinitychurchportlandct.org. If you have any other prayer requests to lift up, email the church office at trinitychurchportlandct@gmail.com.

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

**First Congregational Church News**

The First Congregational Church of Portland, located at 554 Main St., is a member of the United Church of Christ. The church is an "open and affirming" congregation, welcoming everyone. Facial mask-wearing is optional. The building is accessible. The worship service is livestreamed as well as available for later viewing on the church's YouTube channel; search on YouTube for First Church of Portland CT.

On Jan. 1, we will ring in the New Year during our Sunday service at 10 a.m. Under Kasha Breau's direction, the choir will sing the anthem "Ring It In" by Alix Herrmann. Karen Rettich will read the scriptures Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 and John 1:1-14. The Rev. Jane Hawken's sermon is titled, "The Work of Christmas Begins" and the Sacrament of Communion will be distributed. A

brunch follows the service.

First Church Nursery School offers a program for 3-year-olds on Tuesday and Thursday, and one for 4-year-olds on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Contact Amy Jahnke at 860-342-1111 or 1stchurchnurseryschool@gmail.com for more information.

The church emails a weekly newsletter, *The Weekly Word*. 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. Those who wish to follow the church on Facebook may do so at The First Congregational Church of Portland, CT.

**YFS News & Notes**

Portland Youth & Family Services has announced the following pieces of news. For more information, visit www.portlandct.org/youth-services or the YFS Facebook page at www.facebook.com/PortlandCTYouth, or contact Jesse Revicki at jrevicki@portlandct.org, or 860-342-6758. To receive email updates about YFS programs and events, sign up at eepurl.com/h5m35f.

**Drop-In & Draw:** Tuesday, Jan. 10, from 1:30-4:30pm in the Buck-Foreman Community Center, 265 Main St. Come when you want, stay as long as you want.

**Drop-In & Draw Meet-Up:** Friday, Jan. 20, 10:30-11:30 a.m., at BFCC. There will be a seasonal craft for kids home with their parents and caregivers to come in and work on.

**Prevention & Wellness Council:** Wednes-

day, Jan. 25, 6:30-7:30 p.m., in the Buck-Foreman Community Center, 265 Main St. Help YFS work as a community on youth substance use prevention, positive mental health, and becoming a recovery-friendly community. If interested in joining, contact Revicki or just show up.

**Youth Listening Circle:** Postponed until January. YFS is looking for students in middle and high school that are interested in having a discussion on race, culture, diversity, equity and more. Call or email Revicki to sign up.

**LGBTQ+ Support Groups & Meet-Ups:** YFS said it hopes these groups will start in January. Watch for more information.

**Little Hikers:** This group is hibernating for the next couple of months and will start up again in April.

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**Christmas Tree Pickup**  
 The Department of Public Works will begin its annual Christmas Tree Pickup Tuesday, Jan. 3, and continue through Friday, Jan. 13. Residents may place their Christmas trees at the curb or edge of road for pickup. Residents may also bring their tree to the Transfer Station on Sand Hill Road at no cost.

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# Small Attic Fire Quelled

By Jack Lakowsky

Last Monday the Portland Fire Department responded to a structure fire on Indian Hill Avenue, saying flames were burning through the roof and people might still be inside.

Fortunately, upon arrival, firefighters learned the family was safely out of the home. No injuries were reported.

Crews discovered a small attic fire. Middletown firefighters aided Portland.

“Crews worked together to extinguish the fire,” Portland FD wrote on Facebook, thanking Middletown crews for their help.

“A very special thank you to the quick of response of innocent bystanders who were able to alert the family who was home and unaware of the situation.”

The local fire marshal’s office is investigating.



On Dec. 19, fire crews from both Portland and Middletown doused a small-but-serious fire on Indian Hill Avenue. Occupants were home, managing to escape with no reported injuries.

## United 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. Pastor is the Rev. Judith Johnson-Siebold.

A Fourth Sunday weekly Communion service at 1 p.m. replaces the regular 9 a.m. service on those Sundays.

## Resident Earns Dean’s Award

Justin Renk of Portland, a member of the Colgate University Class of 2025, has earned the spring 2022 Dean’s Award with Distinction.

Renk is a history and religion major at the Hamilton, N.Y., university, and is a graduate of Portland High School.

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Wed 28<sup>th</sup> & Thurs 29<sup>th</sup> 9am-6pm; Fri 30<sup>th</sup> 8am-6pm;  
Sat 31<sup>st</sup> 7am-5pm; Closed New Years Day

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### Real Estate Agent of the Year

Sandra Lindstrom, a top-performing real estate agent at Carl Guild & Associates, has been named the Real Estate Agent of the Year for 2022. Lindstrom, a Lebanon resident, works out of Guild's Colchester office.

Lindstrom is known for her extensive knowledge of the local market, attention to detail, and customer service. She has a proven track record of successfully negotiating and closing a high volume of deals, making her one of the most sought-after agents at the firm.

In addition to her sales record, Lindstrom is also highly respected by her colleagues for her professionalism and positive attitude. She is always willing to lend a helping hand and goes out of her way to support her fellow agents, Carl Guild & Associates said in a press release.

"Sandra is an asset to our team and we are so

proud to have her as our Real Estate Agent of the Year," said Carl Guild, owner of Carl Guild & Associates. "She truly deserves this recognition and we know she will continue to excel in the years ahead."

Lindstrom was honored at a special ceremony held by Carl Guild & Associates, where she was presented with a plaque and a cash prize. She will also be featured in the firm's marketing materials and online platforms.

"I am deeply humbled and grateful to receive this award," said Lindstrom. "I love what I do and I am so fortunate to work with such a talented and supportive team at Carl Guild & Associates. I am looking forward to continuing to serve my clients to the best of my ability and making a positive impact in the real estate industry."

### Land Trust Events

Colchester Land Trust has announced the following events – one for CLT members and one for non-members.

**Winter Backpacking Introduction:** Sunday, Jan. 8, noon, at Devils Hopyard State Park. For members only. Meet near the covered bridge. Get an introduction to cold weather backpacking. The CLT will discuss filtering water, pitching a tent, and cooking. If you have a backpack or any gear, bring it along. Space is limited to 15 people; RSVP to Russ at russcmoore314@gmail.com. The length is about three miles, and the CLT said the terrain is difficult. Hiking poles and boot spikes are recommended if icy. Dress appropriately for

the weather and bring backpacking gear such as backpack, stove, food, snacks and water, but no equipment is necessary.

**Pancake Breakfast and Timber Framing Overview:** Sunday, Feb. 12, 10 a.m., at 23 Lee Court. Members and non-members welcome; cost is \$5 for non-members. Park in cul-de-sac and walk down driveway. Meet inside barn. All are invited to this pancake breakfast in a traditional timber frame barn on the property of board members Russ and Natalie Moore. Kids welcome. Space is limited to 30 people; RSVP to Natalie at natsamoore@gmail.com by Feb. 5. The barn is unheated, so folks should dress for the weather. Warm drinks will be served.



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**Ahavath Achim News**

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

Tuesday, Aggadatah class from the Talmud, 6 p.m.; Talmud class, 6:30 p.m.; Kabbalah class, 8 p.m., on Zoom and in person; Wednesday classes, 2:30-4 p.m. – Hebrew Conversation, Jewish Literacy and Jewish Business Ethics on Zoom. Friday night service, 6:30 p.m., hybrid in-person and on Zoom; Shabbat morning service, 10 a.m., hybrid in-person and via Zoom.

There are daily Facebook Live classes on Ken Alter's Facebook page. Also on the page: "Ask the Rabbi" and the Positive Affirmation of the Day.

For more information, call 860-537-2809. Office hours are: Wednesday, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.; and Friday, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.



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### Colchester Federated Church News

Colchester Federated Church is an Open and Affirming church located at 60 Main St. Pastor is the Rev. Lauren Lorincz Ostrout. 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 are optional. 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](http://www.colchesterfederatedchurch.org) under the Worship & Sermons tab. Updated information is also on the church's Facebook page.

**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.

### 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](mailto:csc@colchesterct.gov), or visit [www.colchesterct.gov/senior-center](http://www.colchesterct.gov/senior-center).

**Monday, Jan. 2:** Closed for New Year's holiday.

**Tuesday, Jan. 3:** 9 a.m., Making Memories; 9:45 a.m., Tai Chi; 12:30 p.m., Pinochle; 1:30 p.m., Bingo.

**Wednesday, Jan. 4:** 9 a.m., Making Memories Program, Walking Group meet-up at the Air Line Trail in Amston; 10 a.m., Adult Coloring, Sit & Be Fit; 1:30 p.m., Creative Vision Board.

**Thursday, Jan. 5:** 9 a.m., Exercise with Anne; 10 a.m., Sittercize, Wii Bowling; 11 a.m., Yoga; noon, Chair Massage; 12:30 p.m., Dominoes; 1 p.m., Knit & Crochet.

**Friday, Jan. 6:** 10 a.m., Sit & Be Fit; 10:30 a.m., Hearing Clinic, Choral Group; 11 a.m., Yoga; 1:30 p.m., Bingo.

**Upcoming Programs: Hearing Screenings:**

Friday, Jan. 6, 10:30 a.m. Dr. Matthew Cross from the HearUSA of Glastonbury can check your hearing or clean your hearing devices. Schedule your free hearing screening by calling the senior center at 860-537-3911.

**Creative Life Review Journaling Class:** This class will take place the second and fourth Wednesday of each month starting Jan. 11 at 1:30 p.m. In this class, discuss the benefits of journaling, creating a journaling practice, and ways to journal. Write about your lives using various brainstorming and prompts. This is a free class; supplies will be provided, preregistration is required.

### Spring Baseball, Softball Registration

Registration for Colchester spring baseball and softball teams is now open. Go to [www.cbsl.org](http://www.cbsl.org) and find the registration page to register your player(s) today.

Anyone interested in coaching should sign up for that volunteer role when registering a player. People can also volunteer for any of the different volunteer roles via the "volunteer opportunities" tab on the website as well.

### New Year's Day 5K

The Youth First Coalition and Colchester Youth and Social Services announce the 18th annual New Year's Day 5K Resolution Run. The 2023 5K Resolution Run takes place at Colchester Town Hall at 10 a.m. Sunday, Jan. 1, 2023. Registration and bib pick-up begins at 8:30 a.m.

Pre-registration is \$25 and same-day Registration is \$30. The first 150 people registered will receive a race T-shirt. Register at [tinyurl.com/38a8rver](http://tinyurl.com/38a8rver).

Proceeds benefit youth scholarships and youth center upgrades.

For more information, contact Charity Benedict at Colchester Youth and Social Services at 860-537-7255 or [cbenedict@colchesterct.gov](mailto:cbenedict@colchesterct.gov).

### Honor Society Inductees

Colchester residents Sara Swift and Benjamin Williams were recently inducted into the national English honor society Sigma Tau Delta.

The two were inducted at the Eastern Connecticut State University English department's Dec. 8 English Night celebration. Swift is a senior majoring in English and Williams is a junior majoring in English.



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# Town Deals with Heavy Wind, Rains from Storm

By Michael Sinkewicz

Following a winter storm that brought heavy rain and wind across the state ahead of Christmas Eve, Colchester finally restored power to all its residents earlier this week, according to officials.

Like much of the state, Colchester experienced powerful wind gusts, reaching 50 mph in many towns. Then, by Friday evening, temperatures plummeted from nearly 60 degrees into the 20s, causing slippery road conditions.

Fire Headquarters at 52 Old Hartford Rd was open to the community as a warming and charging station last week, and closed down on Sunday morning.

Sean Shoemaker, Colchester fire marshal and emergency management director, told the *Rivereast* that very few people utilized the center during the storm.

Steven Hoffman, fire chief, said three people visited the center to fill water jugs, but nobody came for heat.

Still, the center was armed with personnel in anticipation of outages and the frigid temperatures. Shoemaker stated that the town typically provides a similar resource during storms, including a cooling center during summer events.

Shoemaker explained that even though the center wasn't visited by many community members, it was better for the town to be prepared, in case people did end up needing that resource at some point.

"Colchester had the vast majority of power restored in 24 hours," he said. "So, I'm not surprised. You always want to make these sources available."

He confirmed that most costumers had power by the weekend, but all locations were completely restored as of Monday.

The fire department, Hoffman stated, responded to 25 emergency incidents that ranged from downed wires and trees, a transformer fire, a tree on a house, fire alarms and medical calls.

Fire personnel helped Public Works remove debris from roads. Any call that involved power lines was handled by Eversource, but fire per-

sonnel did assist in shutting down roads while waiting for Eversource to arrive at the scene.

From an emergency response perspective, Shoemaker's emphasis is on making sure residents are prepared for storms, and have the necessary equipment and resources to handle the event on their own. He stated that most residents should have supplies to last 72 hours from the storm.

"New Englanders are pretty self-sufficient," he said.

Overall, Shoemaker said there were around 1,400 outages in town resulting from last week's storm, which he stated was in line with a typical winter weather event.

There was "relatively minor damage" at a municipal level, he said, adding that he was aware of one house hit by a fallen tree. He stated that there weren't any injuries reported from the storm. Hoffman also confirmed that no department member was injured, either.

During this time of year, when most trees have lost their leaves, the impact from storms can be somewhat softened.

"If it was summer, we would've had much more damage," Shoemaker said.

He expressed that the town had emergency crews and Public Works personnel monitoring the storm and handling calls.

He described the town's response to the storm as "appropriate and adequate."

Hoffman stated that the "departments did an excellent job in preparing for and responding to" the storm.

First Selectman Andreas Bisbikos also praised the work done by the town to address downed trees and wires.

"Our Public Works department did a fantastic job clearing the roads and making them accessible for Eversource to do their job," he stated. "That would explain why our power restoration rates exceeded the surrounding communities. No cars were damaged on public roads."

Although it wasn't used by many residents, Bisbikos said the town was prepared for any

potential outcome from the storm by opening the warming and charging center.

"We were also the first town in the area that opened a warming station to ensure that their citizens had a safe haven in case they did not have access to heat, power, or clean water," he said.

Statewide, Eversource reported more than 100,000 customers lost power from the storm.

The National Weather Service stated that winds reached 64 mph at Lighthouse Point in New Haven. Other coastal areas experienced flooding, the service said.

With the storm approaching on Thursday, just two days before Christmas Eve, town officials began planning its response.

Bisbikos stated that Public Works made sure all their vehicles had gas and prepared their equipment, including sharpening chainsaws. They were ready to begin cleaning the roads on Friday morning. Colchester schools were also closed that day.

He said the members of the fire department were "consummate professionals," who were on standby throughout the storm.

Emergency Management, he added, was communicating with residents and "monitoring the storm every step of the way."

"This was a team effort," Bisbikos said. "I am fortunate that I work with people like John Jones [director of operations], Steven Hoff-

mann and Sean Shoemaker who love our town."

On Dec. 24, Gov. Ned Lamont updated the state in regard to the storm, expressing that the conditions needed to be taken seriously.

"The extreme cold being experienced right now by a vast majority of the nation poses a threat to the health and safety of those without heat, and our municipalities must continue to offer warmth and shelter to those who need it, especially as Christmas Eve approaches," he said in a statement. "I've spoken with the utility companies, and they have promised to get power restored as soon as possible, including with the help of thousands of out-of-state line workers who are spending their holiday to help with restoration."

## Hebron Also Weathers Storm

In Hebron, Town Manager Andrew Tierney told the *Rivereast* that his town handled the storm "the best we could."

"There wasn't a lot of damage, but there was a lot of outages," he said.

Hebron schools were also closed on Friday, due to the storm.

The firehouse on Main Street in Hebron was available for water. The library and town office building were open as a warming and charging center, as well.

Tierney stated that power was fully restored by Christmas Day.

## 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](http://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](http://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.

## Upcoming Senior Center Trips

The Colchester Senior Center is planning the following trip. Reservations should be made in person at the senior center, 95 Norwich Ave. Trips are available to senior center members and adult guests over the age of 18, and are on a first-come, first-served basis; space is limited. Call the senior center at 860-537-3911 for more information.

**Canadian/New England Cruise:** May 12-20, 2023. Sail the St. Lawrence River and Northern Atlantic while visiting ports in Canada and New England. Arrive in Montreal by deluxe motor coach, then set sail with stops in Quebec City, Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, Sydney and Halifax, Nova Scotia, Bar Harbor, and Boston. Includes overnight accommodation in Montreal, a three-hour tour of Montreal, din-

ner, all meals on board, daily activities, nightly entertainment, casino, and deluxe motor coach back to CT from Boston. Prices start at \$1899 per person for twin. Final payment is due Jan 28. You must have a valid passport. Call or visit the senior center for more information or call Friendship Tours directly at 860-243-1630 or 800-243-1630.

**Spain & Portugal: Costa Del Sol to the Portuguese Riviera:** Oct. 14-25, 2023. Taste some of the delicacies of this southern Spanish region. Includes 10 breakfasts, two lunches and four dinners. Cost is \$5,029 per person for double, if booked before March 15, 2023. You can come into the senior center to register in person or register online at [gateway.gocollette.com/link/1102385](http://gateway.gocollette.com/link/1102385).

## Westchester Church News

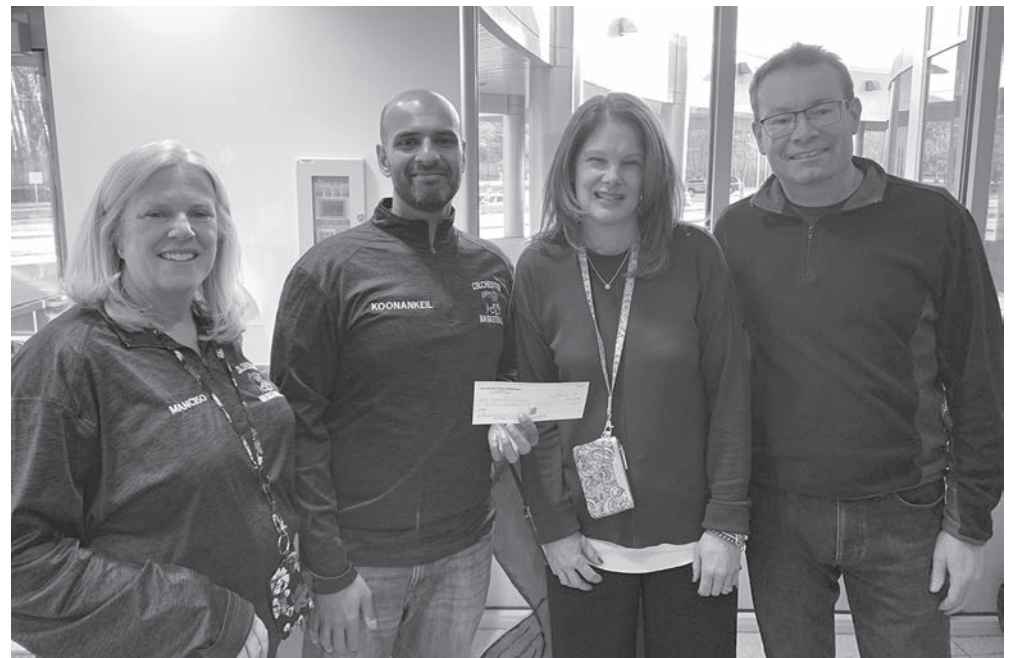
Westchester Congregational Church, 98 Cemetery Rd., holds worship Sundays at 10 a.m. The services are also available on Zoom; visit [westchestercongregation.org](http://westchestercongregation.org) for login information.

Sunday School meets during the worship service.

**Meetings:** The church hosts several groups meeting weekly: Al-Anon, Wednesdays at 7 p.m.; AA, Fridays at 7:30 p.m.; Scout BSA Troop 109, Tuesdays at 7 p.m.; and Cub Scout Pack 109, one Thursday per month at 6 p.m.

**Outreach:** The church has a white wooden Blessings Box in the lower parking lot with non-perishable food items and other useful items. Anyone in need or who wishes to donate may stop by and take or leave a few items.

For more information, email [westconchurch@gmail.com](mailto:westconchurch@gmail.com) or call 860-267-6711.



**Check for CES...** Colchester Youth Basketball recently donated \$5,600 to the Colchester Board of Education to have the basketball hoops at Colchester Elementary School fixed. The hoops broke last February and CYB was informed that the hoops would be fixed when the next year's budget was passed. CYB followed up with CES this August and was told that there was no money in the budget to fix the hoops. As a result, CYB donated the funds to get the hoops fixed. Pictured from left are Erin Mancuso, CYB registrar; Jeff Koonankeil, CYB president; Judy O'Meara, CES principal; and Jeff Darling, CYB secretary. Not pictured but on the CYB Executive Board are: Lauren Beeler, CYB vice president; and Kimberly Radachy, CYB treasurer.

## Parks and Rec Holiday Activities

Colchester Parks and Recreation, located at 127 Norwich Ave. (Town Hall), has announced several holiday-related items of interest. For more information, call 860-537-7297 or visit [www.colchesterct.gov/recreation-department](http://www.colchesterct.gov/recreation-department).

**Home and Business Holiday Display:** Folks can print their free map and view all of the Colchester holiday decorations. Maps are available at [www.colchesterct.gov/recreation-department](http://www.colchesterct.gov/recreation-department) or online at [www.facebook.com/colchesterparksandrec](http://www.facebook.com/colchesterparksandrec). Vote for your favorite home and business decorations online. Voting runs through Dec. 31.

**Colchester Holiday Ornament:** Ornaments will be available in the Parks and Rec. office throughout December. Cost is \$6 per ornament.

## 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](http://christianlifechapel.org).

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## Finance Board Previews Budget Season

By Michael Sinkewicz

The Board of Finance mapped out its budget calendar for the new year during a meeting earlier this month, as officials begin strategizing for the next budget package.

During the Dec. 14 meeting, the finance board approved a calendar for the upcoming budget season, including dates for the initial budget presentations and public hearings.

This year, the board is attempting to expedite the process, with the first public hearing date penciled in for March 7 – last year the hearing was held in the beginning of April.

Officials are hoping for a more efficient budget season next year, after going through a months-long, and at times contentious, endeavor for the current fiscal year's budgets.

Most notably, the town struggled to gain support for its municipal spending package.

In November, voters finally approved a town budget after a fourth referendum. The \$15.62 million proposal passed by a 1092-528 tally and is around \$80,000 less from the 2021-22 budget. The current mill rate is 26.82.

The education board didn't experience the same adversity, as its budget was approved on the first try in May.

During the meeting, Rachel Linkkila, the business director for Colchester schools, and Board of Education member Chris Rivers expressed that the district was still in the "gathering phase" of the upcoming budget process. The district's hope, they said, is to provide

a clear overview for incoming superintendent Daniel Sullivan III, who has served as the superintendent in Putnam since 2019 and will take over in Colchester in January.

Under the guidelines of the new calendar, Sullivan is expected to present a proposal to the school board in early February.

Earlier this month, Sullivan shared that his current focus was on preparing a budget presentation for Putnam, which will help facilitate a smooth transition by the interim superintendent in that district.

Once Sullivan arrives, the education board will likely get a better understanding of their own budget timeline and how their spending package will be pieced together.

For Sullivan, who stated that his first job as head of schools will be "restoring respect and trust," the budget presentation is a major opportunity to interact with both the community and local officials.

Rivers and Linkkila were unsure whether Sullivan would be presenting the school budget on his own, or if he would be assisted by Assistant Superintendent of Schools Charles Hewes.

Mike Hayes, a Democrat on the finance board, said that last year, the former schools superintendent, Jeffrey Burt, only presented the proposal at a public hearing one time, and that he's hoping for a leader "who's willing to work for us and answer questions."

In response, Rivers reassured the board that he believes Sullivan will be "far more transpar-

ent than the previous superintendent."

He added that he was "optimistic" that the process would be different than last year.

While it's still early in the budget season, with new budget surveys likely being launched next month, a potential first referendum for both proposals could take place in May, depending on the outcome of the workshops and public hearings.

Following the fourth referendum result, First Selectman Andreas Bisbikos began previewing some items that may appear in his own 2023-24 proposal.

Included in his list of potential new initiatives was the so-called "transparency software." This item was in Bisbikos' initial proposal last year, but was removed along with the other new initiatives after the budget continued to get rejected by the voters.

Previously, the software was listed at around \$13,000 in the proposal.

The first selectman also shared that he will not be filling the director of operations position and will instead be calling for a new "building maintenance" position, which he suggested could cost considerably less.

Another potential addition to the budget may be two new firefighter positions, which could be accomplished without increasing the overall bottom-line by cutting overtime hours in the department.

Ideally, the town will try to navigate the budget process without generating as much contro-

versy.

At times throughout the last budget season, the town weathered and pushed back on what it called claims of misinformation and fraud. At one point, the Board of Selectmen voted against sending the proposal to a town meeting due to a variety of concerns.

Bisbikos said "false narratives were being put out there" during some of the referendums, which he felt caused the proposals to fail.

He called social media a "wild beast" that can "create chaos."

Bisbikos said that his first budget season as first selectman had been a "learning experience."

The main lesson, he said after the budget was finally approved, was that "trying to get that united front is very important."

The town budget was ultimately trimmed by hundreds of thousands of dollars from the initial proposal. For the fourth referendum, an additional question was added to the ballot, asking voters if the total amount was "too high" or "too low." A similar question may appear again at the first referendum next year.

As a result of the extended budget season, which continued long into the start of the current fiscal year, the town entered a budget freeze. With municipalities continuing to fight inflation, monitoring the current department budget lines will be essential, as well.

## Motions Filed Ahead of Court Hearing

By Michael Sinkewicz

With a court hearing looming that could ultimately determine the future of a new Colchester senior center, a series of motions were filed against the town, adding more uncertainty into the court case.

In the latest development with the lawsuit, Donald Brown, the attorney for both Republican selectman Jason LaChapelle and Republican Town Committee Chairman Taras Rudko, filed a motion on Dec. 22 to disqualify Shipman & Goodwin LLP from representing the Town of Colchester in the court case involving a potential new senior center.

In addition, LaChapelle and Rudko objected on Tuesday to motions to quash on behalf of two of the town's attorneys, Matthew Ritter and Glenn Rybacki. Those initial motions were filed last week to quash the subpoenas that called for their testimony and to produce certain documents.

Also on Tuesday, LaChapelle and Rudko moved for the court to require Ritter and Rybacki to provide all emails sent to members of the Board of Selectmen involving the senior center project, along with other documents outlined in the subpoenas.

The court motions were filed ahead of a public hearing on Wednesday. LaChapelle and Rudko are seeking an order of mandamus that would compel the town to follow the conditions outlined in a town referendum question, which ap-

proved the construction of a new senior center.

They also sought an injunction that would prevent the town from entering a construction contract that would exceed \$9.5 million – the amount listed in the referendum question.

At a remote hearing at New London Superior Court on Dec. 20, the town was summoned to justify why a temporarily injunction should not be issued. The outcome of the hearing could determine whether the project, which faces a nearly \$1 million shortfall, could continue forward.

However, Judge Karen Goodrow granted a contingency motion from the plaintiffs, pushing the hearing to Wednesday afternoon, after press time. More information on the hearing will be included in next week's *Rivereast*.

Brown stated during last week's hearing that he did not have adequate time to review the motions to quash or the documents that were subpoenaed. Then, this week, he filed his own motions against the town.

The attempt to disqualify the town's counsel was filed in part due to the "obvious appearance of impropriety," according to a copy of the motion.

Because LaChapelle is a Colchester selectman, and Shipman & Goodwin represents the Town of Colchester, there is a potential conflict as they are now on opposite sides of a legal argument, Brown argued in his motion. Shipman & Goodwin, Brown wrote, should be disquali-

fied so that LaChapelle's "position and prior communications, thoughts, strategies, and confidential discussions and/or emails, are not used against him [by Shipman & Goodwin attorneys] intentionally or inadvertently."

On Tuesday, Andrew Zeitlin, an attorney with Shipman & Goodwin, filed a motion objecting to the request to disqualify counsel, calling the plaintiff's premise "unsupported and incorrect."

Zeitlin argued that while Shipman & Goodwin serves as counsel to Colchester, and represents the town in numerous ways, its client is solely the town itself – not members of the Board of Selectmen. The firm, Zeitlin said, has not represented any official from the town in an individual capacity who is involved with the senior center project.

With this lawsuit, Shipman is representing the town, as well as Town Clerk Gayle Furman and Senior Center Building Committee Chairman Tony Tarnowski in responding with subpoenas. In addition, Shipman is representing Ritter, who serves as Colchester's town counsel.

In conclusion, Zeitlin wrote that "even if a Shipman & Goodwin lawyer communicated with either of the plaintiffs concerning the Senior Center Project, that does not compel a conclusion that Shipman previously represented either of the plaintiffs in this matter." He added that the plaintiffs "fail to meet their heavy burden on this motion, and it should be denied in

full."

In the objection to the motions to quash, Brown states that the defendants should be compelled to turn over all of the requested documents, which the town has not done, according to the motion.

"Rather, 11th-hour motions were filed," Brown wrote. "It is rather obvious that the subpoenas relate to documents involving the senior center project."

These legal questions will likely be answered during the hearing on Wednesday. The outcome will significantly impact the prospect of continuing the project as currently outlined.

The apparent low bid for the construction of the new senior center was by BRD Builders LLC. It will expire on Jan. 11 if a contract is not agreed to by both parties' lawyers and reviewed by the state before that date.

Last week, Tarnowski stated that even if the town receives favorable information at the hearing, it's unclear whether there would be enough time to secure the contract, which would setback the project and require the town to restart the bid process.

"If we get a decision next week, it's a tight timeline," he said. "So, I don't know."

Currently, a temporary injunction granted earlier this month would prevent any further progress with negotiating a construction contract if the hearing is further delayed.



**Happy Holidays...** The Colchester Garden Club again decorated 14 town planters in the downtown area Colchester in time for the Holiday Homecoming event earlier this month. The Deacon family has been decorating the Cragin Memorial Library flagpole planters through the seasons for many years. This year, Melissa and her son, Cole, engaged his fellow classmates in Lori Barrack's third grade class at Jack Jackter Intermediate School. The students made a variety of ornaments for the planter's three tree tops on PJ Day, a fundraiser for Connecticut Children's hospital to show support for children fighting cancer. The decorated trees are shown at right. The evergreens were donated by Greg Pugatch of Evergreen Acres Tree Farm and Nursery at 464 Windham Ave. All are invited to swing by the library and see up close all the amazing ornaments the children made.





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## Taxes Due

Taxes for the second installment of real estate, personal property, and supplemental motor vehicles are due and payable on Jan. 1. The last day on which to pay without penalty is Feb. 1.

The supplemental motor vehicle tax bills were mailed Dec 9. There is not an additional mailing for the second installment of real estate and personal property bills.

Make checks payable to: Town of East

Hampton. Payment can be made at Town Hall, 1 Community Drive. Hours of collection: Monday, Wednesday and Thursday, 8 a.m.-4 p.m.; Tuesday, 8 a.m.-6:30 p.m.; and Friday, 8 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Payments may also be mailed to: Collector of Revenue, 1 Community Drive, East Hampton, CT 06424. People can also pay online by visiting [www.easthamptonct.gov](http://www.easthamptonct.gov).

## Police News

11/29: Loretta Stula, 29, of 135 Lake Rd., was issued a summons for evading responsibility and operating an unregistered and uninsured motor vehicle, East Hampton Police said.

12/21: Sara Kammerman, 40, of 52 Maple Dr., Colchester, was arrested and charged with two counts of third-degree larceny, police said.

12/24: Christopher Lyford, 49, of 158 Main St., was arrested and charged with second-degree threatening, disorderly conduct and

second-degree violating conditions of release, police said.

12/26: Richard Wellman, 29, of 16 Laurel Glen Dr., was arrested and charged with disorderly conduct and third-degree assault, police said.

Also, from Dec. 19-25, officers responded to 13 medical calls, five motor vehicle crashes and four alarms, and made 41 traffic stops, police said.

## Lions' Humanitarian of the Year

For their 14th year, the East Hampton Lions recently sponsored a Humanitarian of the Year contest, in conjunction with Lions District 23-C. The Lions placed an article in the *Rivereast*, asking the public to nominate individuals they felt deserved to be honored as a humanitarian. This year, Robert "Bob" Atherton was chosen.

Until recently, Atherton chaired the Commission on Aging and worked on the big picture of improving the lives of seniors. He's been very active on many levels of the senior center – recently organizing all of the volunteers and organizing the Meals-on-Wheels program. But his

great love is talking with other people. His own Meals-on-Wheels route should take a half hour however he spends more than hour with the extra time just touching base with the homebound. He is also extremely active in the Haddam Neck Covenant Church and has worked its chicken barbecue for years.

A banquet will be held at Saint Clements Castle in Portland on Sunday. Atherton will be honored along with eight other humanitarians that were chosen by other clubs. All are invited to attend. Tickets are \$55 and may be obtained by calling Lion Mary Krogh at 860-977-5760.

## Middle Haddam Public Library News

Middle Haddam Public Library, 2 Knowles Rd., Middle Haddam, has announced the following. To register or more information on any program, email [middlehaddamlibrary@gmail.com](mailto:middlehaddamlibrary@gmail.com), visit [middlehaddamlibrary.com](http://middlehaddamlibrary.com) or call 860-267-9093.

**Library Hours:** Monday and Thursday, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.; Tuesday and Friday, 3-6 p.m. Masks are optional.

**Autism: A Spectrum in Our Community:** Wednesday, Jan. 4, 7 p.m. Charlie Bennet returns, this time to talk about autism. All are invited to this interactive talk.

**Yoga:** Mondays at 9 a.m., Tuesdays at 7 p.m. and Saturdays at 9 a.m., with Erin Day of Ten Summit Yoga. Cost is a \$10 drop-in fee. Register at [tensummitst@gmail.com](mailto:tensummitst@gmail.com).

**Mahjong:** Mondays, Jan. 2, 9, 23 and 30, 11:30 a.m. All players welcome.

**Nimble Knitters:** Thursdays, Jan. 5-26, 1 p.m.

**Spinning Fibers:** Thursdays, Jan. 12 and 26.

Bring your own wheel and fiber. All are welcome.

**CommuniTea:** Saturday, Jan. 14, 10 a.m.-noon. This is a monthly gathering, at which folks can take out a book, have a cup of tea, and visit. Coffee-drinkers welcome.

**Writer's Workshop:** Wednesday, Jan. 18, 7-8:30 p.m. There will be constructive criticism, Q&A and writing exercises. Please register.

**Walleye on the Fly:** With Rowan Lytle. Monday, Jan. 23, 7 p.m.

## Epoch Arts Winter Classes

Epoch Arts is offering a variety of artistic classes for preschool through 12th grade.

Sign up for classes like improv theater, ceramics, polymer clay and art, or sign up to perform in an original two-act play. Classes begin Jan. 9, run for eight weeks, and are held at 27 Skinner St.

For more information, visit [www.epocharts.org](http://www.epocharts.org).

## Foodshare Returns Jan. 5

The East Hampton Lions are reminding residents the mobile food pantry will be at the St. Patrick Church parking lot next Thursday, Jan. 5, from 9-10 a.m. The truck leaves promptly at 10 a.m., so the Lions advise folks to not come at the last minute.

The food pantry is open to all; no proof of residency and no income requirements needed. However, a minimum of 50 residents needs to attend each time to make sure the food pantry returns. So far, there is an average of more than 140 people per visit, the Lions said.

If the line is long when you arrive, you can stay in your car until the line goes down some. Be certain, however, that you are in line by 9:45 a.m. The other option is to come early so you will be one of the first in line, the Lions said.

## Haines Named Higher Ed Ranking Member

State Representative Irene Haines (R-34) was recently reappointed ranking member of the General Assembly's Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee.

The role of a ranking member is to serve as the leader of the minority party in committee meetings and collaborate with Committee Leadership in proposing bills and legislation.

"I am honored to be reappointed to a leadership role in the Higher Education Committee," said Haines, whose district covers East Hampton, East Haddam and part of Salem. "This committee is responsible for state education oversight as well as economic opportunities in state apprenticeship programs, all which deserve more attention following the pandemic. Supplying the resources to cultivate skilled employees for a wide variety of labor and career opportunities is the reputation I seek to maintain in our state."

Haines was reappointed by House Republican Leader-elect state Rep. Vincent Candelora (R-86).

"Following an unprecedented legislative session, Irene undoubtedly proved to me that her leadership position on the Higher Education Committee was not only reliable but also driven by pragmatism and collaboration with the house majority," said Candelora. "State apprenticeship programs are desperate to elimi-

Last time, the line started forming at about 8:30 a.m. The Lions said they have arranged with the church to have a few chairs to sit on for anyone that has difficulties standing in line.

If schools are closed due to weather, the food pantry will not come. However, if school is delayed for two hours, Foodshare will still be there at 9 a.m. For more information, call Mary at 860-977-5760.

The Lions said they never know what will be on the Foodshare truck. At the first distribution there was primarily produce. The next time, there was produce, bread, milk, butter, creamer, pickles and some miscellaneous products. At another distribution, there were vegetables, fruit, bread, an assortment of dairy products and juices.

nate unnecessary hiring restrictions and Irene is prepared to listen and act upon the concerns of the Connecticut labor market. Being a mother who worked to send her children through higher education institutions, she is aware of the current challenges recent graduates face in finding careers and skilled labor opportunities. I am excited to appoint Irene for this position again and I am confident that she will once again be able to deliberate thoughtfully, acknowledging all perspectives and interests during these trying times."

The responsibility of the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee is to oversee the Board of Regents for Higher Education and the Office of Higher Education in Connecticut. Additionally, the committee serves to discuss legislation related to private and public higher education institutions, apprenticeship and job training programs, post-secondary education, and occupational schools.

Haines was re-elected on November 8th, marking her third consecutive term with as a state representative. Aside from her service on the Higher Education & Employment Advancement Committee, she has also served on the Transportation Committee, Education Committee, and the Planning & Development Committee.

## Senior Center News & Notes

East Hampton Senior Center, 105 Main St., is open. Registration required for all programs unless noted; register at [myactivecenter.com](http://myactivecenter.com) or by contacting the center at 860-267-4426 or [seniorcenter@easthamptonct.gov](mailto: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 encouraged, but not required. Visit the senior center online at [www.easthamptonct.gov/east-hampton-senior-center](http://www.easthamptonct.gov/east-hampton-senior-center).

**Lunches:** Served at the center Monday through Friday, to ages 60 and up. 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. Meals are free, though a \$3 donation is requested.

**Weekly Activities:** **Quilting Group:** Mondays, 9 a.m. **Mexican Train Dominoes:** Mondays, 9:30 a.m. **Setback:** Mondays, 1 p.m., and Thursdays, 1:15 p.m. **Bible Study:** Tuesdays, 1 p.m. **Bingo:** Tuesdays, 1-2 p.m., in person and via Zoom. **Tap Dance:** Thursdays, 11:15-11:45 a.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, 1 p.m.

**Writing Our Lives to Open Our Hearts:** There are two groups; one meets Thursdays, 10-11 a.m., and one meets every other Thurs-

day, 11:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m. The group will meet outdoors, weather permitting; otherwise it will be indoors or via Zoom.

**Mighty Magnificent Men's Group:** Monday, Jan. 9, 10:30 a.m. All men are invited to come to this monthly social hour of fun facts, activities and snacks.

**Book Club:** Tuesday, Jan. 10, 10:30 a.m. *Heirloom Garden* by Viola Shipman Wade will be discussed. Please register.

**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](mailto: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 prearranged designated spot.

## EHACC Accepting Grant Applications

The East Hampton Arts & Culture Commission is accepting applications from East Hampton High School juniors and seniors for \$200 grants to support an annual East Hampton High School capstone project.

Deadline to apply is Feb. 1, 2023. Applications are available at [www.artsforeasthamptonct.org](http://www.artsforeasthamptonct.org) and can be submitted to [arts@easthamptonct.org](mailto:arts@easthamptonct.org) or can be mailed/dropped off at the town manager's office at the East Hampton Town Hall, 1 Community Drive, East Hampton, CT 06424.

## Church Seeks Singers

The Second Congregational Church in Middle Haddam is calling for local singers interested in joining a small choir. Ability to read music is a plus.

The choir would participate in services twice a month at 9:30 a.m.; the service lasts approximately one hour. Rehearsals would be after church on Sunday.

An organizational meeting will be held in January at the church, which is located at 52 Middle Haddam Rd. (Route 151), in Middle Haddam.

To inquire, email Toni Leland at [tonileland@gmail.com](mailto:tonileland@gmail.com).

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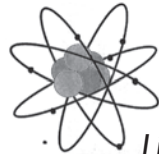
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★ **Top Local Sports Moments cont. from page 1**

ing her previous mark by swimming a 23.07 to cement the first-place finish ahead of runner-up Riley Kudlac, a senior from Glastonbury High School who will be swimming collegiately at George Washington University next year.

**5. Repeat Performance for Portland Golf**

The Highlanders swept through all 16 regular season matches before winning both the Shoreline Conference championship in May and Division III state championship at Fairview Golf Course in Harwinton on June 7. It was the team's second straight state championship and the program's fifth title in the past six seasons. Sophomore Luke Stennett again shined on the links, earning the co-medalist at the state championship events after shooting an eagle on the final hole to finish tied atop the leaderboard. Quinn Lapinski shot a 75 (+3) to finish 3rd, Eli Evison shot a 78 (+6) to finish tied for 7th, and Joseph LaMalfa shot an 84 (+12) to tie for 23rd.

**6. Historic Season on the Links for Raptors**

Boys' golf at RHAM High School won the program's first ever state championship, winning the Division II state championship at Tallwood Country Club on June 6. The Raptors ran away with the championship, defeating runner-up Ellington by 14 strokes as four RHAM golfers finished in the top 11 out of 85 total golfers. Carson Waddell and Conner Rabbitt led the way, each shooting a 77 (+5) to tie for 3rd individually. Holden Sullivan shot a 78 (+6) to finish tied for 7th and Jimmy Hulland shot a 79 (+7) to finish 11th.

**7. Calhoun Shatters Record Books**

Liam Calhoun rewrote the record books at RHAM High School in 2022, breaking eight school records. During the indoor track season

in the winter, he rewrote school records in the 600 meters, 800 meters, 1,000 meters, 1,600 meters, 3,200 meters, and was part of the 4x800 relay team that set a new program mark. Calhoun continued his record-breaking ways in the spring, setting a new mark in the 3,200 and topping his own record in the one-mile. RHAM's record breaker runner is now on the cross-country and track and field teams at Wesleyan University.

**8. Bobcats Basketball Bests Bellringers**

Bacon Academy girls' basketball defeated East Hampton 30-26 in the Class M semifinals on March 14, earning a spot in the state championship game. Valerie Luizzi, who scored a game-high 17 points – including a dozen over the final 16 minutes, calmly sank a pair of free throws to put the game on ice with 4.6 left in regulation. The win advanced the Bobcats to the state championship for the first time since 2017.

**9. Delisle Breaks Pair of PHS Record**

Portland High School's Owen Delisle broke the school record in the 800 meters, running a time of 1:59.92 to finish as the runner-up at the Class S championships at Willow Brook Park in New Britain on May 31. Delisle was also an anchor on the school's 4x400 relay team – teaming with Simon Kandek, Teddy Williams, and Jake Thompson – to break the school record in the 4x400 at the Shoreline Conference Championships earlier in May.

**10. Remiszewski Lifts Bellringers Soccer**

Jakub Remiszewski's penalty kick ended a marathon of a game as East Hampton High School boys' soccer advanced to the Class S semifinals with a win over Canton on Nov. 11. Playing on a rain-soaked field, the teams battled through 100 minutes of game play before



**East Hampton's girls' volleyball championship was selected as the top local sports moment of 2022. The Bellringers won the program's first-ever championship on Nov. 19.**

the match went into penalty kicks where East Hampton's all-conference goalie Thomas Fenton made a pair of crucial stops and the Bellringers netted all five of their penalty shots. Brennan Johnson, Oren Wilson, William Nafis, Ephraim Butson each made their kicks, setting the stage for Remiszewski to boot home the game-ender. East Hampton would defeat Notre Dame-Fairfield in the state semifinals to advance to the program's first state championship since 2014.

**11. Nylen Lights Up Scoreboard**

RHAM High School football star Max Nylen had a game for the ages on Oct. 1, totaling 507 yards and scoring eight touchdowns as the Raptors beat Farmington 69-39. Nylen ran for 375 yards, scoring seven touchdowns on the ground and hauling in a receiving touchdown from 29 yards out. He added 103 return yards—31 on kick returns and 72 more on an interception. Nylen's eight touchdowns tied him for the third most in a game in the history of high school football in Connecticut. This fall, he set a new single-season mark in touchdowns (24) and became the program all-time leader with 38 career touchdowns despite missing his sophomore season because of the COVID-19 cancellation.

**12. Russell Joins Elite Club**

Gyanna Russell, a 2017 graduate of East Hampton High School who went on to star on the basketball courts at Southern New Hampshire, scored her 1,000th career college point on Feb. 5. Russell is still East Hampton's all-time leading scorer with 1,478 points and joined a rare group of 1,000 point double-dippers, achieving the feat in both high school and college.

**13. Highlanders Hardball Dunks Bellringers**

The baseball team at Portland High School beat East Hampton 2-0 at Dunkin' Donuts Park on May 17. Under the bright lights in Hartford, Spencer Rosado pitched a two-hitter and scored the game's first run when he was driven home by Michael Quesnel, who would later score an insurance run following a sacrifice fly by Austin Vess. It was a complete turnaround from the team's game the previous month where the Bellringers dealt the Highlanders a 14-0 loss at PHS.

**14. RHAM Grad Wins National Title**

Alex Heline, a 2018 graduate from RHAM High School, became a national champion rower when she was one of nine girls at Worcester Polytechnic Institute that powered a boat that won the varsity eight+ Division III NCAA rowing championship at Nathan Benderson Park in Sarasota, Fla. on May 28. Heline's name will forever be associated with the program's first national championships and the rowers joined the 1986 men's golf team as the only national champions in school history.

**15. Bellringer Vaults to Top**

East Hampton High School's Nicholas Rivard-Lentz took first place in the pole vault at the Class S championships on May 31. Rivard-Lentz also won the Shoreline Conference Championship and finished as the runner-up in the State Open before taking his talent to new heights by vaulting a personal-best 14'3" at the New England championships in June.

**16. Highlanders Round Ball Eliminates Top Seed**

Portland High School boys' basketball upset No. 1 seed Terryville, 57-52, in the second round of the Division V state tournament on March 10. Eli Evison scored 21 points and Joe Rusczyk added 13 to lead the Highlanders to the upset over a Terryville team that had won 19 of 20 games in the regular season. The Highlanders entered the state tourney as the No. 16 seed before winning a home tournament game

over Coventry and knocking out the division's top-ranked team in the second round.

**17. Nudd Nets 1,000th Point**

Bacon Academy High School's Marissa Nudd scored her 1,000th career high school point as the Bobcats beat Ledyard on Dec. 20. Nudd surpassed the four-digit milestone on a layup with 37.9 seconds left in the first quarter, becoming the eighth player in program history to hit the 1,000-point mark. Her sister, Kellie Nudd, was the last player to surpass 1,000 points, achieving the feat in 2019.

**18. East Hampton T&F Excels at States**

The girls' indoor track and field team at East Hampton High School finished as the runner-up at the Class S state championship on Feb. 12. Kaylee Gravel won the 1,000 meters and Brylee Montanari won the 55-meter hurdles to take home individual championships as East Hampton finished ahead of 28 other teams. Gravel and Montanari continued their championship way in the spring, each winning individual state titles at the Class S outdoor track and field championship on May 31. Gravel, who is now on the running teams at Central Connecticut State University, won the 800 meters and Montanari, who is now on the running teams at the University of North Carolina – Wilmington, won the 100-meter hurdles.

**19. Martino Makes His Mark**

Bacon Academy High School's Jake Martino proved to be one of the best athletes in the state, finishing 8th in the decathlon at Willow Brook Park in New Britain on June 15. It was the second straight year that Martino competed in the 10-event challenge, which features 100 meter dash, long jump, shot put, high jump, 400 meter run, 110 meter hurdles, discus, pole vault, javelin, and 1500 meter run. The decathlon was the finale for what was a record-breaking junior year for Martino, who won the Class MM discus championship on June 2 and also previously broke the school record in the discus during a regular season meet, topping the previous mark by over three feet.

**20. Salamone Achieves All-State**

East Hampton High School's Liana Salamone made the Connecticut High School Coaches Association All-State basketball team in March following a phenomenal first season on the high school hardwood. Salamone, who was the only freshman selected to the team, scored a team-high 445 points and averaged 17.1 points to power the Bellringers offense. The all-round point guard also did so much more than just score – averaging 7.0 rebounds, 3.3 assists, and 2.8 steals per game.

**21. Highlanders Soccer Surges**

In the program's first year under new head coach Cory Tobler, the girls' soccer team at Portland High School advanced to the Class S state semifinals and battled No. 1 seed Lyman Memorial into penalty kicks on Nov. 16. It was a remarkable turnaround for a team that won only one of their first six games in 2022 before ending the regular season red hot and winning three straight state tournament games behind senior captains Mia Quesnel and Amelia Hair. Quesnel, Hair, Camryn DiMauro, and Kaitlyn Hickey all earned all-conference.

**22. Kleinhen Sparks Raptors**

RHAM's Ailish Kleinhen came off the bench to drain five three-pointers and score a game-high 20 points as the Raptors rallied in the closing minutes to beat Bacon Academy 43-39 in front of a spirited home crowd at RHAM High School on Feb. 3. Kleinhen drained her final three-pointer with 2:24 remaining in regulation, giving the Raptors their first lead of the game as the home team closed out the contest on a 12-4 run.

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**Parks and Rec.  
News & Notes**

East Hampton Parks and Recreation has announced the following pieces of news. For more information, call 860-267-7300 or visit east-hamptonct.myrec.com.

**Girls Volleyball Clinic:** Wednesdays, Jan. 4-25, 6:45-8 p.m., at the East Hampton Middle School gym, for grades 6-8. Cost is \$125.

**American Red Cross Babysitting Course:** Friday, Jan. 20, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., at the Town Hall community room. Cost is \$100.

**Wolf Pack Game:** Friday, Jan. 20, 7 p.m. Lower-level seats are \$20 per ticket.

**EHMS Volleyball  
Registration**

Student/athletes in seventh or eighth grade who are interested in playing for the boys or girls volleyball teams can register at FamilyID.com. Students must have a physical within a 13-month period in order to participate.

The deadline for registration is on Monday, Jan. 30. For more information, call East Hampton Middle School athletic director Michael Mercaldi at 860-463-6837.

**Christ Episcopal  
Church News**

Christ Episcopal Church, 66 Middle Haddam Rd., Middle Haddam, holds in-person and Zoom services at 10 a.m. each Sunday. All are welcome. To connect electronically, go to [www.christchurchmiddlehaddam.com](http://www.christchurchmiddlehaddam.com) for directions.

**Coffee Hour:** Hosts are still needed. See the sign-up sheet in the parish kitchen.

For more information or if in need of assistance, call the church office at 860-267-0287 or Donna Hryb, senior warden, at 860-633-0472.

**Congregational Church**

The Congregational Church of East Hampton, UCC, located at 59 Main St., is open for in-person services with the Rev. Amie McCarthy every Sunday at 10 a.m. All services can also be accessed via Zoom by going to [cc-eh.org](http://cc-eh.org).

Church school classes meet every Sunday.

The Yarners meet every Thursday from 10:30 a.m.-noon in the Fellowship Hall. All knitters and crocheters are welcome.

For more information about CCEH and its activities, visit [cc-eh.org](http://cc-eh.org) or call the church office at 860-267-4959 during office hours: Tuesday-Friday, 8 a.m.-noon.

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### Parks and Recreation News

Hebron Parks and Recreation is offering the following programs. For full program descriptions and to register, visit [hebronct.recdesk.com](http://hebronct.recdesk.com) or call 860-530-1281.

**Winter Classic Basketball Camp:** Thursdays, Jan. 5-Feb. 2, after school until 5 p.m., for grades four and five. Held at Hebron Elementary School. There will be activities, drills and games. Cost is \$100.

**Babysitters Training:** Saturday, Jan. 7, 9 a.m.-2:30 p.m., at Douglas Library, for ages 11-17. Cost is \$80. This one-day course is intended to teach age-appropriate skills necessary to care for children of all ages using concepts focusing on safety and prevention. A two-year certificate is awarded after completion of class and test.

**Home Alone Safety for Kids:** Thursday, Jan. 26, 5-6:30 p.m., at Gilead Hill School. Cost is \$45. This interactive course for boys and girls ages 8-13 will cover safety concerns parents have when their children are by themselves. Each student will receive a workbook that covers house key safety, indoor and outdoor (including kitchen) safety, gun safety, fires, gas leaks, first aid kit essentials and phone, door, and internet safety. Pre-registration is required.

**Karate:** In the style of Goju ru, made famous by the *Karate Kid* film series. Six-week sessions re held Mondays and Wednesdays at Gilead Hill School. Cost is \$85 per session. Ages 5-11 are 5-5:50 p.m., and ages 12 and up are 6-7 p.m. Call Parks and Rec. for more info.

### The Worship Center News & Notes

The Worship Center, a non-denominational Christian church, holds services and programs at 99 Marjorie Circle (unless noted). For more information and full program descriptions, visit [theworshipcenterct.org](http://theworshipcenterct.org) and click on the 'events/calendar' link, or call 860-228-4442.

**Worship:** Services are Sundays at 10 a.m., indoors, and are also broadcast on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/TheWorshipCenterConnecticut](http://www.facebook.com/TheWorshipCenterConnecticut) and on YouTube; go to [tinyurl.com/yby64wph](http://tinyurl.com/yby64wph) to access.

**Life Group Hebron:** Meets Mondays at 7 p.m. at the Caseys' home, for worship, prayer, Bible study and fellowship.

**Journey Group:** For grades 6-12. The mission of the group is to support the youth of Hebron and surrounding towns in their spiritual development. During the school year, the group meets every other Sunday directly after the service.

**Virtual Prayer Night:** Tuesdays, 6:30-8 p.m., via Zoom. All are invited to pray for each other, the community and the country. Contact the church office or website for a link and meeting ID.

**Ballroom Dancing:** Offered most Sundays, 6-8 p.m. Learn Waltz and East Coast Swing with instructors Joe Belanger and Denise Jakel. Couples and singles welcome. Cost is \$15/person/class. Call Belanger to register at 860-372-8236.

**One-to-One Confidential Christian Care:** Provided by Stephen Ministry to people in difficult life situation. If in need of help, call the church office.

**Bucket of Blessings:** The church's outreach team has been collecting snack-type food and monetary donations as a love offering for local first responders. To get involved, email [jessicalbain@gmail.com](mailto:jessicalbain@gmail.com).

### Residents Sought to Serve

The Hebron Board of Selectmen is seeking residents to serve on various town agencies.

There are currently vacancies for regular members on the Planning and Zoning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, Parks and Recreation Commission, Public Building Committee and the Commemoration Commission.

There are vacancies for alternate members on the Planning and Zoning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, Commission on Aging, Conservation Commission, Economic Development Commission, Public Building Committee, Parks and Recreation Commission and the Historic Properties Commission.

Interested candidates should attend a meeting of the board or commission in which they may have an interest and discuss with the chairman

the frequency of meetings and the time commitment involved.

There is also a vacancy for a Hebron resident to serve on the Catchment Area Council 15 for Amplify – North Central Regional Mental Health Board.

A vacancy exists for a Hebron representative on the Central Regional Tourism District Board of Directors. The mission of the district is to promote leisure, business, group and corporate travel to the region.

All residents of Hebron who are registered to vote are eligible. Letters of interest may be sent to the Town Manager's Office, Town of Hebron, 15 Gilead St., Hebron CT 06248. For more information, call 860-228-5971.

### Got an Air Line Trail Tale?

Do you have special memories of your experience on Hebron's portion of the Air Line Trail? If so, you're invited to email your short "Tale of the Trail" for possible publishing on the Air Line Trail 12-town website, now being created by CTC&D (Connecticut Resource Conservation and Development) through funding from the state.

Memories can include discoveries of unique trail sections; special moments with

family and friends; meeting fellow trail users; celebrations or commemorations on the trail; experiences with nature; enjoyment of different modes of travel (horse treks, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, wheelchair, biking, walking and more) – any reason the Air Line Trail is special to you.

Email your short tale to [jdavies@ctcd.org](mailto:jdavies@ctcd.org), with the subject line "Trail Tales – Hebron," by Wednesday, Jan. 4.

### St. Peter's News & Notes

Services of Holy Eucharist at St. Peter's Episcopal Church, located at 30 Church St., are held each Sunday at 8 a.m. (Rite 1) and 10 a.m. (with music). All are invited to the Church Hall for coffee and conversation after the services. Priest is the Rev. Ron Kolanowski.

**Services for the Christmas Season:** Festival of Lessons and Carols: Jan. 1 at 10 a.m.

**Meetings and Events:** Balancing Class: Mondays, 10-11 a.m. – cost is \$5; Cub Scouts: first Mondays of the month, 5:30 p.m.; Build-

ings and Grounds Committee: first Tuesdays, 7 p.m.; Virtual Coffee Hours: Wednesdays at 10 a.m.; Boy Scouts: Wednesdays at 7 p.m.; Vestry: third Thursdays, 7 p.m.; Building Networks International, Fridays, 7:30 a.m.

**Outreach: Food Donations:** Items for various local food pantries can be placed in the brown donation box outside Phelps Hall.

For more information, visit [stpetershebron.com](http://stpetershebron.com), search for St. Peter's Hebron on Facebook, or email [office@stpetershebron.com](mailto:office@stpetershebron.com).

### Senior Center News & Notes

Russell Mercier Senior Center has announced the following. For more information and full program descriptions, and to register, call the senior center at 860-228-1700. Pre-registration is required for all programs. The senior center newsletter is online at [tinyurl.com/3xfm862d](http://tinyurl.com/3xfm862d). For information on various other weekly classes, meetings and activities, contact the senior center or look to the senior newsletter.

**Holiday Closing:** The senior center will be closed Monday, Jan. 2.

**All-Levels Yoga:** Mondays, Jan. 9-Feb. 27, 10:15-11:15 a.m. Fee is five classes for \$15, or \$5 per class to drop in. Chairs may be used to meet all abilities. Bring a yoga mat if you will not be using a chair.

**Movie Monday:** Monday, Jan. 9, 12:45 p.m. *The Lost City*, starring Sandra Bullock, Channing Tatum and Daniel Radcliffe, will be shown. Lunch of hot dog, baked beans and coleslaw will be served beforehand at noon (lunch cost is \$3 due Friday, Jan. 6, at noon). To sign-up for the movie or lunch and a movie, call the center.

**Technology Assistance:** Tuesday, Jan. 10, 10-11:30 a.m. Stop in for assistance with any of your devices (such as smartphones, iPads and laptop computers). Pre-registration is preferred.

**Free Lunch and Learn:** Wednesday, Jan. 11, noon, sponsored by Marlborough Health Center. The topic will be on fall prevention. Lunch will be turkey or tuna on a hard roll with lettuce and tomato, chips, bottled water and a cookie. You must pre-register with the senior center and provide your sandwich choice by 2 p.m. Monday, Jan. 9.

**Bus Trip – Lunch to Roberto's Log Cabin in Lebanon:** Friday, Jan. 20, leaving at noon. Cost is \$5 for transportation; lunch is on your own. To register, call the senior center.

**AARP Driver Course:** Tuesday, Jan. 24, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., in-person at the center. You need to arrive by 8:50 a.m. and bring something to

write with. AARP members cost \$20, and non-members cost \$25; fee is payable to the instructor day of class. Register ASAP. Auto insurance discounts may be available. To register, call the senior center. Note: Coffee will be available in the morning, but no food is served, so if you may need something to nosh on, feel free to bring it with you.

**Grocery Shopping Trips:** To Stop and Shop Fridays, Jan. 6 and 27; to Walmart in North Windham Fridays, Jan. 13 and Feb. 3; and to Big Y Jan. 20 and Feb. 10. Pre-registration for each trip is required by the prior Wednesday at 10 a.m. To sign up, call the senior center.

**Energy Assistance Winter Heating Program:** The senior center is taking applications for the Connecticut Energy Assistance Program (CEAP), which is designed to help offset winter heating costs. If a household's primary heating costs are included in rent, the household may also apply for assistance. To make an appointment, call the center.

**Community Café:** Onsite meals take place Monday-Thursday at noon. Reservations due by 10 a.m. the day before the meal, and by 10 a.m. Friday for Monday's lunch. Requested donation is \$3. Reservations required; call the center to register. For the full month's menu, check the newsletter, the website, or at the senior center.

**Senior Transportation:** Offered to ages 60 and up and all adult disabled individuals, for medical care, personal needs care, grocery shopping, or other pre-approved needs. Transportation available Monday-Thursday, 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m., and Friday, 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m. Appointments must be scheduled a minimum of 24 hours in advance, but 48 hours is recommended – and required for new riders. For more information or to schedule an appointment, call the center.

### Transfer Station Holiday Hours

The Hebron Transfer Station holiday hours for this weekend are:

New Year's Eve, Saturday, Dec. 31: closing at 2 p.m.; New Year's Day, Sunday, Jan. 1: closed.

### Library Association Seeks New Members

The Douglas Library of Hebron Association, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit private organization established to support the library, is looking for new members.

This volunteer advocacy group provides support to the Douglas Library Board of Trustees. The Association exists as a requirement of the Charles J. Douglas Trust which provides a source of funding for library business each year. The association designates five members to serve on the Library Board of Trustees.

Members must be residents of Hebron as well as be 18 years of age or older. The association meets twice a year.

For more information, call the library director at 860-228-9312 ext. 316.

### Discovery Zone learning Center



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**LEGAL NOTICE  
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION  
HEBRON, CONNECTICUT**

The Hebron Planning and Zoning Commission will hold a Public Hearing at a Regular Meeting scheduled for Tuesday, January 10, 2023, at 7:00 P.M., to be held virtually through the GoToMeeting Platform, on the following:

1. **Petition 2022-11 and 2022-12** – Petition of Roger G. Barrett, Jr. to amend the Special Permit and Site Plan for a legal, non-conforming use at 326 Gilead St. Application filed under Section 6.B.3 of the Hebron Zoning Regulations. Dated at Hebron, Connecticut, this 19th day of December 2022. Natalie Wood, Chair

Planning and Zoning Commission  
Tue, Jan 10, 2023 7:00 PM - 10:00 PM (EST)  
**Please join my meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone.**  
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**Legal Notice will be published in the Rivereast News Bulletin on December 30, 2022 and January 6, 2023.**

2TB 12/30, 16

**TOWN OF PORTLAND  
PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION  
LEGAL NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

Notice is hereby given that the Portland Planning & Zoning Commission will hold a Public Hearing on Thursday, January 5, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. in the Buck Foreman Room (2nd Floor), 265 Main Street, Portland, CT. Public access through Zoom link A at [www.portlandct.org](http://www.portlandct.org) to consider the following:

**Application #22-12:** 378 Cox Road. Request for an 11-lot subdivision on a property containing wetlands. Application of Tom Briggs. Property of Synnot Properties, LLC. Map 78, Lot 21. Zone RR/Forest Neighborhood Overlay Zone.

**Application #22-15:** 1401 Main Street. Proposed 2 lot re-subdivision. Application and property of Cote Range LLC. Map 68, Lot 1. Zone R-25.

At this hearing interested persons may appear and be heard and written communications will be received. A copy of these applications are available for review in the Portland Land Use Department.

Dated at Portland, CT this 19th day of December 2022  
Robert Ellsworth, Chairman  
Planning & Zoning Commission

2TB 12/23, 12/30

**TOWN OF EAST HAMPTON  
LEGAL NOTICE  
Notice of Hearing**

The East Hampton Planning and Zoning Commission will hold a regular meeting on January 4, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. at the Town Hall, Eaton Smith Council Chambers Room 107 and via ZOOM Virtual Meeting to consider the following:

**PZC-22-010: Connecticut Water Company.** Install well metering building. Map 10A/ Block 85/ Lot 5C  
Ray Zatorski, Chairman  
Note\* any question re: Applications and Maps are on file in the Land Use Office 860-267-7450.

2TB 12/23, 12/30

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**Senior Center Van Driver – P/T \$17/Hr.**

The Town of Marlborough is accepting applications for a part-time Senior Center Van Driver for Wednesday and Friday from 8am to 12noon. This position is responsible for safely driving seniors and persons with disabilities to appointments and outings on an assigned schedule. Valid Connecticut Driver's License and Class A/B Public Service License with Endorsement F is required. The full job description and employment application are available from the Town Clerk's office at Town Hall or online at [www.marlbroughct.net](http://www.marlbroughct.net). Please submit an application and cover letter to: Marlborough Town Clerk, 26 North Main Street, P.O. Box 29, Marlborough, CT 06447. This position will remain open until filled. The Town of Marlborough is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

4TB 12/9, 12/16, 12/23, 12/30



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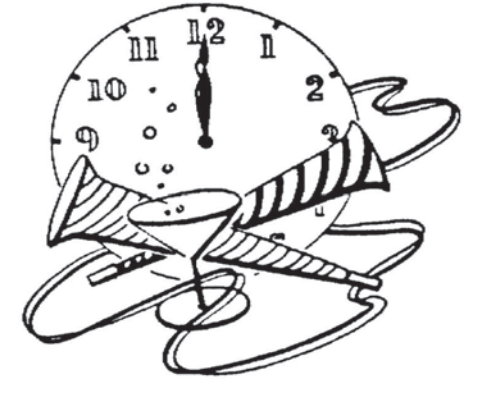
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