



Happy Hanukkah

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RIVEREAST

News Bulletin

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

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Got Milk?... The big, bold "Enjoy Milk" message emblazoned atop Mapleleaf Farm in Hebron has been given a significant touch-up, thanks to an area artist who grew up in Amston. Read all about the project on page 22.

Maio Remembered for Serving Community

By London Brazal Longtime Portland resident Nunziato J. Maio, who passed away at the age of 93 on Wednesday, Nov. 29, dedicated his life to helping others and was known for his unwavering commitment to the community.



Nunzi Maio

donations from local groups hosting food drives, managed orders, organized a team of volunteers, replenished shelves, and dedicated hours to overseeing additional donations of furniture and household items.

Known as "Nunzi" to most, he became an integral member of the Portland Food Bank along with his wife Ruth. The two met on a blind date in Salt Lake City, Utah, when Nunzi served in the Air Force. They fast became great friends. After marrying in 1956, they moved to Portland, where they raised their two kids, Maureen and Kim.

Nunzi became involved with the food bank in the mid-1990s when Ruth was asked to take it over by the first selectman at the time. The volunteer organization has served as a lifeline for numerous local families requiring assistance.

When volunteering, the Maios handled the shopping for the food bank using funds received through donations. They also collected

Nunzi was family to them. They loved joking with him and Ruth noted how he got along with everyone.

On Oct. 5, 2022, Nunzi and Ruth were recognized for their accomplishments and important work in the community by the Board of Selectmen. The board released a statement saying that "Ruth and Nunzi Maio have been respected pillars of the community serving as the Portland Food Bank coordinators for decades, providing food and provisions to those in need all year long."

First Selectman Ryan Curley said this week that Nunzi will be missed by all who knew him and he leaves behind a lasting legacy. "Nunzi's commitment and service to those in need will continue to be an inspiration to all for many years to come."

See Maio Remembered, page 12

Marlborough Kicks Off Holiday Season

By Michael Sinkewicz

With Marlborough's annual "Gathering on the Green" in full-swing on Saturday night, Joe Asklar gestured to hop on top of the brick wall encircling the festivities.

"You want to get the real feel of it," he said. Thousands of residents congregated to officially launch the holiday season and enjoy a parade, tree-lighting ceremony and thrilling fireworks display.

The event, hosted by the Marlborough Volunteer Fire Department in conjunction with the Parks and Recreation Department, proved to be the town's "Hallmark moment" that successfully ignited Christmas spirit throughout the community.

Kids wearing reindeer antlers and oversized string lights shuffled around the green as the RHAM High School chorus huddled near the tree caroling.

"The camaraderie," Asklar, the town's fire marshal and a Board of Selectmen member, said when asked what was his favorite part of the night. "For neighbors to come here with such joy and warmth — I mean think about it."

Over a dozen firetrucks adorned with lights

rolled down North Main Street saluting the patrons with honks and sirens reassembling "Jingle Bells." Apparatus came from numerous neighboring towns and as far away as Stonington, with Santa coming in this time not on his classic sleigh, but atop Marlborough's 1958 Mack B truck.

After dismantling, a seemingly endless line of children assembled to get a picture with Saint Nicholas, who first assisted residents with lighting the tree.

This year, the guest of honor was the family of Kevin Schadtler, a beloved Marlborough resident who passed away earlier this year. The crowd joined them with the countdown, and the tree was illuminated.

But the joyful light emitting from the tree was soon fused with the thunderous crack of fireworks put on by Legion Fireworks, out of upstate New York.

As the pyrotechnics pierced through the foggy sky, Asklar — who had promised a "magnificent" production — had a smirk on his face, as if to say, I told you so.

"What a great show, huh?" he said.

In fact, there were audible "oohs" and "aahs" from the crowd, some even watching comfortably in lawn chairs adjacent to Town Hall.

The impressive scale of the celebration took years to perfect. Asklar explained that originally, the ceremony was quick and simple. Members of the fire department began speculating that something grander could be achieved.

"The first year we did it, all we did was light the Christmas tree and we had one firetruck," Asklar said. "We said 'we're going to take this to the next level.'"

For the last eight years, the community has embraced the event, which is funded through donations; no tax dollars are earmarked.

"We look forward to it every year," said Catherine Castellani. "The fire department just does a fabulous job and all the other towns help. It's amazing."

She was selling ornaments and magnets for the St. John Fisher Church Knights of Columbus, where her husband is a member, and the proceeds supported the Special Olympics.

Sales were moderate, and the table ran out of See Marlborough Holiday Season, page 12

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From the State Senator's Desk...

We're in the final stretch of 2023, with only a few weeks left until New Year's Day. The holiday season is a time for celebration and for us to come together with our families, but it is also a time for us to reflect on the year we've experienced. For me, 2023 was a year I will never forget, and I truly believe it was a year in which Connecticut moved forward in positive ways.

Most prominently, this year is important to me because it was the year I was sworn in and served as a state senator for the first time! One week into the year, I stood with my colleagues in Hartford and officially became the representative for Andover, Bolton, Glastonbury and Manchester. The gravity and seriousness of this role are not lost on me, and I am truly proud to stand in the Capitol and around our state representing all of us.

For the first half of this year, my colleagues and I spent countless hours, late nights and early mornings in Hartford, considering hundreds of pieces of potential legislation and voting to improve, accept or reject them. This experience was eye-opening and rewarding, especially with the successes we accomplished. My colleagues and I were able to cut the state's income taxes for the first time since the 1990s. When they file next year, about one million taxpayers will see their income tax rates decrease. That means a cost reduction of \$600 million dollars – as much as \$600, or more, per taxpayer. The best part? It's aimed at the middle class, meaning single filers earning up to \$150,000 and households earning up to \$300,000.

This was just one of a number of updates and improvements state legislators moved forward. After years of work, the state became the 47th in the country to offer in-person early voting starting in 2024, which was supported by a significant majority of voters in 2022 and will make it easier to cast a ballot. A piece of legislation I proposed and supported is bearing fruit; I'm currently leading a task force in Hartford to study the vehicle tax, and we hope to find a way to get rid of it in a way that supports both household cost savings and our towns and cities. Further bills will support education improvements, hold our state energy utilities accountable and support mental health services, among many others.

But legislation isn't the only thing I'll remember from this year. In all of 2023, I've been touring our entire senate district constantly, learning about the needs for different towns and how I can best support us all in years to come. We have a beautiful district and every visit I make leaves me prouder to represent us all.

I wish you and your family a wonderful holiday season and wish you a wonderful 2024. I look forward to another year of serving our towns.

State Sen. MD Rahman, D-Fourth District

Note: The Fourth District covers Andover, Bolton, Glastonbury and Manchester.

Volunteers Sought for Fields Committee

The town recently received a \$500,000 STEAP (Small Town Economic Assistance Program) grant to cover most of the costs of improving the athletic fields on Long Hill – and town selectmen are now looking for people to help oversee the project.

These improvements, which are designed to benefit residents of all ages, include the addition of a playground, water and electrical connections to the softball field, three new pickleball courts, and lighting for the soccer field and pickleball courts.

The Board of Selectmen is setting up a com-

mittee to help oversee this project. The board is looking for a diverse set of volunteers including parents with young children, those interested in athletics including soccer and softball, as well as adults interested in pickleball to be on the committee. Anyone with a construction or engineering background is also welcome to apply.

If interested, submit a letter with a short description to the Andover Town Clerk at town-clerk@andoverct.org, or mail or drop it off to the town hall at 17 School Rd., Attention: Town Clerk.

Community Festival of Trees

The Town of Andover, in collaboration with Fitch Family Farm, will hold a Community Festival of Trees Sunday, Dec. 10, and families, sports groups, committees, and businesses all are welcome to decorate a tree. Call/text Carol Lee at Town Hall to reserve your tree, at 860-989-6988.

Public viewing and a community auction are set for Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 9-10, at Fitch Family Farm, 11 Bunker Hill Rd. All trees must be decorated by 2 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 9, with

auction bids closing at 4 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 10.

There will be holiday music and refreshments by the fire, sponsored by the Andover Recreation Commission. There will be a visit by Santa and Mrs. Claus on Sunday, Dec. 10, at 4 p.m. Vote for your favorite community auction tree, and bid on one to take home; all winners will be announced during the festival Sunday, Dec. 10, from 4-7 p.m.

A portion of auction proceeds will benefit various Andover charities.

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 or visit www.andoverctchurch.org.

Children's Church: Sunday school is provided.

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.; the senior food pantry is open the opposite Wednesdays, also from 9-9:30 a.m.

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

Sonshine Stampers: Thursdays, 9:30 a.m.

Tree-Lighting: Sunday, Dec. 10.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service: Sunday, Dec. 24, 6 p.m.

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. Also call Palazzi for all luncheon reservations and transportation needs, including rides to medical appointments. For all Young at Heart events including movies, call Sue Schmidt at 860-604-1057, and call Town Clerk Carol Lee at 860-742-0188 ext. 2 for all trip information. For all senior events and information, visit the senior page of the town website, andoverct.org.

Shopping Dates: Willimantic: Tuesday, Dec. 19. Manchester: Tuesday, Dec. 12, and Thurs-

Tree-Lighting Tonight

Andover Congregational Church's Christmas tree-lighting event, originally scheduled for this past Sunday, will be held tonight, Friday, Dec. 8, at 6 p.m., at the church, located at 359 Route 6.

All are invited. There will be a barbecue and carol sing, followed by hot chocolate, cookies, and fire pits to roast s'mores.

Annual Toy Drive

The Andover town employees are collecting new unwrapped toys and gift cards to distribute to Andover families for Christmas throughout the holiday season. All are asked to bring donations to the Town Office Building, 17 School Rd.

For more information, or if you are or know of a family in need of assistance, call Roberta at 860-742-7305 ext 4215 or Carol at 860-742-0188 ext 2.

day, Dec. 28.

Christmas Luncheon: Christmas lunch with entertainment by Carolyn Brodgerski on Friday, Dec. 15, at noon, at the Town Hall community room. Reservations required; no walk-ins accepted.

Upcoming Trips: Festival of Lights, 12/14; Nautilus Museum, time for shopping and the Shack for lunch, 12/22. Contact Carol Lee to sign up and Palazzi for a ride.

Clothing Drive

The Andover Fire House, located at 11 School Rd., will hold a clothing drive Saturday, Dec. 9, from 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

All are asked to bring bagged clothing, shoes, boots, gloves, hats and jackets to be distributed to needy Andover families.

Wanted: Children's Books for Mrs. Merry Claus

New or slightly used children's books are being collected for giveaway by Andover's own Mrs. Merry Claus, a.k.a. Dianne Grenier.

Each year Mrs. Claus visits many Christmas-themed events in the area. This year, she would like to offer each child a book to take home from the "Elves Library." Collection bins have been placed at Andover Elementary School, Town Hall, and at Andover Public Library. For more information, call Mrs. Claus at 860-742-3033 or email Mrs_Merry_Claus@comcast.net.

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From the Editor's Desk

Observations & Ruminations

By Mike Thompson

Happy Hanukkah to all who celebrate.

The eight-night festival of lights began yesterday, Dec. 7. It's been a difficult time recently for Jewish people, with the war in the Middle East leading to many unfortunate acts of anti-Semitism here in the U.S. Hopefully this next week can provide some comfort to the Jewish community.

Speaking of Hanukkah, there will be a local artisan Holiday Bazaar and Craft Fair on Sunday, Dec. 10, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., at Congregation Kol Haverim, 1079 Hebron Ave., Glastonbury. Admission is free.

There will be selections from more than 30 local vendors. Gourmet foods, Judaica items, handmade clothing, jewelry and accessories, handcrafted wood and pottery items, and more will all be available for purchase.

But wait, there's more! You can also enter a raffle to win one of 30 prizes.

All in all, it sounds like fun afternoon in nearby Glastonbury. I encourage you all to check it out.

As for another big December holiday, Christmas, here's a fun bit of news that was made this week. Brenda Lee's "Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree" has finally hit number one on the *Billboard* Hot 100 charts – a mere 65 years after its release.

A perennial holiday hit, "Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree" had never hit number

one on the charts. But it finally did this year, and gave Lee her first number one since 1960's "I Want to Be Wanted."

Lee was just 13 years old when "Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree" was first recorded – and is still with us, at the age of 78. Thus, by hitting number one this week, Lee becomes the oldest female artist, and indeed the oldest artist overall, to top the Hot 100.

Speaking of the holidays, videos of cats climbing Christmas trees – and in some cases, knocking them over – have been making the rounds online, as they often do at this time of year. And while the viral videos are funny, the truth is the holidays can be a rather dangerous time for cats and dogs, if their owners aren't careful.

So, with that in mind, the Best Friends Animal Society – an animal welfare organization working to end the killing of cats and dogs in America's shelters by 2025 – sent me a press release this week, passing along some helpful tips to keep pets safe this season. The society says:

Be aware that increased noise and lights can cause stress in dogs and cats. If pets seem agitated, turn down the music or consider placing them in a quiet, calm room with dim lighting.

Keep candles and open flames on high sur-

Editor's Desk continued on page 7

Bulletin Board

My wife blew in the other afternoon full of holiday cheer after doing some Christmas shopping. "Guess what I found today!" she said.

"A potato that looks like Theodore Roosevelt passing a kidney stone," I guessed.

She ignored me.

"A potato that can do as many pushups as Joe Biden and has more ethics than Donald Trump?" I ventured.

"I've got a whole bag of potatoes that fits that category," she remarked.

"A--"

"Enough with the potatoes, okay?" she said.

I adopted an abused and injured tone. "I was going to say a strawberry that couldn't be half as sweet as my darling bride," I said.

She looked like she wanted to vomit.

"I bought these really warm fuzzy socks to put in the boys' Christmas stockings," she said, taking the high road.

The Little Devil on my shoulder said, "That's it? Really? Socks? All this excitement about a couple of pairs of fuzzy socks?"

"Shut up," I told him.

It was already too late. She'd seen the expression on my face. "I know you don't like Christmas," she said, "but you don't have to spoil it for everyone else."

"I can't help it," I said. "When I was like four years old..."

"And stop with the damn palomino pony, would you already?"

I have become notorious in my family for my holiday complaints about asking Santa to bring me a palomino pony when I was a little kid and how disappointed I was when I ran out on Christmas morning to greet my pony except there was no pony. For years, I've managed to bring up the sad and tragic story of the palomino pony every holiday season to the loud groans and cries of "Shut the hell up!" from my adoring family, which you think might be a little more sympathetic considering the season.

"I'm sorry," I said stiffly. "I can't help it if I was irreparably damaged by Santa's gratuitous cruelty to a mere child."

"You weren't damaged. You just use it as an excuse to torture the rest of us and pretend you hate Christmas."

"I was too damaged. Santa screwed me."

"Santa did you a favor. My uncle had horses. Do you have any idea how much work it is to keep a horse?"

"What, you just ride it around and feed it apples and stuff. And you get to wear a cowboy hat." She rolled her eyes. "Where did you plan to keep this pony of yours?"

"In a barn."

"What barn?"

"I don't know. Some barn."

"And who was going to muck out the pony's stall?"

"What's that? Muck out?"

"That's shoveling the horse's \$%! out of the pony's stall. What do you think happens when you feed a pony apples? It ends up as horse's \$%! and you have to freaking shovel it out."

"Geez," said the Little Devil on my shoulder. "What was she raised by paratroopers or something?"

"Shut up," I told him. "I can handle this."

"Oh sure you can," he chortled.

"So do you really want a palomino pony?" she continued. "Because we've all had it up to here with your damn palomino pony and we're ready to get you a freaking horse just so we can watch you groom it and clean up after it and get sued when he bites some redheaded kid's head because he thinks it's an apple. So what do you say, huh?"

The Little Devil giggled.

"I think maybe I'd rather get a motorcycle," I said.

"Oh sure. How about a pair of warm fuzzy socks?"

"Warm fuzzy socks are good," I said. "I could definitely settle for warm fuzzy socks."

"Good," she said. "Now please give me a hand bringing in the presents from out in the car."

"Merry Christmas," chirped the Little Devil on my shoulder.

"Oh, shut up," I said. "I never really wanted that pony anyway. It was all about the cowboy hat."

Jim Hallas



Winning Logo... Bacon Academy senior Jay Hester won Colchester Music Boosters' first T-shirt logo design contest. T-shirts, sweaters and other gear with Hester's logo are for sale through Dec. 12, on the Colchester Music Boosters (CMB) Facebook page. A portion of the sales goes to CMB, a 501(c)3 nonprofit, to help support K-12 music education in the Colchester Public Schools. Pictured from left are Erin Shuman (secretary), Suzanne Salemi (president), Jay Hester, and Heather Galarneau (vice president). For more information, email colchestermusicboosters@gmail.com.

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Thanks for Your Support

To the Editor:

I would like to thank everyone for their support during the November election. I am honored to have the opportunity to continue to serve as Portland's town clerk. I look forward to assisting you the next time you are in the Town Hall.

Sincerely,

Michael Tierney – Portland

Thanks from Garden Club

To the Editor:

On behalf of the Portland Garden Club, I would like to thank everyone who came out and supported our holiday sale of cemetery planters and other craft items on Saturday, Dec. 2. The holiday sale provides a large portion of our club's monetary needs so that we can care for various gardens in town, present educational programs, and provide services to the Portland and surrounding communities.

I would like to thank our club members for their hard work and tireless efforts to make this year's fundraiser such a huge success. Thanks also to the following people for their generous

donation of supplies: Judy Pogmore, Richard and Judy Lane, Tom McBrien, and Swedish, Center, and Indian Hill Cemeteries. A special thanks to Francis Dwyer and Chad Anderson for helping with the deliveries.

The community's support is sincerely appreciated and I would like to thank the Town of Portland for the use of their parking lot and the *Rivereast News Bulletin* for their advertisement of our event.

Wishing you a wonderful holiday season,
Susanne Anderson, President
Portland Garden Club

It Takes a Village

To the Editor:

They say it takes a village to raise a child. Well, it also takes a village to care for children all around the world who have a serious rare disease like Tango2. The Tango2 Research Foundation hosted their 4th Benefit Dinner and Auction last month. The money raised will help with the organization's advocacy of this disease by supporting families, accelerating research and therapy discovery, promoting awareness and striving for early diagnosis.

See Letters, page 6

RIVEREAST

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★ Letters cont. from page 4

We would like to sincerely thank the many businesses and people who helped to make the auction and raffle a huge success. Thank you to: the Adventure Park in Storrs, Black Walnut Bakery, Lakeside Bar and Grill, Story and Soil Coffee, CBS/Shefyk & Sons, Essex Steam Train, Jeff Mentuck Glass Artist, Ken Barber, Jessica's Gentle Jungle, Lynn's Craft Cubby & Gift Shop, Old Sturbridge Village, Pedal Power, It's So Ranunculus, Mike Cardi, Charlie's Water Wagon, Po's Rice and Spice, Gano's, Amir Campbell, Ann Geffen, Louise Pepineau, The Gelston House, Sadler's Ordinary, Sweet Jean's, Palmer Eye Care and Smiles for the Future. Many thanks to our evening's sponsors: Lakeside Bar and Grill, Walt Jedziniak Photography, Smart Start Pediatrics, Toyota of Colchester, Reynolds Subaru, Tokio Marine Insurance, and Town Fair Tire. Sincere thanks also go to those that attended the Banquet and to Leah O'Hearn for her wonderful "MC-ing."

Without all your support to the foundation and the families affected, the banquet would not have surpassed its goal. Thank you to all involved! For more information on Tango2, go to Tango2Research.org

Joanne Barmasse
Volunteer, Tango2 Foundation

Heroes Came to Help

To the Editor:
My truck lost control on black ice Friday morning Dec. 1 on my way to work. I had just crossed the East Hampton line on Route 16 leaving Colchester. I found myself upside down in my truck. Three men appeared who I did not know. They must have been the ones who called 911. They stayed with me until the emergency vehicles arrived. One fellow was able to retrieve my eyeglasses from the wreckage. I wish there was a way to thank them. The East Hampton police were great, very helpful. The emergency medical team was very nice also.

With all the bad news going around it's good to know there are still heroes who will help a stranger.

John Koopman III - Colchester

Florida GOP Chairman

To the Editor:
"Wouldn't it be ironic if the woman who led an ultra-conservative movement in Florida education that sought to put gays back in the closet was having a long-term, three-way lesbian relationship with a lover she shared with her husband, the state's GOP chairman? That's the allegation being made about Bridget Ziegler - co-founder of far-right Moms for Liberty and a Sarasota School Board member - by an unnamed woman accusing Christian Ziegler of rape and sexual battery. But, in the context of the investigation, the woman revealed to the police officer who initially responded and the investigating detective her long-running 'three-way' sex life with the couple. Hypocrisy on steroids, if true. Moms for Liberty banned school books featuring gay characters and Blacks confronting discrimination in a predominantly white society?" (Miami Herald) So now they're Moms for Threesomes?

Annie Steinbrecher - Marlborough

Healthier Hebron

To the Editor:
The headline read, "Open Spaces Lead to Healthier Bodies and Minds." This is what drew me to the Nov. 9 issue of the *East Haddam News*. So I picked up a copy and read on. The article by the East Haddam Land Trust opens with a series of compelling statements from Russell Melmed, the director of the Chatham Health District, which also serves Hebron. According to Director Melmed, "Escaping the noise and the unnatural (structures) of suburbanized and urbanized areas for the natural environment has an impact on health... Communities with open spaces are healthier." He continues to note, "That's shown by longevity and life expectancy (data). And chronic disease rates are lower... That cuts across educational and economic levels..."

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Donald Roy 860-874-8396

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The authors confirm that Director Melmed's claims are supported by studies released by the University of California-Davis Health in 2023. The benefits include, "Improved thinking and other mental abilities, largely because people usually begin to relax. This increases feelings of pleasure and can help in concentration and focus..." These beneficial effects were also noted by Joene Hendry, president of the East Haddam Land Trust, "During the pandemic we saw a marked increase in the use of hiking trails. As people searched for safe, outdoor activities, they realized that trails offered excellent and safe recreational opportunities, but also offered places to refresh and renew one's spirit during very difficult times."

The town of Hebron has a rare opportunity to build healthier bodies and minds in the very center of town. The property at 17 Kinney Rd. offers easy access to a historic green space. This pristine watershed and ancient farm fields offer a unique location to build health and can also serve as a vibrant economic engine through ecotourism. For more information, please visit Save Hebron Center on Facebook and #Save17.

Sincerely,
Kevin J. Tulimieri - Amston

Golf Tourney Thanks

To the Editor:
A genuine thank you once again to the Portland Golf West who held their annual golf tournament to benefit the Portland Food Bank.

On behalf of the Portland Food Bank and the many people who benefit from it, we would like to personally thank them for their tireless efforts to help those in need again this year. This business have been an ardent supporter for many years. We consider them as part of the Portland Food Bank family. We are very appreciative of their unending support.

It takes a lot of work and many hands to make the food bank successful and this golf tournament certainly helped more than we can express.

Once again, thank you for your continued support.

Ruth Maio, Director
Portland Food Bank

Unfit Federal Court Nominee?

To the Editor:
Joe Biden and his puppets, a.k.a. Blumenthal and Murphy, are proposing that Connecticut law professor Sarah Russell be nominated to be a federal judge. In 2020 she signed a letter, along with others, calling on Governor Ned Lamont to release thousands of state prisoners and jail inmates at the start of the pandemic and declare a moratorium on incarceration! She also claimed prisons and jails are detrimental to human rights and disproportionately harm Black, brown, Indigenous people, people with mental illness and people that use drugs. (I always thought that people in jails and prisons were there because they committed crimes and deserved to be there to prevent harm to law-abiding citizens.)

Senator Blumenthal nominated her for this position and spoke at length trying to convince others to approve her nomination. The Republicans walked out and the vote had to be postponed due to a lack of quorum.

Frank Blume - Colchester

Why Won't Someone Do Something?

To the Editor:
The apathetic nature of this country has gotten us to a tipping point. The thought of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness could become a story you tell your children. Can you imagine trying to explain the idea of freedom to someone who will never have the opportunity to experience it for themselves? The ideals of hard work and winning were once values of this great nation and somehow have been lost in the age of apathy, leaving your future and your children's future to chance like a bag blowing in the wind.

If you ask yourself why someone won't do something, look in the mirror. Whether you love or hate it, every aspect of your life directly results from your actions or inaction. We have become so complacent and comfortable that when our comfort is threatened, we sacrifice freedom for comfort and convenience. We must reevaluate and audit our lives and how we're leading in our homes, communities, and work.

We have an entire generation of young adults who need safe spaces and mental health days and are unprepared for life. You see it firsthand if you're an educator, employee, or employer. The next generation has been set up for failure, and when we have lost everything it means to be American, it will be our fault.

It is time to bring the American culture back, live unapologetically like an American, and stop putting the responsibility onto others. There is a remarkable opportunity before us now, and it would be advantageous for us not to squander it. So, the next time you ask yourself why someone won't do something, remember. It's you.

Chris Soule - East Hampton

Proud of Registrar

To the Editor:
You may have recently read the article in the *CT Examiner* about an anonymous letter that was submitted to Portland's first selectman, town clerk, and registrars of voters. According to the article, the letter alleges that one of our elected officials does not reside in Portland.

We would like to commend the Democratic registrar of voters who filed a formal complaint with the State Elections Enforcement Commission (SEEC) concerning this allegation. She did the right thing, knowing she could face backlash from many people who would be supporting a very popular elected official. She did not file the complaint because she was trying to be political, much the opposite. She waited until the election was over and the recount was completed before filing a complaint about a possible residency issue so as not to sway any votes. She did not want to interfere with an election knowing the residency claim may or may not lead to any sanctions. She filed the complaint because it is her job to ensure all registered voters and elected officials in Portland live in Portland.

Does the elected official live in Portland? I don't know. How could the registrars, first selectman or town clerk know either? It is not their job to investigate. It is their job to pass any information along to the SEEC and let them investigate. As stated in the *CT Examiner* article, both the SEEC and the secretary of state's office advised the registrar to file a complaint with the SEEC.

We are very proud to know that at least one of the registrars of voters was willing to make the tough decisions required of her job. We thank her and applaud her for showing great integrity and commitment to her community. She simply did her job.

Jim Tripp, Chairman
Portland Democratic Town Committee
on behalf of the Portland DTC

Liberals' Fantasy World

To the Editor:
Edwin Smith was particularly prickly last week. What happened, Edwin? Did someone upset you while you were walking your doggie or leave unauthorized mail in your mailbox again? You poor victim. Edwin is the main reason why it's called the "Toilet Paper Mafia." Toilet paper is the perfect delivery system for his letters.

Aside from irony, hypocrisy, inaccuracy, factual omission, fabrication, and adolescent inarticulation, Edwin also incorporates projection into his otherwise phantasmagorical letters (a big word in honor of Scott Sauyet and the BOE!). Without fail, Edwin ignores any aspect of a social issue that doesn't corroborate his narrative. I suspect, but have not fully investigated, the possibility that a decades-long career of interacting with 12-year-old school students has reversed Edwin's intellectual development.

See Letters, page 31

Editor's Desk continued from page 4

faces out of reach of pets. When candles are lit, always monitor both the flame itself and where pets are in relation to it.

Tape electrical cords safely to the wall and make sure that all connections, batteries, and outlets are concealed from curious canines and kittens.

The water a Christmas tree sits in is a breeding ground for bacteria and can be extremely harmful to pets. Keep water covered with a thick skirt to prevent dogs and cats from getting into it.

Holiday plant staples including lilies, holly, mistletoe and poinsettias are known to be toxic to pets and should be kept on high surfaces.

Tinsel, ribbon, metal hooks, plastic and glass can obstruct or perforate the intestine

of pets if ingested. Use an alternative such as paper and hang decorations where pets can't reach.

Curb the tendency to give your dog or cat human food and dispose of trash as soon as possible. Any change in your pets' diet may give them indigestion, diarrhea or worse.

Foods that people should avoid giving their pets include chocolate, grapes, onions, poultry bones, egg nog and fruitcake.

Lastly, the society encourages pet owners to make sure their pets' identification and microchip are up to date, in case anyone inadvertently leaves the door open during a holiday celebration.

See you next week.

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East Hartford facility -
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December 10 performances

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Bacon Academy Honor Roll

Bacon Academy has announced its honor roll for the first quarter of the 2023-24 school year:

Honors with Distinction

Grade 9: Ali Ali, Raphael Antonacci, Gehrig Bartiss, Katherine Belding, Zachary Chiarella, Timothy

Crowell, Sarah Deane, Cody Friberg, Reina Hill, Rae Lenda, Mason Lenk, Charles Mauldin, Keegan McKenzie, Cole Mitchell, Kaylee Opalenik, Karah Pensa, Cora Rago, Zachary Russo, Autumn Sneed, Jason Trusz, Toheed Usman, Shauna Wells.

Grade 10: Oakley Adams, Emma Aivaliotis, Riley Anderson, Alyssa Blanchette, Kylie Boerenko, Hailey Brown, Benjamin Buyniski, Julian Dean, Bela Dec, Jordan Donnelly, Hector Franceschi-Newton, Charlotte Galarneau, Julia Gale, Joseph Gignac, Taryn Gray, Brynn Herboldt, Colby Hlasyzyn, Anna Ibey, Lanie McIllduff, Alyssa Nelson, Wesley Piella, Reagan Reid, Skyelyn Schoen-Rene, Jillian Snow, George Stula, Corinne Toennes.

Grade 11: Heather Bigalbal, Kaitlyn Brennan, Madison Coons, Edward Hageman, Lilliana Healy, Ethan LoVetere, Ashley Nowakowski, Kevin Reas, Alex Sanchez, Jr., Chloe Sanders, Morgan Tyrrell, Chase Vendrillo.

Grade 12: Carolyn Baehr, Allison Bartiss, Mia Belcamino, Abigail Belding, Logan Brown, Jonah

Brownson, Jillian Callan, Sarah Churchill,

Kevin Claffey, Emyliah Colon, Jonathan Curry, Samantha D'Atri, Andrew Ferrigno, Emily Ferrigno, Garrett Geleney, Dimitra Goncalves, Xavier Gudelski, Taylor Herboldt, Jara Hester, Leah Hochholzer, Owen Ibey, Mariam Kasli, Sana Kasli, Jace King, Cheyenna Landry, Alexa Lebiszczak, Emma Liberty, Christopher Lusignan, Jack Mallett, Neil Malloy, Melinda McKenzie, Lydia Muhl, Rohan Patel, Tyler Pulse, Sebastian Santini, Dina Sehl, Clover Skilton, Shea Sweet, Brianna Tasky, Luke Torneo, Sherlyn Vazquez-Lopez, Arlo Waters, Daniel Wozniak, Amaya Zavistoski.

High Honors

Grade 9: Jake Ashley, Brooke Burchfield, Aidan Claffey, Kellen Conley, Bray Geleney, Zephyn Harrington, Savanna Healy, Rowan Hodgkins, Ella Jeffries, Peyton Mikalonis, Samantha Moon, Grace Poirier, Garrett Rodgers, Kagan Ruzsala, Benjamin Salemi, Ian Sanders, Katelyn Siena, Alexa Smith, Mason Steele, Riley Trudeau, Melissa Vazquez-Lopez, Ashleen Walsh.

Grade 10: Arianna Bloch, Emma Cote, Lucian Dean, Kiley Filloramo, Emma Gyngell, Mia Hageman, Lily Koziol, Michael Krol, Devon Kudrak, Madison Levasseur, Andrew Mertz, Sokhano Nguon, Sydney Ostergren, Allen Quinones, Lorelei Romasanta, Rachel Rumph, Mia Santini, Abigail Stillwell, Natalie Uhrig.

Grade 11: Jackson Budrow, Julia Cavaliere,

Cate Grasso, Caitryn Holt, Amber Hostetler, Benjamin Jordan, Keggyn Landry, Juliana Martino, Kaitlyn Meltsner, Mutia Quarshie, Charles Rose, Gavin Shkutzko, Meghan Zingler.

Grade 12: Nathaniel Alexander, Kayla Balsler, Illiana Blanco, McKayleigh Capone, Dante Colella, Aaron Fidyrych, Cody Gesiak, Brady Gould, Kayla Hall, Sean Jolly, Aisha Kasli, Theodore Koutsofavas, Madelyn Koziol, Logan Lamme, Johannes Liebenberg, Kaylee Marshall, Alex Mauldin, Sophie Melmed, Lauren Myers, Travis Piella, Audra Putorti, Leah Putorti, Samuel Ringuette, Holden Serrambana, Ethan Siborg, Chelsea Smith, Lourzinais Sosa Torres, Kiera Stewart, Olivia Tellar, Meghan Walsh, Alyssa Waterman

Honors

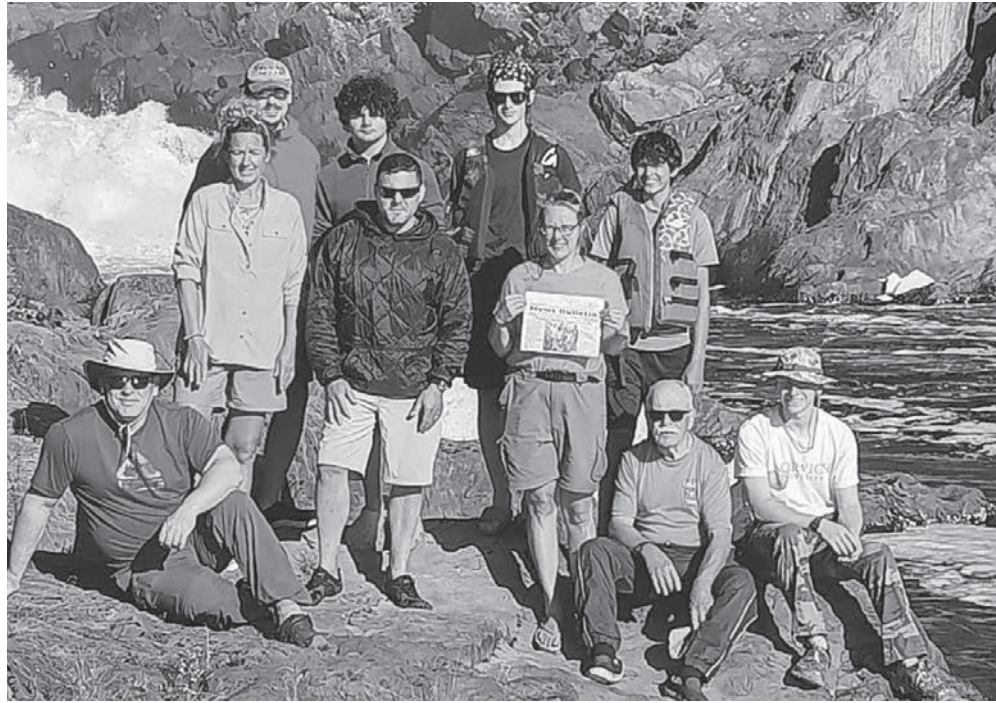
Grade 9: Lilliana Anderson, Cody Blanda, Cole Boutin, Skyy Courtemanche, Jacoby Eisenberg, Lauren Emmons, Leah Eveleigh, Hannah Ferrigno, Elizabeth Floyd, Matthew Galante, Asha Hormuzdiar, Madeline Ives, Brandon Kapoor, Mason Koji, Paraskevi Koutsofavas, Hailey McGlynn, Abigale McGregor, Nathan Metcalfe, Joshua Millington, Sai Parekh, Simon Parra, Boden Paul, Chelsea Pirro, Abigail Richards, Landon Roderick, Jacob Schoen-Rene, Kolby Simonds, Eleni Tsakiris, Paolo Uccello, Evan Vernali, Miles Viggiani, Codey Wade, Delaney Walsh, Michael Wisniewski, Travis Wood.

Grade 10: Elijah Banks, Harrison Billiot, Caroline Brown, Ashton Capone, Clarence Coogan, Melanie Couture, Ethan Creutz, Logan East, Nicholas Gilman, Troy Johnson, Caden

King, Sasha Koopman, Grayson Mahon, Oliver Melmed, Madeline Meyer, Joseph Papale, Gianna Riley, Benjamin Simonds, Liam Sweeney, Landon Vigil, Matthew Vilardo, Colton Waterman, Chase Williams, Erica Willson.

Grade 11: Avery Anderson, Abby Berk, Hailey Cardoza, Isaiah Carr, Jacob Cerniglia, Alexa Chiarella, Elias Chiaverini, Birch Collins, Callum Cuadro, Dominic Cusano, John Dalton, Isabella Falkowski, Joshua Fenton, Jean-Paul Fougereuse, Abigail Grimm, Bailey Handwerk, Bennett Holloway, Aaron Hosford, Douglas Howard, Ivy Huang, Jillian Jones, Nicholas June, Timothy Kastrop, Benjamin King, Tanner Kundahl, Fiona Lin, Anthony Liu, Julia Lombardo, Oliver Markham, Rylee McKenzie, Josiah Nolsoe, Katelyn Novak, Andrew O'Neill, Sydney Orlando, Emilee Pac, Audrey Palmer, Tristan Pedroso, Jameson Pirro, Madden Roderick, Alexia Rodriguez, Dominique Sanchez, Garrett Schuth, Vincent Shi, Sawyer Simone, Veronica Smith, Olivia Sobota, Eve Svata, Kaden Treat, Nevaeh Wikarska, Liam Yates, Jason Zingler, Daniel Zurita

Grade 12: Madison Brown, John Ceruti, Noah Crowell, Allison Deane, Matthew Elsdon, Grace Eveleigh, Makayla Gale, Taylor Gerst, Brett Guntulis, Jessica-Willow Harris, Quintin Henley, Olivia Hightower, Grant Johnson, Quincy Lawley, Gabriel Mahon, Maya Mancuso, Michael Marino, Lucas Mieszkowicz, Gavin Nichols Sanchez, Morgan O'Connor, Dylan Opalenik, Eric Prates, Konnor Tuthill, Dylan Ward, Juan Yanez, Freddy Zhang.



Whitewater Rafting!... A group picture of Troop 72 during their high adventure whitewater rafting trip this summer at Allagash Falls, a 90-foot waterfall in Maine. The trip lasted five days and covered 72 river miles on the Allagash and St. John's River in northern Maine.

Donations Sought for Wreaths Across America

Locally, volunteers supporting Wreaths Across America at Westchester Cemetery have been working to ensure that the 55 service members buried there will be honored again this year with the placement of live balsam veterans' wreaths as part of National Wreaths Across America Day 2023.

This event will be held at the Westchester Cemetery off Route 16 on Saturday, Dec. 16,

starting at noon sharp.

Donations are welcome; each individual \$17 contribution sponsors a fresh balsam wreath that will be placed on the headstone of a veteran at the cemetery. To sponsor a wreath, or for event details, visit www.WreathsAcrossAmerica.org/CTWCCC. Donations can also be mailed to Wreaths, c/o Linda Pasternak, 636 Westchester Rd., Colchester, CT 06415.

Colchester Federated Church News

Colchester Federated Church is an Open and Affirming church located at 60 Main St. Pastor is the Rev. Lauren 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. For those wishing to worship from home, the service is broadcast via Facebook Live each Sunday. Worship videos are at www.colchesterfederatedchurch.org under the Worship tab. Updated information is also on the church's Facebook page.

Sunday School: 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 for more information and to register 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. from September through June.

Advent & Christmas Schedule: Dec. 10: Advent week 2: Peace, 9 a.m. worship service; Dec. 17: Advent week 3: Joy, 9 a.m. worship service; Dec. 24: Advent week 4: Love & Christmas Eve, 9 a.m. and 9 p.m. services - Family Service with Christmas Pageant at 9 a.m., and Lessons & Carols at 9 p.m.; Dec. 31: Christmas Carol Sing at 9 a.m. worship service, Wear your favorite Christmas sweater.

The Congregational Church in South Glastonbury invites you to

HANDEL'S *Messiah* Sing Along

Sunday, December 10, 7:30 p.m.
949 Main Street, South Glastonbury

Come to sing or to listen

Sarah Himmelstein, Soprano
Alex O'Neil, Alto
Bruce Giles Barger, Tenor
Laurentiu Rotaru, Bass

South Church Adult Choir
Hop River String Quartet
Eric Ouellette, Keyboard
Greg Flower, Conductor

& You!

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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 christian-lifechapel.org.

Bible Study for Men: Mondays at 6:30 p.m. and Saturdays at 8 a.m.

Women’s Bible Study: Tuesdays at 10 a.m.

Community Bible Study and Prayer: Wednesdays at 7 p.m.

Donuts with Don: Fridays at 10 a.m. This is an open discussion on how God fits into your life.

Carol-Sing and Nativity: Sunday, Dec. 10, 3 p.m., on the Town Green. Complimentary cookies and hot chocolate will be provided by Abundant Life, Christian Life Chapel and Fellowship Community Church.

Parks & Rec News & Notes

Colchester Parks and Recreation has announced the following programs and events. Registration required unless noted. For full descriptions and to register, visit www.colchester-ct.gov/recreation-department. Parks and Rec. can also be reached at 860-537-7297 or at Town Hall, 127 Norwich Ave.

Giving Tuesday: Camp Scholarship Donations: Your donation, in any amount, will help send a child to camp this summer. For more information, or to set up a reoccurring donation, contact the office at 860- 537-7297.

It’s A Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play: Friday, Dec. 8, 7:30 p.m. Colchester Actor’s

Theatre: A Parks and Recreation Community Program presents this American holiday classic as a live 1940s radio broadcast. With the help of an ensemble that brings a few dozen characters to the stage, the story of idealistic George Bailey unfolds as he considers ending his life on a fateful Christmas Eve. Tickets are available at Colchester-Actors-Theatre.ticketleap.com.

Holiday Home and Business Decorating Contest: Print your free map and view all of the decorated sites; maps are available online or on the Parks and Rec. Facebook or Instagram pages. Vote for your favorite home and business decorations on Facebook by Dec. 31.

Shelter Collection Drive

Presents for Paws will host its 16th annual Shelter Collection Drive Saturday, Dec. 9, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m., at John Gagnon’s Pet Resort, 227 Upton Rd., to collect items for Connecticut animal shelters.

Presents for Paws will accept the following donations based on shelter needs/requests: cat litter (high priority); dog food (Purina preferred, wet/dry, unopened – please no Ol’ Roy or Beneful); cat/kitten food (wet/dry, any brand, unopened); cat/dog treats (no rawhide); new/gently used dog toys (especially kongs and chew toys); and cleaning supplies (such as Clorox wipes/spray, trash bags, and paper towels).

If you cannot attend, you are welcome to purchase items for Presents for Paws from its online wish list at linktr.ee/presentsforpaws501c.

Monetary donations are also appreciated; they are tax-deductible and 100% of donations go to help shelter animals.

Presents for Paws is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization located in East Haddam that collects and distributes supplies to area shelters, rescues, and municipal pounds. For more information on the drive, to make a monetary donation or to become a volunteer, visit www.presentsforpaws.org.

Winter Indoor Soccer

Colchester Soccer Club is holding online registration for its 2024 winter indoor season.

Register by Dec. 15, by logging in to your account at www.colchestersoccer.org, or creating a new account, and the available programs will show under your listed participants. This program is available to players in grades PreK-12.

The eight-week season will be held in the Jack Jackter Intermediate School gym beginning the weekend of Jan. 8, with games being scheduled on either Friday nights, Saturdays, or Sunday mornings; division schedules will not be decided until after registration numbers are reviewed.

Contact President Tim Daniels for more information at president@colchestersoccer.org.

A Festival of Lessons and Carols

Guardian Angels Parish/St. Andrew Church will present a “Festival of Lessons and Carols for Advent/Christmas” on Sunday, Dec. 10, at 2 p.m., at St. Andrew Church, 128 Norwich Ave.

The program will be the telling of the Christmas Story. It will include scripture readings, and songs performed by the Principal Choir, The Young Peoples Choir, along with soloists. The Bell Choir will also participate, as well as perhaps some special guest performers.

All are welcome. A free will offering will be accepted to support the Colchester Food & Fuel Bank. For more information, contact Terry Phillips at 860-608-0130.



Chanukah Party... Rabbi Ken Alter and cantor Tami Cherdack Sherman invite everyone to Congregation Ahavath Achim’s Chanukah party on Saturday, Dec. 9, at 5 p.m. Attendees will light their menorahs together and enjoy homemade latkes, donuts and music. The party is free and open to all. Donations will be accepted.

Ahavath Achim News

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

Tuesday: Aggadata class, 6 p.m.; Talmud class, 6:30 p.m.; Kabbalah class, 8 p.m. on Zoom; call for link.

Wednesday: Hebrew, 2:30 p.m., Jewish Literacy, 3:30 p.m.

Shabbat Schedule: Friday at 6:30 p.m., in-person and on Zoom – Shabbat; Saturday

morning, 10 a.m., in-person and on Zoom – Shabbat service.

Chanukah Party: Saturday, Dec. 9, 5 p.m.

There are daily Facebook Live classes on Ken Alter’s Facebook page; Ask the Rabbi and Jewish Trivia are also featured.

For more information, or a link for services or classes, call 860-537-2809. Office hours are Wednesday, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.



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

Facing the Holidays with Chronic Lyme

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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Colchester Community Theatre Separates from Town

By Michael Sinkewicz

The Colchester Community Theatre (CCT) has officially become a non-profit organization, separating from the Town and launching an exciting and challenging transition for the group's leaders.

The paperwork was filed in October, creating CCT Inc., with 501C nonprofit status.

For over 25 years, the CCT had a generous relationship with the Town of Colchester that involved fully sponsoring the organization, which allowed the group to utilize school facilities for shows and rehearsals and conduct a summer workshop each year for kids. Most importantly, the sponsorship allowed the CCT to be insured through the town.

Over a year ago, the CCT was informed that it was no longer covered under the town insurance, effectively ending the sponsorship and jeopardizing the sustainability of the group.

In May, the CCT reached an agreement with the town to become an official Parks & Recreation program, which would essentially allow the organization to continue being insured and function through the town.

With the new nonprofit status, the CCT is responsible for maintaining its own insurance, amongst additional hurdles. But auditions for the group's next feature presentation, *Kinky Boots*, have taken place in recent weeks, and the group is confident in its success moving forward.

"The arts are so incredibly important," said CCT President Diane Ozmun. "We have to have that exist in our community."

Even though the group was financially self-sustaining, and zero tax dollars were funneled into its budget, the previous relationship with the town allowed the CCT certain perks that made putting on a production easier. For example, although ticket sales covered the total expenses, items such as props and costumes were purchased in advance with the town, and

reimbursed afterwards.

"We've always been profitable," Ozmun explained, adding that old financial maneuvers were not possible. "We're no longer in that place."

CCT still has access to town facilities, including the Bacon Academy auditorium, where *Kinky Boots* will be performed in February. But the group needs additional funding to ensure that it can survive in the long term. The CCT was awarded a grant that will provide a boost for this upcoming show as well.

"We are actively seeking donations," Ozmun said. "We don't have that fallback; we're on our own now."

For over 25 years, the CCT has been a prominent presence in the community, Ozmun added, and the group is asking for that support once again.

"We're very excited about the future, but we need our community support to help us shift over."

Recent months have been full of research into what being a nonprofit entails, and what the group will require to stay afloat.

"It's certainly a lot of work to become a [non-profit] and remain solvent," she said.

After the CCT's summer workshop production of *Finding Nemo JR* in July, sights were set on the next feature production. Ozmun stated that the procedures and requirements to exist through the recreation program would impact the group's ability to function as it desired.

The checks and balances, she explained, would've impacted the CCT's timeline.

"We needed to have full and complete autonomy to select our shows and perform shows without any restriction," she said. "It was going to slow down the process for us getting into our whole production."

As a nonprofit, the CCT will continue to be the same entity that residents have embraced for over two decades; its goals and priorities remain the same.

"We really try to provide a variety of show selections that can meet the interests and heart of what people can enjoy through musical theatre," Ozmun said. "We're excited to continue to do that."

Although the relationship with the town is over, at least on paper, it will continue to exist in practical terms. The CCT isn't looking to abandon the town or forget its history.

"We still feel a part of the town," Ozmun expressed. "It's in our name. The town is the whole reason we exist. Now, it's just just in a different way."

Last Friday, Ozmun along a few of the CCT's directors, met Colchester First Selectman Bernie Dennler in what she described as a "very positive meeting."

"It's important that we stay connected with the town," Ozmun said. "Bernie was of course very supportive of us."

She said the meeting revolved around how the town can promote the CCT in conjunction with the programs offered by the Parks and Recreation Department. Both sides can work together, she explained.

Dennler also assured the CCT that they would continue to maintain complete control of their own creative process, according to Ozmun.

Moving forward, the two sides plan on meeting periodically. It's possible, she said, that their relationship may continue to evolve.

"We're leaving the door open if there's a need for more or a different type of connection," she said.

Senior Center News & Notes

Colchester Senior Center, 95 Norwich Ave., has announced the following. Unless noted, registration is required for all programs. For full descriptions and to register, call 860-537-3911, email csc@colchesterct.gov, or for a full list of activities, visit www.colchesterct.gov/senior-center.

Monday, Dec. 11: 9 a.m., Making Memories, Exercise with Anne, CoA Meeting; 10 a.m., Sittercize; 10:30 a.m., Holiday Party; 11 a.m., Learn to Sign; 12:30 p.m., Mah Jongg, Bridge; 12:45 p.m., Setback.

Tuesday, Dec. 12: 9 a.m., Making Memories; 9:45 a.m., Tai Chi; 10 a.m., LTC Ombudsman Meeting; 10:30 a.m., Scotland & Iceland Trip Presentation; 12:30 p.m., Pinochle, CHOICES Counseling; 1:30 p.m., bingo; 3:30 p.m., Cookie Decorating; 7 p.m., SCBC Meeting (via Zoom).

Wednesday, Dec. 13: 9 a.m., Making Memories Program, Walking Group meetup at the Airline Trail in Amston; 9:30 a.m., October Kitchen Bingo; 10 a.m., Adult Coloring, Sit & Be Fit; 1-3 p.m., Cardio Drumming; 2 p.m., Sewing Circle; 2:30 p.m., Staff Meeting.

Thursday, Dec. 14: 9 a.m., Exercise w/Anne; 9:30 a.m., Newport Trip details; 10 a.m., Sittercize, Wii Bowling; 10:30 a.m., shopping trip; 11 a.m., Yoga; noon, Chair Massage; noon-3 p.m., Senior Benefits Counseling by an appointment only; 12:30 p.m., Dominoes; 1 p.m., Knit & Crochet, Cookie Baking.

Friday, Dec. 15: 10 a.m., Sit & Be Fit; 10:30 a.m., Cookie, Cocoa & Choir Holiday Show; 11 a.m., Yoga; 1 p.m., Tech Time with Harry; 1:30 p.m., Bingo.

Upcoming Programs: Holiday Lights Evening Trip: Tuesday, Dec. 19, 4 p.m. departure. Travel to the "Magic Lights" at Rentschler Field in East Hartford. Enjoy dinner on your own at Cracker Barrel, with time for some shopping in their gift shop. Cost is \$8 and includes park admission and bus transportation. Space is limited; deadline to sign up is Monday, Dec. 11, or whenever the trip sells out.

Sugar, Spice & Everything Nice Holiday Luncheon: Wednesday, Dec. 20, 11 a.m. As the holidays approach, so do the visions of sugar plums, gingerbread houses, Christmas cookies and candy canes. All are invited to celebrate the holidays with this sweet theme. Victoria Rose will provide a holiday performance. Dinner is prime rib, garlic roasted potatoes, squash with peppers and carrots, dinner roll, assorted holiday cookies and apple juice. Tickets are \$9 per person and space is limited.

Special Subway Lunch: Tuesday, Dec. 26, noon. TVCCA is closed Dec. 26. However, the senior center is offering a Subway lunch for those who wish to eat at the center. The lunch includes a six-inch sub sandwich, bag of chips, drink and cookie, for \$10. Register before Dec. 19.

New Year's Eve Brunch 'N Bash: Friday, Dec. 29, 10 a.m. Have brunch while listening to jazz crooner Patrick Tobin. Menu will include broccoli, bacon & cheese quiche, turkey sausage patties, home fries, fruit salad, orange juice, pastries, and a mock-champagne toast right as the clock strikes noon. Tickets are \$9/person. Space is limited.

Building the BOE Budget

All are invited to join Superintendent of Schools Daniel P. Sullivan III and Business Director Rachel Linkkila on Monday, Dec. 11, for an overview of how the Board of Education budget is built.

The forum will take place from 5-6 p.m., in the library media center at Bacon Academy, 611 Norwich Ave.

Ukrainian Catholic Church News

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

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

Westchester Church News

Westchester Congregational Church, 98 Cemetery Rd., holds worship Sundays at 10 a.m. The services are also available on Zoom; visit westchesterconchurch.org for login information.

Sunday School for children meets during the worship service.

Meetings: 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.

For more information, email westconchurch@gmail.com or call 860-267-6711.

5K Resolution Run

The Colchester Youth First Coalition and Colchester Youth and Social Services will hold the 19th annual New Year's Day 5K Resolution Run at Town Hall at 10 a.m. Monday, Jan. 1. Registration and bib pick up begins at 8:30AM.

Pre-registration is \$30 and Same Day Registration is \$40. The first 200 people registered will receive a race performance tee. Register at tinyurl.com/59cy4cks.

Proceeds benefit youth scholarships and youth center upgrades. For more information, contact Charity Benedict at Colchester Youth & Social Services at 860-537-7255 or cbenedict@colchesterct.gov.



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Scout Troop 72 recently held its fall Court of Honor, at which several merit badges were presented. Pictured from left are scouts Logan Cleary, Bryce Berta, Ben Salemi, Alex Laspino, Johnathan McAllister, Anthony DePaola, Sai Parekh and Adam Laspino.

Troop 72 Holds Court of Honor

Scout Troop 72 recently held its fall Court of Honor, at which several merit badges were presented.

The troop attended the weeklong overnight summer camp at J. N. Webster in Ashford and had a great time swimming, shooting, hiking and boating. The Scouts earned a total of 43 merit badges.

During summer camp the leaders elect an "Honor Camper" which represents a Scout who has been engaging, and represents the spirit of Scouting at its best; this year's Honor Camper is Logan Cleary, and he was honored with a special neckerchief and certificate.

Merit badges were earned by the following scouts:

Adam Laspino: Canoeing, Chess, Fishing, Kayaking, Radio, Wood Carving; Alex Laspino: Chess, Radio, Swimming, Wilderness Survival; Anthony DePaola: Animation, First Aid, Motorboating; Benjamin Salemi: Animal Science,

Archery, Wilderness Survival; Bryce Berta: Canoeing, Chess, Entrepreneurship, Geocaching; Chase Vendrillo: Automotive Maintenance, Geology, Mining in Society, Plant Science; Johnathan McAllister: Chess, Leatherwork, Rifle Shooting; Logan Cleary: Leatherwork, Pottery, Swimming, Wood Carving; Lucas Jodoin: Canoeing, Chess, Plant Science, Pottery; Sai Parekh: Archaeology, Astronomy, Chemistry, Engineering, Kayaking; Zack Jodoin: Canoeing, Chess, Game Design.

To see highlights of the troop's events, find the troop on Facebook at Boy Scout Troop 72, Colchester.

The troop holds regular meetings at Colchester Federated Church on Mondays at 7 p.m., from September to June. If your child aged 11 to 17 is looking for an outdoor adventure program that teaches life skills, email the troop at scoutmaster@troop72ct.org, attention Ben Smith, or stop by for one of the troop meetings.

Resolution Run to Make Return

By Michael Sinkewicz

In a few short weeks, it'll be time for folks to lace up their shoes and start burning off those holiday calories, as Colchester's "5K Resolution Run" will make its annual return.

On New Year's Day, at a tolerable 10 a.m. start time, the community is welcome to participate in the community race, which is celebrating its 19th year.

The 5k - or 3.1 mile - run is hosted by Colchester Youth First Coalition and Colchester Youth and Social Services (CYSS).

As always, the race kicks off at Town Hall on Jan. 1; registration and bib pick up begins at 8:30 a.m.; pre-registration is \$30 and same-day registration is \$40. The first 200 people registered will also receive a race performance tee. Register at tinyurl.com/59cy4cks.

"It's a great way to kick-off the new year," said CYSS Director Valerie Geato. "It helps people step off on the right foot."

For nearly 20 years, the race has been a "community tradition," Geato expressed, and it's definitely competitive, although walkers are also encouraged.

Scott Bushey, a Hebron resident, is frequently breaking the tape first, Geato said. His pace will be tough to beat, but perhaps a Colchester hero will emerge this year. Fair warn-

ing, he once completed the race in 16 minutes and 36 seconds - a 5:21 mile pace.

"He's really fast," Geato confirmed.

Race conditions can vary - anything from snow to a scorching 50 degrees is possible - but those who participate are ultimately contributing to a greater cause.

Proceeds generated from the race benefit youth scholarships and youth center upgrades.

"For us, it's our biggest fundraiser of the year," Geato said.

The funding contributes to the coalition's youth leadership award, which is given yearly to a Bacon Academy senior.

"It's a great way to recruit kids," she said.

This year, Geato said the target fundraising goal is \$5,000. Numerous sponsors helped cover the costs of the shirts this year, and a well-designed long sleeve tee might motivate more individuals to sign-up.

Patrons will be treated with a hot chocolate stand as well, and will have access to indoor bathrooms.

For more information, contact Charity Benedict at CYSS at 860-537-7255 or cbenedict@colchesterct.gov.

50 Years of Bacon Wrestling

2023-24 is Bacon Academy Wrestling's 50th varsity season. All are invited to help celebrate at any or all of the following five events:

Wednesday, Dec. 13: Colchester Youth Wrestling Night. All CYW wrestlers and their parents are free.

Wednesday, Dec. 20: Alumni Night. All Bacon Academy Wrestling alumni are free.

Wednesday, Jan. 10: Bacon Academy Student Night. All Bacon Academy students get in for free.

Wednesday, Jan. 24: Senior Night. Prior to the

meet we will honor the seniors on the team.

Saturday, Feb. 3: The Matt Bishel Bobcat Classic. This is an all-day tournament at which Bacon Academy Wrestling will honor former alumnus Matt Bishel, who passed away in 2011. Wrestling starts at 10 a.m.

At all Wednesday events, wrestling starts at 6 p.m., but all are invited to come early and enjoy some of the pre-meet activities, which will start around 5:15 p.m.

During each event there will be some special activities.

Exploring Scotland and Ireland

Colchester Senior Center is offering a trip to Scotland and Ireland in September 2024 - and an informational presentation is coming up Tuesday, Dec. 12, at 10:30 a.m., at the center, 95 Norwich Ave.

The trip will be Sept. 8-20. See Edinburgh on a panoramic coach tour or by foot, cruise famed Loch Ness, visit the Titanic Experience in Belfast, walk the Giant's Causeway and soak up the views of Causeway Coast. Also, visit Ireland's capital city of Dublin and tour historic St. Pat-

rick's Cathedral.

Trip includes transportation to airport, airfare, hotels and 18 meals (11 breakfasts and seven dinners). Double occupancy is \$5,829 per person if booked before March 9, 2024.

Trips are available to Colchester Senior Center members and their adult guests over the age of 18. Senior center membership is free for Colchester residents aged 55 and older. There is an annual fee of \$15 for seniors residing outside of Colchester.

Giant Menorah on the Colchester Green

The entire community is invited to a festive Chanukah celebration on the Colchester Town Green, corner Main Street and Norwich Avenue. The event, scheduled for the seventh evening of Chanukah, will take place on Wednesday, Dec. 13, at 6 p.m.

The community Chanukah celebration is free and open to all. It will feature a fire show, chocolate-coin "gelt" drop from way up in the sky, warm "latkes" (potato pancakes), and hot cider. A giant Menorah will be lit and free raffles will be drawn.

For more information, call Chabad at 860-659-2422, email Yehudis@ChabadER.com or visit www.ChabadER.com.

Toys for Tots Fundraiser

The St. Joseph's Polish Club at 395 South Main St. is hosting its third annual Army vs Navy football game Toys for Tots fundraiser on Saturday, Dec. 9.

Watch the football game in the hall on the big-screen TV. Doors open at 2 p.m. and kick-off is at 3 p.m. There will be a buffet and raffle prizes. Bring a new unwrapped toy or a \$15 donation per person to attend this event.

For more information, call 860-537-2550.






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History Museum Open Sunday

The Colchester History Museum, located at 24 Linwood Ave., will be open one more Sunday for the season on Sunday, Dec. 3, from 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.

The museum, adjacent to Cragin Memorial Library, is free and features exhibits all highlighting the people and events in Colchester's history. The museum offers guided and self-guided tours.

For more information, contact the historical society at mail@colchesterhistory.org or 860-537-3240.

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Holiday Art and Gift Sale

A Holiday Art and Gift Sale will take place at Marlborough Arts Center, 231 N. Main St., through Dec. 9. The gallery will be open every Friday, Saturday and Sunday from 1-4 p.m. The sale will feature handcrafted items including stained glass decorations, small sculptures, wooden bowls, handmade soaps, and hand-woven articles as well as over 100 original framed paintings and photos. All are

priced from \$10 to \$200. The Arts Center will accept cash, check, or credit card payments. It is located at 231 N. Main St. and is accessible from routes 2 or 66, and has handicapped-access and on-site parking. For more information, visit the website www.marlborougharts.org or call 860-467-6363.

Preservation Society Calendars Available to Order

The Marlborough Preservation Society's 2024 calendars are now available for pre-order. This year's theme is "Marlborough's Notables," and will feature people who have a connection to Marlborough and who have made an impact to the state, country or world – past and present. This is a full-color, 11x17 calendar with history and accomplishments of 12 notable people from town. The cost is \$22 per calendar. All proceeds go

to storing the historic Town Green mural. For more information, visit www.marlboroughhistory.org/store. For mail orders, the society's mailing address is: Marlborough Preservation Society, P.O. Box 351, Marlborough, CT 06447. And for more information on the society, visit marlboroughhistory.org, or email mhs@marlboroughhistory.org.

St. John Fisher Church News & Notes

St. John Fisher Roman Catholic Church is located at 30 Jones Hollow Rd. Pastor is the Rev. Alvin LeBlanc, Bill Gilles is deacon John McKaig is deacon emeritus. Heather Mancini is church secretary and can be reached at 860-295-0001; hours are Monday-Wednesday and Friday, 8:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. People are asked to call before heading over or connect via email at stjohnfisher30@yahoo.com.
Christmas Mass Schedule: Dec. 24, Christmas Vigil at 4 p.m., Evening Mass at 8:30 p.m.; Dec. 25, Christmas Mass at 9:30 a.m.
Advent Reconciliation: Monday, Dec. 18, 6-8 p.m. and Tuesday, Dec. 19, 9-10:30 a.m.
Weekend Masses: 4 p.m. Saturday and 8:30 and 10:30 a.m. Sunday. All are welcome. Week-day Mass: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, 8:30 a.m.
Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament: Mondays at 9 a.m.
Weekly Sacrament of Reconciliation: Saturdays, 3-3:30 p.m., or by appointment
Family Faith Formation: Led by Cindy Bryan, this is an active family faith formation program for the church's kindergarten through elementary school population. Deacon Bill Gilles leads the middle school program. For more information, call the church office.

Confirmation Community: Led by Helena Thomas, this is a 9th- and 10th-grade confirmation program. For more information, call the church office.
Adult Worship Choir: Meets Wednesdays from 5:30-7 p.m. All are welcome to join. More information is 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 is the last Thursday of the month for St. Vincent de Paul in Middletown. The Community Garden has wrapped for the year and provided over 365 pounds of fresh produce to the Marlborough Food Bank. Other scheduled service opportunities can be found on the church website and are scheduled monthly.
Other Programs and Offerings: For more information on other programs, seasonal offerings, adult faith formation, youth group, RCIA, Knights of Columbus or other ministries, call the office, visit www.stjfisher.org, or look for the church on Facebook (Saint John Fisher Roman Catholic Church).

Parks and Rec Fall Programs

Marlborough Parks and Recreation has announced the following. For full program 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.
Parents' Night Out: For grades K-6. Friday, Dec. 15, 6-9 p.m., at the Marlborough Senior Center. Drop off the kids and go have dinner, see a movie, or go shopping. Kids will have the option of participating in arts and crafts activities, games, sports or watching a movie. Pizza and beverages will be provided. Registration fee is \$20 per child resident, \$25 per child non-resident.
Netto Indoor Soccer: Games will begin the week of Jan. 8, and will be played after school

on Mondays and Wednesdays at Marlborough Elementary School. Games will conclude at 4:30 p.m. Fee is \$75 and participants will receive a T-shirt.
Adult Programs: Adult Volleyball: Thursdays, 8-10 p.m., at MES. Fee: \$5 per week.
Adult Drop-In Basketball: Sundays, 8-10 a.m., through March 31, at MES. Fee is \$5 per week.
Zumba Class Fall Session: Thursdays through Dec. 21, 6:30-7:30 p.m., at MES. Drop-in fee is \$10 per week.
Driveway Reflective Number Signs: Cost of the sign is \$50. Vertical sign is double sided 8" x 24" with 4" numbers on blue highway reflective metal. Order forms are online and at Town Hall.

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★ *Maio Remembered cont. from page 1*

As a tribute to their dedication and outstanding service, the lower level of the Senior Center where the food bank is located was renamed in their honor. On Jan. 30, 2023, the Board of Selectmen hosted a ceremony at the Senior Center with an engraved plaque that thanked the couple for their countless hours of devotion to the Portland Food Bank.
 In 2009, Nunzi and Ruth were recipients of the Ralph Paley Spirit of Portland Award. They were the first to receive the honor, which was initially called the Town Spirit Award, and introduced by the senior center. The award is a community leadership award given to residents who make remarkable contributions to the town and are dedicated to helping their fellow residents.
 So impactful was the Maios' work that someone who was not close to the couple nominated them to be featured as Hometown Heroes in the *Hartford Courant* in 2017. The person had been in awe of the services the Maios provided to Portland, noting how they always did it without fanfare. In the subsequent article, written by Shawn Beals, other members of the community described Nunzi as someone who "goes above and beyond" and was genuinely loving.
 Former first selectwoman Susan Bransfield said Nunzi was the kindest man she'd ever known.

"He was always there for me and for so many others, with his pleasant smile, a joke of the day, and his generosity of positive words," Bransfield said.
 Bransfield also described Nunzi as a dedicated and loving husband, father, grandfather, and friend to many.
 "He will be missed," she said. "I will always have a special place in my heart for Nunzi and all his wonderful works. May God bless him forever."
 Nunzi graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Massachusetts and a Master of Science degree in chemistry from the Ohio State University. After settling in Portland, he worked with United Technologies Fuel Cell Division then H&R Block.
 Ruth had many favorite moments, but she especially loved the trips they took as a family. After getting home from work on a Friday, the couple and their daughters would drive straight through the night to Wyoming, Ruth's birthplace. "We would only stop for gas and food. We'd get there Sunday night," explained Ruth. She recalled how they would sing the whole time, even if they got tired of it.
 Nunzi dedicated his time selflessly to the food bank and his community, leaving behind a legacy of kindness and generosity; he will be fondly remembered for his contributions.

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Marlborough residents gathered around their illuminated Christmas tree on the Town Green last Saturday to kick off the holiday season.



Santa swapped out his sleigh for a 1958 Mack B firetruck last weekend as he paraded down North Main Street in Marlborough during the town's annual "Gathering on the Green" celebration.

★ *Marlborough Holiday Season cont. from page 1*

popcorn earlier in the night, which likely disrupted traffic. But unlike past years when when it snowed, or even worse sleeted, the weather was clear, guaranteeing a jolly atmosphere.
 "We love this town," Castellani said.
 Marlborough Jr. Ancient Fife & Drum Corps proudly stood at attention and performed its own renditions of Christmas classics.
 David Morganson, the chairman of the Board of Assessment Appeals, was watching his four kids playing in the corps, each one with a disciplined, serious look on their face — not because they were miserable, but to stay in character.
 "They're kind of acting at the same time as playing an instrument," he said.
 Morganson's children have joined a historic tradition and community of members who have taken pride in their craft for generations. The gathering on the green was also the embodiment of community, he said.
 "I think if you don't come together, you're not

a community," said Morganson, who has lived in town for 16 years. "So this really defines the community."
 And in a small town, the checkbook can usually stay at home. A treat at one of the booths won't cost \$30, he explained; it's just one of the differences from living in a densely populated city.
 "There's conveniences and inconveniences," Morganson expressed. "You can't buy a new toaster at 10 p.m. on a Thursday, but you can come out for hot chocolate with your family."
 Lynn Wohlfer was with the Women's Auxiliary, distributing those steaming cups of hot chocolate, along with cookies and candy canes.
 "I've been doing it for years," she said. "We get a lot of people and they're so happy."
 When asked what keeps her involved with the yearly gathering, Wohlfer delivered a straightforward explanation.
 "We love it. It's a wonderful community."

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Selectmen Award HVAC Bid for Town Hall

By Michael Sinkewicz

The Marlborough Board of Selectmen (BOS) on Tuesday awarded a \$329,000 bid for a new Town Hall HVAC system to Air Temp Mechanical Services Inc.

The BOS voted 4-1 in favor of the HVAC system and also 4-1 on an additional vote for roughly \$10,000 for Town Hall insulation. Republican selectman Joe Asklar represented the lone vote in dissent with both motions.

He objected to the approval due to what he felt was a lack of data and information that he had previously requested on the project.

Town Manager David Porter told the *Rivereast* that the HVAC upgrade was long overdue, and that Town Hall currently used a “Frankenstein system” not designed for the current building needs.

“On certain days, especially cold ones, the heating system has trouble keeping up,” he said. “Sometimes instead of being 68 degrees, which is where we’d like it to be, it drops below 65.”

While Porter said his colleagues are “good sports” and will put on a fleece, they also use space heaters, which is not ideal. The alternative, though, is for employees to be sent home.

“We’ve kind of dealt with it,” Porter expressed, “But this upgrade has been a long time coming.”

On Wednesday morning, Porter confirmed that the HVAC system will be funded through the town’s capital non-recurring (CNR) budget.

“We anticipated this project a couple of years ago and included it in our long-term capital plan,” he stated.

During the meeting, the selectmen transferred \$48,500 in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds from Boat Launch Reconstruction Project to the HVAC replacement project, as well as \$12,000 for insulation project. Porter said the funding became available after the town was awarded a STEAP grant to cover part of the expense of rebuilding the launch at Blish Park.

The ARPA money “will offset costs for which we were prepared to expend CNR funds. Accordingly, we anticipate our capital budget showing a surplus,” he stated. The base contracts for the HVAC is for \$329,000, plus \$12,000 for potential shift work and \$7,500 for contingencies.

The insulation project is entirely covered by the reallocation of ARPA funds. Originally, the insulation was not part of the Town Hall renovation, but after BOS encouragement, the town studied the building and determined that 12 inches of insulation above the ceiling “represented a cost-effective investment would reduce

our heating and cooling expenses for years to come,” according to Porter.

As winter approaches, Porter said the inefficient heating system was an “inconvenience,” but that staff will continue to manage. Still, he looks forward to the issue being resolved.

“To the best of my knowledge, nobody has quit and found a different job over the heating system,” Porter said, “but I’ve heard from some my colleagues that they’d prefer to work in an environment that was a consistently comfortable temperature, which isn’t an unreasonable request.”

Nativity Festival Tonight and Tomorrow

Nativities shared by the local community will be on display at Marlborough Congregational Church, 35 South Main St., on Friday, Dec. 8, from 7-9 p.m., and Saturday, Dec. 9, from 11 a.m.-2 p.m.

All are welcome to view the collection in the sanctuary, which is adorned for Christmas, while live holiday music is performed on harp, guitar, and mountain dulcimer by local musi-

cians. Musicians performing are Carolyn Brod-ginski, Jason Castonguay and Bonnie Glow.

There is no charge for the event. Proceeds from a free will offering will go to the Connecticut Chapter of Casting for Recovery, an organization that enhances the lives of women with breast cancer by connecting them to each other and nature through the therapeutic sport of fly fishing (castingforrecovery.org).

Congregational Church News & Notes

Sunday Worship and Sunday School at the Congregational Church of Marlborough, United Church of Christ, 35 South Main St., is at 10 a.m. Worship is streamed live every Sunday at mcc.marlconchurch.org and recorded for later viewing at the website. Childcare for infants and toddlers is provided downstairs in the nursery but children are always welcome at the worship service. All children in the community are invited to attend Sunday School. Contact Gwen Lawson at the church office at office@marlconchurch.org for more information.

Sunday, Dec. 10: The 10 a.m. worship will feature the Chancel Choir’s Christmas Cantata, “Love Came Down at Christmas” with narrations and familiar Christmas hymns. The Cantata highlights the four themes of Advent: hope, peace, joy and love. The second Advent candle will be lit during a brief ceremony during the service. At Coffee Hour in the lounge, parishioners can choose from a large selection of homemade Christmas cookies and purchase them for \$8 per pound. Also, after worship a holiday vendor fair, with gifts for the whole family, all made by the children in Sunday school and youth group, will be in the Rev. Val Seaver’s office. All items will be sold by donation.

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

Outreach: The church collects non-perishable food items year-round for Marlborough

Food Bank with a basket located in the narthex for Sunday worshipers to bring their donations. The Drive-Thru Café for Marlborough Food Bank patrons is held monthly at the church.

AA: The church sponsors three scheduled meetings: Wednesdays at noon and 7:30 p.m. in the Great Hall, and Thursdays at noon in the Youth Room.

ACA: Meets in the Youth Room Tuesdays at 7:30 p.m.

Tree-Lighting and Carol Sing: Friday, Dec. 8, starting at 6 p.m. Led by guitarist and songwriter Steve Pozzato, this event will be held on the church lawn by the deck. Hot chocolate will be served. The event is free and all are invited. A box to collect winter clothing for local shelters will be available.

Second Blessings Thrift Shop: The shop features name-brand handbags and jewelry, linens, vintage and collectibles, toys and games, and items for giftware, baking, cooking and entertaining. Second Blessings is open Fridays from noon to 3 p.m. and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., through Dec. 23. For more information, contact the church office. The shop sells year-round through eBay at bit.ly/MCCebay.

General Info: Worship services and programs are open to all. The church is an Open and Affirming faith community. For more information on the church or its programs, call Seaver’s direct line at 860-295-0432 or email pastorval@marlconchurch.org.

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. Transportation is Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays; call 36 hours in advance of your appointment to guarantee a ride. Note: There will be no transportation offered Dec. 11-15.

Food Bank: Located at 3 Wilhenger Drive (860-295-6008), it 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.

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

Monday, Dec. 11: Free bread and bakery goods, 10 a.m. -- donation from Stop & Shop; 8-Ball Pool, 10 a.m.-noon; Bingo, 1-3 p.m.; Setback or cards of choice, 3-4:30 p.m. Congregate Meal, noon. Menu: 100% juice fruit punch Juice, veggie quiche, Lyonnaise potatoes, vegetable medley, garlic knot, lemon pudding with topping.

Tuesday, Dec. 12: Free bread and bakery goods 10 a.m. -- donation from Big Y; Meals-

on-Wheels, noon.

Wednesday, Dec. 13: 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; Setback, 1-4 p.m.; Congregate Meal, noon. Menu: grape juice, broccoli ‘n cheese stuffed chicken breast, mashed sweet potatoes, green beans, wheat dinner roll/ice cream cup.

Thursday, Dec. 14: Meals-on-Wheels, noon; Parkinson’s Disease Exercise w/ Anne, 3-4 p.m.

Friday, Dec. 15: Not Just Quilters, 9:30 a.m.-noon; assistance, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.; 8-Ball Pool, 10 a.m.-noon; Meals-on-Wheels, noon; Congregate Meal, noon. Menu: crab cake w/ tartar sauce, tater tots, ketchup, California-blend vegetables, wheat bread, fresh fruit; Traditional Children’s Christmas Songs with former radio personality Bill Naughton Jr. on guitar and vocals, 1-2 p.m. (invitation extended to MECCA and the parents thereof); Setback, 2:30-4 p.m.

Church Tree-Lighting Tonight!

Marlborough Congregational Church is having a Tree Lighting, Carol Sing and Winter Outerwear Clothing Drive tonight, Friday, Dec. 8, at the church deck. The church is located at 35 South Main St.

Gather at 6 p.m. to have hot cocoa and collect new or gently used coats, hats, mittens, gloves and scarves. The tree will be lit at 6:30 p.m., and there will be the singing of Christmas carols led by Steve Pozzato on guitar.

After the event, all are invited to attend the Nativity Festival at 7 p.m. inside the church meeting house.

New Year’s Eve Open House

There will be a New Year’s Eve open house at Marlborough Arts Center, 231 N. Main St., on Sunday, Dec. 31, from 6-9 p.m.

Bring a snack to share, your own drink, and enjoy the company of others who also want to celebrate, but not at midnight. There is on-site parking and the building is fully accessible.

The open house is free. For more information, call 860-467-6353.

Art Exhibit Continues at Town Hall

A variety of new pieces of art by award-winning local artist J. Bogon Romanowski will continue to be exhibited in the Town Hall, 26 North Main St., until Dec. 29. The Town Hall is open from 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday through Thursday, and from 8 a.m. until noon on Friday.

All are free to visit and view Romanowski’s variety of pieces in various styles: oil, charcoal and graphite drawings, and mixed media.

These monthly exhibits are sponsored by the Marlborough Arts Center.

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Tri-Board Meeting Highlights Future Budget Concerns

By London Brazal

The Town Council, Board of Education and Board of Finance, along with other town officials, gathered Monday to discuss the current fiscal year and review the initial plans for the upcoming fiscal year. The three boards listened to Town Manager David Cox, Superintendent Paul Smith, Police Chief Dennis Woessner, Senior Services Coordinator Jo Ann Ewing and Public Works Director Matt Walsh.

Town Council Chairperson Dean Markham said the meeting's purpose was to plan the course for the upcoming budget. In addition, he commented that the meeting would develop a "collegial and civil working relationship" so they can all serve the best interests of the residents of the town. Rather than having one tri-board meeting which ultimately limits the length of discussion and workshopping a budget, their goal is to have up to three. While serving on the elected boards, a collective goal is to be open and transparent with citizens so they can understand what is happening at any point in the budget process.

While referencing the projection of the 2024 budget, Cox said there were no significant

changes in the normal allocated funds. In terms of the BOE budget, it currently looks similar to the last fiscal year which ended this past June. However, expenses can exceed budget projections, mainly due to fluctuations in actual expenses related to special education outplacements. This happened the last fiscal year which created a deficit. Cox mentioned how the town received an unanticipated grant from the state which was able to offset the costs.

Department Issues on Radar

Woessner explained how there are 17 police officers but roughly 50% of the time, only two officers are working on the street. As first responders, they are required to respond to all medical calls no matter the status. Hypothetically, if one set of officers is at a scene and someone requires CPR, they can't leave until relieved by medical personnel. If another call occurs, they would have to call in mutual aid.

"But that's not always the most efficient way," said Woessner.

He explained how his biggest goal is to request an additional officer. This would help increase the time of having more than two officers

on patrol. "Staffing is expensive but I think it's very important. It's important to the quality of service for the residents," Woessner said. An additional officer was drafted into the current year's budget but was ultimately cut to help lighten the burden on taxpayers.

In the most recent press release from the police department, between Nov. 13 and Dec. 3, officers responded to 52 medical calls and 17 motor vehicle accidents. In the 20 days, that averages to about two medical calls a day and almost one accident a day.

Along with staffing, recruitment has been a problem as well. In the coming year, Woessner has an officer who has unofficially expressed retirement. "The [recruitment] pool is very very small," said Woessner. Another issue the police department faces is the increase of complex cases. Woessner explained how it is difficult to work on different cases when officers are working different shifts. The ultimate goal is to have a detective so they are assigned to the specific complex cases.

Ewing explained one of the major concerns for the senior center is transportation. She sees a need for a backup in case the main driver can-

not perform their duties or if there is a high demand. Another concern, which has been brought up multiple times, is a full-time assistant director position. As of now, two assistants are doing one job, and two activity specialists that work on different days. Ultimately, a problem lies in the continuity of conversation and keeping the planning consistent.

In the future budget, Walsh sees a challenge with the 85 miles of paved roads. Funding is important for trying to keep up with road maintenance to stay at the "status quo." To help plan for capital expenditures, the roads were surveyed and scored 70 out of 100. Walsh said that was average. He noted the \$350,000 funding was not enough to maintain a good status for the roads. The most recent rating dropped to 68. "Roads are getting worse and worse even though we're throwing money at them," added Walsh. His approach is to add money incrementally to get to \$850,000 by 2029. Ultimately, labor costs have been the root of the problems.

As the 2024-25 budget continues to be discussed, residents are encouraged to get involved early to provide input.

Original Epoch Arts Play Tonight

Epoch Arts will present *Hidden Injustice*, an original mini-production written by the student performers, tonight and tomorrow, Dec. 8 and 9, at Epoch, 27 Skinner St.

The theme of this year's one-act play is centered on the inequities of imprisonment systems in other countries. The premise of the story is that a group of American teenagers wake up to find themselves in prison. They have no knowledge of who they are or what

they have done. Through interactions, the teenagers slowly discover their stories and the injustice that put them behind bars.

Hidden Injustice is based on real stories and inspired by men and women who have been wrongfully locked up. The play is recommended for people middle school-age and older.

Showtime is 7 p.m. both nights, and tickets are \$12. For more information, visit epoch-arts.org.

Senior Center News & Notes

East Hampton Senior Center, 105 Main St., announces the following. Registration is required for all programs unless noted; register at myactivecenter.com or by contacting the center at 860-267-4426 or 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.

Lunches: Served Monday through Friday, to ages 60 and up. Call 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; a \$3 donation is requested.

Weekly Activities: **Quilting Group:** Mondays, 9 a.m.; **Mexican Train Dominoes:** Mondays, 9:30 a.m.; **Setback:** Mondays and Thursdays, 1-3 p.m.; **Bible Study:** Tuesdays, 1 p.m.; **Bingo:** Tuesdays, 1-3 p.m., in person and via Zoom; **Cross-Stitch & Embroidery with Shannon:** Wednesdays, 1:30 p.m. -- Bring projects to share and work on together; **Tai Chi:** Thursdays, 10:30-11 a.m.; **Tap Dance:** Thursdays, 11:15 a.m. **Cribbage:** Fridays, 9:30-11 a.m. -- let the center know in advance if you plan to attend; **Mahjong:** Fridays, 10 a.m.-noon -- call also to put your name on a list if interested in learning how to play; **Textile Group:** Fridays, 1 p.m.

Wii Bowling: Every other Thursday at 11 a.m.; **Cornhole:** Every other Thursday at 11 a.m.

Writing Our Lives to Open Our Hearts: There are two groups; one meets Thursdays, 10-11 a.m., and one meets every other Thursday, 11:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m. Groups meet in-person or via Zoom.

Wonderfully Wicked Women's Group (WWW): First and third Mondays of each month, at 10 a.m. This is an opportunity to meet others and share resources. The group determines the topics for discussion for the next month.

East Hampton Senior Center Holiday Party: Wednesday, Dec. 13, 2-5 p.m., at the senior center. There will be Santa, crafts, food, music and prizes. Admission is a non-perishable food item for the food bank.

Mesh Holiday Wreath Class: Friday, Dec. 15, 1:30-3:30 p.m. Cost is \$5 for supplies.

Family Tree: Friday, Dec. 15, from 10:30-11:30 a.m. Ken Doney, East Hampton resident, will introduce people to the 'how to's of this research. Register on myactivecenter.com. You are welcome and encouraged to bring your own electronic device to start your journey.

Art with Karen: Sunday, Dec. 17, 2 p.m. Cost is \$5 for supplies.

Chair Yoga with Kitch: Wednesdays at 1 p.m., from Dec. 20-Feb. 14. Cost is \$20; register at the senior center.

Trips: Willimantic Walmart Shopping Trip: Monday, Dec. 11, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Donation for bus transportation is \$4.

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 Jewing@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.

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, visit middlehaddamlibrary.com or call 860-267-9093. The library's P.O. Box number is 123.

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

Mahjong: Mondays at 10:30 a.m. Experienced and new players welcome.

Fiber Arts: Thursdays, 10 a.m.-noon. Bring your spinning wheel, knitting, weaving, embroidery, etc. All are welcome.

Yoga: With Erin Day of Ten Summit Yoga. Mondays at 9 a.m., Tuesdays at 7 p.m., Saturdays at 9 a.m. Cost is a \$15 drop-in fee. Register at tensummitst@gmail.com.

Holiday Mocktail Party: Friday, Dec. 15, 4-6 p.m. Learn to make alcohol-free mocktails. Registration required.

CommuniTea: Saturday, Dec. 16, 10 a.m.-noon. This is a monthly gathering to visit with neighbors, friends and other library patrons. Have a cup of tea (coffee drinkers welcome).

Used Book Sale: Saturday, Dec. 16, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., in the lower level of the library. There will be used DVDs and books for children and adults. Refreshments served. Proceeds benefit the library.

One-on-One Technology Tutoring Sessions with the East Hampton High School Interact Club: Tuesdays, Jan. 30, Feb. 13 and Feb. 27, 3-6 p.m. Sign up for your individual session in advance by calling the library. Bring your cell phone or tablet to the session.

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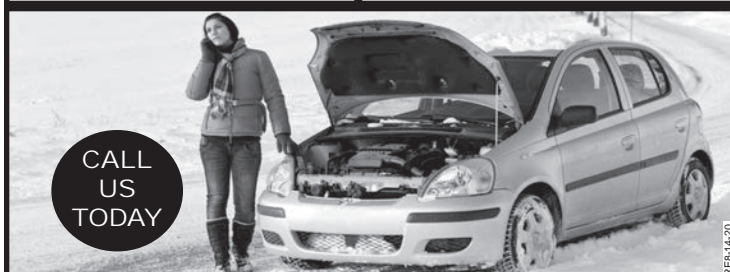
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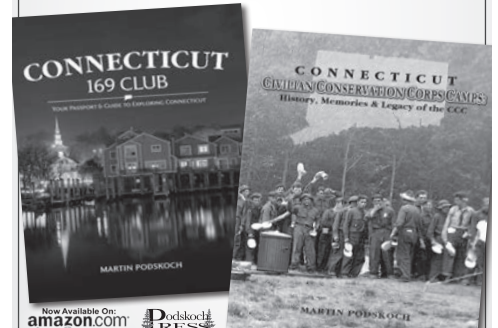
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Classic Holiday Film Has Ties to Belltown

By London Brazal

The classic Christmas movie *It's a Wonderful Life* embarks on a transformative journey of George Bailey, a compassionate small-town banker. The 1946 film has a significant connection to Belltown.

Toward the end of the movie, people may remember when Bailey receives a present from his guardian angel Clarence Odbody. Suddenly, a bell on the Christmas tree rings. Bailey's daughter Zuzu then responds with the memorable line, "Every time a bell rings, an angel gets his wings." The tiny decorative bell was produced by the Bevin Brothers, a bell company that started in East Hampton in 1832. As the company proudly boasts, it was "an authentic Bevin Bell that gave Clarence his wings."

According to Cici Bevin, the company's general manager, the movie did not gain popularity upon its initial release and wasn't considered a classic until the 1970s. "It was in more recent times when it became so iconic," said Bevin. "The movie wasn't a success at first and did very

poorly. The original studio forgot about the copyright and went out of date."

After the copyright lapsed, the movie entered the public domain and became a staple on television stations across the country.

And now, according to Rotten Tomatoes, the film is "the holiday classic to define all holiday classics." *It's a Wonderful Life*, the website states, "is one of a handful of films worth an annual viewing."

At the time of the film's release, Bevin Bells was between its third and fourth generation of owners -- Stanley A. Bevin was the owner and his son Chauncey G. Bevin II was coming in. As a family business, the Bevins have stayed true to orientation as they are in their sixth generation of ownership -- former Kentucky governor Matt Bevin is the owner and president and Cici Bevin is the general manager.

Cici Bevin said the company also employs family pairings such as siblings and fathers and sons, even though they are not related to the

Bevins. "These people really care about what they do," added Bevin. After a fire in 2012, the company's business model shifted, and 50% of its production continues to be bells, but the other half produces suppressed gas cylinders. "It's great that we still have the business to do this and all the jobs we can keep."

Following the company's connection with *It's a Wonderful Life*, the actress who played ZuZu Bailey, Karolyn Grimes, stayed in touch with the Bevins. "We do a lot of great stuff with her," explained Bevin. Grimes buys bells from the company and sells them herself. "In an interview, she even talked about the Bevin Brothers and our connection."

When the Bevin Brothers first started in East Hampton, there were more than 20 other bell manufacturers. At the time, bells were used everywhere from ovens and doorbells to car horns and bikes, before many of those sounds became electronic. Bevin Bros. is credited for inventing the first bicycle bell in 1865 and the first foot bell for early cars without horses. By the time *It's a Wonderful Life* came out, many bell manufacturers were already shut down. Now, Bevin Brothers prides itself on being the only remaining US manufacturer solely dedicated to making bells.

Leading up to the holiday season, the com-

pany becomes busiest between August and October. In August, Bevin Bells sends out many of its production to wholesalers including the kettlebells used for the Salvation Army across the country. With that, the company also sends bells to Santa-themed train rides such as the Polar Express Train in Essex.

Another holiday tradition is for the company to make sleigh bells. At the time of the company's founding, sleighs were a popular way to get around in cold winters. They were quiet and posed a danger to people walking on the same old-fashioned roads. Soon after, a law required sleighs to have bells to alert others nearby. Bevin Bells used to create around 20 various sizes and types of sleigh bells. Today, the factory continues to make more than 50 various sizes and types of bells in East Hampton.

When the company is busy with the holiday bells, the top seller tends to be the silver-plated *It's a Wonderful Life* Keepsake Bell and a smaller ornament bell. As the company is deeply rooted in the community, the Bevin Bros. also donates sleigh bells every year for the Jingle Bell Parade and tree-lighting ceremony. This year's annual parade is today, Dec. 8. Residents can gather at the library at 5 p.m. and the parade will begin at 6:15.

Epoch Arts Classes and Christmas Events

Epoch Arts has a variety of classes, theater productions and events for area youth this season. All classes are held at 27 Skinner St. Register online at www.epocharts.org or call 860-365-0337.

Kids Christmas Party: Wednesday, Dec. 13, 4-6 p.m. Kids in grades 1-6 will create a holiday piece of art. After that, Epoch elves will help decorate some Christmas cookies, followed by treats in the café. Cost is \$25.

Teen Ugly Sweater Paint Party: Thursday,

Dec. 15, 7-9 p.m., for grades 6 and up. Put on your ugliest sweater and come for a festive themed paint night, filled with music, snacks and an original painting to bring home. Cost: \$25.

Winter Classes and Theater Production: All are invited to a variety of afterschool classes like ceramics, improv, art and more. Teens can also join Epoch's original theater production that stages in May.

MistleTunes to Perform

The MistleTunes will perform Christmas favorites at Paul's and Sandy's Too on Saturdays and Sundays, Dec. 9 and 10. All performances will be from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. and 1:30-3:30 p.m., weather permitting.

The MistleTunes, comprised of Kathleen Genovese and Christine Walsh, perform a wide range of holiday favorites.

For more information, call Paul's and Sandy's Too at 860-267-0143.

Got Yarn??

The East Hampton Yarners are seeking contributions of yarn for their charitable projects. If you have yarn you'd like to share, contact Judy Hoffhine at jhoffhine@gmail.com.

The Yarners have provided projects for people from East Hampton to Middletown to Honduras.





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Holiday Boutique Sale


The East Hampton Senior Center will hold its annual Holiday Boutique Sale during the Village Center's December Business Saturday event on Saturday, Dec. 9, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m., at the senior center, 105 Main St.

The sale features quilted seasonal runners and small quilts, aprons, ornaments, pot-holders, knitted hats, scarves and mittens, woodcrafts and other items handcrafted by the center's seniors. Jewelry and yarn also included.



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Haddam Neck Covenant Church News

Haddam Neck Covenant Church, located at 17 Haddam Neck Rd. in East Hampton, invites all to online or in-person worship Sundays at 9 a.m. Pastor is the Rev. Tom Cowger. Refreshments are served after the service.

Puppet Ministry: Each Sunday, the Church's Puppet Ministry features Digger the Dog and some of his friends from Farmer M's Red Barn to help explain the meaning of the message topic.

Children's Ministry: For children in grades K-5, held in Fellowship Hall during the worship service. The theme is "Friends with God."

A toddler nursery is also available. All are welcome.

Vocal Choir: Choir rehearsals are held Wednesdays at 7 p.m. New members are welcome.

Adult Bible Study: Sundays at 10:30 a.m. in the Music Room. The study is on "Fruits of the Spirit."

Office Info: The office can be reached at 860-267-2336; hours are Tuesday and Thursday, 8 a.m.-4 p.m. The church website is www.hncovenantchurch.org.

Belltown Motors

Tire & Service Center



Stop in today to ensure your Car, Truck or SUV is **READY FOR WINTER!**

Get Prepared Early While many people truly start to prepare for the rigors of winter in December, it is ideal to make sure your car(s) are prepared for the winter in the early fall. By doing so, you give yourself time to make sure everything is ready -- before it's too late.

Consider Getting Snow Tires Snow tires are made of a softer rubber than all-season tires which allows them to retain flexibility, even in the coldest of cold. Tread patterns on these tires also allow for exceptional grip in the snow and ice.

Check Your Fluid Levels Working windshield wipers and a solid supply of wiper fluid will ensure that you and your customers have visibility in the worst of snowstorms. Wiper fluid will get used up quickly if a car is being driven during a snowstorm, for obvious reasons.

Change Your Oil and Find the Proper Viscosity Again, this winter car care tip seems rather simple, however it's another tip that is easy to miss. The cold weather negatively affects oil's effectiveness. The cold climates will make your oil thicker, reducing engine circulation.

Have Your Battery Checked It's typically more difficult for a battery to operate in colder weather, therefore it's important to make sure your battery is strong enough to last the winter.



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December 9th & 10th
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Police News

11/14: Alec Debrito, 26, of 11 Sherry Dr., was arrested and charged with failure to drive right and driving under the influence, East Hampton Police said.

11/27: Cameron Garcia, 21, of 53 Keirstead Cir., Marlborough, was arrested and charged with driving under the influence, police said.

11/29: Mark Barton, 55, of 26 Bevin Blvd., was arrested and charged with two separate counts

of criminal violation of a protective order and two separate counts of second-degree failure to appear, police said.

12/1: David Mann, 25, of 203 Chestnut Hill Rd., was issued a summons for disorderly conduct and second-degree threatening, police said.

From Nov. 13-Dec. 3, officers responded to 52 medical calls, 17 motor vehicle accidents and 24 alarms, and made 89 traffic stops, police said.

Santa Claus is Comin' to Town!

Once again, members of the East Hampton Volunteer Fire Department have scheduled their annual "Santa Run" visits to various neighborhoods in town, with firefighters escorting Santa Claus as he rides high atop Engine 3-12, spreading the joy and good cheer of the holiday season.

Santa's visits to East Hampton begin Friday, Dec. 8, with the East Hampton Rec Department's Jingle Bell Parade in the Village Center. Santa's tours with the fire department will begin Saturday, Dec. 9, with weekend routes starting at approximately 4 p.m.; weekday tours will begin at 5 p.m. The routes will be conducted in accordance with the schedule shown below and will follow the approximate order in which the streets are listed. A GPS tracker will be installed on Engine 3, allowing children of all ages to locate Santa at any point along that evening's route.

Important note: for safety reasons, Santa will not be able to stop and greet people along the state-controlled roads in town; if you live along routes 16, 66 or 196, consult the schedule below and arrange to meet Santa at a convenient nearby location.

Also, note also that inclement weather or emergency calls could potentially result in curtailment or cancellation of a particular evening's activities and cannot be rescheduled. Any changes or updates to the established schedule will be posted on the EHVFD Facebook page as soon as practicable.

Dec. 8: Jingle Bell Parade/Village Center.

Dec. 9: Dziok, Dale, Harlan Place, Flatbrook to Olde Flatbrook, Olde Flatbrook, Tallwood, Waterhole, Deer Meadow, Salmon Run, Comstock Trail, Brookside Court, Tartia, Jacobson Farm, Tartia to end.

Dec. 10: Old Marlborough Road, Poets area, Lake Vista Drive, Edgewater Circle, Laurel Ridge, Indigenous Peoples' area (Wangonk, etc.), Lake Drive, Staeth, Aaron's Way, White

Birch (lower), Ridgeview, White Birch (middle) to end at Company 3.

Dec. 11: Main Street (between Barton Hill and Route 66), Hills Avenue, Fairlawn, Melburn, Laurel Glen, North Maple, Maplewood, Beechcrest, Sherry Drive, Spice Hill, Tarragon (upper), Nutmeg, Tarragon (lower), Curry, Saffron, Arden, Champion Hill, Abbey, Anderson, Flannery, Cone, Childs Road (Middle School side).

Dec. 12: Old Coach, Old Middletown, Chestnut Hill, Michael, Hog Hill, William, Charles Mary, Terp, Hog Hill to end, Alden's Crossing, Long Crossing.

Dec. 13: Old Skinner, Old Chestnut Hill (lower), Carriage, Lena, Emily, Old Young, Taylor, Wildwood. Daniel Street, Wopowog, Brook Hill, South Main, Main Street to finish at Village Center.

Dec. 14: Old Middletown Road, Depot Hill (lower), Oakum Dock, Grist Mill, Depot Hill (upper), Middle Haddam Rd., Bates, High Point, Schoolhouse, Hurd Park Road, Long Hill, Keighley Pond.

Dec. 15: North Main, Christopher, West Dr., Bellwood Court, Edgemere Condos, Clark Hill, Waterview, Mountainview, Hilltop, Sunrise, Skyline, Highland Terrace, Starview, Midwood Farm, Tiffany, Grayson, Stonegate, North Cone.

Dec. 16: Edgerton, Chatham Fields, Huckleberry, Sunset, Cedar Ridge, Holly, Smith, Dogwood, Royal Oaks area, Arch, Viola, Flanders, Daly, Pecauset, Portage, Bear Swamp, Peach Farm, Whispering Woods, Town Line Drive, Orchard View.

Dec. 17: Start at Company 3: White Birch Road (upper), Country Lane, Tammie Ann Dr., Berkshire, Chapman, Elmwood, Birchwood, Crestwood, Fernwood, Mott Hill, Brack Farm, Mott Hill to Lake Drive, Candlewood, Raymond, Pocotopaug Dr, Auburn Knoll, Island View, Blue Heron, Eastham Bridge, Seven Hills Crossing.

Dec. 18: Walnut, Smith to Flanders, Flanders (between Smith and 196), Bishop Hill, Bevin Blvd. Barton Hill, Crescent, Steepleview, Oak Knoll, Maple, Gov. Bill O'Neill, lower Barton Hill, Forest Glen, Forest, Hyde Farm, Mary Ann Drive, Hayes, East Hayes, Childs Road (off Forest), Forest to end at Skinner.



East Hampton High School senior Amarylla Ingala will dance in four lead roles in this year's Connecticut Concert Ballet production of *The Nutcracker*.

Local Teen in Nutcracker

Amarylla Ingala, a senior at East Hampton High School, will perform in Connecticut Concert Ballet's 2023 production of *The Nutcracker*.

Ingala has been studying classical ballet at Connecticut Concert Ballet since the age of 4, and this will be her 13th *Nutcracker*. She will be dancing the lead roles of Lead Snowflake, Archangel soloist, Marzipan Demi-Soloist, and Flower.

Performances will be held at Manchester High School's Bailey Auditorium on Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 9 and 10, with family-friendly showtimes at noon and 4 p.m. both days. Sunday performances will feature live music performed by the Manchester Symphony Orchestra.

Professionally staged with full costumes, sets and lighting, this production will highlight 150

of Connecticut Concert Ballet's local students alongside professional guest artists. Join Clara at an old-fashioned Victorian Christmas party, witness an epic battle, travel through an enchanted snowy forest, and visit the palace of the Sugar Plum Fairy.

Other local dancers performing include: Isabelle Kreamer of Amston; Oakley Adams and Lauren Emmons of Colchester; Leah Petro of Hebron; and Elsie Gardiner and Emmeline Trinh of Marlborough.

Tickets are available online only at CTConcertBallet.org. For Zone 1, tickets are \$47 for adults and \$37 for children 12 and under. For Zone 2, tickets are \$37 for adults and \$27 for children 12 and under.

Call 860-418-7294 for show information.

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East Hampton Library News & Notes

East Hampton Public Library, 105 Main St, has announced the following. Registration required unless noted; to register, or for full program descriptions, call 860-267-6621 or visit us at easthamptonpubliclibrary.org, or on Facebook at facebook.com/EastHamptonLibrary.

Library Hours: The library is open Monday-Wednesday, 10 a.m.-8 p.m.; Thursday-Saturday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

All-Ages Book Bingo! Monday, Dec. 18, 6:30-7:30 p.m. Get ready to shout "Bingo!" and win some books at this family event. Refreshments provided. Drop-ins welcome.

Children's Programs: Bubbles & Beats! Mondays, 10:30 a.m., for ages 18 months to 5 years (drop-ins and siblings welcome.); **Toddler Time:** Wednesdays, 10:15 a.m., for children ages 18 months to 3 years; **Stories & Songs:** Wednesdays, 11:15 a.m., for ages 3-5 years; **Baby Rhyme Time:** Thursdays, 10:15 a.m., for ages birth to 24 months, and their caregivers.

Nintendo Switch Game Play: Saturday, Dec. 9, 2-3:30 p.m., for grades 1-5. Play *Mario Kart 8 Deluxe*.

Ready to Read Book Club: Wednesday, Dec. 13, 4:30 p.m., for grades K-2. Share your favorite early reader books and play games to improve literacy skills. Registered participants will receive a book to take home. This month's book is Ben Clanton's *Narwhal: Unicorn of the Sea*.

Family Storytime: Saturday, Dec. 16, 10:30 a.m., for ages 3-5; siblings welcome. Come for

stories, songs, and open-ended play. Participants will also have the chance to work on a craft to bring home. No registration required.

Teen Programs: Teen Advisory Board: Tuesday, Dec. 12, 6 p.m., for grades 6-12. Teens are invited to come have a say in programming, collection development, and more. The group meets monthly and new members are welcome.

Middle Grade Dungeons & Dragons Learn to Play: Wednesday, Dec. 27, 3:30-5:30 p.m. Kids in grades 5-7 are invited to come learn how to make their own D&D character, how to use imagination and a character sheet for combat and storytelling, and find out what all those "D&D dice" are really used for. No previous playing experience required; all supplies included.

Adult Programs: LibrarYoga with Amie Meacham: Tuesday, Dec. 12, 6:30 p.m. Yoga 200-certified instructor Amie Meacham leads an hour of gentle yoga for adults in the Community Room. All levels welcome; bring your own mat if you have one and wear comfy clothes.

Belltown Book Brunch: Friday, Dec. 15, 11 a.m. There will be coffee or tea, a breakfast treat, and bookish banter. Register or drop in

Music in the Library: Entwined Early Music: Tuesday, Dec. 19, 6 p.m. On historic instruments, this trio will perform holiday pieces from the 13th-18th centuries. Light refreshments to follow.

Books and Brews: A Holiday Pairing

Rule of 3 Brewing, located at 201 West High St., Unit B1, will hold "Books and Brews: A Holiday Pairing" this Saturday, Dec. 9, from 1-4 p.m.

John Vitale and veteran brewer Scott Cross are the owners of the brewery, and they've teamed up with local author Jack Matthews to plan the holiday event.

Matthews reached out to nearly 20 local authors in the area, inviting them to participate.

They eagerly responded and will be at Rule of 3 on Saturday, ready to talk with visitors about their books and to sell and sign a copy for anyone looking for a special and unique gift. Authors were selected for the event to ensure that a wide array of genres were represented, including: international mystery and crime, historical fiction, young adult, children's, local history, military memoir, middle grade fiction, and a cop story.

Wreaths Across America Ceremony to Return

The East Hampton VFW Post 5095 and Auxiliary have announced that this year's Wreath Across America ceremony will take place at noon Saturday, Dec. 16, at the post, 20 North Maple St.

The ceremony will be followed by the laying of the wreaths at the Book of Names Memorial, located across the street from the post on the high school grounds. The ceremony is open to the public.

The VFW Auxiliary is asking the public to sponsor additional wreaths to be placed at flags and various soldiers' gravesites in all 12 cemeteries in town. Sponsors are asked to donate \$17 per wreath to help provide as many wreaths as possible.

One can sponsor a wreath by sending a sponsorship form to the VFW Post 5095, 20 North

Maple Street, East Hampton, CT 06424, c/o Linda Wallace, WAA East Hampton Leader. Checks should be made out to "VFW Post 5095 Auxiliary" with "WAA Fund" on the memo line. Forms can be found at the post, at East Hampton Public Library, and at Town Hall. In lieu of a form, send name, address, phone, email, and the number of sponsored wreaths at \$17 each with a check to the above Post address.

Christmas Bazaar

The St. Patrick Guild will host its annual Christmas Bazaar for one day only on Saturday, Dec. 9, from 9 a.m.-1 p.m., in the St. Patrick Church Parish Center.

Shop for various Christmas items, take a chance at the basket raffles, browse the display of jewelry, or treat yourself at the bake sale.

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Dear Jody -
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Wishing All of My Family, Clients & Friends a Wonderful
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Church Service Time Change

Sunday worship services for Haddam Neck Congregational Church and Second Congregational Church of Middle Haddam are now held at 10:30 a.m. each week in Haddam Neck, at 408 Quarry Hill Rd.

Christmas Eve: Christmas Eve services will be held at Haddam Neck Congregational Church on Sunday, Dec. 24, at 10:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., featuring traditional Christmas Bible readings and hymns.

All are welcome. Visit www.haddamneckcongregationalchurch.org for more information.

Online Farmers Market

Healthy PlanEat is a local online farmers market where people can shop directly from local sustainable farms and food artisans. There is a new pick-up location at HydroCat Microgreens, 47 Tartia Rd., East Hampton.

To place a pre-order, visit bit.ly/healthyeasthampton. The pre-order window for each week is Sundays at 5 a.m. through Thursdays at 9 p.m. Through the winter, pickups will be Saturdays, 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Next week's pickup is Dec. 16.

Congregational Church News & Notes

The Congregational Church of East Hampton, UCC, located at 59 Main St., is open for 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.

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.

Choir meets every Thursday from 7-8:30 p.m. All voices are welcome.

For more information about CCEH and its activities, visit cc-eh.org or call the church office at 860-267-4959 during office hours: Monday and Wednesday, 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

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As the year draws to a close, I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to all my clients, past and present. May you have warmth and joy this holiday season. And cheers to a bright and prosperous 2024!

-Jamie



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HAPPY 21st BIRTHDAY Jayna Lynn!

Love, Mom, Dad, Taylor & Grace

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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 for directions. The Holy Eucharist is celebrated with the Rev. Diana Rogers.

Donations: Food items for East Hampton Food Bank may be placed in the black totes at the rear of the church. Clean returnable bottles and cans are collected in cans by the shed.

Sunday School: Sunday School classes are in session. The Rev. Joanne Neel-Richard and Emily Vick lead the group, which meets at 9:55. New students welcome. Contact neelrichard16@gmail.com for information/dates, as classes are

sometimes rescheduled.

Secret Santa: Sign up to sponsor a child from the church's Covenant to Care social worker's caseload for Christmas. Information about each child and a signup sheet are located in the parish hall. Wrapped, labeled gifts are due Dec. 17.

Christmas Pageant: At the 10 a.m. service Dec. 17.

Flower Envelopes: Donation envelopes for Christmas flowers are located in the pews. The church asks people to return their contributions as soon as possible.

For more information or if in need of assistance, contact Donna Hyrb, senior warden, at 860-633-0472 or donnadubehyrb@gmail.com.

HNCC Christmas Concert

Haddam Neck Covenant Church will hold its annual Christmas Choral Concert Sunday, Dec. 10, at 9 a.m. The church is located at 17 Haddam Neck Rd. in East Hampton.

"Born for Us, Noel" blends the voices of the church's Choral Choir with instrumental accompaniment to provide a mixture of traditional, gospel and contemporary Christmas

music. Jan Ulanowicz on keyboard and Wayne Visintainer on bass guitar are joined by guest musicians Frank Natter on guitar, Matt Seymour on drums, and June Ingram on violin.

All are invited to come for refreshments after the concert.

Visit www.hncovenantchurch.org for more information.

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Honor Roll

Brent Cattanach of East Hampton made the East Catholic High School honor roll for the first quarter of the 2023-24 school year. A member of the Class of 2027, Cattanach earned First Honors.

Used Book Sale

Middle Haddam Public Library, located at 2 Knowles Rd., will hold a Holiday Used Book Sale Saturday, Dec. 16, from 10 a.m.-1 p.m., in the lower level of the library. There will be DVDs and books for all ages, as well as puzzles, and note cards featuring scenes from Middle Haddam. Visit www.middlehaddamlibrary.com for more information.

Babysitting Night

The East Hampton High School Class of 2026 is hosting a babysitting night Friday, Dec. 8, from 5-8 p.m., at the East Hampton Middle School cafeteria. Kids (ages 3 and up) will watch a holiday movie, and snacks will be provided. There will also be crafts and games throughout the night. Cost is \$10/child (flat fee) if you sign up in advance by emailing Beth Vickery at bvickery@easthamptonct.org or Amy Zupan at azupan@easthamptonct.org. Cost is \$15/child at the door. Email either Vickery or Zupan for more information.

Bethlehem Lutheran Church News

Bethlehem Evangelical Lutheran Church, located at 1 East High St., holds Bible study Sundays from 9-9:45 a.m., followed by services at 10 a.m. Church pastor is Jamie Stall-Ryan. **Upcoming Events:** Jingle Bell Craft Fair: Saturday, Dec. 9, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., in the Fellowship Hall; Stuff-A-Cruiser: Saturday, Dec. 9, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., in the church parking lot; Carol Sing, Sunday, Dec. 10, starting at 4 p.m.; Free Spaghetti Dinner, Wednesday, Dec. 13, 5 p.m. – bring a friend!

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Chicken Marsala
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Middle School Honor Roll

Honor roll students for the first quarter of the 2023-24 school year at East Hampton Middle School are:

High Honors

Grade Eight: Ethan Arcari, Carmelo Aresco, Alexis Bailey, Julia Barry, Kylie Bigelow, Anna Bothamley, Mathias Bueno Olascuaga, Aubrey Butler, Noah Cahoon, Savannah Carrington, Amelia Chrin, Julia Clark, Samantha Coleman, Brandon Coppolelli, Leslie Cruz, Olivia Currier, Noah Cyr, Anja, Czaja, Charlotte Daniels, Giuliana DonAroma, Taylor Dudek, Dakota Duplin, Cole Eighthy, Lauren English, Hadley Fazekas, Gabriel Finn, Owen Flannery, Adriana Garcia, Brett Gustavson, Brianna Gustavson, Cailan Hall, Abigail Hambidge, Sean Hargreaves, Thomas Haslam, Holden Hines, Jason Hurt, Gradon Johnson, Kaitlynn Johnston, Addison Jump, Shonali Karkun, Aiden Kelly, Addison Kentzler, Jaxson Kentzler, Eliana Kiernan, Gavin King, Eli Kloepfer, Gavin Kloepfer, Grace Krug, Hunter LaRose, Emily Le Moine, Caden Lee, Kenzie Lee, Ella Lessard, Alyssa Levenduski, Owen LoPresti, Alexander Maalouf, Trent Mackie, Brenna Mai, Jasmine Martin, Addison Marzi, Hudson Milardo, Noah Miro, Jack Morrell, Peyton Moulthroppe, Leah Murphy, Nethum Nakandala, Mackenzie Napiello, Vincenzo Niosi, Kaya O'Brien, Kaeden Owen, Addison Perkins, Alivia Peterson, Bryce Pierson, Sadie Pinaud, Brayden Pisani, Ava Ploszay, Travis Raines, Mason Rall, Kayla Raul, Emily Rawlinson, Ryan Reola, Elise Roy, Reid Saucier, Cayden Schooner, Taylor Schooner, Hunter Steiner, Jakoby Stevens, Katelyn Stiles, Mackenzie Strickland, Logan Thorpe, Avery Trombino, Kaelah Van Wey, Juliana Ware, Elizabeth White, Zoey Wilks, Riley-Jewel Wong, Gabriella Zisk.

Grade Seven: Patrick Adams, Aehan Amith, Alyssa Arnold, Emily Baer, Samuel Bafumi, Landon Baillargeon, Matthew Balamucki, Alana Banks, Addyson Bear, Alex Beaulieu, Brooke Bellemare, Arianna Blancato, Ryder Bonin, Samantha Braga, Chloe Brown, Luke Burr, Jack Busher, Avery Cashin, Garrett Chretien, Georgia Clark, Joshua Clark, Gabriella Cooke, Kailynn Cruz, Wren Cuthbertson, Samuel D'Amore, Gianna Doll, Olivia Doolittle, Emma Egan, Alexandria Ellison, Ryan Flannery, Brayden Flynn, Ashley Fontanella, Nora Foster, Peyton Frucce, Bennett Galovich, Hadley Galovich, Giana Garuti, Brody Ghagan, Connor Guarino, Avery Guild, Derek Guiliano, Meadow Hart, Vitaliy Herasym, Tristan Hickey, Alayna Jensen, AmyAnne Jewart, Aloma Johnson, Cara Johnson, Alexander Jovel, Emma Kissane, James Kochuk, Elsie Kovitch, Angelina LaFleur, Gianna LaFleur, Joseph Landon, Christian Landry, Lily LaPlant, Tamzin Lemire, Shannon Mahoney, Lila Malinka-Morgan, Mark Marozzi, Logan Matte, Nathan McCormick, Aurora McMahon, Thomas McMahon, Molly McWade, Makayla Mikulski, Riley Millett, Mia Milton, Reagan Moquin, Samuel Morales Rivera, Joaquin Moren, Ethan Mortimer, Jackson Moulthroppe, Ama Nakandala, Garrett Neary, Miya Nichols, Patrick Nunes, Hayden O'ryan, Grady Ottone, Dash Palmer, John Perez, Daniel Peterson, Kayleigh Philbrick, Lachlan Plante, Aoife Pont, Emma Riddell, Tristan Robinson, Sofia Rodrigues, Quinn Rurka, Kendall Sawyers, Alexander Scanlon, Maximus Schunk, Logan Seaman, Summer Smith, Emma Snyder, Ciarán Stanton, Adam Tiano, Mason Tierney,

Mckayla Wanat, Reid Wilk, Gianna Zadroga.

Grade Six: Ian Aiello, Anabela Amarel, Pranud Anthony, Juliana Aresco, Wade Aresco, Daniel Arndt, John Baczek, Cassandra Bombaci, Whimsy Brand, Charlotte Burgin, Colton Burgin, Mila Chipman, Richard Claude, Abigail Coleman, Alexa Colwell, Madison Connors, Abigail Coyne, Calum Danaher, Natalie Dean, Kayleigh Doll, Mia DonAroma, Pierce Drobiak, Tyler Drzata, Nicholas Dudek, Jacob Duranleau, Kayla Engelhardt, Cody English, Edward Faber, Alexander Farrell, Mason Ferguson, Evelyn Fielding, Tobias Finn, Brayden Formigilo, Clara Foulis, Daniella Garcia, Avery Gaughran, Lucas Gionfriddo, Samuel Gray, Cayden Guite, Sofia Haley, Jackson Hall, Wesley Hanson, Brooke Hawes, Madison Herman, Callahan Hines, Mira Hogan, Zoe Holzer, Taylor Karabetsos, Adriana Karas, Thomas Kellogg, Isabella Kiernan, Owen Killian, Keegan King, Kimberlee Kleszcz, Ava Kosek, Elijah Kramer, Chanuk Kulatunga, Nicholas Lorenzen, Kenzy Lumbr, Emilia Luparia, Olivia Luparia, Gavin Lynch, Sara Maalouf, Isabella Mackie, Josslyn Marrero, Natalie Maxwell, Cole McCarthy-Nowak, Cameron Meacham, Charles Montalbano, Gabriella Munoz, William Muzzy, Grayden O'Hearn, Quinn Paiva, Trevor Philbrick, Caleb Pinaud, Tiffany Pinzon, Joseph Ploszay, Bryson Rall, Mackenzie Rapple, Caleb Raymond, Mia Ricciardelli, Emma Roberge, Sophie Roy, Walker Roy, Junedi Salad, Noah Salamone-Martinez, Jenna Sandquist, Luca Serra, Emily Stiles, Jacob Sylvester, Abigail Tinney, Sophia Tomlin, Colin Trowbridge, Sophia Vargas Mendez, Devin Werme, Lukas Werme, Jackson Wilks, Harper Woodson, Avery Yocher, Zachary Zabroski, John Zarate.

Honors

Grade Eight: Elizabeth Beer, Forrest Bellucci, Thomas Bertelsen, Jr., Adalin Cardoso, Scarlett Cassell, Kailyn Crowley, Tyler Dallaire, Mariella Feliciano, Essio Giovanelli, Aden Hilton, Elizabeth McNaughton, Faythe Pugo, Annabel Tucker, Worthington Zinkerman.

Grade Seven: Jacob Armitage, Brayden DeFilippo, Savannah Duplin, Corbin Engle, Hayden Groeper, Maddox Hansen, Aiden Hatcher, Kylie Hull, Landen Lord, Riley McMahon, Charlotte Palma, Nathan Philbrick, Julianne Poe, Wyatt Rosenfeld, Jasmyn Skinner, Mason Stino, William Supinski, Donzel Williams.

Grade Six: Deklan Cardoso, Ryley Cohen, Aaron Dumond, Mason France, Nolan Hilton, Arsen Kuleba, Graysen Loan, Antonio Martino, Cameron Marzi, Carter Pattison, Stephen Quealy, Madison Stojak.

Edward Jones Collecting for Food Bank

The local Edward Jones location, at 205 E. High St., Suite 2, is serving as a drop-off location for non-perishable food items for East Hampton Food Bank.

Needed items: spaghetti sauce, tomatoes in a can, peanut butter and jelly, coffee, tea, hot chocolate, oatmeal or other non-perishable items. Items not needed: no canned vegetables and no mac and cheese (the food bank already has enough).

The collection will run until Dec. 21. For more information, email Joyce Waldron at joyce.waldron@edwardjones.com or call 860-342-2486.



Lions Donate to Fire Department... East Hampton Lions members Tom Denman (far left) and President Liz Cooper (far right) recently presented a \$1,500 check to East Hampton Volunteer Fire Department members (from left) Jim Burke, Sean Webster, Marty Swan and Dan Miller. This money was raised from food sales at the fire department's annual fireworks show. The Lions and EHVFD thank all residents who came to the show.

Capstone Grants Available for EHHS Students

The East Hampton Arts & Culture Commission is accepting applications from East Hampton High School juniors and seniors for two \$200 grants to support two East Hampton High School Capstone projects.

The grants will help support the student's proposed Capstone project, a multifaceted assignment that serves as a culminating academic and intellectual experience for students. Capstone projects may take a wide variety

of forms including a long-term investigative project that culminates in a final product, presentation, or performance.

Applicants will be invited to present their Capstone Project idea to commission members. Deadline to apply is Feb. 1. Visit www.artsforeasthamptonct.org for an application or pick one up at the town manager's office at Town Hall.



Teacher Honored... Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 5095 recently presented the Teacher Recognition Award and Citizenship Education Medal to the East Hampton High School Teacher of the Year, music director Andrew Groves.

Stuff-A-Truck for Seniors

The East Hampton Village Merchants, in cooperation with East Hampton Senior Services and the East Hampton High School Interact Club, will hold Stuff-A-Truck for Seniors Saturday, Dec. 9, from 11 a.m.-3 p.m., in the East Hampton Village Center.

Drop-off is at 94 Main St., across the street from Le Chic Boutique. People are asked to donate such gifts as: puzzles (500 piece or less), fancy lotions or soaps, gift cards to local establishments, notepads/journals, word search or crossword puzzle books, scratch tickets, hats/gloves, and warm socks.

All items should be new and unwrapped.

Music for Christmas

The New England Chamber Choir and Instrumental Ensemble, conducted by Richard Wm. Donahue, will perform a "Music for Christmas" concert Sunday, Dec. 17, at 4 p.m., at East Hampton Congregational Church, 59 Main St.

All are welcome to this free event. There will be a reception with refreshments following the concert.

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CAVITIES: WHAT ARE THEY?

Tooth enamel is the durable, protective outer layer of teeth. Bacteria in the mouth use ingested sugars to create acids that deteriorate this protective layer, forming cavities. Because enamel does not regenerate, dentists advise daily brushing with fluoride toothpaste and flossing to halt this destruction. A cavity begins as a white spot, which can be healed. However, over time, discoloration and decay occur, turning the spot from brown to black. Cavities primarily form on the tops of the teeth as well as in between them, where food becomes impacted, creating more bacteria. If not properly addressed, cavities cause sensitivity, pain, infection, and loss of sound natural teeth, making cavity prevention the first line of defense in avoiding permanent tooth loss.

Cavity-causing bacteria and its resultant damage can be controlled if we deal with bacterial plaque activity on a daily basis. A toothbrush alone, however, no matter how often used, cannot do the whole job. It takes the combined effort of smart eating, conscientious daily brushing and flossing, and professional visits to promote total oral health as well as complete body health. If it's been too long since you treated your teeth and gums to professional care, now would be a good time to call us for an appointment.

P.S. One-third of a human tooth, known as the root, is hidden beneath the gums, making it vitally important to keep gums healthy to ensure oral health.

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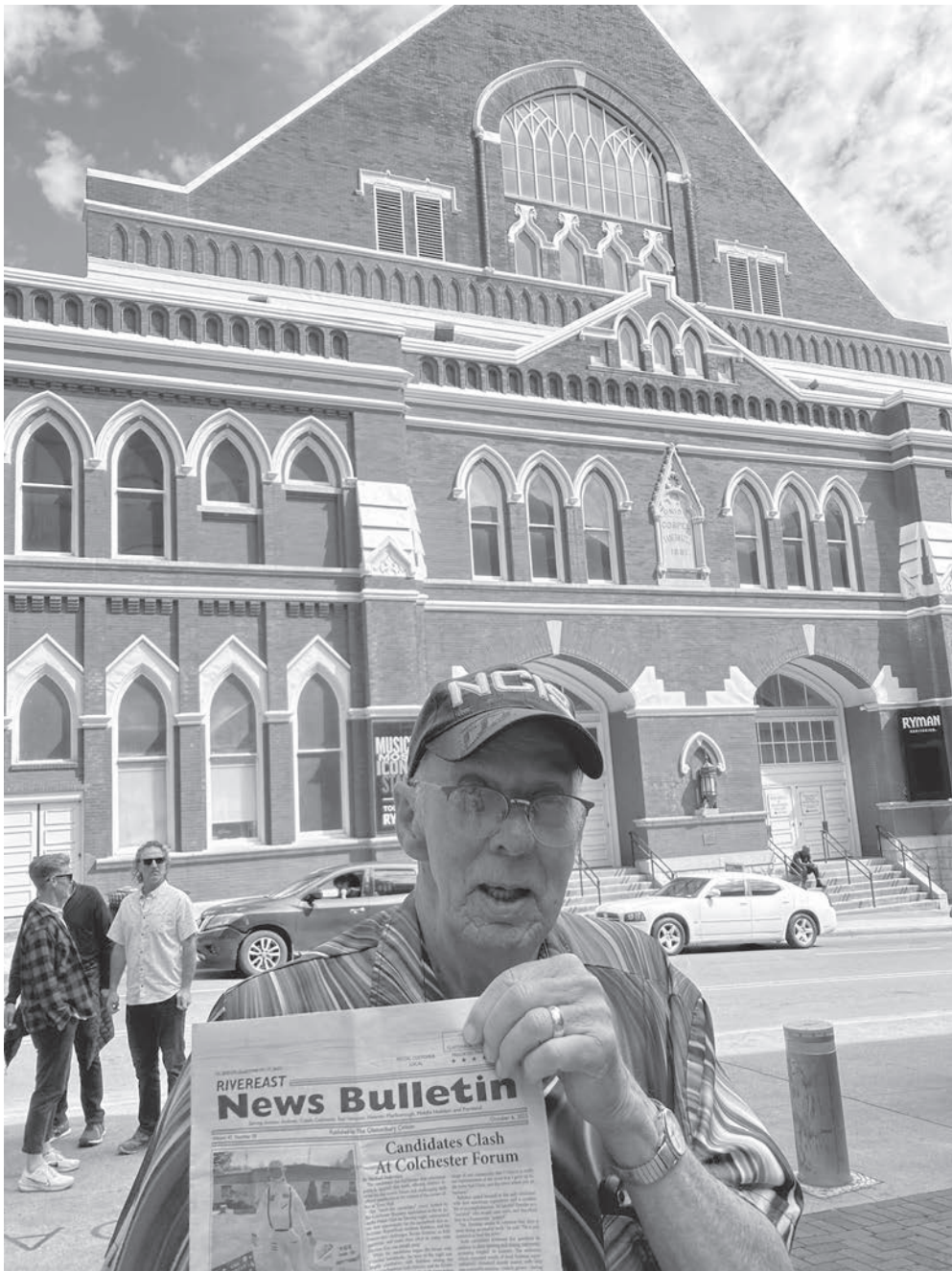
Anniversary Trip... Shelvie Johnson and Kelly Nichols-Johnson, of Colchester, recently celebrated their 30th wedding anniversary in St. Lawrence Gap, Barbados. Happy anniversary!

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.



Houston, We Have a Rivereast... Marlborough natives Dana Anstey (left) and Jodi Zareski (right) are with mom Dianne Zareski of Marlborough at the Johnson Space Center in Houston. They gathered, along with others from Lockheed Martin and University of Arizona, to celebrate the successful sample return of matter from asteroid Bennu the previous Sunday as part of the Osiris Rex Space program. Later that evening, Jodi received an award at their celebration dinner. *Photo by Bill Pearse, also of Marlborough.*



Hello, Music City!!... Bob Rudne standing in front of the original Grand Ole Opry in Nashville TN.



That's a Big Lobster!... Penny Gadbois of Colchester is shown here with sister Annette, sisters-in-law Debbie and Kathy and cousins Jackie and Elizabeth in front of the Giant Lobster at Rotary Park, Shediac, New Brunswick, Canada.

Where in the World?

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Panthers Protect Pierson Park, Eye Title Saturday

By Josh Howard

After a pair of playoff wins last week, the Cromwell/Portland football team is headed to the state title game for the second time in three years.

Cromwell/Portland, the No. 4 seed, will face No. 2 seed Bloomfield in the Class S State Championship game this Saturday, Dec. 9, at Rentschler Field, kicking off at 10:30 a.m.

The Panthers playoff journey back to the state title game started with a victory a home, defeating Griswold/Wheeler 26-18 in the first round of the Class S bracket on Nov. 28.

The victory marked the third straight season that the Panthers won a playoff game at Pierson Park.

Junior quarterback Jess Elfreich threw a pair of touchdowns, while the brotherly backfield duo of Emeka Yearwood and Osi Yearwood each ran for touchdowns as the home team erased three deficits to advance to the state semifinals.

Head coach Randell Bennett joked that it took his team a little time to “warm up” for the 6:30 p.m. kickoff on a frigid night, adding “we just needed some time to wake up.”

After the Panthers fumbled away the game’s opening possession, the visiting Wolverines capitalized on the turnover by driving 52 yards in 11 plays with the final play being a one-yard touchdown plunge from Joshua Turner.

Cromwell/Portland countered on the next possession when Jack Nolan high-pointed an Elfreich fade pass in the back left corner of the end zone from 13-yards out, capping a 10-play drive. Elfreich then connected with Emeka Yearwood for the two-point conversion, giving the Panthers an 8-6 lead with 11:24 to play in the first half.

After trading punts, Griswold/Wheeler recaptured the lead when quarterback Luke Cassidy hit Kyle Montigny with a 50-yard touchdown bomb midway through the second quarter.

Again, Cromwell countered on the next possession by driving 84 yards, capped by an 11-yard touchdown pass from Elfreich to fellow junior Matt Gish, putting the Panthers up 14-12 at the break.

Gish wasn’t wearing receiver gloves on the 33-degree night, yet that didn’t stop him from hauling in several key passes.

“I knew I could beat them over the middle all night,” recalled Gish. “I was open on the play before and we just didn’t connect, but we definitely connected there.”

The Wolverines bit back one more time on their first drive of the second half when KinKade Rubino scored from a yard midway through the

third quarter.

But for the final 20 minutes of regulation, it was all Panthers.

Osi Yearwood scored from a yard out with 4:30 left in the third quarter, regaining the lead for the Panthers, before the home team’s defense began to exert their will.

Gish sacked Cassidy, causing a fumble that was recovered by Matthew Michaud.

On the play prior, Gish was called for an unnecessary roughness penalty for suplexing Rubino out of bounds.

Gish, an accomplished wrestler in the winter, said he was upset with himself after the penalty and eyed quick redemption, saying, “That strip-sack was electric, I loved it.”

With 10:50 to play in regulation, Emeka Yearwood broke several arm tackles before scooting down the right sideline for a 38-yard rushing touchdown.

Emeka Yearwood, who is the older brother of Osi, then had an 80-yard touchdown called back on a holding penalty before he finished the game on the defensive side when he sacked Cassidy on fourth down with three minutes left in regulation.

Bennett said that Yearwood has a knack for coming up with big plays when the team needs them most, adding, “He understands that it’s on his shoulder now; we expect those plays from him.”

An Elfreich to Nolan 20-yard connection on third down allowed the Panthers to drain off the final few minutes off the clock.

The playoff victory was also sweet redemption for the Panthers, who had lost their final regular season game at Pierson Park, falling to Granby/Canton 22-6 on Senior Night (Nov. 3).

Following the loss, the team reeled off three straight road wins to qualify for the postseason.

Senior captain Jack Williams noted that, following the Senior Night loss, the team was determined to play another game at Pierson Park.

“We didn’t want that to be our last home game, so we knew we had to get back here,” added Williams. “We had to win – it was our last [home] game.”



Jack Williams, a senior from Portland High School, was one of seven Cromwell/Portland football players to be named All-Pequot Conference. After winning a pair of playoff games, Williams and the Panthers are headed to the Class S State Championship game in Hartford this Saturday.

Emeka Yearwood added, “This is everything. We lost on Senior Night and you have to end on a win, always.”

The Panthers followed up the playoff home win with an even more impressive road victory, defeating top-seed Ansonia 28-0 in the state semifinals at Derby High School on Dec. 3

Cromwell/Portland literally dominated from start to finish as Emeka Yearwood scored on the first play from scrimmage, rushing for a 64-yard touchdown, and Osi Yearwood polished off the game with an 80-yard scoring scamper in the fourth quarter.

Elfreich again tossed a pair of touchdowns, one each to Tyler Cipolla and Vaughn Payne, to round out the scoring.

But it was the Panthers defense that stole the show, shutting out a Chargers offense that entered the semifinals averaging 40 points a game. It was also the first time all season that the Panthers had held an opponent scoreless.

On Saturday, the Panthers will be looking to duplicate the feat from two seasons ago when they beat Bloomfield (21-6) in the 2021 Class S championship game.

Parks and Rec. News & Notes

Portland Parks and Recreation offers a variety of programs for adults and children. For a complete list of programs, full course descriptions, or to register, visit portland.recdesk.com or call 860-342-6757. Advanced registration is required.

Rec Basketball K-2 with Skyhawks: Saturdays, Jan. 6-Feb. 10, at Gildersleeve School. Kindergarten is held from 8-8:50 a.m.; first grade, 9-9:50 a.m.; second grade girls, 10-10:50 a.m.; second grade boys, 11-11:50 a.m. Fee: \$100/resident, \$120/non-resident.

Drop-In Basketball: Mondays (for women) and Tuesdays (for men), 7:30-9 p.m., through May, at Portland Middle School.

Used Winter Adult Coat Drive

Each December the Portland Knights of Columbus collects used coats for the food bank, to provide their clients. Donations can be placed in the large container in the Rosary Room at St. Mary Church.

Honor Roll

Portland residents Ryan Farley and Delaney Poach made the East Catholic High School honor roll for the first quarter of the 2023-24 school year.

Farley earned Honors with Distinction and Poach earned First Honors. They each are members of the Class of 2026.

Food and Toy Drive

The Mimma Burke State Farm Insurance Agency will hold its seventh annual Food and Toy Drive until 5 p.m. today, Dec. 8.

The agency is collecting non-perishable food items, toiletries and unwrapped children’s toys. All proceeds will go to the Portland Food Bank. The agency is located at 201 Marlborough St.

Holiday-Themed Drop-In Craft

Portland Youth & Family Services will offer a Holiday-Themed Drop-In Craft on Friday, Dec. 15, from 10:30-11:30 a.m. and 4:30-5:30 p.m. at the Buck-Foreman Community Center, 265 Main St.

Kids age 6 and under are invited to create a craft with their parents, grandparents and caregivers.

Vocal Chords Holiday Concert

The concert “Harmonizing Holidays” will be presented by the Middlesex Hospital Vocal Chords (MHVC) on Sunday, Dec. 10, at 2 p.m., at Portland High School, 95 High St.

The 90-voice chorus and 10-piece orchestra will perform Irish and French carols, classical, swing, gospel, ballads, and traditional holiday pieces.

Proceeds from the concert help fund scholarships presented in the spring to graduating Middlesex community high school seniors pursuing a career in music or nursing.

Tickets are \$25. Call 860-347-2787 or 860-342-3120 for tickets or visit www.vocalchords20.org. Be sure to ‘like’ the Vocal Chords on Facebook.

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School Facilities Survey Out Now

By London Brazal

A recent survey was commissioned by the Portland Board of Selectmen to collect community feedback on the ongoing design of a school facility modernization plan. The outcomes will be utilized by both the Board of Education and the BOS as they strategize crucial upgrades to the school facilities.

Over the last two weeks, residents should have received a postcard in the mail from a research firm called Great Blue. The flyer has a QR code that links to an online survey. The link can also be found on Facebook at www.facebook.com/PortlandCTFirstSelectman. Curley and Superintendent of Schools Charles Britton encourage all residents to take the survey since the options would directly affect the town's mill rate and the future of students' education. The survey takes about 8-10 minutes to complete, and responses are anonymous.

Throughout the survey, residents will answer questions about Portland in general and then more specific questions regarding the schools. Some questions relate to minimizing costs for taxpayers, ensuring the modernization of schools, and creating capacity for potential enrollment. Another section of the survey focuses on recent budgeting and what is needed for the schools in the future. Residents are also allowed to give opinions about potential budget questions and provide written feedback.

The Portland Facilities Study Committee was first created in June 2021 toward the end of former first selectman Susan Bransfield's term. The committee was formed because the BOE raised concerns about the adequacy of school facilities, especially with Brownstone Intermediate School, Valley View Elementary School, and Gildersleeve Elementary School.

The chair of the committee is former selectman Lou Pear. The BOE representatives include Dave Murphy and Meg Scata while the BOS representatives include Michael Hernandez and Robert Hetrick. The other members include Peter Filanda, Kerry Darby, Eileen Moynihan and Scott Nicol.

Initially prompted by a 2000 study, recom-

mendations led to a new middle school and renovations at Portland High School. In 2001, Portland voters approved a referendum authorizing renovations at Portland High School and the construction of a new middle school for grades seven and eight.

In 2010, there was another facility study committee that focused on the infrastructure needs of the district's three elementary schools. The committee considered closing Brownstone Intermediate School, relocating fifth grade to Gildersleeve Elementary School and sixth grade to Portland Middle School. It was deemed possible, but there were multiple potential issues including space and room conditions. Five years later, the schools removed modular classrooms at Valley View and reconfigured the grade levels. Ultimately, with the renovations and construction of the high school and middle school, significant capital investments at the elementary schools were deferred.

From June to September 2022, the committee hosted 17 focus groups with Britton and Pear. Participants included faculty from the schools, members of the parent-teacher organizations, parents of students, the Board of Education, the Board of Selectmen, the Republican Town Committee, the Democratic Town Committee, and other community stakeholders. Britton reported that the focus group participants unanimously endorsed the identified priorities, acknowledged the intermediate need for addressing the aging infrastructure and supported the downsizing of the schools by decommissioning Gildersleeve.

The Options

At a joint board meeting with the BOS and BOE on May 24, Pear and Britton presented the school modernization plan which is available on the school's website. After considering a range of options, the committee narrowed it down to three options. The first option is to maintain all five public schools and plan a series of capital improvements with the Sightlines Report and Friar Facility, a report made by architects. The second option is to decommission two elemen-

tary schools, create a plan for capital improvements and construct a new single elementary school. The last option was to decommission one elementary school and construct two new elementary schools.

Ultimately, the committee opted for option three because it had the best potential to meet all of the identified priorities. Furthermore, it builds capacity for potential enrollment and the possibility of a full-day pre-kindergarten program. The committee also presented that it generates greater long-term fiscal solvency while maximizing state reimbursement for renovations and new construction.

Through the decommissioning of Gildersleeve and the consolidation into two elementary schools, the BOE annual operating budget will be reduced. The total annual savings is projected at \$828,578. The recommended option could most likely go to a referendum vote next November. Renovations and new construction could start as early as September 2025.

To learn more about the plan, visit portlandctschools.org and listen to a podcast by Britton or read the Facility Study Committee report. Any questions can be emailed to cbritton@portlandct.us or rcurley@portlandct.org.

Service of Lessons and Carols

The adult and youth choirs of St. Mary Church will once again host a Service of Lessons and Carols to celebrate the Advent and Christmas seasons.

The service will be held Sunday, Dec. 10, at 3 p.m., at Saint Mary Church, 45

Freestone Ave. All are invited to attend this service, which will feature scripture readings, prayer and traditional carols from around the world, as well as modern liturgical songs of the season. There will also be familiar carols for everyone to join in singing.

Donations of the following items will be

accepted to benefit Portland Food Bank: personal items (shampoo, deodorant, toothpaste, toothbrushes); paper goods (paper towels, toilet paper, tissues); and food items, especially bagged snacks, apple juice, condiments, canned meats, tuna, and stews).

A monetary free-will offering will be accepted, to help support the work of the Saint Mary music ministry in revitalizing choral offerings and liturgy. The choirs provide music for weekly and funeral Masses, and at special celebrations throughout the year.

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 for children ages 3 to 12 meets the first and third Sunday of each month, from 10:15-11:15 a.m. Call Sylvia LeShane at 860-342-0658 for more information or to register your child. The children are preparing for their participation in the annual Christmas pageant, which will be presented during the Dec. 17 wor-

ship service. During December, while the church waits for the series *The Chosen* to begin its new season, music director Allen Hill will offer a video series on Noah's Ark, as presented by The Ark Encounter. These videos will be shown after worship and other planned discussions, in the Fellowship Hall. All are invited.

All are welcome to all worship services and special events. For more information 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.



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Obituaries

East Hampton

Laura Ann Wills

Laura Ann (Shook) Wills, 66, of Middletown, formerly of Westbrook and Clinton, passed away at Middlesex Hospital Friday, Nov. 10, after a long illness. Born in New London Dec. 14, 1956, she was the daughter of the late Harry Shook of West Hartford, and the late Izo-ra Shook of Clinton.

She is survived by her daughter, Beverly Archer (Todd) of Middletown; brother, Rene Shook (Paula) of East Hampton; sister, Sandra Nesci of East Hampton; nephew, Joshua Shook (Jona) of Bristol; niece, Sarah Shook of New Hampshire; and several cousins.

In addition to her parents, she was predeceased by her former husband, James Wills of Westbrook.

The family would like to thank the health care professionals at Middlesex Hospital, Apple Rehab and Middlesex Health Care Center for their devoted care of Laura over the last several years.

Services will be private at the convenience of the family.



families, offering support and understanding to those seeking connection.

Her legacy of kindness, generosity, and tireless service will forever be etched in the hearts of those who were fortunate enough to know her. Patricia Shelberg will be dearly missed by all who had the privilege of sharing in her warmth, love, and commitment to making a positive impact on the lives of others.

In this time of grief, we extend our deepest condolences to the family and friends of Patricia Ann Shelberg. May her soul find eternal peace, and may her memory be a source of comfort and inspiration for those who mourn her passing.

Funeral services will be held Monday, Dec. 11, at 10 a.m., at St. Patrick Church, 47 West High St., East Hampton. Friends and family may call on Sunday, Dec. 10, from 4-6 p.m., at Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton.

Portland

Nunziato J. Maio

Nunziato J. Maio, 93, a longtime Portland resident, died Wednesday, Nov. 29, at Buckingham Heights in Glastonbury.

Nunzi was born Dec. 21, 1929, in Barre, Mass., to Filippa and Rosa (Orlando) Maio, the second of their four children. He graduated from Barre High School and earned a Bachelor of Science degree in chemistry from the University of Massachusetts in Amherst and a Master of Science degree in chemistry from The Ohio State University.

Nunzi met Ruth Seneshale in Salt Lake City, Utah, while serving with the U.S. Air Force. They were married on July 7, 1956, and moved back east to settle in Portland and raised their daughters, Maureen and Kim. The Maios were parishioners at St. Mary Church in Portland.

Nunzi had a long, distinguished career with United Technologies Fuel Cell Division in South Windsor. He helped develop the fuel cells that powered NASA space shuttles. After taking early retirement from UTC in 1988, he had a 25-year second act with H&R Block preparing tax returns. Nunzi was a member of the Portland Golf Club, winning the club championship in 1981 and 2004. He was an avid bowler who continued to play with his UTC team until well into his 80s. Nunzi and Ruth were dedicated volunteers who ran the Portland Food Bank that has been renamed in their honor.

In addition to his parents, Nunzi was predeceased by his sister, Fortunata; brothers-in-law Amerigo Simeone and Leo Jolly; sister-in-law, Lee Maio.

Nunzi is survived by Ruth, his loving wife of



67 years; his siblings, Anthony and Angelina; his children, Maureen (Michael) Duffy, Kimberly (Stephen) Franklin; four grandchildren, Meghan, Erin, Michelle and Kelly; one great-grandchild, Roísín; and his nephews, nieces, and their families.

A Mass of Christian Burial was held Saturday, Dec. 2, in St. Mary Church, Portland. Burial with full military honors was in St. Mary Cemetery, Portland. The Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland, is in charge of arrangements.

The Maio family is deeply grateful to the dedicated staff at Buckingham Heights, where Nunzi moved on Oct. 10, 2022. He was in the best of hands thanks to their attention and kindness. In lieu of flowers, please consider making a donation to the Portland Food Bank.

Amston

Donald J. Ray Jr.

Donald J. Ray Jr. of Lebanon passed away Monday, Dec. 4, at Hartford Hospital, following a brief illness. He was 67. Known by his friends as Donnie, Don Juan and Donzo, he was born April 9, 1956, in Hartford. He was the son of the late Donald J. Ray Sr. and Nancy (Clement) Ray.

Don grew up on Amston Lake in Hebron. He spent his adult life in a variety of professions, including work as a welder at Electric Boat in Groton, carpentry and excavation. In 1982 while working on an excavation site in Danielson, Don was buried alive in a trench collapse. He was airlifted to Worcester Medical Center with life-threatening injuries. His family and friends were called to his bedside to say goodbye, but Don, exhibiting a trait that would serve him well, fought for his life and after several months in the hospital, he was able to return home to Amston, where he was a member of the Scorpions softball team in the Hebron Men's Softball League and was a part of the Sons of the American Legion in Hebron.

On Oct. 11, 1986, Don married his wife, LaurieAnn Sola. The couple went on to settle on the Lebanon side of the lake and raise their two daughters. While there, Don was also a founding member of the Amston Lake Tax District.



He also pursued his lifelong love for motorsports, including NASCAR and Formula One, while building and customizing several cars, vans and trucks of his own. Don was also an avid UConn basketball fan. He will be remembered for his stubborn willingness to fight every obstacle presented to him and his loyalty to family and friends.

Don is survived by LaurieAnn Ray of Lebanon; daughters, Carrie (Jake) Kvasnik of Maryland and Lindsay Ray and Patrick Geneau of Manhattan, N.Y.; brothers, Michael (Joyce) Ray of Cape Cod and Amston and Patrick of Hampton; sister, Lori Dumas-Ray of Florida; and brother-in-law, Donald Pigan of Colchester. He is also survived by his mother-in-law, Janet Sola of North Haven; brothers-in-law, Raymond (Pam) Sola of North Haven, and John (Jen) Sola of North Haven; sisters-in-law, Natalie (Chris) Stock of North Haven, Janet (Rev. George) Manukas of Hamden, and Helene (Rigo) Smith-Sola of Brooklyn, N.Y.; special friends, Steve Goode and Henry Meckl; and many nieces, nephews and extended family members.

In addition to his parents, Don was predeceased by his sister, Brenda Pigan; father-in-law, Raymond Sola; and former brother-in-law, Joseph Belisle.

Don's family would like to thank those who cared for him during his stay at Hartford Hospital.

Calling hours will be held Sunday, Dec. 10, from 3-6 p.m., at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. A chapel service will take place the following day, Monday, Dec. 11, at 10 a.m., at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home; burial will follow immediately after the funeral home service in the New Hebron Cemetery in Hebron.

To sign the online guestbook or share a memory of Donald, please visit www.auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Colchester

James McNally Jr.

James Patrick McNally Jr., fondly known by all as Jay, of Colchester, passed away at home surrounded by his loving family Monday, Dec. 4. He was 70 years old.

Jay was born Feb. 24, 1953, in Hartford. The son of the late James and Catherine (Wallace) McNally Sr., Jay grew up in East Hartford and graduated from Penney High School. He married his beloved wife Michele "Shel-leigh" Fomento in March 1988. The couple settled in Colchester where they built their home and raised their daughters. Jay was a dedicated and proud father attending all his girls' skating competitions and cheering them on as their biggest fan.

For most of his career, he was a self-employed carpenter. He spent his final working years employed by the Town of Vernon Board of Education as a maintainer. Jay enjoyed building and renovating homes and tending to his vegetable garden, to include sharing his harvests with neighbors and friends. Many of those whom he loved to hunt and fish with remain his life-long

See Obits, page 32



East Hampton

Patricia Ann Shelberg

In Loving Memory of Patricia Ann Shelberg:
Oct. 3, 1937 – Dec. 3, 2023

It is with profound sadness that we announce the passing of Patricia Ann Shelberg, born on Oct. 3, 1937. Patricia was preceded in death by her beloved husband, Richard Shelberg, and her parents, Clara and John Lewis.

She is survived by her brother, Dennis Lewis; devoted daughter, Richelle Gorham and husband Jeff; her son, Rick Shelberg; daughter, Lisa Hershey; granddaughter, Nicole Sinsigalli and husband Nick; grandson, Eric Hinxman and wife Brittany; granddaughter, Alissa Hinxman; granddaughter, Asia Bengtson, and husband Corey; grandson, Alex Banning; grandson, Malique Banning; granddaughter, Madison Gorham; granddaughter, Leighanna; granddaughter; Adrenne, and her many great grandkids.

Patricia's life was a testament to the power of selfless compassion. Throughout her years, she dedicated herself to helping others in any way possible. As a social worker, Patricia played a vital role in reuniting people with their birth



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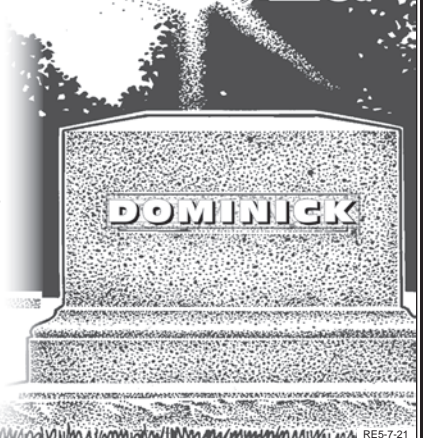
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★ *Letters cont. from page 7*

Who does he think he is, Benjamin Button? Oddly enough, if you reread all of his letters in which he assumes an accusatory and vindictive stance (i.e., all of them) against everything not liberal, you would swear he's regurgitating a CNN script.

The "MAGA Anger" myth is another mainstream talking point in the ranks of the liberal elite. Edwin's opus to irony is his claim that alleged "MAGA" letter writers have anger issues and have suffered some kind of trauma. On the contrary, Edwin. Liberals are the embodiment of psychological trauma, manifested as anger toward dissenting thoughts and opinions. They live in a fantasy world of unicorns and fairy dust (or ice cream and the Easter Bunny if you're Joe Biden, strippers, crystal meth, and tax evasion if you're Hunter Biden). Liberals have redefined opposing thought as "misinformation" or "disinformation" to frontload their arguments against non-liberals. It's like a progressive security blanket against the truth. The truth is, they're all a bunch of frauds and phonies who care about themselves and nobody else.

#Climatechangehoax

**Condolences,
Ed Kozlowski – Colchester**

Thank You, Colchester

To the Editor:

On Nov. 28, Colchester residents came out to stand up for Colchester and appropriate the rest of the funding needed to finish the new senior center. Thank you for coming out to vote and for understanding how important this project is to our town and our seniors.

I've worked on this project since I was appointed to the Board of Selectmen in 2007 and became liaison to the Commission on Aging. I read a 2006 committee report assessing the need for a community/senior center, but the recommendations moved nowhere and that piqued my interest. Over the years more groups and committees were established – the Friends of the Senior Center (Norm Dupuis) and the Senior Center Study Committee. The Senior Center Study Committee recommended the project move forward with the renovation of the WJJMS Project, but that failed at referendum and the WJJMS project move forward on its own.

In 2017, things began to change with the Senior Center Subcommittee. I chaired this committee that researched 13 parcels to find a site for a new senior center and the land where we are building today was chosen. At the same time there was bipartisan support from the BOS and BOF to move forward with a new senior center.

It took another two years but in 2019 the BOS appointed the current building committee. With the support of first selectmen Art Shilosky and Mary Bylone, the first SC referendum passed, and the building committee got to work.

Here we are today with the incredible, dedicated building committee led by Chair Tony Tarnowski finally having all the tools they need to complete the project. But none of this would have happened without so many people working over so many years to complete this project. Thank you, Colchester!

**Sincerely,
Rosemary Coyle – Colchester**

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

Thanking Portland Voters

To the Editor:

Thank you, Portland voters, for coming out on Election Day. It was a tremendous turnout for our community, certainly something to make us all proud. It was also a huge win for Portland, because we continue to have Team Curley working for us, towards a bright Portland future.

I also want to thank our entire town committee for their hard work, and especially all our candidates. There was a tremendous amount of planning and teamwork that brought us to this result. We are very pleased that having put up 12 candidates, 10 of our candidates prevailed in their pursuit of elective office, to faithfully serve the Town of Portland. Regarding our two candidates not securing office, one loss was extremely narrow, with a Board of Education candidate behind by only three votes after a recount. Certainly confirmation that every vote makes a difference!

We are also proud of our commitment to positive campaigning, consistently maintaining our focus on why our candidates are the best option for Portland, and not tearing down others. We demonstrated a clear commitment to continuing the path to economic growth and capable fiscal management that promotes a bright fu-

ture. Team Curley is committed to striving to meet the needs of our community and retain your confidence that our team is here for Portland first and foremost.

As you may know, Portland has tremendous unmet infrastructure and capital improvement needs. It's going to take a lot of work to dig out from under that burden. Be assured that Ryan Curley, and his team for Portland are up to the task.

We wish you a very Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays, and Happy New Year over the coming weeks. Best wishes for health and happiness to you and your families.

**Tim Lavoy, Chair
Portland Republican Town Committee**

Give Trump a Break

To the Editor:

Give Trump a break. After all, everyone inflates their net worth and overvalues their properties; leveraging loans and insurance to save \$250 million is the most common thing in the business world.

And can't you see, nobody does it better than me...

The values I gave as high in the sky..

If I sold them right now Russia and China would buy..

At a price don't you see, guess what it would be?

Just enough to vindicate me...

Trump Derangement Syndrome? Believing any and all thing the Orange Messiah says and that his presidency made America Great Again. Remember his awkward visit to the Queen Mother... England told him not to come, begged him to leave and then to go home and don't come back. His recently dear departed sister said this before she died: "It's the phoniness of it all. It's the phoniness and this cruelty. Donald is cruel." She added, "You can't trust him." R.I.P. As Tucker Carlson said, "there really is no upside to the Trump presidency." I guess the stable genius will make him his vice president.

**Regrets,
Tim Rinell – East Hampton**

Gathering on the Green Thanks

To the Editor:

Marlborough Parks and Recreation would like to thank the following volunteers for their help with this year's Gathering on the Green:

Joe Asklar, Mark Merritt, Louise Concodello, Barbara Lazzari, Kendra Montstream, Brandon Montstream, Leah O'Hearn, Vi Schwarzmann, Karen Schwarzmann, Marlborough Volunteer Fire Department, Marlborough Police Department, Richmond Memorial Library, AHM youth services, Knights of Columbus, Marlborough Women's Auxliary, Marlborough Junior Fife and Drum, RHAM chorus carolers, Marlborough C.E.R.T. and Santa and Mrs. Claus.

We would also like to recognize and thank the following towns that participated and made this the biggest lighted firetruck parade to date: Glastonbury Fire Department, Lebanon Volunteer Fire Department, Haddam Neck Volunteer Fire Department, East Haddam Fire Department, Lyme Fire Company, East Hampton Volunteer Fire Department, Bozrah Volunteer Fire Department, Wequetequock Volunteer Fire Department, East Hampton Ambulance, Colchester Fire and Emergency Services. Thank you to all of you for donating your time and helping to bring this amazing event to the community.

Marlborough Parks and Recreation

MAGA Meaning

To the Editor:

Ken Hjulstrom is probably not naive enough to believe "MAGA" is an innocent acronym.

It was the campaign slogan of the most destructive president ever. It represents Trump and his followers. In 2016 it represented those believing America had lost its way, largely because we'd had the temerity to elect a Black president. It came to stand for bullying, narcissism, xenophobia, sexism, and racism; associated with a fascist, anti-democratic strand of politics. It was the rallying cry of an insurrection. "MAGA" emblemizes everything wrong in our country.

The Trump years made America much worse. A world that had looked to us for leadership now looked away in embarrassment. International foes saw him as a "useful idiot," and he was obviously in Putin's pocket. Trump's mismanagement of the COVID-19 pandemic – and his ridiculous encouragement of anti-vaxxers – was responsible for at least half the U.S. cases. Trump's only pandemic concern was the stock market's reaction.

His pandemic handling caused an economic crash – cratering the demand for oil. Those crediting Trump for lower gas prices and an energy surplus are thanking him for letting our economy tumble and giving him credit for long-standing trends. (Net imports of oil have fallen steadily since 2006, for example, and the record lows are during Biden's administration: <http://link.sauyet.com/93>.)

Those who fondly recall the Trump years either have forgotten or actually liked the incessant lying, the bullying, the hate crimes, the attacks on journalists and judges, the nepotism, the "very fine people" and "so-called judge" comments, the calling of war hero John McCain a loser. Did you enjoy the longest government shutdown in history? Who else would have tear-gassed BLM protesters in order to attend a photo-op?

To actually improve America's greatness we must ensure that Trump and his like-minded sycophants never gain power again.

**Sincerely,
Scott Sauyet – Andover**

Note: Sauyet is a member of the RHAM Board of Education, but is speaking as an individual.

A Salt

To the Editor:

Circa 1988, a mountainous New Hampshire neighborhood was assaulted by sodium chloride. What were once BYOB vacation cabins turned into BYOW weekend "overnighters." But it's only recently that problems linked to sodium chloride have gotten national media attention.

According to Kyle Bagenstose, usatoday.com, 12/24/19, "Heavy road salt use in winter is a growing problem... Each year, Americans spread more than 48 billion pounds of salt on roadways to ward off the effects of winter weather. But it comes at a cost. De-icing salt degrades roads and bridges, contaminates drinking water and harms the environment, according to a slate of scientists expressing growing alarm.

"The issue of road salt has been out in front of us for decades but has received very little attention until the past five years," said Rick Relyea, a biological scientist at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute near Albany, New York. "Then we see, my goodness it is everywhere, and it is a growing problem.

"It's a problem that's growing exponentially. The country used about 164,000 tons of road salts in 1940, U.S. Geological Survey data shows, it broke 1 million tons in 1954, 10 million in 1985, and now averages more than 24 million tons a year."

Road salts change the Ph of our water and soils. Once in the water NaCl spreads like wild fire, dissolves completely and remains in our soils for hundreds of years. The tainted water rots our cars and pulls heavy metals, like lead, out of plumbing and fixtures. Studies have linked road salts with fish and plant die offs, high blood pressure, blue-green algae and soil imbalances.

For more information see, truesdalelake.com, northernontario.ctvnews.ca, nbconnecticut.com, "Sodium & Chloride in Well Water" at portal.ct.gov, and "Road Salt" onlnepubs.trb.org. #save17.

Jean Tulimieri – Amston

Festival of Wreaths Thanks

To the Editor:

On Dec. 2 and 3, the Portland Historical Society held its 12th annual Festival of Wreaths – "Jingle & Mingle" – showcasing 37 uniquely decorated holiday wreaths, swags and tabletop decorations, each demonstrating the wonderful ideas of individuals, businesses, class-rooms and organizations of Portland. On behalf of the Society, I would like to thank the following for their donations of wreaths for the festival:

Adams Hometown Market, Portland River Valley Garden Club, EverGreen Landscaping, Amy Knous, Gotta's Farm, Linda Cunningham, Rhea DeBari, McCabe & Associates, Joyce Murphy, Mallory Rowley, Susan Bransfield, Sarah Perruccio, Hubbard Homestead, Patty Pizichemi, Eileen Marino, Portland Fair Association, Martha Lutecki, Julie Macksoud, Portland Garden Club, Deb Freitag, Colleen Brede, St. Mary's Ladies Guild, Karen Labbadia, Jane Kl-empa, Tall Tale Antiques, Room 13 at Gildersleeve School, Susan AlysonYoung and Sharon Paddock. We would also like to thank Jarvis Airfoil for their financial support.

We thank the people from near and far who came to see the decorated wreaths and bought raffle tickets – many were lucky enough to go home with beautiful, fun holiday decorations. Some folks even did their holiday shopping in our Callander Cupboard Pop-Up Shop. Many thanks to our volunteers, our bakers and to Jim

McCabe for the use of his carriage house. A heartfelt thank you goes to all the "worker bees" who make this weekend possible.

A special thank you to the Portland High School A Cappella singers and their director Samuel Tucker for their renditions of holiday songs on Sunday afternoon.

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

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

Open and Civil

To the Editor:

I know some people will say that I am speaking from my personal experience with Dean Markham, the current chair of the Town Council. Yes, he is my husband. But what some may not know is that he is aware he doesn't know everything and will seek answers before taking action. He appreciates that no one is perfect and everyone deserves a second chance.

I know there were reservations about Mr. Radavich's nomination to the Board of Finance, especially his ability to put personal beliefs aside when serving in a public office. It was a pleasure to see the council members listening and sharing their thoughts without prejudice. Council member Rich Knotek's comments were extremely well thought out and presented. Following the town charter's provision for filling vacant elected positions on town boards with a member of the vacancy party; Mr. Radavich was recommended by the Republican Town Committee to fill this position.

The approval of Mr. Radavich to the BOF was done with respect for both Mr. Radavich and each council member. High five to all seven members for handling this issue in an open, professional and civil manner.

Debbie Markham – East Hampton

New Skin or Old Callus

To the Editor:

Colchester voted convincingly on November 7th for a change, a "new skin" of Democrat representation. As a candidate on the other ticket, I can fully comprehend the shift, as vitriol and steadfastness seemed to flourish across both sides to no productive outcome other than be the catalyst for a change.

To the elected I say congratulations, you hold Colchester's future in the balance. The challenges and questions I pose to our elected are these: Will that future truly be in the best interest of all the town's people or serve selected pockets; will fiscal responsibility and the realism that nearly half of our tax paying citizens are either in or approaching their sunset years and don't have the tolerance or appetite for exorbitant tax increases or deep pockets to support that; will Colchester remain as the charming country, farming, and quiet community, with excellent provisions, that have brought me and so many of us here to live and retire, or will it become a community of transient residency for only school dependent residents.

The challenge I pose for all our town's folk, is to stay close to town affairs and dealings, holding our elected to these accounts, lest all that you loved about Colchester be quietly brushed away. Remember, Colchester is not a Simsbury, Avon, Westport, or Fairfield, and budgets should respect that on all fronts. We must live within our collective means and make hard decisions that keep moving us forward while not having us walk under tons of tax burden. In closing, and to all elected, I hope you will attend personally all town meetings and not hide behind half exposed video screens, to allow me and our entire community to civilly exchange eye to eye.

John Consiglio – Colchester

MAGA Lost Souls

To the Editor:

Marlborough's Ken Hjulstrom pines away for Trump's MAGA II return and criticizes President Biden for pronouncing MAGA using negative tones. Ken might want to bone up on his colonial history a bit.

During our war for Independence, the Tories and English King demanded the colonies stay loyal, while patriot Whigs opposed autocratic rule. Patriots spoke the word Tory with disgust and disdain, just like actual patriots today use MAGA as a foul word. With Thomas Paine framing the conflict in common language, and France giving huge financial and military support, we prevailed, freeing ourselves of monarchical rule. So began the United States of

See Letters, page 32

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

★ *Letters cont. from page 31*

America, with George Washington voluntarily walking away from the presidency, returning to life as a common citizen.

What confusions reside in Ken's head that lead him to think Trump is worthy of our praise and a second presidency? Washington was 'Father of His Country' and Trump was the insurrectionist who tried to destroy that country. Washington was honest while Trump can't speak without employing multiple lies. General Washington fought 17 battles commanding our Continental Army, while Trump used bone spurs to avoid his military service. Ken somehow imagines Trump, flying inside his luxury

757 jet with 24-karat gold-plated bathroom fixtures, as synonymous with Washington atop his horse at Trenton, freezing alongside his soldiers.

Ken says, "We just need a leader who actually believes in America and who believes in us." I say to Ken and other MAGA lost souls, look again at the painting of Washington crossing the ice filled Delaware River on Christmas 1776, in a boat, alongside his troops. Do your minds really envision Trump capable of such a resolution? Now Google 'Mussolini Uniform Podium Microphone Speech' and see Il Duce in all his arrogant, megalomaniac glory. Surely you now see the Trumpian similarities.

Edmund Smith - Andover

Obituaries cont.

friends.

He is remembered as a devoted and loving husband, father, grandfather, and friend to all who knew him. He will always be loved by his wife, Shel-leigh McNally; his children, Emily McNally (Kevin Campbell) of North Carolina, Erika McNally (Matt Buechel) of Colchester; granddaughter, Harper Campbell; siblings, Karen Jenkins of Manchester and Patti McNally of Glastonbury; and numerous nieces, nephews, extended family members and friends.

A celebration of life with calling hours will be held at Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester, on Saturday, Dec. 9, from 4-6 p.m.

Donations in Jay's memory may be made to Tunnel to Towers Foundation, www.t2t.org.

To sign the online guestbook or share a memory of Jay, please visit www.auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

TOWN OF COLCHESTER
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
LEGAL NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The Colchester Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a Public Hearing on December 19, 2023, beginning at 7:00 PM in the Colchester Town Hall Meeting Room at 127 Norwich Ave, Colchester, CT, to hear and consider the following:
Appeal of Notice of Zoning Violation and Order to Cease and Desist dated September 28, 2023 and issued to Niantic Bay Group, LLC of 1967 N. Rose Hue Path, Hernando, FL 34442 for failure to provide required affordable housing within the Jordan Lane Affordable Housing Development (P&ZC Application 2021-015) that was permitted pursuant to Section 8-30g of the CT General Statutes a/k/a the Affordable Housing Land Use Appeals Act. Niantic Bay Group, LLC has submitted a "claim of error, requirement or appeal of decision made by Zoning Enforcement Officer" related to said Notice of Zoning Violation and Order to Cease and Desist. Property Locations: 34 Jordan Lane (ID#03-00/001-514); 24 Jordan Lane (ID#3-00/001-517); 22 Jordan Lane (ID#3-00/001-518); 20 Jordan Lane (ID#3-00/001-519); 16 Jordan Lane (ID#3-00/001-520); 12 Jordan Lane (ID#3-00/001-521); and 10 Jordan Lane (ID#3-00/001-522). Zoning District: Suburban Use (SU). A copy of the Notice of Zoning Violation and Order to Cease and Desist and the documents constituting the appeal are available in the Land Use Department and Town Clerk's Office, Colchester Town Hall, 127 Norwich Avenue, and may be inspected during regular business hours (8:30 AM - 4:30 PM, Monday through Friday). These and other relevant documents are also available under the link entitled "ZBA 2023-004 Niantic Bay Group, LLC Appeal" on the Colchester Zoning Board of Appeals webpage at <https://www.colchesterct.gov/zoning-board-appeals>.
Zoning Board of Appeals
Laurie Robinson, Chair

2TB 12/8, 12/15



EMPLOYMENT

SEEKING A WELL-ORGANIZED PERSON: to manage the church office at Gilead Congregational Church on a part-time basis (15-20 hours). Duties include but not limited to: creating a weekly online newsletter and weekly worship bulletins, managing the church calendar, ordering supplies, managing purchase orders, communicating church events internally and with the broader community, compile the annual church report, among other seasonal tasks. Weekly office hour schedule negotiable. Send resume, cover letter and references to the church pastor at 860-707-4340 or PastorBrian@GileadChurch.net.

THE GLASTONBURY CITIZEN: has a position open in our classified/subscription department. Position will be Monday through Wednesday from 9-3 at our office located at 87 Nutmeg Lane in Glastonbury. Must be able to make and answer phone calls in a professional and courteous manner, along with have basic knowledge of computers. Will train the right person. Position is accommodating to moms with children in school. Send resume to josh@rarereminder.com or contact us at 860-633-4691 with additional questions.

LABORER WITH EXPERIENCE: in commercial construction for a general contractor in the Hartford area. Full-time position. Email resume or qualifications to Labor2023@yahoo.com.

PART-TIME MAINTENANCE WORKER: to fix odds and ends as needed at our three residential group homes. Ellen Young 860-559-4693.



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LEGALS

Legal Notice
Andover Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission

The Andover Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission APPROVED the following applications at their Regular Meeting on December 4 2023:

- Permit Application **IWWC #23-17:** Austin Harmon (Hull Forest Products), **63 Bunker Hill Rd.** - Application to construct wetlands crossings for an approximately 54-acre timber harvest.
- Permit Application **IWWC#23-19:** Eric Anderson (Town of Andover), **17 School Rd.** - Proposed installation of concrete pad for two propane tanks, a portion of which is in wetlands.
- Application **IWWC 23-20:** Patricia Klayman, **25 Cider Mill Rd.** Construction of a 20-foot by 24-foot shed/workshop within the 200-foot Upland Review Area of Staddle Brook.
- Application **IWWC 23-16:** Vincent Grimaldi, **357 Lake Rd.** Construction of a 21-foot by 21-foot garage within the 100-foot Upland Review Area of an unnamed brook and wetland.

If you have any questions, please contact the Andover Wetlands and Watercourses Commission APPROVED the following applications on December 5 2023:

The Duly Authorized Agent of the Andover Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission APPROVED the following applications on December 5 2023:

1TB 12/8

LEGAL NOTICE
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
HEBRON, CONNECTICUT

The Hebron Planning and Zoning Commission will hold a Public Hearing at a Meeting scheduled for Tuesday, December 12, 2023, at 7:00 P.M., to be held virtually through the GoToMeeting Platform, on the following:

1. **Petition 2023-09** - Petition of the Hebron Planning and Zoning Commission to amend the Hebron Zoning Regulations Sections 3.C and 3.F to permit Family and Group Child Care Homes as accessory to residential uses in accordance with Connecticut Public Act 23-142.

Dated at Hebron, Connecticut, this 28th day of November, 2023.

Natalie Wood, Chair
Planning and Zoning Commission
Dec 12, 2023, 7:00 - 10:00 PM (America/New_York)
Please join my meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone.
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<https://meet.goto.com/install>
Legal Notice will be published in the Rivereast News Bulletin on December 1, 2023 and December 8, 2023.

2TB 12/1, 12/8

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Call **Maryla Underwood at 860-801-1114** or email munderwood@colebrookvillage.com

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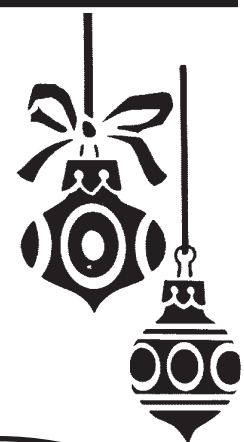
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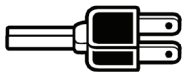
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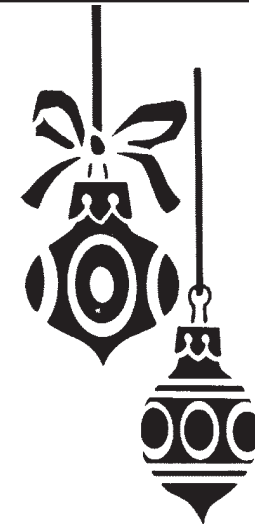
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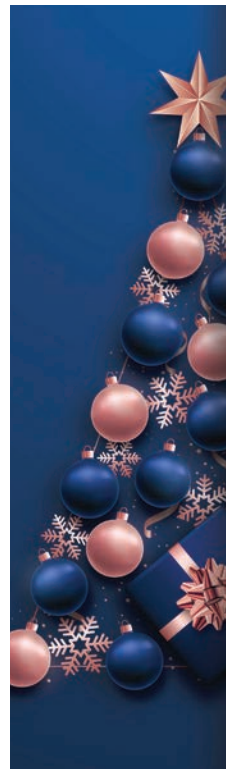
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