



RIVEREAST

News Bulletin

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

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February 3, 2023



This photo – taken by East Hampton photographer Joe Gowac – is going to grace a U.S. Postal Service Forever stamp, new for 2023. While he wasn't sure why, the Portland first selectman bets the USPS chose the Arrigoni for its notable look, and the fact that it dates back to the Depression. (Federal officials say the bridge is in Middletown, but it's just as much a part of Portland.)

Arrigoni Bridge Earns Stamp of Approval

By Jack Lakowsky

Last week, the Town of Portland got a pleasant surprise – the Arrigoni Bridge, long a local landmark, will feature on a new U.S. Postal Service Forever stamp.

It is one of just four selected from all the bridges in the nation.

First Selectman Ryan Curley told the *Rivereast* he didn't know of the stamp until the postal service made its announcement, which came by way of the state Department of Transportation.

The selected bridges range from pedestrian to car carrying, all regarded as local landmarks, and other selectees include more modern bridges in Omaha and Oklahoma City, and one connecting the states of Iowa and Illinois.

While the stamps are only available for bulk purchases for now, the Arrigoni will still be seen all over the country.

Why the Arrigoni got picked isn't clear, likely its venerable history and its impressive pair of 600-foot steel arches, the tallest in Connecticut.

"This came as a pleasant surprise," said Curley of the national recognition.

It may not be a "formal" honor, but, Curley said, the "stamping" can be used as leverage in appeals to the state and federal governments for funding future bridge work.

The online history transportation archive Kurumi.com features a wealth of information about the bridge's long, and at times expensive, history.

The bridge, which spans well over a half mile, was opened in August 1938, at a cost of about \$3.5 million, more than \$60 million in today's dollars. The year it was built, it won first prize in the large bridge category from the American Institute of Steel Construction.

It was named for Durham state Sen. Charles J. Arrigoni, who fiercely advocated for the bridge's construction.

Until the 19th century, the only way to cross the Connecticut River was by ferry. The first service in Connecticut was at Windsor in 1642; in Middletown, service was started in 1726.

On April 12, 1896, a 1,300-foot two-lane plank drawbridge was built at Middletown. At the time, it was the longest highway drawbridge in the world.

As motor traffic increased in the early 1900s, especially on weekends and holidays, drivers clamored for a way to cross the river without being interrupted to let marine traffic pass through. Studies for the new bridge date back to at least 1933.

Construction started in 1936 and continued nearly 24 hours a day until the Arrigoni Bridge opened to traffic on August 6, 1938. The day it opened, the bridge was the longest of any kind in New England.

The bridge was completely repainted in 1997. The bridge's history has a darker side as the site of suicides and nearly a decade ago, a man threw his infant son into the river, drowning the boy.

An idea to decorate the Arrigoni Bridge with necklace lighting and spotlights from below has gone back and forth for decades. Many oppose this move, saying the money could be better

See *Arrigoni Bridge*, page 3

Musicals are Back at RHAM High School

By Michael Sinkewicz

After a nearly six-year hiatus, the RHAM High School drama club is putting on a full scale musical next week, following months of rehearsals as students prepare for their shining moment.

The production is *High School Musical*, an upbeat story filled with singing and choreography, adapted from the popular 2006 Disney Channel film of the same name.

The show premieres next week with a performance on Feb. 10 at 7 p.m. There are two showtimes on Feb. 11 at 2 and 7 p.m. Tickets are sold at the door.

Last week, as the final details were ironed out, the *Rivereast* sat down with the cast and crew to understand what goes into bringing the show to life and the magic happening backstage.

Behind the Scenes

The play's director, Emma Filosa, matches the energy of her actors. In fact, she sees herself as the catalyst to motivate and inspire the students who walk through the auditorium doors after school each day.

During the day, she works in one of the middle school special education programs. Then, her focus shifts to squeezing the most out of the production.

The cast "definitely started this really doubting themselves and really holding back and as we go, I see it more and more that they're bringing it out," she said. "I think once they have an audience, it's going to explode."

Committing to a show, and the hours of work that comes with it, is an accomplishment for a program that's been largely dormant. The pandemic put a hold on almost all productions, with a radio play-style adaptation of *It's a Wonderful Life* being the only opportunity for students to perform. There hasn't been a musical production since 2017.

"I knew that a lot of them were wanting to do it before they graduated," Filosa said. "I got in touch with the principal and said, 'Can we do a drama club?'"

Over the summer, she got approval from the principal to direct a show and worked out a re-

hearsal schedule with the auditorium director. Since November, rehearsals have been nearly every day.

While Filosa has been involved with theater her whole life, this is her first large-scale musical – and she knew right away what she wanted.

"As soon as I got the approval [from the principal], I applied for the license for *High School Musical*, because I always wanted to direct that," Filosa said. "And I knew it was going to bring in more kids."

One challenge became clear: audiences have images frozen in their minds from the 2006 film. Finding the balance between the source material and innovation can be difficult to manage.

"There's definitely an expectation with the characters and what the set will look like and what the costumes are going to be like," Filosa said. "To some extent, I want to give people that so they feel that but I also want it to be their own show because I want them to be able to embrace

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RE2-3-23

Trader Joe's Now Open in Glastonbury

By Shawn R. Dagle

Folks in *Riverast* towns no longer have to head to Manchester or West Hartford if they want some Organic Elote Corn Chip Dippers or Hold the Cone! Mini Ice Cream Cones.

That's because, at long last, Trader Joe's is open in Glastonbury. The store opened yesterday (Thursday, Feb. 2) at 400 Hebron Ave., a new plaza located at the corner of Hebron Avenue and Sycamore Street, near the center of town.

The months-long wait for the specialty grocer came to an end at 7:55 a.m., with a grand opening ceremony and ribbon cutting, followed by the official opening of the store at 8 a.m.

"We are so excited to be opening in Glastonbury," Trader Joe's public relations manager Nakia Rohde explained in an email to the *Riverast's* sister paper, *The Glastonbury Citizen*, late last week.

The Hebron Avenue store is the specialty grocer's ninth location in Connecticut. Other stores are located in West Hartford, Manchester, Orange, Fairfield, Danbury, Westport, Darien and Stamford.

The interior of the Glastonbury store will include artwork featuring local history. According to Rohde, murals will include depictions of the Rocky Hill-Glastonbury ferry, Cotton Hollow Preserve, the Comstock Covered Bridge over the Salmon River in East Hampton, depictions of Glastonbury's Apple Harvest and Strawberry Moon festivals, Connecticut's state flower the Mountain Laurel, and its state bird, the American Robin.

"These neighborhood highlights will be featured along with Trader Joe's products," Rohde said. "There will always be something new to catch your eye during every adventure to the store."

Though you won't find many name-brand items at Trader Joe's, "you'll discover a store full of unique and interesting products, along with everyday basics, in the Trader Joe's label," according to its website.

"Our buyers travel the world searching for products we think are exceptional and will find a following among our customers," added the grocer's website. "To earn a spot on our shelves,

each product is submitted to a rigorous tasting panel process, in which every aspect of quality is investigated in context of the price we can offer. If a product is assessed as an outstanding value, it becomes an essential part of the Trader Joe's shopping adventure."

Based in Monrovia, Calif., Trader Joe's — which has 540 stores in 42 states and the District of Columbia — said it plans on hiring more than 80 new crew members to work at its Hebron Avenue location.

According to Trader Joe's, which is still in the process of hiring new staff members, the grocer "prides itself" on hiring locally, and plans on hiring folks from Glastonbury and the surrounding area.

The Glastonbury store will also take part in the Trader Joe's Neighborhood Shares Pro-

gram. As part of that program, the Hebron Avenue Trader Joe's will donate 100 percent of its products that are unsold, but still usable, to nonprofit and community-based organizations.

"The store is partnered with Connecticut Foodshare and Food Rescue US-CT for their Neighborhood Shares program," explained Rohde.

At yesterday's grand opening, store captain Alex O'Brien (who has been visiting the site since early January to prepare) and Trader Joe's crew members were in attendance to welcome their newest customers.

Trader Joe's on Hebron Avenue in Glastonbury will be open daily from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. For more information, visit traderjoes.com.

Shawn R. Dagle is a reporter for The Glastonbury Citizen.

Scholarships Available

Residents of Andover, East Hampton, Hebron, Marlborough and Portland can apply for American Savings Foundation scholarships. These renewable scholarships can be used at a range of four-year colleges and universities, two-year colleges, and at accredited technical and vocational programs.

The foundation is accepting applications from high school seniors, college students and nontraditional adult students who will be enrolled for the 2023-24 academic year. Students can apply online at www.asfdn.org, and applications are due March 31. The website also has links to other area scholarship programs as well

as resources for learning about financial aid.

Scholarships are awarded primarily based on financial need, with consideration given to academic performance, community involvement, and other indications of a strong desire to achieve goals through education. Current high school seniors must be ranked in the top third of their graduating class or have a 2.5 GPA or higher. Current college students must be maintaining a 2.5 GPA or higher.

For more information and to apply, students and parents can visit www.asfdn.org or call the foundation at 860-827-2556.

Scholarships Available

Carl Guild and Associates has announced its community scholarship program for local high school seniors entering college in the fall.

There are six \$1,000 scholarships given, one each in East Hampton, Portland, Colchester, East Haddam, Glastonbury and the RHAM district. There are no restrictions or qualifications; all resident seniors can apply.

Deadline for applications is April 1. Visit www.carlguild.com/scholarship for an application, ask your school's guidance counselor for one.

Correction

In last week's "Standout Athletes of the Week" story, RHAM's Max Czarniecki was incorrectly identified as being part of the school's record-breaking 4x800 relay team. Czarniecki did break the school's 300-meter mark, yet the correct members of the 4x8 relay team were Josh Gauthier, Sam Fortin, Cam Rhodes, and Konrad Jandzinski.

The *Riverast* regrets the error.

Standout Athletes of the Week

By Josh Howard

Here are the *Riverast* Standouts of the Week for the week of Jan. 23-29:

Luke Randazzo - RHAM High School (Swimming & Diving): Randazzo is the ultimate dual threat in the pool, starring as both a swimmer and a driver for the local co-op team that features student athletes from RHAM, Manchester High School, and Coventry High School. Randazzo, a junior, has had first place finishes in both swimming and diving event this winter despite only picking up the sport two years ago. He is on track to be selected to the Central Connecticut Conference (CCC) All-Academic team.

Morganne Pineda - Portland High School (Basketball): Pineda scored a career-high 31 points to go along with five rebounds and three assists as Portland notched a solid victory, 56-36, over conference rival Lyme-Old Lyme. The Wildcats from Old Lyme had defeated the Highlanders in the first meeting on Dec. 16 at Portland High School, but the Highlanders got sweet revenge in the second meeting by winning by 20 points on the road. The Highlanders next home game will be Tuesday, Feb. 7 against Hale Ray at 7 p.m.

Jake Martino - Bacon Academy High School (Track and Field): Martino won the shot put at both the Eastern Connecticut Conference (ECC) Developmental Meet on Jan. 20 and at the Jack Long ECC Select Meet on Jan. 29. During the ECC Developmental competition at the University of Connecticut, Martino threw a personal-best 47'4.5". Next up is the ECC Championship this Saturday, Feb. 4, at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy in New London.

Austin Cuthbertson - East Hampton High School (Basketball): Cuthbertson was impactful on both ends of the court as the Bellringers defeated Westbrook 60-45 on Jan. 27. Cuthbert-



RHAM High School junior Luke Randazzo was selected as a Standout Athlete of the Week for his work in the local pools as both a swimmer and diver.

son, a sophomore, had 12 points and head coach John Antolini credited him for his work on the defensive end, registering five steals. It was a complete team win for East Hampton, who also got 22 points and nine rebounds from Brady Lynch and 11 points and 10 rebounds from Nate Ireland. The Bellringers are in the middle of a three-game road trip before returning to East Hampton High School for a home conference game against Morgan on Monday, Feb. 6, at 7 p.m.

For questions or to submit an Athlete of the Week nomination, email joshhowardsports@gmail.com.

Cover Story • Cover Story

★ *Arrigoni Bridge, cont. from page 1*

spent elsewhere and that light pollution will further hinder stargazers and astronomers. Supporters say the bridge will look more attractive and support tourism.

In 2022, yet another multimillion dollar investment was in bridge was finished, work that started just before the pandemic began.

Last August, the Connecticut Department of Transportation announced the safety and pedestrian improvement project at the Arrigoni Bridge has been completed.

The project, which started in February 2020, included replacement of the bridge deck, improvements to the bridge approaches on

both sides of the Connecticut River, new sidewalks, and steel and concrete repairs which improve safety and increase the lifespan of the bridge.

The project was originally slated to finish in February 2022, but completion of the weather-dependent work was delayed until late summer.

While the Arrigoni Bridge deck was paved in summer 2021 work continued underneath the structure until summer 2022. That work included replacement of bearings, steel upgrades, painting, and other structural improvements.

Other new stamps include civil rights icon and late U.S. House representative John Lewis, skateboard art, a painting of the Everglades and close-ups of microorganisms.

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From the Editor's Desk

Observations & Ruminations

By Mike Thompson

First off, congratulations to the Arrigoni Bridge! As you saw on the cover this week's paper – in case you hadn't heard already – there's going to be a U.S. postage stamp this year featuring the beautiful bridge that connects Portland to Middletown.

The Arrigoni is one of just four bridges to be featured on the new stamps. The other bridges in the series include the Bob Kerrey Pedestrian Bridge in Omaha, Neb.; the Skydance Bridge in Oklahoma City; and the Iowa-Illinois Memorial Bridge in Bettendorf, Iowa and Moline, Ill.

While I haven't seen any of those three bridges, I can tell you the Arrigoni is definitely deserving of being featured on a stamp. It's just beautiful to look at, with those majestic arches soaring over the Connecticut River in elegant beauty. In fact, according to the state Department of Transportation, the Arrigoni's two 600-foot steel arches have the longest span length of any bridge in Connecticut.

The stamp depicts the bridge from the Portland side, at sunset. It's a gorgeous capturing of what's really a gorgeous structure.

Now, there is a catch if you want to acquire an Arrigoni stamp. The presorted first-class mail stamps will be available for purchase by bulk mail users, in coils of 3,000 and 10,000, according to the U.S. Postal Service.

But still, the Arrigoni is getting immortal-

ized on a national stamp. That's pretty freakin' cool.

I was sad to hear about the passing this week of actress Cindy Williams. I spent many an hour as a child watching, and very much enjoying, *Laverne & Shirley* reruns. And watching them again as an adult (there's seriously a channel on the Pluto streaming service that airs nothing but *Happy Days*, *Laverne & Shirley* and *Mork & Mindy* reruns 24 hours a day), I've really been able to appreciate how brilliant the physical comedy on that show was.

Williams and the late Penny Marshall just excelled at slapstick, and they complemented each other perfectly.

One of my very favorite moments in journalism came in 2007 when I got to interview Cindy Williams for *The Glastonbury Citizen*, as she was appearing at the McDonald's in town at a '50s-themed car show. She was extremely gracious, and answered all my questions. It was a lot of fun. Definitely my biggest brush with Hollywood fame.

Before I close, I see Tom Brady has announced his retirement. Again. He says this time is for real. I say – we'll see.

See you next week.



Weir Stops By... State Rep. Steve Weir (R-55) recently visited Lisa Hopkins' fifth grade class from Andover Elementary School to speak with the students about his role and responsibilities, his experiences as a new state representative, the legislative process, and other topics related to state government. "It was truly a pleasure to have been invited to speak with the students from Andover Elementary School and highlight the role state government plays in their lives," Weir said. "I was really impressed with their knowledge and overall interest in what goes on at our state Capitol."

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

Lopsided 'Diversity'

To the Editor:

Philadelphia Flyers hockey player Ivan Provorov's recent refusal to wear the special team-altered jersey for the NHL's Pride Night revealed that "diversity" is a lopsided, one-way street. In response to his desire to "stay true to myself and (my) religion (Eastern Orthodoxy)" the LGBTQ+ rainbow coalition and sympathizers went ballistic! Believers in true diversity countered by buying out his number 9 jersey in record time.

Peter Kushkowski
"Almost Heaven"
Portland

Unbelievable...

To the Editor:

Everyone's favorite grade school science teacher had an epiphany: Joe Biden should not seek a second term in 2024. What do you suppose led Mr. Science to this conclusion? Was it the fact that Joe was purposefully banished to his basement sandbox in 2020 to avoid embarrassing public antics that would magnify his ineptitude as a presidential candidate? Was it the past plagiarism issues? Or was it the well-documented belief in D.C. that Joe has always been one slice of bread short of a sandwich? And 50 years is a lot of sandwiches...

I admire the skill involved in how progressive liberals always characterize their opponents as the root of all evil while simultaneously offering "objective" critiques of their own heroes who commit far worse acts. It's not really a skill, though. It's more of an undiagnosed medical condition. Mr. Science laments Swift Boaters slandering John Kerry, while the entire Demo-

cratic Party engaged in a proven phony Russia collusion story with direct ties to Hillary Clinton's campaign. And why is it that progressive liberals believe every fairy tale that the media concocts? Liberals might want to consider that what they're told isn't always true.

Back to Old Joe. Truck driver, lifeguard, scholarship student, football player at Delaware State, professor, raconteur. But his detractors are the ones to blame. George Santos...he's the real liar and the real threat to democracy. Making up false narratives to gain access to power and prestige. And, apparently, he also tried to pass himself off as having American Indian heritage to curry favor with...oh wait a minute...that was somebody else. Possibly our next president if Mr. Science gets his wish.

Hey Sy...do you read your letters before you send them to Mike Thompson? Your logic is full of holes.

Warm wishes,
Ed Kozlowski – Colchester

FBI's New York Field Office

To the Editor:

The Russian operation to get Trump elected in 2016 was real. We are still living under the specter of 2016, and we are closer to the beginning of the process of learning about it than we are to the end. An FBI agent working for Putin swayed the 2016 election by both leaking disinformation about Russia-Gate and revealing the reopening of the email investigation, right before the election. The person who led the relevant section, Charles McGonigal, has just been charged with taking money from the Russian oligarch Oleg Deripaska.

See Letters, page 6

Bulletin Board

A recent joyful notice from a rather distant relative that she and her husband are going to have a baby got me to thinking about this whole birth thing.

At the risk of exposing myself for the curmudgeon I am, why is it that folks having their first child act like they're the first people in human history to give birth? I mean, people have been having kids for thousands of years, many of them conceived, if not delivered, in the most unlikely places. Of course I'm pleased that you're pleased, but in the greater scheme of things, it's not like you're having a baby panda or something.

Still, I guess we all do it. I recall one of my pregnant sisters-in-law and her husband years ago crooning over an in-utero photo of their developing son. "Oh, honey," she exclaimed. "He has your nose!" To which the other replied, "But he has your hands!" C'mon people, all I can see here is a shapeless blob. I could find more detail in a beached jellyfish. Whether he has your nose, or her hands or the mailman's butt, who the hell knows? (They laugh about it now, by the way.)

I admit to being highly excited about the birth of both my boys. Of course, at the time I had no idea they'd move so far away that I'd end up shoveling my own driveway. Also, while excited, I didn't feel compelled to videotape their arrival in all its miraculous (but messy) glory. Nor did it escape me that the process of giving birth obviously hurts. You'd certainly never get me to do that and all I had to do was watch and try to be supportive while keeping my eyes closed.

The guy in the adjoining room when our Son #1 was born was also trying to be supportive as his wife screeched and carried on for hours to the obvious disgust of the nurses on duty, who seemed to think she was overdoing it. At one point, I heard her crying out for her husband, "Danny! Danny! Danny! Get over here!"

"What is it, honey?" I heard him say soothingly.

"I'm going to kill you!" she shrieked.

I saw the poor guy out in the hallway later. "How's it going?" I asked.

"Oh, great," he replied. "Just great."

Yeah, so what's with that ice pick sticking out of your eye?

I read somewhere once that women who give birth experience some sort of weird nurturing amnesia where they actually forget all the pain and discomfort due to their great joy over the happy outcome. I don't know how people capable of remembering that you bought them discounted chocolates for Valentine's Day in 1993 can forget that giving birth hurts, but there must be something to it or nobody would do it more than once.

In any case, it seems to me that things have sure changed since my wife and I had our boys. (Son #2 says, "Yeah. Now people have babies in the hospital instead of in log cabins." He's quite a comedian. We'll see who's laughing when I figure out how to post those photos of him in a diaper and a cowboy hat.)

For instance, what's with these "gender reveal" celebrations? Aside from being an excuse for an additional party, I don't see how these "reveals" square with the national conversation these days about gender and identity. Shouldn't parents wait until kids are at least six or seven years old and mature enough to choose their own surgeon before having a "gender reveal?" And am I going to be shunned as completely tone deaf if I send over a pink or blue onesie for the baby shower? It's hard to know what's acceptable behavior in these days of rapidly changing social norms.

As for the recently arrived "guess what, I'm pregnant" announcement, I'm happy for them. It's hard not to share the feeling when people are so obviously delighted. I can only hope that the post office will still be in business when the actual blessed event takes place in a few months so I don't have to rent a camel and make my way by the light of some distant star to deliver an appropriate baby gift.

Jim Hallas

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

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

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RE23-23

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★ Letters cont. from page 4

So, Comey (former FBI director) put this guy in charge of the FBI's New York field office. The guy then proceeded to leak lies about the Hillary email investigation to Giuliani. And he pressured Comey to announce they were reopening the investigation into Hillary just days before the 2016 election. McGonigal was also put in charge of the Trump/Russia investigation.

Meanwhile, the whole time he was himself, working for Russia.

Trump & Yanukovich (president of Ukraine from 2010 until he was removed from office in the Revolution of Dignity in 2014), were similar figures: interested in money, & in power to make or shield money. And therefore, vulnerable partners for Putin. They also shared a political advisor: Paul Manafort. He worked

for Yanukovich from 2005-2015, taking over Trump's campaign in 2016. Manafort had to resign as Trump's campaign manager in August 2016 when news broke that he had received \$12.7 million in cash from Yanukovich.

Reconsider how the FBI treated the Trump-Putin connection in 2016. Trump and other Republicans screamed that the FBI had overreached. In retrospect, it seems the exact oppo-

site took place. The issue of Russian influence was framed in a way convenient for Russia and Trump. (*Road To Unfreedom* by Timothy Snyder, CBS, *Newsweek*, *NY Post*, Yahoo, Justice.gov, ABC)

Annie Steinbrecher – Marlborough

Bisbikos' Surprise Presentation

To the Editor:

I appreciate hearing about Bisbikos' presentation but question how it was handles. The points made regarding town needs in terms of youth center, police department and food bank are all valid points.

The choice of utilizing prime commercial real estate which would generate additional taxes if commercially developed I think deserves a thorough evaluation before entering into any commitments by the town. As an alternative we should consider demolition of existing senior center building and build in its place a new building to house youth center, food bank and police department. This would use existing town real estate and create a town government center of support services comprised of Town Hall, senior center and new youth, food bank and police center. This new building would be accessible by the youth by sidewalks from our schools and provide opportunity for our police to engage with our youth in this shared space.

In terms of Old Town Hall, we should invest in its renovation as it is important part of town history, possible uses creating youth, family and senior counseling center.

To fund these options, I would think funds could come from multiple sources and grants.

Sincerely,
Paul Chreiman – Colchester

Fix Public Works at Old Colchester

To the Editor:

Desperate to convince us to finance their municipal complex in the town center, the Town of Hebron continues to spread misinformation. One of the biggest whoppers is the idea that the Public Works problems couldn't be fixed at its current location at Old Colchester Road. Old Colchester has worked just fine for more than four decades. It was the preferred location when problems surfaced with the current facility. Viable architectural plans were drawn up for a common-sense facility that would meet Hebron's needs. These plans were eventually rejected when the idea of municipal complex on the Horton property with a new fire department, police department, and town hall were conjured up. Knowing that few people would vote for this, the town has consciously used Public Works as a "driver." First, they would bring the Public Works Complex to vote and then having destroyed the Horton property for anything else, they would build the rest of it.

The irony is that the Old Colchester site was rejected by the town manager, because it was "too expensive." ("A. Tierney summarized \$8M on existing site is too expensive" - Minutes of BOS meeting, 9/15/2016 - https://hebronct.com/agendas/#section_list). Now, in planning to build on the Horton property, the price tag has ballooned to \$20M (their numbers, we know it will be more) for just the Public Works Building. The entire Municipal Complex will cost well north of \$50M.

Town insiders, many of whom don't pay taxes or are moving, want us to fund a grandiose, unneeded municipal complex, which will include a "state-of-the-art" Public Works building. The truth is these vanity projects will ruin the charming and rural town that we love. Let's vote! Bring it to referendum!

John Collins – Amston

BOS Vision vs. Community Values

To the Editor:

What a town preserves represents the values of the community. Hebron promotes itself as possessing "Historic charm with a vision for the Future." Hebron has an active open-space agenda, but no land has ever been acquired solely for its historic value! Hebron leadership acquires land without research of its historical significance.

Only 13 Hebron buildings are designated as "historic properties." Many are town-owned, yet the master plan is to abandon them and move Hebron Center.

Selectmen were elected and swore to preserve Hebron's "rural historic character," but their actions promote the opposite. Hebron's Plan of Conservation and Development is inde-

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cisive about preserving history, totally ignoring prehistory and minorities while promoting un- rightly suburban sprawl.

Hebron's PWC debate resulted from the BOS assuming the site was historically insignificant without any research. Ironically, the Connecticut Historical Society recently acquired documents that irrefutably show that the new PWC will destroy Governor John S. Peters' farm – the last remaining farm in Hebron Center, shaped and worked by his "Black cousins," Cesar Peters' family. Sentient people would make an effort to preserve stonewalls and a field cadaster that was created before Hebron was settled. Yet, the town's website shows no such plans to accommodate historical features.

Burnt Hill Park provides mute testimony of the BOS vision of a rootless, bulldozed, suburban future. Connecticut's State Archaeologist recently identified Burnt Hill as one of the very few Paleo-Indian sites in Connecticut. Unfortunately, the prehistoric evidence and 18th century farmstead were bulldozed for playing fields. Hebron's rare middle income African-American site now lies under commercial parking lots. Soon Hebron Center's last remaining farmland, established in 1702 and owned by Governor Peters, will be destroyed for a salt shed. Ancient armies sowed salt over conquered cities. Will Hebron leadership's machinations do the same?

John Baron – Hebron

More About Kinney Road

To the Editor:
I have asked the town to put some indications of where the entrance to the new DPW facility would be. I think residents should look and observe for themselves, to get a feel for the area.
There have been multiple quotes and letters regarding a former D.E.E.P. employee. How does the D.E.E.P. feel about the project now??
Twenty years ago, I owned the property at 34 Main St. At that time it was discovered that the

Mobil gas station at the corner of Wall Street and Main Street had leaking fuel tanks. Ten or so businesses and residences surrounding the site were advised to not drink the water. That is when city water was installed along Main Street and the owner of the gas station had to perform remediation by excavation of the contaminated soils, install multiple test wells along Main Street to continuously take samples and monitor the ground water. They also had to provide 10 years of city water at no cost the affected well owners.

The brook that runs between 34 Main St. and the Fire Safety Complex on Main Street runs all the way through the Raymond Brook Preserve to Kinney Road and beyond. Have any of the wells on Kinney Road been tested for contamination?

**Sincerely,
Todd Habicht – Hebron**

Rag Doll

To the Editor:
On my Andover Lake walks, I frequently see a dog outside with a ragged doll of sorts in its mouth. He seems to be enticing you to come try and take it away. Another Andover Lake resident, Don Denley, last week complained about Ned Lamont, the rag doll he never lets go of.
Don began his listings of things wrong with Democrats and Lamont (and I quote) "Lamont's Accomplishments: 1) 50th worst state to open a business. Look it up!" Enticed by Don's challenge, I looked it up and found Forbes listed Connecticut as 11th best state to open a business. Another website, blog.hubspot.com, only listed the top 10 states and worst 5 states to start a business, and Connecticut wasn't on either list. Wallethub, a personal finance website, lists Connecticut 49th with only Alaska being worse. We can see there are disagreements among various business prognosticators. Perhaps Mr. Denley could identify his sources of information next time he makes cocksure statements?

Most business-savvy people probably consider Forbes a better judge of business trends than Hubspot or Wallethub.

Another contributor last week, Colin McNamara, called the gathering of world and business leaders at the Davos World Economic Forum "the plotting of the elite to oppress the masses." He inferred it was about "fascism," "importing high-end prostitutes," and attendees being "like alien invaders."

The Davos webpage sounds reasonable to me. "The world today is at a critical inflection point. The sheer number of ongoing crises calls for bold collective action. The Annual Meeting will convene leaders from government, business, and civil society to address the state of the world and discuss priorities for the year ahead." I scanned the list of accomplished leaders posted on that site. If Colin sees elitists and fascists, so be it. To each his own.

Edmund Smith – Andover

Property Assessments

To the Editor:
I have always tried to be a trusting person and assume positive intent. But I have found this hard to do when it comes to my Andover property assessments. For 17 years, I have found errors in my property field cards; not one field card has been correct. I have gone before the Board of Assessment Appeals for every revaluation since 2006; the BAA reduced every assessment with the exception of the revaluation for 2016. I appealed the BAA 's decision with the Superior Court. Representing myself, my appeal went to trial, and the judge ruled in my favor.
When one error is corrected then another error appears. I should not have to address these errors. By Connecticut statutes: 12-63(a) assessors are required to appraise houses based on fair market value, how can that be done when the field cards are inaccurate? My invalid recording has included an unfinished basement and slab under the house. I assure you I did not pull a permit to add an unfinished basement or a slab. The date my house was built was inaccurate,

causing problems with my home insurance company. I recently questioned the accuracy of my depreciation which went from 31% to 11%. There was no reason for this % change. When asking for an explanation, it was refused and rudely dismissed. A small repair in one corner of my house was listed as new siding, which is over 30 years old.

Taxpayers fund the costs for revaluations, there should be an expectation of accuracy. Errors put the burden on the taxpayer to resolve.

Andover residents, check your property field cards at the Assessor's office. if there are errors then this could relate to being overtaxed. You only have until Feb. 16 to file a form to be heard by the BAA.

Emily Timreck – Andover

A Sketchy Surprise

To the Editor:
The Colchester first selectman's "surprise" proposal to spend millions to buy the vacant Jack's Chevrolet building from an undisclosed middleman (rather than directly from its current owner) should set off alarm bells.
There's no transparency when a first selectman covertly negotiates to buy and sell real estate with unnamed developers while leaving the rest of the Board of Selectmen in the dark. At the surprise presentation, sincere questions went unanswered or were met with hostility by the first selectman. It's no wonder that residents are concerned about what is happening behind closed doors. Many people are also asking: was this even a genuine proposal in the first place?
It's hard to believe a plan that redirects millions of dollars from other needs, and includes selling off another town building, is meant to be taken seriously. It looks more like political theater to give lip service to the Youth Center, food bank, and police without a chance of success.
Let's talk about real solutions...
To address the cramped Town Hall, let's renovate its vacant third floor. Let's use the space in a building we already own, rather than spend

See Letters, page 8

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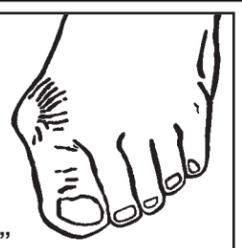
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Taught early enough, healthy habits turn into healthy lifestyles. Begin with proper brushing and flossing techniques, and continue with regular professional care and cleanings for a healthy smile that will last a lifetime. If you would like more information on how to get your child's dental experience off to a good start, we welcome your call. We have both children and adults as patients because everyone, regardless of age, deserves a winning smile.
P.S. According to an American Dental Association study, children who were breastfed are less likely to have tooth alignment issues when they are older.

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★ **Letters cont. from page 7**

millions renovating something we don't. Then, let's bring the Town Hall department heads together with the Board of Selectmen to develop a strategy to best use that additional space.

To address downtown parking issues, let's act on the proposal from our last town planner to construct a parking lot with ARPA funds on town-owned land adjacent to Town Hall with access to the Green via Hayward Avenue.

Finally, let's get to work on a serious proposal to deal with the Youth Center and save the poorly maintained historic Wheeler Block building where it's located.

Colchester needs solutions, not surprises.

Bernie Dennler III – Colchester Candidate for First Selectman

A Word of Thanks

To the Editor:

I just want to take a moment to thank my friends and colleagues for the outpouring of good wishes on my retirement. The phone calls, flowers, plants, cards, and people stopping with kind words is greatly appreciated.

Twenty-three years in public service as your elected town clerk have been extremely rewarding. Many great relationships have been formed and the support I have received from the Hebron residents is humbling and is cherished. As many of you know, I have several interests and plan to spend more time with family, help my husband in his business and continue working with my nonprofit that benefits a medical clinic in Guinea, West Africa.

The Hebron Board of Selectmen has appointed Francesca Villani to be the next town clerk and I could not be happier with their choice. Fran is a Hebron resident and has a long list of credentials, including being the assistant Hebron town clerk for more than four years.

With Fran as town clerk, I can retire in good conscience, knowing that this department will be left in her capable hands.

**Sincerely yours,
Carla Pomprowicz – Hebron**

Turkeys Take Priority for Bisbikos

To the Editor:

First, I want to thank the Colchester finance department staff for everything they do. They are working under challenging conditions with little support or leadership.

At the last Board of Finance meeting, we heard that the budget numbers are incorrect, the accounting formulas could be wrong, the department is understaffed and behind schedule, and they need more training to operate the town's accounting software correctly. The Board of Finance can only discuss the budget with correct numbers. Given the issues, there is no way to know whether Colchester is over budget or not.

It's obvious the problems have been happening for a long time. One of the reasons the last budget was voted down was because the First Selectman couldn't produce accurate accounting information.

Where has First Selectman Andreas Bisbikos been? He has plenty of time for photoshoots and turkey pardons, so why hasn't he ensured we have an accurate picture of how our money is spent?

During the meeting, I heard the town is over budget for snow removal. There hasn't been any snow this year...

John Farrell – Colchester

Belltown Schools Budget

To the Editor:

East Hampton parents were listening in October when Town Council Chairman Mark Philhower warned against any proposed increase over 3 or 4%.

But as any educator, parent, or advocate (or realist, for that matter) can tell you, the cost of providing our children a good education is not getting any cheaper. Beyond the expense of meeting contractual obligations, school districts must deal with increases in fuel prices, food, and everything else that is taken for granted.

Sure enough, when Superintendent Paul Smith unveiled his proposed education budget for 2023-24, it called for a 5.8% increase. Certainly, that figure provides for some sticker shock, and though I'm no mind-reader, I can't imagine the Republican members of the Town Council were pleased. That figure is subject to change before the Board of Education forwards its proposal.

Once the shock wears off and you read a little deeper into the budget, you realize this is a conservative spending plan. There are no frills here,

no fancy new programs or added positions. A couple months ago, principals presented the school board with dozens of proposals that they would love funded if just a little more money was available. The overwhelming majority of those requests were either denied outright or will only be possible through outside funding or grants.

In essence, the budget increase is necessary to merely keep the schools functioning at the levels they are now. Cuts are going to mean staffing and existing programs.

I'm not prepared to sit idly and watch the quality of an East Hampton education diminish. In the end, we are the ones voting – both by referendum and on Election Day. As parents and advocates, we need to push for the funding our kids deserve.

**Sincerely,
Matt Engelhardt – East Hampton**

Imagine

To the Editor:

Imagine believing... what was once right is now wrong, and wrong is now right;

the CDC, FDA, NIH and other 'trusted' health organizations are working on our behalf; pharmaceutical and medical cartels are working to improve our health;

politicians at the federal, state, and local levels represent the will of the people;

there is a significant distinction between most R & D politicians and particularly at the federal and state levels;

the education industry including teacher unions cares about educating our children;

government is our provider and protector;

there are more than two genders;

the food industry provides quality food devoid of ingredients that harm our health;

global organizations such as the UN, WHO, and Red Cross care about people;

social and mainstream media such as newspapers, TV, and Twitter, and Hollywood are unbiased

federal, state and local elections are secure;

U.S. Supreme Court and the judicial system are fair arbiters of constitutional law;

climate change (as marketed) is real;

long white streaks observable in the sky on a clear day are condensation from airplanes;

God-given freedoms are not being eroded on a daily basis in exchange for 'safety and security';

Biden possesses the nuclear football;

a vaccine was necessary to combat the COVID 'virus' when most age groups had a 99+% recovery, similar to the seasonal flu;

people are not dying and suffering serious adverse health reactions from the COVID 'vaccine' & boosters;

Disney is the most magical place on earth; the movie *The Matrix* was not a documentary;

mainstream media when critical thinking is required;

'woke' is in when it is time to awake.

Tip of the iceberg.

So much more to imagine.

Paul Bureau – Colchester

Thanks from Wrestling Team

To the Editor:

The Portland/Cromwell wrestling team would like to thank Portland, Cromwell and the surrounding communities for their outstanding support of our wrestling program. The team recently hosted The Arrigoni Classic and The Highlander Invitational on Jan. 21st and Jan. 28th. Through concessions and donations, the fans, wrestlers and workers were well-fed and the team raised money essential to support the continued growth of the wrestling program.

The wrestling team's successes are due to the hard work and dedication of our wrestlers, our coaches Mark Favale and Dan Harding Jr., volunteers and their families, as well as the commitment of the school districts, community businesses and the Portland Sideliners. A special thank you to Coreyanne Armstrong for commencing the Highlander Invitational with powerful and beautiful bagpipe music that energized the crowd leading to a wonderful day of wrestling.

We are grateful to the following businesses who helped make these events possible: Campagna Restaurant, Farrell's Restaurant, Pizzeria DaVinci, Tommy's Pizza, Primavera Pizza, Mellili Cafe, Fabian's Pizza, Olympic Pizza, Main Street Pizza, Wing Yum, Barb's Pizza, Freddy's Pizza, ABC Pizza, Adams Home-town Market, Ace Hardware, Portland Liquors, Brownstone Bottle Shop, Stop and Shop in

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The Portland/ Cromwell Wrestling Team

New Hebron History Online

To the Editor:

Groundbreaking historical information relating to the proposed site of an industrial Public Works facility in Hebron Center is now available online! The information and several maps have been submitted to the Board of Selectmen and are posted on the BOS agenda for Feb. 2, 2023, pages 12 through 24, found on the town website: <https://hebronct.com/uploads/agendas/63d41031ab01e.pdf>

As residents continue to urge the Board of Selectmen to consider the vital environmental dangers of placing a Public Works facility at 17 Kinney Rd., the emerging historical information needs to be added to the numerous reasons why this location is not suitable. This landscape has connections to the most notable and diverse aspects of Hebron history, from the glacial soil deposited 12,000 years ago to the gift of the Mohegan Sachem Attawanhood in 1675, from our first colonial settlers to Hebron's first industries of the early 1700s, from Judge Sylvester Gilbert and Governor John S. Peters to the significant community of free African Americans of the 1820s and 1830s, and more!

The historical significance of the area is noted in the Phase I Archeology Report by Dr. Sarah Holmes, May 2022, which states on page 40 the site may be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, "for National Register Criteria B, pertaining to the association with the land to prominent individuals, such as Judge Sylvester Gilbert and to the Levi S. Backus' family members, the APE may fall within this category." The new information strongly supports the eligibility for this distinguished designation under a long list of historically important individuals.

Now is the time for the selectmen to act and protect this irreplaceable asset. It is our responsibility as a community to preserve this location and share it with others. For more information, please visit Kinney Road Matters on Facebook and #Save17.

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

Progressively Worse

To the Editor:

As the cost of living continues to rise and people struggle to make ends meet, the Democratic-controlled Connecticut legislature is back in session and doing whatever they can to further our state's downward trending spiral.

Some Connecticut Democratic-proposed bills this session include allowing non-citizens to vote, lowering the voting age to 16, banning gas stoves, hiring more state tax agents, allowing your children to be vaccinated without your knowledge or consent, banning open carry and

many rimfire rifles, curtailing people's ability to hunt, expanding access to abortion and removing age restrictions, and legalizing euthanasia. While Democrats take every opportunity to capitalize on minority disillusionment and victim culture, they offer solutions that only further harm those they claim to protect while benefiting their political campaign donors.

Businesses are leaving Connecticut in droves and larger corporate layoffs are beginning to ramp up as it's becoming increasingly difficult to do business in Connecticut. Electricity rates are the most expensive in the country, the gasoline tax is being reimposed, truckers are having to pay mileage surcharges, and our property taxes are ever increasing while local politicians claim they are "working for the people"...give me a break!

I'm politically unaffiliated, but Democrats don't deserve any praise as they have held a decades-long majority that's only resulted in a "progressively" worse place to live and work for the people of Connecticut that actually do both. We'll have to wait and see how much damage they are able to inflict this legislative session...but this year is a long one and Lamont is at the helm, so buckle up and enjoy the show. I'm just wondering if it's a comedy, a tragedy, or a horror show....what do you think?

Colin McNamara – Marlborough

Facts Don't Warrant Fear

To the Editor:

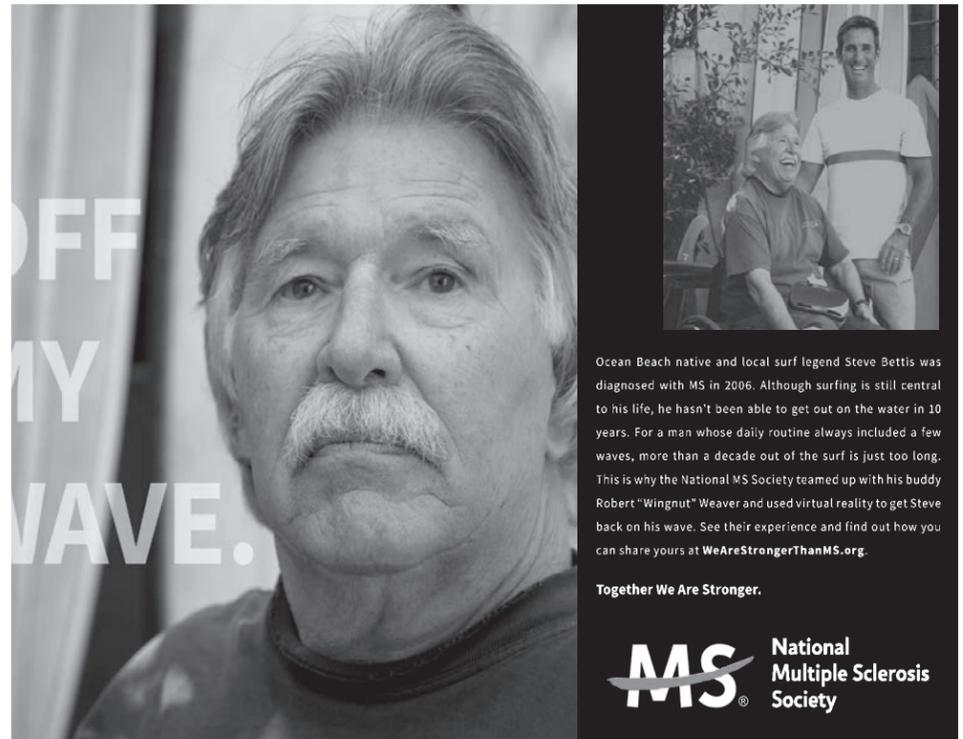
Good day, Hebron citizens. I requested, through the town, information on possible salt contamination from salt storage facilities and public works buildings in and around the general eastern Connecticut area. The responses from Chatham Health and from the state DEEP are as follows. The only issues reported were one in Marlborough, back in the '90s, from a '60s vintage salt box, and one in East Hampton back in the mid-'80s. Both of these salt boxes were of an old, outdated design which would never be utilized (or even allowed) today.

Per the state: "It is important to note, that DEEP has not received any data or complaints concerning salt contamination around salt storage sheds that were recently constructed to modern day specifications (i.e. covered and on impervious surfaces) and that have been maintained using best management practices as recommended by the DEEP Water Planning and Enforcement Division's Stormwater Program." The correspondence goes on to state that the majority of complaints received and investigated by DEEP are the result of road application procedures. Not salt sheds.

While everyone is concerned about possible water contamination, there are simply no facts to warrant the level of fear some are trying to create. The town and the Building Committee have spent vast amounts of time doing many in-depth studies and, the end result is that the best, and safest place to do this facility is off of John Horton Boulevard. There may be other options, but they all have major shortfalls. I urge you to look at what the town is trying to construct and call and ask questions. Look at the studies and reports. Town staff will be happy to work with you.

**Thank you,
Daniel Larson**

Note: Larson is chair of the Hebron Board of Selectmen, but said he is speaking as an individual.



Ocean Beach native and local surf legend Steve Bettis was diagnosed with MS in 2006. Although surfing is still central to his life, he hasn't been able to get out on the water in 10 years. For a man whose daily routine always included a few waves, more than a decade out of the surf is just too long. This is why the National MS Society teamed up with his buddy Robert "Wingnut" Weaver and used virtual reality to get Steve back on his wave. See their experience and find out how you can share yours at WeAreStrongerThanMS.org.

Together We Are Stronger.

MS National Multiple Sclerosis Society

Portland • Portland

Pancake Breakfast Sunday

The Portland Volunteer Fire Department invites everyone to an All-You-Can-Eat Pancake Breakfast this Sunday, Feb. 5, from 7-11 a.m., at Engine Company No. 1, located at 7 Middlesex Ave., right behind the Post Office.

The breakfast will feature sausage, all-you-can-eat pancakes (chocolate chip, regular, and, in honor of Valentine's Day, strawberry), and assorted beverages. Cost is \$8 for adults and \$4 for children.

Also, the PVFD has ceramic pancake coffee cups for sale, with the department's logo and a cartoon character squirting syrup on a stack of pancakes. The cups are \$20, and each month you return with the "clean" cup, you will have \$1 subtracted from the cost of your breakfast.

For more information or to be placed on an email notification list (there is also a sign-up list at the door), call Wayne Mergel at 860-759-6921.

For more information or to be placed on an email notification list (there is also a sign-up list at the door), call Wayne Mergel at 860-759-6921.

'Chill for Change' Returns Feb. 11

Middlesex YMCA and Camp Ingersoll will hold the annual Chill for Change at Jobs Pond in Portland on Saturday, Feb. 11, at 1 p.m.

At the Chill for Change, folks jump into Jobs Pond in the middle of winter, all to raise money for a cause. Costumes are optional, but encouraged!

People can support the event by jumping into the pond or donating to a jumper. This year's goal is to raise \$30,000. All funds raised go directly to supporting camp scholarships and life-changing camp experiences. Donate, register as a single jumper, or register a team at CampIngersoll.org.

All jumpers must preregister and raise at least \$100 to participate.

Awards are given for Best Costume, Best Team Theme, and Biggest Piggy Bank (most funds raised). The individual who raises the most money will receive a certificate for a free session of camp. This certificate can be used for your own family, or gifted to anyone you know.

For more information, contact Ben Silliman at bsilliman@midymca.org or 860-342-2267, or search for YMCA Camp Ingersoll on Facebook.

KoC Baby Shower

The Freestone Council 7 Knights of Columbus will hold its annual Baby Shower Saturday and Sunday, Feb. 4 and 5 and Feb. 11 and 12. All items donated at the Gathering Space at the Church of St. Mary will be shared with the local Portland Food Bank, and Birthright.

Birthright provides a wide range of support services for expecting and new mothers, including no-cost non-judgmental pregnancy testing, prenatal health care, and maternity/baby supplies.

Donations should be new and unwrapped.

Items needed include diapers, sleepers, blankets, rattles, bibs, bath towels, wipes, lotion, shampoo, bottles, baby bath items, pacifiers, comb and brush sets, socks, stuffed animals, blanket sleepers, crib sheets, sweaters, hats, diaper bags and booties.

A box for "Respect Life" cash donations will also be available. Donations can also be mailed to Freestone Council, PO Box 7, Portland CT 06480.

For more information, call David Shovlin at 860-342-4259.

Senior Center News & Notes

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

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

Free Grab-and-Go Meals: The senior center is offering Waverly Senior Center members, who reside in Portland only, one free Grab-and-Go meal starting in February. You must be able to pick up the meal yourself, at 11:45 a.m., at the Waverly Senior Center, in the Mary Lou Rice room. Please do not arrive before 11:30 a.m., as there are programs in that room. Note: You are not eligible if you are already receiving Meals-on-Wheels. You must register one week in advance for a Grab-and-Go Meal. For information, or to sign up, call at 860-342-6761.

Next Week's Programs: Monday: Light Aerobics, 9:30 a.m.; Syncosize II Dance fitness, 10:30 a.m.; Blood Pressure Clinic, 10:30-11:30 a.m., at the library this month. Tuesday: Bears on a Journey, 9:30-11 a.m. - making fleece teddy bears for cancer patients; donations are sought of light fleece, one yard or more for making teddy bears for cancer patients throughout Connecticut. If you would like to donate, call 860-342-0809; Watercolor Lessons, 9:30 a.m.-noon (to register, email bivenne@yahoo.com); Coupons for Troops, 1-4 p.m.; setback,

President's List

Hannah Sroka of Portland made the fall 2022 President's List at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio.

Sroka is earning a Bachelor of Arts, certificate degree in English: creative writing, professional writing, global readiness.

Dean's List

Kendra Schoeps of Portland made the fall 2022 Dean's List at the University of Vermont. Schoeps is majoring in professional nursing.



The 25th, and final, Mid-Winter Chocolate Fest will be this Saturday, Feb. 4. Pictured this week, getting ready for the festival, are Diane Burgess (left), who came up with the idea of a Mid-Winter Chocolate Fest 25 years ago, and Nancy Johnson (right). Johnson is standing in back of her favorite candy to make - the pecan turtles. Diane and I worked together for 30 years at the First Church Nursery School housed at the church. She was the director and I was the 4-year old assistant teacher. They are known as the Dynamic Duo of the church.

Mid-Winter Chocolate Fest

The Women's Fellowship of the First Congregational Church in Portland will host its 25th, and final, Mid-Winter Chocolate Fest on Saturday, Feb. 4, from 1-4:30 p.m., in the Fellowship Hall of the church, 554 Main St. All are invited to drop by and experience an afternoon of chocolate treats and valentine delights.

The Chocolate Mousse Café will be a take-out-only booth where one can purchase a variety of delectable desserts including their always favorite Double Truffle "Black Beast," Lemon Truffle Pie and Turtle Cheesecake. The Baked Goods Booth will offer a variety of breads including cardamom, muffins, bars, cookies, and pies in both chocolate and non-chocolate flavors. The Candy Booth will have an assortment of items including English toffee, candy coated pretzels, chocolate covered cherries, candy rose

bouquets, and lollipops in all shapes and sizes. The Valentine's Craft Booth will have gift mugs, small gift baskets for all ages, jewelry and unique greeting cards. The children's area will include gift items and a combination craft/grab bag. New this year will be a sale room where one will find a variety of items including vintage treasures.

The snow date will be Sunday, Feb. 5, from 1-4 p.m. Admission is free.

As this is the last time this event will be held, the Women's Fellowship said it would like to thank everyone for their support and participation through the years.

For more information, call the church at 860-342-3244 or visit www.firstchurchportlandct.org.

Food Bank, Foodshare Truck

Portland Food Bank is located in the lower level of the Portland Waverly Senior Center, 7 Waverly Ave. The food bank is open Monday and Thursday, 9 a.m.-noon, except for holidays. The food bank will be closed Monday, Feb. 20, for Presidents Day.

To access the food bank's services, people are required to register with the food bank (copy of an ID and recent piece of mail or utility bill) and be a Portland resident. Donations are only taken during food bank hours. Call 860-342-6795 for

more information or for volunteer and donation opportunities.

The Connecticut Foodshare truck comes to the Waverly Center every other Monday from 1-2 p.m., except for holidays. People using the Foodshare are required to form a line and everyone will have an opportunity to "shop" at the truck once it is set up. People do not have to be a Portland resident to attend the Foodshare, and they're asked to please bring bags.

The next Foodshare is Feb. 13 at 1 p.m.

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Portland Takes Action On Plastic Pollution

By John C. Hall

At its Jan. 18 meeting, Portland's Board of Selectmen unanimously passed a resolution to address the growing problem of municipal solid waste in Connecticut and the increased costs that burden towns. The resolution supports Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for packaging and printed paper.

Connecticut's General Assembly will consider establishing EPR in state law during the 2023 session. EPR laws for other products such as paint, electronics, and mattresses were passed in previous years. Proper disposal or recycling of these materials is paid for in advance by the manufacturer. Packaging, which makes up a large percentage of our waste stream, is somewhat more complicated because it made from so many mixed materials.

First Selectman Ryan Curley took the lead on the issue by preparing the resolution and placing it on the Jan. 18 agenda. During the discussion of the motion to adopt, selectman Ralph Zampano commented, "Anytime the Board of Selectmen has an opportunity to reduce waste and its impact to the environment and also reduce cost to the town, I think we should support that proposal."

Connecticut's proposed EPR legislation for packaging would create a system whereby packaging manufacturers and importers would pay a fee to sell those products in our state. Those fees would be higher for non-recyclable or excessive packaging and lowest for compostable and minimal packaging. The variable fees would incentivize companies to redesign their packaging, making it more recyclable and reducing its plastic content.

The fees would be used to build and operate facilities capable of recycling more types of plastic and preparing that plastic to be incorporated into new products.

Currently, only about 6-9% of the plastic produced gets recycled. The rest gets burned, posing health risks to low-income communities where incinerators are located, or buried in Midwest landfills, or shipped overseas where much of it ends up in the ocean. After decades of increasing plastic packaging, there is no place on earth free from plastic pollution. Even human blood and breast milk contain microplastics, and the dangers to human health are only beginning to be understood.

The action by the Town of Portland does not pretend to solve all our solid waste problems, but it is one step that municipalities can take to begin reducing plastic pollution. Since the closing of the MIRA waste facility in Hartford, the shortcomings of our failed recycling system place a higher burden on taxpayers. Some municipalities—like Middletown—now pay more to dispose of single stream recyclables than for ordinary household trash. Ten years ago, towns were getting revenue from recyclables.

If other towns pass similar resolutions and if their leaders submit testimony to the Environment Committee of the Connecticut General Assembly, it will help to enact Extended Producer Responsibility for packaging and printed paper in our state.

Note: Hall is the executive director of the Jonah Center for Earth and Art, a Portland-based nonprofit.

YFS News & Notes

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

New Instagram Account: YFS is now on Instagram; visit www.instagram.com/PortlandCTYouth for another way to hear about upcoming programs.

Youth Listening Circle: Tuesday, Feb. 7, from 6-7:30 p.m., at a location to be determined. YFS is looking for students in middle and high school that are interested in having a discussion on race, culture, diversity, equity and more. Join students from East Hampton, Durham and Middlefield and have your voice heard. Call or email Jesse to sign up.

Afterschool Drop-In & Draw: Tuesday, Feb. 14, from 2:30-4:30 p.m., on the first floor of the

Buck-Foreman Community Center, 265 Main St. This is time for students to come after school and do some semi-structured art. Come when you want, and stay as long as you want.

Drop-In & Draw Meet-Up: Friday, Feb. 17, 10:30-11:30 a.m., at the BFCC. This month, make a patriotic popsicle stick gnome for Presidents Day.

Prevention & Wellness Council: Wednesday, Feb. 22, 6:30-7:30 p.m., at BFCC. Help work as a community on youth substance use prevention, positive mental health, and making Portland a recovery-friendly community. Contact Revicki or just show up if you're interested in joining in.

Youth Services Advisory Board: Tuesday, March 21.

Easter Egg Hunt: Saturday, April 1.

LGBTQ+ Support Groups & Meet-Ups: YFS said it is finalizing details for these, and plans to hold them every other Wednesday at Portland Library. Watch for more information.

Installation Service for Zion Pastor

Zion Lutheran Church will be celebrating the installation of its pastor, Sara Stall-Ryan, on Sunday, Feb. 12, at 2 p.m., at the church, 183 William St. The public is invited.

Stall-Ryan was welcomed as interim/transitional pastor in December 2019. With churches basically shutting down due to the COVID-19 pandemic a few months later, Stall-Ryan quickly worked with church members, Zion organist Allen Hill, and her own family to put together worship services posted to YouTube each week.

As COVID-19 numbers came down and social distancing recommendations were reduced, she was able to conduct outdoor services at the church, while finding innovative

ways to celebrate Holy Communion and still keep parishioners safe.

And finally, with her guidance, Zion was able to return to worshipping within the church itself. Services are still video recorded and posted to YouTube for viewing by anyone who might be unable to get to church physically, or anyone who is just curious about Zion.

After following church protocols for calling a pastor, the congregation voted in June 2022 to invite Stall-Ryan to become Zion's pastor, no longer "transitional" or "interim." She accepted.

Refreshments will be served following the Feb. 12 service. All are invited.

Romance Book Sale

The Friends of the Portland Library group is sponsoring a used book sale featuring romance books for the month of February in the Second-Hand Prose Bookshop at the Portland Library, 20 Freestone Ave., during regular library hours.

The sale will also feature art books. The Friends recently received a large selection of art books from a private collection, including books on master artists, impressionism – both French and American – and art collections in museums around the world.

There are also puzzles, games, DVDs, and fiction, teen and children's used books available for purchase.

Books are 50 cents for paperbacks and chil-

dren's books, \$1 for trade paperbacks and \$2 for hardcover. DVDs are 50 cents each disc and puzzles and games are \$2 unless marked otherwise.

FPL also has "I Love CT Libraries" reusable bags on sale for \$1 each. See a sample at the front desk and purchase them from the library staff.

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

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

Portland Library News & Notes

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

Hours: Monday through Thursday, 10 a.m.-8 p.m.; Friday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Masks are optional. **Holiday Closing:** The library will be closed Monday, Feb. 20, for Presidents Day.

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

Drop-In Playdates: Thursdays through Feb. 23 (no program Feb. 16), at 10:30 a.m. Children ages birth to 5 and their caregivers are invited for an hour of socialization and open play with the story room toys. No registration is required.

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

Take Your Child to the Library Day: Saturday, Feb. 4. This year marks the tenth anniversary of the *Paw Patrol* franchise, and the library is celebrating. See if you can find Marshall, Rubble, Chase, Rocky, Zuma, Skye, Everest, Ella, and Liberty in the library scavenger hunt and create crafts to take home. Sgt. James Kelly will be at the library here with Portland's police dog Magnus for an 11 a.m. program for school-aged kids. Registration for the police dog program is required and space is limited.

Minecraft Unplugged: Thursdays, 3:30 p.m., Feb. 9 and 23. Grades 3-5 are invited for some Minecraft-themed offline games, crafts, challenges and more. Space is limited.

Family Fort Night and Nocturnal Animal Hunt: Friday, Feb. 10, 5:30 p.m. Come after the library has closed to create reading dens, have a bear-themed snack, and search the library once the lights go out for some animals hiding in the book stacks. Space is limited.

Family Craft Night: Foam Mitten Wreath: Wednesday, Feb. 15, 6:30 p.m. Make custom foam mitten wreaths. This activity has steps that are appropriate for all ages, but a parent or guardian must be with children to help with supervision. Space is limited.

Readers' Theater: The Mitten: Tuesday, Feb. 21, 1-2:30 p.m., for grades K-3. Everyone will be assigned a part and given a script when they arrive. Kids will then play some theater games and be ready to put on a performance for friends and family by 2 p.m. Space is limited.

Wildlife in Winter: Saturday, Feb. 25, 11 a.m. Staff from the White Memorial Conservation Center will discuss a variety of ways that animals survive the winter, from staying active to migrating to hibernating. There will be a story, some props and even some local animal friends. Space is limited.

Teen Advisory Group Meeting: Monday, Feb. 6, 3:30 p.m. Share your thoughts on what you would like to see the library offer in terms of programs, materials and more. Snacks will be offered, and teens will earn community service hours.

Monster Mitten Craft and Valentine Snack: Monday, Feb. 13, 3:30 p.m. Create a sweet or scary mitten friend while snacking on some Valentine treats. Registration is required.

Adult Programs: Mitten Tree: Bring in mittens and gloves for children or adults to be distributed by the Portland Food Bank.

Book Discussions: Talk About Books (TAB): Tuesday, Feb. 7, 1 p.m. *The Four Winds* by Kristin Hannah will be discussed. **Mystery Lovers Book Club:** Tuesday, Feb. 21, 1 p.m. *The Stills* by Jess Montgomery will be discussed.

Wednesday Movie: Wednesday, Feb. 8, 1 p.m. *Ticket to Paradise* will be shown.

Adult Paint Party: Thursday, Feb. 9, 6 p.m. The party will have a Valentine theme.

Black History Month Programs: Who We Are: Monday, Feb. 13, 6 p.m. This documentary will be shown, followed by a discussion. **Summer of Soul:** Thursday, Feb. 23, 1 p.m. This is the award-winning film about the 1969 Harlem Cultural Festival.

Seed Library: Will soon be available for garden enthusiasts, whether beginner or seasoned. You will find free seeds available for your garden. Have some leftover seeds? Donations are welcome. For more information, call Jan Nocek at 860-342-6771.

Dean's List

Portland residents Haley Sroka and Lucas Varano made the fall 2022 Dean's List at Worcester Polytechnic Institute in Worcester, Mass.

Sroka is majoring in biomedical engineering, and Varano is majoring in mechanical engineering. They are each members of the Class of 2025.



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Board Holds Budget Forum

By Michael Sinkewicz

The Board of Finance held a budget forum last week as the town transitions into the next budget season with aspirations of a manageable and expedited process.

Officials of the boards of finance, education and selectmen shared their thoughts during the Jan. 25 meeting, as did members of the community.

After a drawn-out budget season last year, officials have made it a priority to gather information and insight to avoid a similar outcome. Last month, a budget survey was launched online, which may also provide valuable data for the boards to digest.

In November, voters finally approved a town budget after a fourth referendum. The \$15.63 million proposal passed by a 1092-528 tally and was about \$80,000 below the 2021-22 budget. The mill rate was set at 26.82.

However, school spending, which makes up the majority of town spending, was approved at the first referendum last May.

During the meeting, members of the finance board largely agreed that the original town budget presented to the community was likely the best; it was also the largest bottom-line number.

By the end of budget season, municipal spending had been trimmed hundreds of thousands of dollars from the initial proposal presented by First Selectman Andreas Bisbikos.

Throughout the process, officials speculated on the reasons the budget was being rejected. An additional question added to the final referendum asked voters if the budget was “too high” or “too low.” The town budget will likely be presented in March by Bisbikos.

The education budget is scheduled to be presented to the school board next Tuesday, Feb. 7. New Superintendent of Schools Daniel Sullivan III will be leading the presentation.

Previously, it was unclear whether Sullivan, who took over as head of schools at the beginning of January, would be making the presentation or if Assistant Superintendent Charles Hewes would ultimately get the nod.

A collaboration between Sullivan and Hewes is the most advantageous approach, Chris Rivers, chairman of the recently-revamped school board budget subcommittee, explained.

He said that the plan allows for the “fresh

perspective of a new superintendent coming that that’s going to have to put the budget that ultimately gets approved into action” along with the “longevity and institutional knowledge of Dr. Hewes of what’s been happening the past several years.”

After Sullivan’s presentation, the school board will hold workshops before ultimately approving a spending plan. Once the proposal is finalized, the finance board takes full custody of the school budget and can also make revisions.

While earning community approval for municipal spending proved to be more challenging last year, the school budget accounts for over 70% of total town spending.

Still, while waiting for a physical proposal to review, finance board members offered their general perspective on the outlook of the school budget.

“I think that we held the town budget to a certain expectation this year,” said Republican Tim Vaillancourt. “The majority of people that took the time to vote and state their opinion on whether it was too high or too low stated that it was too high. I would recommend that the [school board] have that in mind when they formulate their budget.”

Republican John Thomas agreed, stating that the town budget was cut back significantly, and that he would “like to see the numbers more realistic to what really is needed.”

“The school board needs to do a solid evaluation of what’s going on in the schools and what the schools really need,” he said.

Democrat Mike Egan pushed back on these ideas, calling for a “dose of reality.”

He argued that the district’s four schools account for the majority of the town’s staff and salary, and it’s difficult to make those cuts.

“The most important service we provide as a municipality is the education of our kids,” he said.

On top of these comments, Rivers added that board members were welcome to tour the schools and emphasized that maintenance was a significant expense for the district.

After the discussion, members of the public weighed-in, as well. Vince Rose urged officials to work together throughout the budget process.

“We had everything but a united front last

year,” he said. “That cannot happen if you expect to pass this budget.”

Michael Dubreuil expressed that officials should go over information that further justifies and explains the school positions, and associated costs.

Expenditure Reports

After the budget forum, the board proceeded with a regularly scheduled meeting agenda, which included reviewing the town’s expenditure reports.

The report, shared by Chief Financial Officer Debbie Kratochvil, displayed expenditures for the current fiscal year up until the end of December.

Mike Hayes, a Democrat on the board, highlighted the legal and insurance line, which appeared to be significantly over-budget.

However, Kratochvil explained that due to a technical issue, that item, and potentially several others in the report, were inaccurate. The real figures, she added, were likely much less than they appeared on the sheet.

Hayes stated that if the reports were knowingly inaccurate, they shouldn’t have been sent out to the board and the members should’ve been notified of the error in advance.

He said it was “incompetent,” but then rephrased his position by saying the action represented Kratochvil “not doing her due-diligence.”

Kratochvil apologized for the inconvenience, stating that a revised December report could be sent out to the board. She added that her de-

partment is grossly under staffed and she is currently working on year-end tasks that are time sensitive.

Bisbikos jumped in, stating that “there are a lot of things going on” in the finance department.

He said the error was “no fault to Debbie or the diligent work of our staff.”

Addressing Hayes, Bisbikos said the comment was “out of line” and that he was “ashamed” the word “incompetence” was used.

Still, the concerns about potentially going over-budget may be valid.

Art Shilosky, a Republican on the board, pointed out overages in both the Fire Department and Public Works.

“We were led to believe that this going to be under control,” he said. “I’m concerned.”

In response, Bisbikos said the overages in the Fire Department were mainly due to overtime pay as a result of personnel issues. To address this, he confirmed that he’ll be adding two Fire Department positions to his budget proposal, something he’s previously suggested.

Thomas viewed the expenditure report and the current state of the budget in a different light. He suggested that the report was actually a positive sign because the town expenses were likely much lower than the board understood them to be.

“Yes, we all looked at documents that may not have accurate,” he said. “We’re probably in better shape than we think we are.”

CCO Seeks Members, Starts Rehearsals

The Colchester Choir and Orchestra will begin rehearsals Thursday, Feb. 23, at Bacon Academy, 611 Norwich Ave. The spring concert will be Saturday, May 20, also at Bacon Academy.

All are invited to join the CCO. Seats are open in all sections, both choir and orchestra. The group plays everything from pops to classical. Choir rehearses in the choir room from

6-7:30 p.m., and orchestra rehearses in the band room 7:30-9 p.m.; orchestra members should come at 7 p.m. to warm up.

To register – half-year registration is available – go to tinyurl.com/4ysam6sw. For more information, visit colchesterchoirorchestra.org; look for Colchester Choir and Orchestra on Facebook; or email colchesterchoirorchestra@gmail.com.

CCT Presents *Young Frankenstein*

Colchester Community Theatre will present *Young Frankenstein*, through special arrangements with Music Theatre International, on Friday, Feb. 17, at 7 p.m., Saturday, Feb. 18, at 2 and 7 p.m., and Sunday, Feb. 19, at 2 p.m. Performances will be at the Bacon Academy auditorium, 611 Norwich Ave.

From the creators of the record-breaking Broadway sensation *The Producers*, in this musical comedy Mel Brooks adapts his classic 1974 film *Young Frankenstein* for the stage. The musical, which made its Broadway debut in 2007 and ran for a little over a year, features such numbers as “The Transylvania Mania”, “He Vas My Boyfriend” and “Puttin’ on the Ritz.”

Ticket prices are \$18 for adults and \$14 for seniors (age 65+) and children (age 12 and under). Preferred seating tickets (a maximum of 60 each performance) are available for \$28 each. Preferred seating ticket-holders will be

asked to arrive at least a half hour before performance times as entrance to obtain seats will be allowed before the general audience. Seating for the general audience will take place 20-30 minutes before the performance time.

To purchase tickets online (credit card only), go to www.showtix4u.com/events/1750. In-person ticket sales (cash and check only) will be available at Wagging Tails Pet Shop (95C Linwood Ave.) and Cabinet of Curiosities (228 Old Hartford Rd.), during regular business hours. Tickets will be available at the door on performance days, subject to availability. Advance ticket purchase is recommended. All ticket sales are final; no refunds or exchanges.

In case of inclement weather, visit the Colchester Community Theatre Facebook page or www.colchestercommunitytheatre.com for updates. CCT is sponsored by Colchester Parks and Recreation.

Upcoming Programs at Cragin

Cragin Memorial Library, 8 Linwood Ave., has announced the following programs. For more information, call 860-537-5752 or visit www.colchesterct.gov/library.

Celebrating Black Inventors: Take and Make Crafts: Mondays in February, stop by the Children’s Department to pick up craft kits that teach kids about Black inventors and their inventions.

Take Your Child to the Library Storytime: Saturday, Feb. 4, 10:30 a.m. Drop in for a special all-ages storytime about race cars.

Take & Make Foodie Fun: Saturday, Feb. 4, for kids and teens. Grab a bag and create a sweet snack.

In-Person: Animal Heart Craft: Wednesday, Feb. 8, 6-7 p.m. Come to the Children’s Department for an animal craft in the shape of a heart.

Movie Night: Thursday, Feb. 9, 5:45 p.m. *Remember the Titans* will be shown. Rated PG, the movie runs two hours. Snacks provided.

Winter Seed Sowing: Saturday, Feb. 11, 10:30-11:30 a.m. Learn to winter sow native flower seeds to create a habitat for monarch butterflies and other pollinators in your own garden. Winter sowing is the process of planting seeds outdoors in a container (milk jug) during the winter months. All materials will be provided. This program is a partnership between the library and the Colchester Garden Club.

In-Person: Valentine Cards: Monday and

Tuesday, Feb. 13 and 14, all day. Drop in to the children’s department and make someone special a Valentine’s Day card.

In-Person: STEAM Challenge: Wednesday, Feb. 15, 6-7 p.m. All ages are invited to the children’s department for a gumdrop STEAM challenge.

Teen Craft: Foam Clay: Thursday, Feb. 16, 3-3:45 p.m., for grades 6-12. Stop by the teen room for a craft.

Starting a Vegetable Garden: Thursday, Feb. 16, 6 p.m.: Wellstone Farm operator, and Master Gardener instructor, Ian Gibson will present. This program is sponsored by the Colchester Garden Club and Friends of Cragin Memorial Library.

Teen Gaming: Tuesday, Feb. 21, 3-4 p.m., for grades 6-12. Try a new game or play with friends on the Nintendo Switch.

Game Night: Thursday, Feb. 23, 6-7:30 p.m. Come by with your family (or a group of friends) to try out board games from the library’s collection. Snacks and games provided.

Cragin Craft Swap: Saturday, Feb. 25, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Bring in unwanted craft supplies to the library Wednesday, Feb. 15, through Thursday, Feb. 23, and then come for a Craft Swap, to pick up some new-to-you supplies.

Cragin Book Club: Monday, Feb. 27, 6 p.m., at the library. Ask at the Adult Circulation Desk for this month’s book. For updates on the program, sign up at tinyurl.com/cmlbookclub.



Spreading Christmas Cheer... For the holidays this year, Brian and Rob Gustafson from Colchester Housing Authority loaded their trucks with Holiday Box Project gifts to be delivered to Colchester seniors, in a long-standing collaboration with Jack Jackter Intermediate School.

Senior Center News & Notes

Colchester Senior Center, 95 Norwich Ave., has announced the following. For full descriptions, call 860-537-3911, email csc@colchesterct.gov, or visit www.colchesterct.gov/senior-center.

Monday, Feb. 6: 9 a.m., Making Memories, Exercise with Anne; 10 a.m., Sittercize, Black History Month; 11 a.m., Learn to Sign; 12:30 p.m., Mahjong; 12:45 p.m., setback; 1 p.m., bingo.

Tuesday, Feb. 7: 9 a.m., Making Memories; 9:45 a.m., Tai Chi; 10:30-11:30 a.m., Healthy Living for a Brain & Body; 12:30 p.m., Pinochle, CHOICES Counseling; 1:30 p.m., Bingo.

Wednesday, Feb. 8: 9 a.m., Making Memories Program, Walking Group meet-up at the Air Line Trail in Amston; 10 a.m., Adult Coloring, Sit & Be Fit; no Across the Ages today; 1 p.m., Creative Life Review Journaling; 2:30 p.m., Senior Center Staff Meeting.

Thursday, Feb. 9: 9 a.m., Exercise with Anne; 10 a.m., Sittercize, Wii Bowling; 10:30

a.m., Shopping Trip; 11 a.m., Yoga; noon, Chair Massage; 12:30 p.m., Dominoes; 1 p.m., Knit & Crochet; 2-2:30 p.m., Cookie Decorating Class.

Friday, Feb. 10: 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m., AARP Tax Aide by appointment only; 9:30 a.m., Painting with Ruth; 10 a.m., Sit & Be Fit; 10:30 a.m., Choral Group; 11 a.m., Yoga; 1:30 p.m., Bingo.

Upcoming Programs: Luv Bug Valentine’s Luncheon: Wednesday, Feb. 15, 11 a.m. There will be musical entertainment by Bill Benson, followed by a lunch featuring braised beef tips with mushroom sauce, mashed potatoes, carrots and peas, brownie sundaes and juice. Cost is \$9/person for members aged 60 and over. Space is limited. Register by Feb. 8.

Block-Printed Apron Workshop: Tuesday, Feb. 28, 10:30 a.m. All are invited to come and design an apron using various textile stamps and fabric paint. Both floral and geometric stamps will be provided. Cost is \$10 includes an adult sized canvas apron, use of stamps and paint. Space is limited. Register by Feb. 17.

Colchester • Colchester

Matt Bishel Bobcat Classic Takes Center Stage

By Josh Howard

Bacon Academy High School will again host the Matt Bishel Bobcat Classic, a multi-school wrestling tournament, this Saturday, Feb. 4.

The annual tournament, which starts at 9 a.m., will have continuous matches throughout the day and include 16-person (double elimination) brackets in each weight class.

Bacon Academy's wrestling head coach Drew DeBowsky organized the event, which is now in its 14th year.

"If anybody wants to come out and watch that day or even learn more about the sport it is a great opportunity to see a lot of good quality wrestling," DeBowsky said of the upcoming tourney, which will feature 14 teams.

When the wrestling tournament started it was originally named the Bobcat Classic before it was renamed the Matt Bishel Bobcat Classic a dozen years ago.

Bishel, a 2007 graduate of Bacon Academy High School, was a four-year wrestler at the school and soccer player at the school. At the time of his passing in 2011, he was just three months away from graduating from Eastern Connecticut State University with a degree in biology.

All admission and any other monetary donations collected will benefit the Matt Bishel Memorial Scholarship Fund, established in 2011,

which helps send student athletes to wrestling camps and seminars along with continued education in the sport of wrestling.

DeBowsky, who also owns The Jewelry Connection in Colchester, said the local community has chipped in to support the cause with donations. Restaurants and other businesses have provided gift cards and other monetary donations.

Food items have also been donated that will be sold at the tournament. Proceeds from concession stand items sold will help support the wrestling team with equipment costs and other essentials.

DeBowsky, a 1983 graduate of Bacon Academy, has been heavily involved with coaching wrestling locally and is in his second year leading the Bobcats.

He inherited the program the season after the COVID cancellation in 2021 and had only two wrestlers signed up. He was forced to rebuild the program on the fly, quickly increasing the number of wrestlers to nearly 20.

"The guys that have come on have learned quickly and been competitive. It's been really good," DeBowsky said. "There have been a few kids that had done youth when they were much younger and I have been able to spark that interest to get them back at the high school level."

Lions Accepting Grant Applications

The Colchester Lions Club is now accepting applications for grant requests from community groups and organizations, in preparation for its annual Community Night of Giving in April.

Organizations should be prepared to demonstrate how the funds would be used to benefit the community. Applications can be found at colchesterlions.org, or may be obtained in writing: Colchester Lions Club, P.O. Box 423, Col-

chester, CT 06415.

Completed applications must be submitted by March 15.

Serving the community since 1949, the Colchester Lions give back all profits raised to groups and organizations in the community, in addition to Lions' causes in the region, state, country and world.

Lions Offering Scholarships

The Colchester Lions invite all Colchester residents in their senior year of high school to apply for one of several scholarships.

Applications are welcome from all graduating students planning to attend any accredited college, university or trade school. It doesn't matter if students attend public, private, charter or magnet high schools, or if they are home-schooled. Applications are available through the Bacon Academy guidance office or at colchesterlions.org.

For more information, contact Elizabeth Bessette at elizabeth.a.bessette@gmail.com. Bacon Academy students should submit their application to the Bacon Academy guidance office. All other students should email their application to elizabeth.a.bessette@gmail.com or mail them to Colchester Lions Club, Attn: Scholarship Committee, P.O. Box 423, Colchester, CT 06415.

Applications must be received by Friday, March 10.

Upcoming Senior Center Trips

The Colchester Senior Center is planning the following trips – and reservations are due in March.

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

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

Gorgeous Glass in Boston: Tuesday, April

18. Spend time at the Mapparium at the Mary Baker Eddy Library. This huge glass globe shows the world's boundaries frozen in time circa 1935. Also have a three-course family style Italian lunch at Maggiano's Little Italy, and then see flowers made of Austrian blown glass during a guided tour of The Glass Flowers exhibit in the Harvard Museum of Natural History. Cost is \$130 per person. Sign up at the senior center by March 17.

Beautiful: The Carole King Musical at the Thomaston Opera House: Sunday, April 30. See a matinee of this musical about the true story of singer-songwriter Carole King's rise to fame. A pre-show lunch will be served at Black Rock Tavern, with a meal choice of chicken marsala, salmon or pork tenderloin. Cost is \$125/person. Sign up at the senior center by March 30.

CYSS News & Notes

Colchester Youth and Social Services has announced the following pieces of news. For more information and full descriptions, call 860-537-7255 or email youthservices@colchesterct.gov. Register for programs online at www.colchesterct.gov/yss.

Guiding Lights: Tuesdays, Feb. 7-March 28, at the Youth Center, 40 Norwich Ave. Seventh-graders meet from 2:15-4:30 p.m., and fifth-graders from 3:15-4:30 p.m. This is a free peer mentoring program that connects fifth-grade students with seventh-grade mentors on a one-to-one basis.

Girls Circle: Tuesdays, Feb. 7-April 4, 3:15-4:30 p.m., for girls in grades 4-5. In this free program, girls will make new friends while using interactive games and guided activities.

Minds Over Matter: Thursdays, Feb. 9-March 30, 2:15-4 p.m., for grades 6-8. This is a free group for middle school students to learn skills to reduce anxiety.

Skate & Play: Tuesday, Feb. 21, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., for grades 6-10. Fee: \$40. Roller-skate (or rollerblade) at Ron-A-Roll and then we'll travel

to Nomad's Adventure Quest for laser tag, arcade, bumper cars, teacups, rock wall climbing and mini golf. Must wear socks and must bring bagged lunch (there is no option for buying food). Drop-off and pick-up are at the Town Hall, 127 Norwich Ave.

Urban Air: Friday, March 10, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., for grades 4-10. Fee: \$42. There will be virtual reality, ninja obstacle courses, laser tag, trampoline and more. Pizza and water included. Complete waiver prior to trip. Drop-off and pick-up are at the Town Hall, 127 Norwich Ave.

Youth Center Drop-In: Mondays and Wednesdays, 2-4 p.m., for grades 6-8. This is a free program offering middle-schoolers a place to go after school. Kids can have a snack, play pool, air hockey, video games, basketball and more. There are also crafts, spaces to relax, and a reading/homework area. You do not need to pre-register to attend; students will receive instructions for online registration at their first visit, and they must be registered online to attend again.

Captaining the Bobcats on the mat this winter are senior Connor Tuttle and junior Carson Brown.

Brown finished as the runner-up in the 152-pound division at the state championships a year ago, helping the team placed ninth overall at the Class S state finals.

DeBowsky said that both of his captains have been great leaders and are fully committed to the program.

"They go to camps and offseason clubs and they have been able to come in and help with getting guys up to speed," added DeBowsky.

One of DeBowsky's goals since taking over the program is to rejuvenate the relationship between the high school team and town's youth wrestling by connecting more with Colchester Youth Wrestling (CYW), non-profit organization that formed in 2000 that aims to introduce the youth in Colchester and surrounding towns to the sport of wrestling by providing a

disciplined and competitive program for kids to learn and develop wrestling skills, self-confidence and the ideals of good sportsmanship.

Bishel started his wrestling career in the CYW before and DeBowsky said the two programs are once again working together in an effort to increase the interest in wrestling locally.

DeBowsky and his Bobcats will be one of a dozen teams from Connecticut that will be competing in the local tournament. Portland High School and Newtown High School (a top-10 team in the state) will also be competing, along with a team from Massachusetts and another from Rhode Island.

Awards will be given to the top-three finishers in each weight class and top-three teams, along with a Most Outstanding Wrestler of the tourney.

The cost to attend the daylong tournament is \$5 for adults and \$3 for students and seniors.

Wrestling Tournament Fundraiser

The Bacon Academy Wrestling 14th annual Matt Bishel Bobcat Classic will take place Saturday, Feb. 4, at the Bacon Academy gym. Wrestling starts at 9:30 a.m., with finals at around 5 p.m.

Cost \$5 for adults and \$3 for students and seniors.

All admissions and 50/50 raffle donations along with monetary donations will go to the Matt Bishel Scholarship Fund, which is used to send student athletes to wrestling camps and seminars along with continued education in the sport of wrestling.

There will also be hot food and drinks sold all day, with proceeds supporting the wrestling team with equipment costs and other essentials.

The community can help by donating to the tournament. Already, organizers have received food donations from several stores and restaurants, along with gift cards and checks from several others.

If interested in donating – make checks out to Bacon Academy Wrestling – or for more information, email coach Drew DeBowsky at jlryconnection@yahoo.com.

Garden Club Winter Sowing Activity

The Colchester Garden Club is offering a Take-and-Make activity on Winter Sowing. This free drop-in workshop will be held Saturday, Feb. 11, between 10:30 and 11:30 a.m. at Cragin Memorial Library, 8 Linwood Ave. There will be a pre-selected choice of seeds available to plant from the Colchester Seed Library.

Winter sowing is a method of starting seeds in a one-gallon plastic water or milk jug which becomes like a miniature greenhouse, then setting outdoors in winter, generally with seeds that require a period of cold stratification taking advantage of natural temperatures. This process is easy to do with the seeds sprouting in early spring to be transplanted into the garden once threat of frost is past. All materials and in-

structions will be provided by members of the Colchester Garden Club. If you have questions, please email colchestergardenclub@yahoo.com and include "CGC-Winter Sowing" in the subject line.

The Colchester Garden Club is a nonprofit organization and member club of the Federated Garden Clubs of Connecticut, New England Garden Club Inc, and National Garden Clubs. The club meets the fourth Monday of the month during winter, spring and autumn at 6 p.m. at Cragin. For information about the club, send an email to colchestergardenclub@yahoo.com or call the membership coordinator at 860-267-4471.



Arts Studio to Open... The Color House, a new creative arts studio and artisan shop, will hold an open house-style grand opening celebration Saturday, Feb. 11, from noon-4 p.m. The studio is located on the back side of the Colchester town green, on the second floor of the Oz'NBones BBQ building. The Color House offers walk-in paint-your-own pottery, classes in pottery/ceramics, canvas painting, private art parties, and more. The studio also features a shop where visitors can purchase handcrafted items from local artisans. For more information, visit www.cohoct.com, follow on social media @thecohoct, or contact studio founder Tina Parsadanov (pictured here) at thecohoct@gmail.com.

Colchester • Colchester

New Pet Shop Offers Lost Customer Experience

By Michael Sinkewicz

A new pet store in Colchester offers a unique combination of merchandise and high-quality service for customers searching for a memorable in-person shopping experience.

Wagging Tails Pet Shop, located at 95 Linwood Ave., opened its doors in December with the ambition of becoming the community's premier pet store.

Owners Katie and Shane Hardy believe their business fills a void in town, especially after Pet Valu, which previously occupied the site, closed down.

Katie managed that store for around five years before being "blindsided" by a company-wide conference call disclosing the shutdown.

Overall, Katie is the animal expert of the business. She's been submerged in the industry for 15 years, beginning in Florida.

"I remember going into a pet store down in Florida that had pretty much the same layout," she said. "It was small, it was personable, it had all the cute things that everybody was looking for — that was my dream way back then."

After moving back to Connecticut, Katie managed a boarding facility and became a certified groomer, which she did professionally for five years. Her extensive background also includes time managing a veterinarian hospital.

Shane explained how that background, along with consistent family support, motivated them to pursue their own store.

"Without a doubt, this doesn't happen without family," he said. "I think it was a dream of ours to own our business one day. It was something that we talked about for years and I think when Pet Valu shut down, it was a culmination of things that she's done in her life to be like, 'why not?'"

He added that since the community supported Pet Valu, the broad customer base would likely return to new ownership, as well.

"We just kind of made the push to start this because this is true happiness," Katie said.

Still, like any new business, there were hiccups along the way. Supplies, like shelves, were delayed and other products were out of stock.

"We've had a couple bugs along the way for sure, but we've definitely worked them all out," Katie said.

Most importantly, the community backing has helped secure a fruitful and successful launch. Perhaps, she speculated, people recognize her from the previous store, which creates a sense of familiarity and comfort.

"People come back from Pet Valu that see us here and see that it's me and the staff that I brought on with me that are from Pet Valu," she said. "We're super excited to be here and to

have that following again."

Katie said that over the past several weeks, the community support has been "unreal."

A Unique Experience

While Wagging Tails is operating in the same space as the prior pet shop, it offers a customer experience that the owners believe is rare.

The store features all of the services needed for your pets, but it doesn't sell animals. Katie classified their shop as "pet specialty."

Included in the store's extensive inventory are dog foods, cat foods, leashes, collars — "basically all the accessories that folks are looking for," Katie explained.

She stated that there's live crickets and bugs for people looking to take care of their reptile feeding needs. (Katie expressed that Colchester has a large reptile community.)

Perhaps the most exciting feature of the shop is a self-service dog wash, which Katie described as a "huge" attraction for them.

"As a groomer, I can finally offer what at Pet Valu I couldn't," she said. "I can offer nail-trimming and ear-cleaning. Clients don't necessarily need to go a grooming facility; they can come here and bathe."

Shane said he considers the store more of a "boutique pet shop."

"Katie does a really good job at focusing on really high quality," he said. "She thoroughly vets stuff before it ever gets in here. That's different than some of the large chains."

Katie agreed that she's fairly selective with what she keeps in the store. There are some foods, she said, that are commonly found in Walmart or Target that are mass produced. Typically, she tries to find items that are "more supportive of independent retailers and have a good nutritional value."

Beyond an impressive line of products, Katie humbly acknowledged that she is a valuable asset for pet owners in the community. While her resume is quite imposing, she's still trying to soak up more material that will not only benefit herself, but her customers.

"I feel like I have a lot to offer and I'm constantly trying to re-invent myself and educate myself," she said. "A lot of the companies that we have here offer educational training with all of their products. Continuously educating myself to inform customers when they come in is huge for me."

That level of expertise and commitment is on full display for anyone who visits the shop.

Shane expressed that every customer that walks through the door will be a personal experience.

"We are priding ourselves on giving the best possible customer support," he said. "Every



Katie and Shane Hardy have opened up a new business in town, Wagging Tails Pet Shop.

time you come in this store, you're going to get a greeting and every time you leave, you're going to get a 'thank you.' That's really critical and hopefully that's a differentiating factor."

For new store owners, this was really the only way to approach business. Interacting with community members and forming relationships can help get a local shop into the fabric of a community.

"You want someone when you walk through the door that knows your pet's name," Katie said. "Trying to troubleshoot with customers and get one on one with them and talk about different options — that's what I enjoy, the relationship you build between customers."

However, for some shoppers, personal interactions are rare. Many prefer browsing online through large chains, who often offer cheap prices. Sometimes, Katie argued, that approach sacrifices quality for convenience.

Wagging Tales is active in the local community, including the Colchester dog park. The owners recognize that it's a "challenging time" for independent retailers, and there's an emphasis on local institutions supporting each other when possible.

Shane conveyed that moving forward, there might be a transition back to in-person shopping, as people continue to reward local businesses for their extra efforts.

"I'd like to think that you will see some type of shift going to more in-person," he said. "I think

there's still a handful of people and a market-place for individuals that want to come and shop at a store."

The long-term goal is to expand their store. Shane explained that their shop is taking up about half of the old store's square footage, so if another business doesn't move in, that space may be available in the future. If not, perhaps they'd explore adding additional stories in the neighboring towns.

For now, they're hoping for a successful inaugural year. Besides the wall that cut the original space in half, Katie and Shane, along with their families, helped construct and design the shop.

Katie expressed that she was running through Facebook marketplaces, hunting down leads and securing all the specific items she wanted. Overall, the vision was executed.

"The layout of the store definitely turned out the way I wanted it to be," she said.

Both Katie and Shane emphasized that family was an enduring theme throughout the shop. Shane's uncle passed away just weeks before the grand opening, but he, too, had a vision for the store.

"Right after Pet Valu closed, he called me one day so excited and was like 'I had a dream that you opened up a pet store and it was amazing and it was in the old location,'" Katie said.

At the front of the store, there is a "treat of the month" section in his memory.

Incoming Kindergarten Story Time

Colchester Elementary School will host Incoming Kindergarten Story Time sessions in March, April and May, for 4-and 5-year-old Colchester children who will be entering kindergarten during the 2023-24 school year.

During each of the three sessions, children will listen to books read by kindergarten teachers, while parents learn about the registration process, the kindergarten curriculum, readiness expectations, the school day, school policies

and transportation. A question-and-answer period will be available at each session.

Sessions will be Tuesdays, March 14, April 4 and May 9, from 11:10-11:40 a.m., in the media center at CES, 315 Halls Hill Rd. Parents and children are invited to attend multiple story times. Topics for parent information change each month. No pre-registration is required.

Lions' Breakfast Buffet

The Colchester Lions Breakfast Buffet will return to the St. Joseph's Polish Society on Sunday, Feb. 26, from 7:30-11 a.m. This is a full breakfast with eggs, bacon, sausage, toast, home fries and pancakes, with juice, coffee, tea or water.

Pre-sale prices are \$8 for adults, \$6 for seniors, \$5 for children age 5-12, and free for kids 4 and under. At the door, prices are \$9 for adults, \$7 for seniors, \$6 for children age 5-12, and free for kids 4 and under.

Tickets may be purchased in advance at Dime Bank, 139 S. Main St., or by calling 860-537-1093 and leaving a message for Julie.



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Board Set to Award Senior Center Contract

By Michael Sinkewicz

Following weeks of uncertainly and legal challenges, Colchester is moving ahead with the construction of a new senior center.

Yesterday, after press time, the Board of Selectmen was expected to award a contract to BRD Builders LLC in the amount of \$8.6 million.

Initially, the deadline to formally enter into a building contract was Jan. 11, but BRD Builders agreed to extend the window, allowing negotiations to move forward. First Selectman Andreas Bisbikos was expected to sign the contract following the meeting, most likely on Friday or early next week.

Last month, the selectmen awarded the bid to BRD Builders, allowing the attorneys for both sides to finalize the details of a construction contract.

Securing a contract ensures that the project will move forward, which was uncertain over the past several weeks.

The most significant hurdle involved litigation introduced by Republican Town Committee Chairman Taras Rudko and selectman Jason LaChapelle, who sought an injunction that would've prevented the town from awarding the contract.

New London Superior Court Judge Karen Goodrow denied the injunction request while also lifting an emergency injunction previously granted by the court.

During that hearing, Goodrow stated that she agreed with assessments that the total project budget was currently estimated to be between \$10.2-10.8 million. The construction contract accounts for the majority of the project's budget.

At the 2021 referendum seeking community approval for the project, residents signed off on \$9.5 million for the building of a new senior center. Now, as the project is set to move ahead, the town will likely consider additional funding avenues to prevent additional lawsuits in the future.

This week, Senior Center Building Committee Chairman Tony Tarnowski told the *Rivereast* that he worked with representatives from BRD Builders along with attorneys for both sides to iron out the final contract details.

"We went through the contract and agreed on what's best for both parties," he said, describing the proceedings as "typical."

As many residents and senior citizens voiced their concerns with the fate of the project, Tarnowski offered a reassuring message that additional hold-ups were unlikely.

"We're in a good place now and the project is moving forward," he said.

One aspect that can now begin is value engineering. While working with the builder, some items can potentially be substituted to save costs without impacting the overall design of the building.

That process is standard industry practice, Tarnowski explained, and often begins after a contract has been signed. Both sides can offer ideas and then determine what is actually workable once construction begins.

Tarnowski stated that while those discussions will officially take place in the near future, he has already talked to BRD Builders about potential value engineering, to ensure that both sides are prepared.

Still, the prospect of requiring additional funding is entirely possible, he said. Inflation costs in the construction industry have raised budgets for municipalities across the state, and at some point, the town may need to explore its options.

"You have to trust the process," Tarnowski said. "If we think we're going to be short, that's up to the selectmen and if it's another referendum, then so be it."

He expressed that the town is not going to put up half a building or walk away from the project at any point. As long as the selectmen continue to work with the building committee, the town can stay abreast of any funding concerns.

Selectman Rosemary Coyle told the *Rivereast* that she'll trust Tarnowski's judgment and support the contract agreement.

She agreed that a top priority for the board moving forward is to determine how much additional funding is necessary and hopes the building committee will ultimately provide those figures in the weeks ahead.

"I believe in finding solutions," she said, adding that the town should consider any option to secure more funding, whether it's from the town's reserve accounts or the Bendas Estate fund, which was donated to the town.

To avoid any more controversy, she said, it's likely smart to go out to referendum again and ask residents to sign-off on spending more money.

"I worked on this for so many years," she said. "I believe people want this and it's a real plus for the community."

Tarnowski stated that construction will likely begin in late March or early April. Last year, a groundbreaking ceremony was pushed back, but one will "definitely happen" this year.

"We already have a program in place and we just have to pick a date," he said. "I have six shovels in my basement painted gold."

Several notable guests were scheduled to at-

tend the ceremony and the hope is that many will be able to make the new date as well. Governor Ned Lamont, Lieutenant Governor Susan Bysiewicz and Congressman Joe Courtney will be invited.

Social Media Controversy?

Earlier this week, First Selectman Andreas Bisbikos posted a link to the construction contract on Facebook. He also thanked several individuals involved with the contract negotiations including Mike Clifford of BRD Builders, Bob O'Brien of Shipman Goodwin and Peter Strniste, who represented BRD Builders.

Notably, Tarnowski's name was omitted. Bisbikos later edited the post and included Tarnowski.

Some officials, including Coyle, took to Facebook to call out the oversight.

Coyle told the *Rivereast* that for her, "it's always about the facts, not politics."

"It wasn't right," she added. "I know the hours Tony put into this project and he deserves credit. He worked with the builder to resolve issues."

In an emailed response, Bisbikos explained how the mix-up occurred. He stated that he frequently uses social media to distribute information, and a simple error took place.

Bisbikos wrote that he copied-and-pasted a portion of Tarnowski's email message to himself, where Tarnowski was speaking in first person.

"Once I pasted it, some people felt that 'I was speaking in the first person' and taking credit from Tony's hard work (rather than sharing Tony's email)."

He continued by stating that "Tony's message was great news and I was excited to share it. However, where I went wrong, was in my haste to get this good news out, I copy and pasted it, and didn't clarify that it was 'Tony who was speaking in the first person and making those quotes.'"

Bisbikos called it an "honest mistake," which was corrected.

"It's sad that this was politicized and draws attention away from the person who truly deserves it," he continued. "Tony deserves ALL of the credit for his hard work and negotiations. The town of Colchester is very lucky to have someone with his expertise willing to donate his time and energy for our good."

Tarnowski said Bisbikos called him to straighten out any confusion.

"To me, I'm not looking for glory," he said. "It sounded like an honest mistake to me."

Ladies Guild Offering Trip

The St. Andrew Ladies Guild is offering a travel opportunity in May. From May 10-12, people can head to Lancaster, Pa., for a variety of activities.

Travelers will see two shows: *Moses* at the Sight & Sound Theatre, and *Footloose* at the Dutch Apple Dinner Theatre. There will also be a trip to Hershey, Pa., for a guided Hershey Town Tour. The last stop before heading home is a visit to the Wind Creek Bethlehem Casino for lunch on your own.

Cost is \$615/person double and \$745/person single, and includes transportation, two

shows, two nights' hotel, two breakfasts, two dinners, sightseeing and admissions as per itinerary, and a tour guide and driver gratuity.

Deposits are being accepted. Deposit is \$150 and the check is made to Friendship Tours. Send deposits to Guardian Angels Parish, 128 Norwich Ave., Colchester, CT 06415. Trip protection coverage is strongly recommended at the time of deposit.

For more information and reservations, contact Barbara Gozzo at 860-537-0179 or barbogozzo@gmail.com.

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Bacon Basketball Bounces Rocky Hill

By Josh Howard

For the first 16 minutes against Rocky Hill, Bacon Academy girls' basketball didn't look like themselves.

The Bobcats, who entered the contest 13-0, trailed by as many as a dozen points in the second quarter and were down 28-19 at the break before rallying in the second half to win 51-45 at Rocky Hill High School, earning their 14th win in as many games.

The tale of two halves came on the second night of back-to-back games for the Bobcats who had defeated Amistad at Bacon Academy High School the previous night.

Whether it was fatigue or lack of execution, Bacon had trouble finding their footing on the road. The home Terriers made the extra pass, assisting on nearly every bucket and running a press defense in the first half that frustrated the Bobcats, causing multiple turnovers.

Head coach Kevin Fennell said the team used the halftime break to regroup.

"I think they got a little more focused and they started sharing the ball more," added Fennell. "We missed a few shots [in the first half] that we may have made in other games."

The tide began to turn on the first possession of the third quarter when junior Cara Shea canned a triple from the top of the arc, prompting a 15-2 scoring spurt for the Bobcats.

Five different Bacon players scored during the third quarter scoring run, which put the Bobcats up 34-30 with 3:03 to play in the third.

"When we share the ball we get better looks and the shots start falling," stated Fennell. "Getting higher percentage shots has been important for us all season."

Fennell was pleased with the offense, yet he said it was the other end of the court that allowed them to chip away at the deficit and eventually take a lead they would not surrender.

"We challenged them a little defensively and I think [our players] responded to it," added Fennell, whose team increased the tempo in the second half, leading to several transition buckets.

Sophomore Katelyn Novak led the defensive charge, registering six steals and blocking five shots.

Novak added nine points, eight rebounds, and four assists in the win.

"Katelyn has been willing to do whatever is asked of her. Whether it is a timely three or a rebound or a block shot or coming up with a steal; she is just an all-around basketball player," Fennell said of the multifaceted Novak. "She applied herself in a lot of ways tonight and was a huge part of that comeback."

After being held to two points in the first quarter, senior captain Marissa Nudd heated up over the final three quarters to score a team-high 17 points.

Nudd, a Southern Connecticut State University-commit, also grabbed eight rebounds and sealed the game with a pair of free throws to put the Bobcats up 51-43 with under a minute to play in regulation.

It was also the next generation of Bobcats that made a big impact in the second half.

Clinging to a one-point lead late in the third quarter, freshman Alannah Baehr pulled up and sank a 3-pointer to end the quarter and give the Bobcats a 39-35 lead heading into the final eight minutes.

Baehr finished with nine points, seven coming in the second half.

"It's been fun to watch Alannah's progression," stated Fennell. "She has been paying attention to the decisions she makes in different spots and she has been recognizing what works and what doesn't. She certainly has a high level of potential."

Rocky Hill made a final push in the fourth, going on a 7-0 scoring run behind a pair of layups from freshman Katie Harding, who scored a game-high 21 points and grabbed eight rebounds.

But it was too little, too late as Nudd grabbed an offensive rebound and was fouled before making the game-clinching free throws.

Prior to the contest, the Terriers had won six of their previous seven games and head coach



Bacon Academy junior Cara Shea directs the offense as Rocky Hill's Katie Harding plays defense. The Bobcats would rally to beat the Terriers 51-45 at Rocky Hill High School on Jan. 24

James McKinnon said the team's first half performance was one of the best halves of basketball they had played all year.

However, they were unable to maintain their same defensive pressure and offensive fireworks in the second half.

"Their pressure and height got to us," McKinnon said of Bacon's turnaround. "They got a lot more deflections in the second half and they out-rebounded us in the second half. They are 14-0 for a reason."

During the first 14 games, the Bobcats outscored their opponents by an average of 23

points per game.

It's been a terrific start for Fennell, who was previously an assistant coach with the program and was the head coach of the boys' basketball program at the school from 2008-2013.

Following the win over Rocky Hill, Fennell and the team suffered their first setback, losing consecutive games to Ledyard and East Lyme to bring their overall record to 14-2.

They will now start a three-game home stand on Monday, Feb. 6, when they welcome Norwich Free Academy to Bacon for a 6 p.m. tip.

Historical Society Calendars Available

The Colchester Historical Society's 2023 Calendars are here! The theme this year is Sports in Colchester, and the calendars feature images of sports teams and games in Colchester from 1931 to 1973.

The limited-edition 2023 Colchester Historical Society calendar sells for only \$12. This year, for \$20, the historical society will include a copy of *Historical Landmarks: A Historical Tour of Colchester*. For an additional \$20, you can also add the illustrated history of Colchester, *Images of America: Colchester*.

Calendars can be purchased at the Colchester History Museum on Sundays through Jan.

29 (or sold out), from noon-2 p.m.; look for the "Calendars for Sale Today" sign in front of the museum. Calendars can also be purchased at Nathan Liverant and Son Antiques at 168 South Main St.; hours are Monday-Saturday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

The calendars and books can also be mailed for an additional shipping fee; contact the society at mail@colchesterhistory.org or call 860 537-4230. Calendars and books can also be purchased at www.colchesterhistory.org/get-involved/shop-1.

Calendar sales provide funds to support the historical society.

Abundant Life Church News & Notes

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

Sunday Services: Sunday School is at 9:30 a.m. and the main service is at 10:30 a.m. There is also Children's Church available for ages 4-11. All are welcome. The main service is also

broadcast live each week on Facebook. Visit www.facebook.com/groups/abundantlifeCT or look for the church on Facebook. For more information, call the church.

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

Westchester Church News

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

Sunday School meets during the worship service.

Meetings: The church hosts several groups meeting weekly: Al-Anon, Wednesdays at 7 p.m.; AA, Fridays at 7:30 p.m.; Scout BSA

Troop 109, Tuesdays at 7 p.m.; and Cub Scout Pack 109, one Thursday per month at 6 p.m.

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

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

Parks and Rec News

Colchester Parks and Recreation, located at 127 Norwich Ave. (Town Hall), has announced the following items of interest. For more information or full descriptions, call 860-537-7297 or visit www.colchesterct.gov/recreation-department.

Programs: Card-Making Class: The third Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m., at Town Hall. Upcoming dates: 2/15, 3/15, 4/19. Cost: \$15 per class, per person (\$20 for nonresidents). A minimum of two people is needed for this class.

Senior Yoga: Mondays through Feb. 27, 4:45-5:45 p.m., on Facebook Live, for ages 45 and up. Cost: \$35/residents, \$40/non-residents.

Gentle Yoga: See the Parks and Rec. website for dates and times. Cost: \$40/resident, \$45/non-resident.

Events: Spring Clean-Up: Saturday, April 22, at 8 a.m., on the Town Green; rain date: April 29. Jobs include spreading mulch, raking, weeding, picking up garbage, and more. Locations include the schools, town buildings and parks. Meet up afterward at Mel's Downtown Ice Cream for a free ice cream as a 'thank you.'

Food Festival on the Town Green: Saturday, May 6; rain date is May 7. There will be vendors, games and food. Watch www.facebook.com/FOODIEAFF for more information.

Town Clerk Earns Certification

Colchester Town Clerk Gayle Furman has earned the designation of Certified Municipal Clerk, which is awarded by the International Institute of Municipal Clerks (IIMC), Inc.

IIMC grants the Certified Municipal Clerk designation only to those municipal clerks who complete select education requirements; and who have a record of significant contributions to their local government, their community and state.

The International Institute of Municipal Clerks, founded in 1947, has 14,000 members throughout the United States, Canada and 15 other countries, and the mission of this global nonprofit corporation is to enhance the education opportunities and professional development of its membership.

Youth Lacrosse Registration

Colchester Youth Lacrosse has announced registration is open for boys and girls in grades K-8 to join lacrosse teams. Players from all towns are welcome, and can register at Colchesterlax.org.

Project Graduation Fundraiser

For the entire month of February, when you purchase a reusable Community Bag at the Big Y located at 7 East Hampton Rd., Marlborough, \$1 will be donated to Bacon Academy Project Graduation.

The goal is to sell 200 bags.

The mission of Bacon Academy Project Graduation is to provide drug- and alcohol-free events for all graduating seniors of Bacon Academy. Direct donations are always welcome.

For more information, visit baconacademy-projectgrad.org or look for "Bacon Academy Project Graduation" on Facebook.

Vendors Wanted

The Colchester Dog Park Committee is looking for vendors that sell-dog related items for its ninth annual "Spring Bark for the Park."

The event will be held on the Town Green on Sunday, May 21, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m., and will feature May Baskets, a blessing of the dogs, and other canine entertainment. Vendor slots are available at \$40 per booth. No charge for nonprofit organizations.

Contact tagnobark@gmail.com for more information. The event is sponsored by the Colchester Parks and Recreation Department.

CLT Pancake Breakfast

Colchester Land Trust (CLT) will hold a Pancake Breakfast and Timber Framing Overview Sunday, Feb. 12, 10 a.m., at 23 Lee Court. All are invited.

Park in a cul-de-sac and walk down a driveway. Meet inside the barn. All are invited to this pancake breakfast in a traditional timber frame barn on the property of board members Russ and Natalie Moore. Kids welcome.

The breakfast is free for CLT members, and \$5 for non-members. Space is limited to 30 people; RSVP to Natalie at natsamoore@gmail.com by Feb. 5. The barn is unheated, so folks should dress for the weather. Warm drinks will be served.

Residents Participate in Symposium

Two Colchester residents were among the Lasell University students who presented original research, participated in panel discussions, and shared creative works at the annual Career Readiness Symposium.

Haylee Skoog presented their senior graphic design portfolio and shared the process and ideas behind their creations. The presentation incorporated the NACE competencies of professionalism and career & self-development.

Liah Brown presented the fall/winter issue of *Polished Magazine*, "The Digital Age." The award-winning, student-run magazine covers Boston's fashion and cultural scene. Brown is the magazine's co-managing editor.

President's List

Madeline Sullivan of Colchester made the fall 2022 President's List at James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Va.

Sullivan is majoring in communication sciences and disorders.

Polish Dinner-Dance Feb. 19

The St. Joseph's Polish Society at 395 South Main St. will host a Polish dinner-polka dance Sunday, Feb. 19. Dinner will be served from 1-2 p.m., and Dennis Polisky and The Maestro's Men will perform from 2-6 p.m.

The Polish dinner includes pierogies, golumpki, kielbasa, kapusta, rye bread, and butter. Tickets are \$25 per person, and must be purchased in advance.

For more information, call 860-537-2550.

Dean's List

Aidan McLoughlin of Colchester made the fall 2022 Dean's List at Worcester Polytechnic Institute in Worcester, Mass.

McLoughlin, a member of the Class of 2026, is majoring in mechanical engineering.

Ahavath Achim News

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

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

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

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



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Dean's List

Loudon Chupas of Colchester made the fall 2022 Dean's List at American International College in Springfield, Mass. Chupas is majoring in criminal justice.

Dean's List

Colchester residents Luke Jenkins, Heather Marvin and Bridget McIntyre made the fall 2022 Dean's List at the University of New England in Maine.

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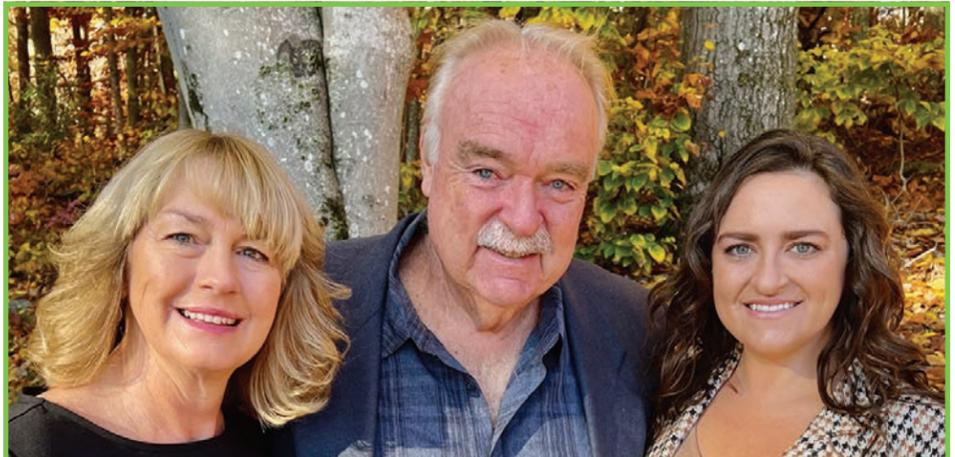
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Super Bowl Sunday Chili Fundraiser

Christ Episcopal Church, Middle Haddam, is holding a Super Bowl Sunday Chili Fundraiser on Feb. 12. One pint of chili, a serving of corn bread, and a cookie are available for \$10.

Orders must be placed by calling Susie Karl at 860-873-1136. Pick-up will take place at the Parish Hall from noon-2 p.m. All profits will be donated to the East Hampton Food Bank.

Bethlehem Lutheran Church News

Bethlehem Evangelical Lutheran Church holds live in-person services Sundays at 10:45 a.m. All are welcome. Enter via the front door and ushers will assist you. The church is located at 1 East High St.

There is also a livestream link at the church's Facebook page, www.facebook.com/BethlehemEH.

Haddam Neck Covenant Church News

Haddam Neck Covenant Church, located at 17 Haddam Neck Rd. in East Hampton, invites all to 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.

Kids Church: Music and hands-on interactive activities are offered for kids in the Fellowship Hall during the worship service. All are welcome.

Bible Study: Adult Bible Study is held each Sunday at 10:30 a.m. in the Chapel. The study traces God's covenant with his people.

Zoom Bible Study: Thursdays from 7 to 8 p.m. The study looks at various ways to approach Bible reading to enhance the ability to hear what God says.

Office Info: The office can be reached at 860-267-2336; hours are Monday-Friday, 12:30-4:30 p.m. The church website is at www.hncovenantchurch.org.

Dean's List

Adeline Fede of East Hampton made the fall 2022 Dean's List at Worcester Polytechnic Institute in Worcester, Mass.

Fede is majoring in biomedical engineering, and is a member of the Class of 2025.

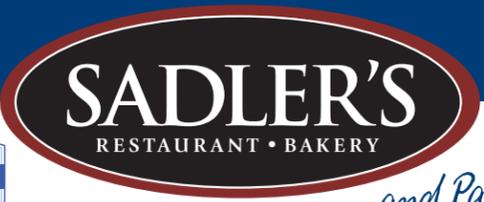
Police News

1/18: Kyle Theobald, 24, of 33 Forest St., was issued a summons for misuse of registration plate and using a handheld mobile device while operating a motor vehicle, East Hampton Police said.

1/26: Joseph Purcell, 53, of 17 Quiet Woods Rd., was issued a summons for operating a motor vehicle while under suspension, improper use of a marker plate and operating an unregistered and uninsured motor vehicle, police said.

Also, from Jan. 23-29, officers responded to nine medical calls, three motor vehicle crashes and four alarms, and made 31 traffic stops, police said.

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Carl Guild, Local Realtor Donating Commission

By Jack Lakowsky

Attention area homebuyers! Want to find your dream home and help a worthy cause – any cause you want?

Carl Guild & Associates realtor Chad Ghere is helping customers do just that. He's currently donating 10% of each commission to a customer's preferred organization or type of organization – whether local first responders (Ghere's personal choice), schools, libraries, animal shelters or grassroots charities, Ghere told the *Rivereast* he just wants the funds going to a good cause.

Ghere and his family moved to East Hampton in 2020, having previously worked in major cities like Seattle and Chicago. Ghere said he and his family have always been tight-knit, the frequent moves making it hard to find lasting friendships. When the family got to East Hampton however, small-town hospitality got him thinking; hey, this place is fantastic.

He said the town's warm welcome – which included neighbors introducing themselves, and he, his wife and his kids quickly making close friends – inspired him to want to give back.

By simply listening and paying attention to people Ghere learned of the great needs of local nonprofits and community centers. He began

thinking about ways he could help.

Ghere took an unconventional route to do so, applying his 20 years of professional experience as a realtor, leveraging his expertise to potentially net impactful funds.

According to Zillow the average home price in Belltown is more than \$340,000, meaning individual donations could reach as much as a whole day of selling brownies or washing cars.

"As clientele builds, donations will go up," he said. "It's up to the client where the money goes, whether they're buying or selling, whether they're keeping it in East Hampton or heading to Colchester or Cromwell."

Ghere said he hasn't quite thought of a specific goal and is more focused on needs. Noting if he had the choice he'd donate to local first responders, he said donations could be as specific as using the money to buy food for the local police K-9, or can be as general as donating to local police or fire departments.

"You can't name them all, there are so many options," he said. "The more I talk to organizations the harder it gets to pine one down."

Ghere said he's never done anything quite like this before, and that he was actually surprised at the enthusiastic reaction. When local schools superintendent Paul Smith heard about Ghere's effort, he contacted the *Rivereast* to help get the word out.

Depending on how this round goes, Ghere said, he may well up the percentage, donating 15% or 20% of his commission, potentially thousands given to worthy causes.

A detailed planner, Ghere also has an idea to somehow sum up at the end of a calendar year exactly how much was raised, and get that info back to customers, because who doesn't feel good doing good?

Ghere hopes his selflessness might inspire others, whether hometown realtors or international moguls.

"Imagine all that could happen" if people with the means to do so gave just a little more, he said.

"Every dollar helps."

Ghere joined Carl Guild, a prominent local real estate firm with offices in East Hampton, Colchester and Glastonbury, because it too focuses on lending a helping hand.

Take, for example, the scholarship Carl Guild gives to local students every year.

Under the Carl Guild & Associates Scholarship program, \$1,000 scholarship will be awarded to one student who is a resident from each of the following towns: Colchester, East Haddam, East Hampton, Portland, Glastonbury and one student from the RHAM district planning on going to either community college or a four-year program.

Applicants need a record of volunteerism in non-school activities and/or participation in extracurricular activities, a copy of an unofficial transcript, and deadline is April 1. Don't be late!

The applications will be reviewed, and recipients selected by the Carl Guild & Associates Scholarship Committee. The recipient will be notified no later than April 30 and agree to a press release in a local publication.

In addition to his work with Carl Guild, Ghere's looking to purchase investment properties for his own portfolio, any condition or situation, whether foreclosure, short sale or property liquidation.

Application packages can be emailed to carlguild@gmail.com or mailed to: Carl Guild & Associates, P.O. Box 188, East Hampton CT 06424.



Carl Guild & Associates realtor Chad Ghere, who lives in East Hampton with his family, moving to town in the summer of 2020, hopes to start a trend by donating to a customer's choice of a charitable or town organization, schools, libraries, etc. Ghere said East Hampton has been so welcoming, he was compelled to give something back.

Coat, Hats and Outerwear Drive

The East Hampton Lions Club will hold an outerwear drive for residents of East Hampton. Collection will be Monday, Feb. 6, through Wednesday, Feb. 15.

Drop off clean, gently used coats, hats, scarves, gloves and sweaters (no boots, please) at St. Patrick Parish Center at 47 W. High St. Hours are 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Monday through Friday. Items will also be collected at Paul's & Sandy's Too, 93 E. High St., and in the foyer of Memorial School, 20 Smith St.

Anyone in need may stop in the parish center on Thursday, Feb. 16, from 6-7:30 p.m., and, if donations last, on Friday, Feb. 17, from 6-7:30 p.m.

For more information, contact Lion Mary at 860-977-5760 or gov.mary23C@aol.com.



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W I N E	 Woodbridge Wines \$11⁹⁹ (1.5 L)	Cavit Wines \$11⁰⁹ (1.5 L)	Rex Goliath Wines \$9⁹⁹ (1.5 L)
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Council Looks to Expand Tax Relief

By Jack Lakowsky

Last week, the East Hampton Town Council started talks on how best to give tax relief to local residents, especially spouses of first responders who die in the line of duty, discussing several options.

According to info from Town Manager Dave Cox, the town is designing language to implement nearly all state-allowed programs and breaks, and to see whether it's most beneficial to offer "flat" benefits, or ones best on factors like income percentages.

The town has a wide range of options, from total tax abatement to none.

The council will now hash out the details of the ordinance before it heads to public hearing for a vote.

In essence, the town is looking to work in optional tax breaks it doesn't currently use, along with aligning optional tax relief language with the state's, expanding breaks to people with disabilities and families of first responders killed on duty.

Receptive to the idea, the council's main suggestion was expanding qualifying income levels for spouses of deceased first responders, which for a married couple would be about \$137,000.

"A hardship is a hardship," said councilor Brandon Goff.

For disabled people the proposed ordinance includes thousands in relief, and it's also got relief for low-income people, including forgiveness of late taxes and associated interest.

Cox also included language for "nondisabled veterans without wartime service", who can get an exemption from property tax at either \$5,000 or 5% of the assessed value of the veteran's main residence, given their income qualifies.

The exemption is also for spouses and parents of military members killed in action. Cox said while the council has good leeway in other parts of the ordinance, this is one it can't expand much.

Family of military killed in the line of duty are entitled to up to \$20,000 in relief, or up to 10% of the property's assessed value.

Discussion largely focused on how best to give widows and widowers of first responders a break.

The council, after initial suggestion by councilor Alison Walck, asked that Cox expand the relief option to not just East Hampton first responders, but first responders, whether volunteer or paid, that work anywhere – whether Belltown or Hartford – and live locally.

Councilman Eric Peterson said luckily (and hopefully) these types of incidents are rare, so

a broadly inclusive ordinance won't be a detriment to the town's income, suggesting a heftier tax break of 50%. One town Cox researched gave qualified people 100% relief.

"If the family needs help, let's give it to them," said council chair Mark Philhower.

To qualify, the person must have died performing their duties, not, for example, on the way to work, a risk nearly every worker assumes.

Belltown Library Needs Bigger Digs

East Hampton Public Library Director Tim Kellogg briefed the council on the library's ongoing strategic development, a plan begun in 2020 under former director Ellen Paul, and set to conclude this year.

Since starting the plan, the library has modernized its facility, brought in new furniture and programing. Library activity has grown massively in the last few years, with a nearly 300% increase in summer reading participation last summer, Kellogg reported, as well as increased borrowing.

Now, the library has to look to the hard job of expansion. Inside renovations were successful, but more work is needed to meet the town's needs and proven not to meet those ever-grow-

ing needs.

"While designs plans sought to remedy the library's growing need with changes in furniture [and other equipment], the proved to inadequately address the growth of the library's service population, program attendance, demand for meeting spaces and lack of adequate space in general.

Kellogg said the building has not had any significant changes since 1986, since which time the town's population has grown greatly.

Kellogg pointed out the public library in Cromwell, a town less than 10% bigger than East Hampton, is 54% larger than Belltown's.

Participation at East Hampton Public Library rivals that of libraries in far larger towns like Glastonbury and Middletown, according to Kellogg.

In a letter to the council Kellogg named several potential steps forward, including expanding all of its services, possibly accomplished by a "long-term capital expansion project over the next several years," whether renovation or relocation. This which could include growing into the senior center space, which would then need to move.

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.

Children's Programs: Storytimes: Toddler Time: Wednesdays at 10:15 a.m. for children ages 18 months to 3 years, Stories & Songs: Wednesdays at 11:15 a.m. for ages 3-5 years, Mindful Movements: Mondays at 10:30 a.m. Held in the library community room. For ages 18 months and up; siblings welcome, Baby Rhyme Time: Thursdays at 10:15 a.m. For children ages 0-18 months and their caregivers. Held in the library community room.

Valentines for Seniors: Stop by the children's room any day through Feb. 11 and use the supplies provided to design a Valentine's Day card for a local senior citizen.

Take Your Child to the Library Day: Saturday, Feb. 4, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. There will be mini-golf and crafts from 11 a.m.-4 p.m., and face-painting will be offered from 1-4 p.m. No registration required.

DIY Days – Slap Bracelets: Saturday, Feb. 11, 11 a.m.-4 p.m., for children and families in grades K-8. No registration required; just drop in. Available while supplies last.

Nintendo Switch Tournament: Saturday, Feb. 18, 2-3:30 p.m., for grades 1-5. All skill levels are welcome. Registration required.

Teen Programs: Teen Dungeons & Dragons: Wednesday, Feb. 15, 5:30-7:30 p.m., for grades 8-12. No previous playing experience is required. The library will provide basic fifth edition, level four characters and all the supplies needed to play.

Teen Friday: Friday, Feb. 17, 3:30-4:30 p.m., for grades 6-12. Kick off the weekend with a variety of games, activities and crafts.

Adult Programs: Cookbook Club – Casseroles!: Tuesday, Feb. 7, 6:30 p.m. Bring in a dish of your favorite casserole, or try something new. The library will provide plates and utensils; all you need is your casserole and 10 copies of the recipe to share. The Cookbook Club meets the first Tuesday of every month.

Violin & Valentines: An Evening of Music with Brunilda Myftaraj: Tuesday, Feb. 14, 6 p.m. Catch a performance by acclaimed violinist Brunilda Myftaraj. Light refreshments to follow.

Belltown Book Blast: Thursday, Feb. 16, 6:30 p.m. on Zoom, or Friday, Feb. 17, 10 a.m. in person. Meet with the adult librarian Keri and get a sneak peek at the library's newest titles, upcoming new releases, and chat about what everyone has been reading. For the in-person gathering, just drop in and enjoy a cup of coffee or tea. For Zoom, register online to get the link.

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 at the center Monday through Friday, to ages 60 and up. Call the center to reserve a meal or sign up online. Reservations for the next day's meal are due by 11 a.m. the day before. Meals are free, though a \$3 donation is requested.

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

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. The group will meet outdoors, weather permitting; otherwise it will be indoors or via Zoom.

Wonderfully Wicked Women's Group: Monday, Feb. 6, 10 a.m. This is a low-key opportunity to meet others and share resources. The group determines the topics for discussion for the next month.

Movie Day: Wednesday, Feb. 8, 1-3 p.m. *Remember the Titans* will be shown. Light refreshments will be served.

Mighty Magnificent Men's Group: Monday, Feb. 13, 10:30 a.m. This is a social hour of facts, activities and snacks, just for guys.

Book Club: Tuesday, Feb. 14, 10:30 a.m. A

Spark of Light by Jodi Picoult will be discussed.

Valentine's Day Affair: Tuesday, Feb. 14, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Drop by to have your picture taken and pick up a heart-healthy snack. Think about signing up for lunch and listening to love songs on the piano with Sue Hewes. Register in advance; treats are limited.

Closet Organizing: Folks are invited to help organize the center's craft supply closet Wednesday, Feb. 15, from 10 a.m.-noon. Sign up to stay for lunch too.

Cross-Stitch: Wednesdays, 1:30-2:30 p.m., beginning Feb. 15; all are welcome, whether they know how to cross-stitch or not. Guided by Shannon Urzua. Registration requested.

Family Tree: Friday, Feb. 17, 10:30 a.m. Ken Doney will help people search for the history of their families. Bring your own mobile device. One-on-one time is available.

Scrabble Party with the Interact Kids: Friday, Feb. 17, 10 a.m.-noon. Snacks will be provided. Register in advance.

Beyond: Brazil/Black History in Bahia: Wednesday, Feb. 22, 3-4 p.m., via Zoom. See some famous Salvador sights. A small Brazilian treat will be provided.

Art w/Karen: Sunday, Feb. 26, 2-4 p.m. Karen Williams will take people through beginner steps of creating an acrylic painting. Cost is \$5, paid to Williams the day of the event.

AARP Safe Driving Course: Monday, Feb. 27, 11:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m., at the senior center. Fee: \$20 for AARP members, \$25 for non-members. Bring exact amount for payment as no change will be available. Check made out to AARP or cash (no bills larger than \$20). Arrive 10-15 mins early for paperwork. Bring a pen, and your AARP card number if a member.

Trips: Stayin' Alive: See this Bee Gees tribute band at the Aqua Turf club in Plantsville Monday, May 22. There will be coffee and doughnuts upon arrival and a family-style lunch served. Cost is \$116. Deposit of \$25 to reserve a spot by March 9. Please call for more information or stop by to pick up a flyer.

Lighthouse Cruise-Narragansett Bay: Wednesday, July 12. Cost is \$127. Deposit of \$25 is needed by April 6. Cruise aboard a catamaran and see 10 famous lighthouses and 10 islands. Brunch at the Quonset 'O' Club before the cruise and go shopping at Olde Mistick Village after. Call for more information or stop by to pick up a flyer.

Saratoga: Aug. 2-3. Visit the Saratoga racetrack and place your bets, then stay at the Queensbury Hotel and enjoy a welcome dinner. Day two includes heading to the top of Prospect Mountain overlooking Lake George and then a two-hour narrated luncheon, Lake George steamboat cruise with live entertainment! Also, stroll the village. Cost is \$429/person for a double/triple and \$509/person for a single. Deposit of \$150 is due May 2. Call for more information or stop by to pick up a flyer.

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

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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 will be celebrated with the Rev. Diana Rogers.

Sunday School: New students are always welcome. Call the Rev. Joane Neel-Richards at 203-671-3455 for details or contact her at jneel-richard16@gmail.com.

Donations and Contributions: Place all returnable bottles in the barrels next to the shed. Items for donation to the East Hampton Food Bank are collected in the black containers next to the rear door of the church.

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

Congregational Church News & Notes

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

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.

Upcoming Events: Valentine Pop-Up Boutique: Saturday, Feb. 11, 9:30 a.m.-noon.

Mardi Gras Fat Tuesday Pancake Dinner: Tuesday, Feb. 21, 5-6 pm. Suggested donation: \$15/family.

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.

Schools Offer Preschool Programs

The East Hampton Public School System is seeking 3- and 4-year-old residents interested in preschool programs for the 2023-24 school year. There will be two preschool programs offered: the Integrated Preschool half-day program and full-day Smart Start program.

Memorial Elementary School's preschool Integrated Program will be held three times a week for 3-year-old students and four times a week for 4-year-old students. Due to limited spaces, selection for peer models will be determined through a lottery process. If selected, peer models demonstrating age-appropriate skills will be assigned by age to either a three day or four day a week schedule (2.5 hours per day). Children must be toilet-trained and turn 3 prior to Sept. 1 to be eligible.

Memorial's Smart Start Program will be held five full days per week (8:50 a.m.-2:50 p.m.), following the East Hampton Public School calendar. Priority will be given to 4-year-old children that meet income guidelines or have other factors for consideration. Other applicants, regardless of economic or risk factors will then be selected.

Parents interested in proceeding through the selection process must pick up an application/information packet at either Memorial Elementary School or the East Hampton Public Library. Packets are available at both locations. The completed Parent Interview Form, Immunization Form and a Proof of Residency must be returned to Jodi Blyler at Memorial School office no later than March 17.

Once all three forms are returned, parents will be contacted, no later than March 24, to schedule a time to bring their child for the screening and lottery/selection process. Forms received after March 17 will not be accepted.

EHMS Baseball, Softball Registration

East Hampton Middle School students who are interested in trying out for either the baseball or softball teams can register online through FamilyID.com. Athletes must have a physical conducted within the last 13 months before trying out.

Deadline for online registrations is Monday, March 13.

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

Cabin Fever Talk Saturday

The Chatham Historical Society's next Cabin Fever talk will be Saturday, Feb. 4, at 1 p.m., in-person at East Hampton Public Library, 105 Main St.

East Hampton native and avid historian Dean Markham will present "It's a Hot Time in the Old Town Tonight." He will talk about the history of fires that have plagued the town – such as the May 2012 blaze that destroyed the 1880 Bevin Bell Factory.

All are invited.



The Chatham Historical Society is conducting a Heating & Cooling System Fundraising Drive. Here are the society's new officers for 2023 – President Carol Morris, Secretary Paula Alm and Treasurer Don Burr – by the new split heating and cooling system that services tow museum buildings. Absent from the photo is Vice President Debbie Day. Photo by Marty Podskoch.

Historical Society Fundraising Drive

The Chatham Historical Society (CHS) recently acquired a new heating and cooling system – and is now seeking donations to help pay for it.

CHS members voted for a new heating and cooling system because the old one was not functioning properly. After doing research they decided to get a Samsung ductless mini split heating and cooling system that is used today by many homes and businesses. After soliciting bids, a system was installed that furnished both heat and cooling to both buildings. This was essential to keep a steady temperature and humidity level to help preserve the historic artifacts in

both buildings, the society said.

The cost of the new system was \$10,000.

The CHS depends on raising money through various events throughout the year to maintain the buildings and grounds, insurance, electric, sewer, telephone, security system, and water expenses. So CHS is asking the public if they could donate money towards this worthwhile cause. The society is a 501(c)3 organization, so donations are tax-deductible.

To contribute to this new system, send donations to Chatham Historical Society (Heating & Cooling Drive), c/o Don Burr, Treasurer 29 Bay Rd., East Hampton, CT 06424.

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 has a new P.O. box number: 123.

Library Hours: Monday and Thursday,

10 a.m.-2 p.m.; Tuesday and Friday, 3-6 p.m. Masks are optional.

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

Spinning Fibers: Thursdays at 10 a.m. Bring your own wheel and fiber. All are welcome.

Valentine Pop-Up Boutique

On Saturday, Feb. 11, the Congregational Church of East Hampton, located at 59 Main St., will hold a Valentine Pop-Up Boutique from 9:30 a.m.-noon.

Featured will be a chocolate bake sale, Emma's Famous Fudge, gifts and a Valentine photo booth. There will be free coffee or hot chocolate for all who attend.

Storm date is Sunday, Feb. 12, from 1-3:30 p.m.

Chocolate Cherry Cakes for Sale

The Missions Committee of the Second Congregational Church of Middle Haddam at 52 Middle Haddam Rd. will sell chocolate cherry cakes on Sunday, Feb. 12, from 10:15-11:15 a.m.

The cakes are in heart- and star-shaped glass dishes; decorated for \$4 each. A percentage of the profits are donated to the East Hampton Food Bank.

Call Kathy at 860-510-8102 to reserve.

Valentine Tea

Haddam Neck Congregational Church will hold a Valentine Tea, to benefit Heifer International, on Sunday, Feb. 12, at noon at the church parish house, 408 Quarry Hill Rd., Haddam Neck.

The tea will feature homemade Valentine treats and punch. All are welcome.

Admission is free, but donations will be accepted to benefit Heifer International, a national nonprofit that works to eradicate hunger on a global scale.

For more information, visit www.haddam-neckcongregationalchurch.org.

Helping Hands Closed for February

Helping Hands, a ministry of Cornerstone Church, will be closed all month and will reopen on Saturday, March 4. The church will start accepting donations again Thursday, March 2.

For more information, email Judy Holmquist at judyhlm49@yahoo.com.

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Kindergarten Registration

Gilead Hill School is registering eligible kindergarten students for the 2023-24 school year.

Parents/guardians of children who will be 5 years of age on or before Dec. 31, 2023, and are planning to have their child attend public school in Hebron, are asked to log into the Hebron Public Schools website, at www.hebron.k12.ct.us, by today, Friday, Feb. 3, to begin the registration process.

Parents/guardians will be required to complete the registration online and upload your

child's birth certificate and two address verifications. One address verification must be a mortgage document, lease/rental agreement or property tax statement. The other address verification must be a cable bill, utility bill or internet bill. Call the Gilead Hill School office at 860-228-9458 with any questions.

Students currently enrolled in Gilead Hill's preschool program do not need to register for kindergarten, as this process happens automatically.

St. Peter's News & Notes

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

Meetings and Events: Balancing Class: Mondays, 10-11 a.m. – cost is \$5; Cub Scouts: first Mondays of the month, 5:30 p.m.; Buildings and Grounds Committee: first Tuesdays, 7

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

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

For more information, visit stpetershebron.com, search for St. Peter's Hebron on Facebook, or email office@stpetershebron.com.

The Worship Center News & Notes

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

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

Life Group Hebron: Meets Mondays at 6:30 p.m. at the Caseys' home, for worship, prayer, Bible study and fellowship. Next meeting: Feb. 6.

Journey Group: For grades 6-12. The mission of the group is to support the youth of Hebron and surrounding towns in their spiritual development. Meets every other Sunday directly after the service; lunch is provided. Next date is Feb. 12. Upcoming event: Youth Winter Retreat, Feb. 17-19, at Camp Monadnock, N.H.

Youth Group: First Friday Fellowship! The first Friday of each month from 6-9 p.m. at the church, starting Feb. 3. All are invited.

Virtual Prayer Night: Tuesdays, 7-8 p.m., via Zoom. All are invited to pray for each other, the community and the country. Contact the church office or website for a link and meeting ID.

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

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

New Co-Ed Bible Study – 'Forgiving What

You Can't Forget: Wednesdays, 7-8:30 p.m. Lysa TerKeurst shares her personal journey with forgiveness and what the Bible has to say about letting go of resentment and finding peace. Call the church or visit Church Center app for more information and to register.

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

Women's Breakfast: Saturday, Feb. 18, from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Food provided, so RSVP is necessary. All women of the church – as well as their friends, mothers, daughters, mother-in-laws, etc. – are invited.

Dean's List

Hebron residents Bridget Lalonde and Max Wechsler made the fall 2022 Dean's List at Bucknell University in Lewisburg, Pa.

Lalonde is majoring in biology, and Wechsler is majoring in political science. They are members of the Class of 2023.

The following Hebron residents made the fall 2022 Dean's List at the University of Vermont:

Megan Constable, who is majoring in statistics and psychological science; Eric Slater, who is majoring in environmental sciences; Matthew Sitnik, who is majoring in civil engineering; Rachel Purcell, who is majoring in elementary education – K-6; and Eva Morelli-Wolfe, who is majoring in early childhood preschool.

Preschool Lottery Applications

Hebron Early Childhood Center at Gilead Hill School is taking applications for eligible preschool students for the 2023-24 school year.

Parents/guardians of children who will be 3 or 4 by Dec. 31, 2023, and are planning to have their child(ren) entered into Hebron's preschool lottery, are asked to call the Gilead Hill School office at 860-228-9458 to have an application mailed to them. The application may also be downloaded from the Hebron School

District website, at www.hebron.k12.ct.us; go to "Quick Links" in the bottom left-hand corner of the website.

Lottery applications must be completed and returned to the office by Friday, Feb. 24. Enclose two forms of residency when you return the lottery application. The lottery drawing will be held on Thursday, March 16, at 9 a.m., at the school. Applicants will be notified of their acceptance or waitlist status by phone.

Douglas Library News & Notes

Douglas Library, located at 22 Main St., has announced the following. For more info and full program descriptions, and to register, call the library at 860-228-9312 or visit www.douglaslibrary.org.

Friday Films: Fridays at 1 p.m. Schedule: Feb. 3, Tar (rated R); Feb. 10, Black Panther: Wakanda Forever (PG-13); Feb. 17, Everything Everywhere All at Once (R); Feb. 24, *The Inspection* (R). Bottled water and individually wrapped snacks will be provided.

Chess Night: The first Thursday of each month at 4:30 p.m. All skill levels welcome.

Spirited Book Club: Wednesday, Feb. 15, 7-8:30 p.m., at the American Legion, located next door to the library. This month, discuss *The Personal Librarian* by Marie Benedict. Copies of the book will be available for check-out at the Adult Circulation Desk. Must be over 21 years of age.

Medicare Information: Wednesday, Feb. 22, 2 or 6 p.m., with Mark Macrina. All are invited to learn the ins-and-outs of Medicare and

the differences between original Medicare and Medicare Advantage. Local insurance agent Mark Macrina will present. This is strictly an informational seminar, and no individual health will be discussed.

Teen Advisory Group: Wednesdays, Feb. 8 and 15, 2:30-3:30 p.m. This is a way to get your service hours in. Registration is not needed for any of these events.

Holiday Closing: The library will be closed Monday, Feb. 20, for Presidents Day, and will reopen Feb. 21 at 10 a.m. All online services will be available.

Take & Make: During January, adults and teens can pick up a craft kit from the hold shelf across from the adult circulation desk, while supplies last.

Children's Storytime: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10 a.m. These are family classes for children birth to 5. There are stories, crafts, songs and interactive play. No registration is required. This program is free and open to the public. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Pollinator Pathway to Meet

The first meet-up of the Hebron Pollinator Pathway (HPP) will be Monday, Feb. 6, at 6 p.m., at Douglas Library, 22 Main St.

The HPP's goal is to create pollinator friendly habitats throughout the community. The group focuses on education and the creation of demonstrator gardens.

The agenda for next week's meeting will

include plans and ideas for 2023 including HPP's initial community event, a winter seed-sowing fundraising event to be held Saturday Feb. 18, from 10:30 a.m. to noon, at Douglas Library, 22 Main St.

Contact Michele Sinkez sinkezmichele@gmail.com or Candace O'Shea Candaceboshea@gmail.com for more information.

Church of the Holy Family News

The Church of The Holy Family, 185 Church St. (Route 85), celebrates weekend Masses Saturday at 5 p.m. and Sunday at 9:30 a.m.; and weekday Masses Tuesday at 7 p.m. and Thursday at 6:30 a.m. Visit holyfamilyhebron.org for more information. The church office can be reached at 860-228-0096.

Church Collecting for Homeless Shelter: The church collects items for the Windham Region No Freeze Hospitality Center, which provides assistance to homeless adults. Critical needs: men's and women's sweatpants (M,L,XL); Lysol disinfectant spray; \$15 Stop

& Shop gift cards for gas to assist people living in their cars; Walmart gift cards; and plastic rain ponchos. Call to arrange the pickup of gift cards. Additional needs: paper towels; toilet tissue; men's M,L,XL sweatshirts, hoodies, thermal shirts, T-shirts, and boxer briefs (always needed); men's and women's insulated waterproof gloves; women's briefs (sizes 6-10); and sturdy adult backpacks (new or used in good condition). Place donations of goods in the designated collection box next to the church's Cry Room. Place large quantities of donations in the Cry Room. For more information, call Monica or John McKerracher at 860-228-4211.



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Vendors Sought for Maple Fest Craft Fair

Gilead Congregational Church (672 Gilead St.) will host a Craft Fair on Saturday, March 18, from 10 a.m.-4 p.m., during Hebron's Maple Festival – and vendors are wanted.

If you are a crafter and would like to secure a space in the Fellowship Hall, contact the church office at 860-228-3077 or GCC@GileadChurch.net.

At the fair, crafts expected to be available for sale include handmade soaps, jewelry, local photography, hand-carved wooden pens, kiln-fused glass art, and more.

There will also be Maple Cakes for sale by the church's Women's Fellowship, for people to munch on as they shop.

Learn to Braid – Create a Chair Pad

A two-day traditional braiding class, cosponsored by the Hebron Historical Society and Hebron Historic Properties Commission, will be held at the Peters House, 150 East St., on Saturday and Sunday, Feb. 25 and 26, from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. each day.

Students will create a round, wool, chair pad with instructor Teri Stratton.

Tuition for the class is \$100. Materials and/or tools can be purchased through the instructor for \$43 maximum, or students may supply their own. All are invited to participate. Registration is due Feb. 22.

For information or registration, call Sue at 860-368-7463.

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From the Town Manager's Desk...

Greetings, Hebron Residents:

My office is working diligently on the upcoming budget. I will be presenting the town manager's proposed budget for fiscal year 2023-24 to the Hebron Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance on Thursday, March 2, in compliance with requirements outlined in Hebron's town charter. This year's budget reflects the town's needs and continues to maintain a high level of services and educational excellence. This year will prove to be challenging with the various requests.

The town government budget includes funding for general government operations, contributions to capital projects, contribution to open space land acquisition and debt service payments. Please keep in mind that the budget document is a work in progress and numbers will change over the next several weeks. The budget is based on information available today, with placeholders for unknown or estimated amounts.

An email address hebronbudget@hebronct.com has been set up to receive public comments and input. Emails received will be forwarded to the Boards of Selectmen, Finance and Education. It is important for public participation early in the budget process. Public participation at all meetings is encouraged, meetings are listed on the town's calendar located on the website at <https://hebronct.com>. We urge you to become informed and involved in the budget process. Budget detail, information and key dates are also available on the Hebron website at <http://hebronct.com/budget-information>.

I am pleased to announce that the Hebron Maple Festival will take place this year on Saturday and Sunday, March 18 and 19, on the Hebron Green, weather permitting. This festival features numerous maple flavored food products. There will be artists, crafters, farmers and small businesses with a huge variety of items available. Also, the famous tractor parade will take place on Sunday, March 19. This is a free community event open to all ages, I hope to see you there enjoying all that it has to offer.

Sincerely,
Andrew J. Tierney
Hebron Town Manager

Gilead Congregational Church News

Gilead Congregational Church, an Open and Affirming Congregation located at 672 Gilead St., has announced the following. For more info, see the church bulletin at gileadchurchucc.updates.church, email gcc@gileadchurch.net, or call 860-228-3077.

Sunday Worship: Sundays at 10 a.m., followed by Coffee Hour in the Fellowship Hall. Services are also available on YouTube at www.bit.ly/GileadChurchUCC and on Facebook at tinyurl.com/GileadChurchUCC.

Scheduled Events/Meetings: 2/6: Bible Study, 9:30 a.m.; 2/7: AA meeting, 7:30 p.m.; 2/8: Choir Practice, 7 p.m.; 2/9: Trustee Meeting, 7 p.m.

Yoga in the Fellowship Hall: Wednesdays and Saturdays, 9:30-10:30 a.m. Contact Jennifer Goodine of Wise Warrior Yoga to register, at wisewarrioryoga@gmail.com.

Faith, Food and Film: Friday, Feb. 3. The gathering begins at 6 p.m., followed by a meal, dessert and a movie. Bring a dish to share.

Card-Making: Sunday, Feb. 26, 11:30 a.m. Cost is \$15, with a portion being sent to Connecticut Foodshare. All are welcome to join. Contact Gayle at gayle.sylvester@comcast.net to register.

Maple Fest Craft Fair: Saturday, March 18, from 10 a.m.-4 p.m., in the Fellowship Hall.

Residents Sought to Serve

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

There are currently vacancies for regular members on the Zoning Board of Appeals, Parks and Recreation Commission, Commission on Aging, Public Building Committee, Library Board of Trustees, Hebron Green Committee, Water Pollution Control Authority and the Commemoration Commission.

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

Interested candidates should attend a meeting of the board or commission in which they may have an interest and discuss with the chairman the frequency of meetings and the time commitment involved.

President's List

Hailey Lyon of Amston made the fall 2022 President's List at Southern New Hampshire University in Manchester, N.H.

Molly Bellmore of Hebron made the fall 2022 President's List at Plymouth State University in Plymouth, N.H.

Dean's List

Hebron resident Reese Maynard, a theatre arts major, made the fall 2022 Dean's List at Western Connecticut State University.

Erik Fellenstein of Hebron made the fall 2022 Dean's List at Nichols College in Dudley, Mass.

Mary Ciarrocchi of Hebron made the fall 2022 Dean's List at Belmont University in Nashville, Tenn.

Amston resident Hannah D'Amaddio made the fall 2022 Dean's List at the University of New England in Maine.

Provost's List

Jessica Delton of Hebron made the fall 2022 Provost's List at Hofstra University in Hempstead, N.Y.

The Provost's List recognizes students who earned a perfect 4.0 grade point average.

Delton's major is pre-physician assistant studies.

Parks and Recreation News

Hebron Parks and Recreation is offering the following programs. For full program descriptions and to register, visit hebronct.recdesk.com or call 860-530-1281.

Valentine's Day Crafternoon: Tuesday, Feb. 7, from 3:15-4:30 p.m., in the Gilead Hill Art Room, for grades K-2. Each student will bring home three crafts. Cost is \$30.

Paint Party: Friday, Feb. 10, 4:30-5:30 p.m., in the Douglas Library community room. Learn step by step to paint an 11x14 Valentine gnome, and learn options on how to customize the gnome. Cost is \$23 per participant with supplies included.

Youth Futsal Clinic: In coordination with CAB Futsal and Soccer, this clinic will be offered for boys and girls in the U9-U13 divisions. Futsal is a form of soccer in South America and Europe. The clinic will be held Saturdays at Hebron Elementary, Feb. 25-April 1 (no program March 18). U11-U13 is from 2-3:30 p.m., and U9-U10 is from 3:30-5 p.m. Cost is \$149.

Backyard Wiffle Ball: For all skill and ability levels for boys and girls in grades 5-8. No equipment needed. Space is limited. Sundays, Feb. 26-March 26 (no program March 19). Grades 5/6 are 5-6:30 p.m. and Grades 7/8 are 6:40-8:10 p.m.

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

Senior Center News & Notes

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

Bus Trip to Chowder Pot of Hartford: Wednesday, Feb. 8, leaves the senior center at 11:15 a.m.; let staff know if you need to be picked up. Have lunch at the Chowder Pot before it closes its doors for good. Space is limited so sign up early. Transportation cost is \$5 per person and lunch cost is on your own. To sign-up, call the senior center.

Massage Therapy: Every Thursday, table massages are offered by appointment, and on Mondays, Feb. 13 and 27, chair massages will be offered. Massages run either 25 or 50 minutes, for \$25 or \$50, accordingly. Thursday appointments are available from 9 a.m.-1:30 p.m., and the Monday chair massage appointments will be available from 9 a.m.-2:30 p.m. To make an appointment, call the senior center.

Mobile Food Truck Transportation: Tuesday, Feb. 14. Pick-ups are based on who is signed up (will be approximately 10:45 a.m.) and will bring people to the food truck, which will arrive at 11:15 a.m. at the Church of Hope/Red Barn at the corner of routes 85 and 66. All are welcome; no forms to fill out. Bring your own bags. Must sign up by 10 a.m. the day before, by calling the senior center.

Food Bank Transportation: Tuesdays, Feb. 7 and 21. Pick-ups to begin between 10:30 and 10:45 a.m., based on who is signed up. Must pre-register by 10 a.m. the day before, by calling the senior center.

Heart Health Stroke Prevention Presentation: Monday, Feb. 6, 1-2 p.m. Chatham Health will present Heart Health Stroke Prevention, and also offer blood pressure checks. Come for

lunch before at noon. To sign up for the presentation and/or lunch, call 860-228-1700.

AARP Tax Preparation: Appointments are available for in-person tax prep at the senior center. Tax preparation will take place Tuesdays from 9 a.m.-1 p.m., from Feb. 7-March 28. This is by appointment only. The pre-screening paperwork will be available by the first week of February, which is to be completed prior to your appointment. To make an appointment, call the senior center.

Shopping Trips: Fridays. Schedule is: to Big Y Feb. 10 and March 3; to Walmart in North Windham Feb. 24; and to Stop and Shop March 17. Pre-registration for each trip is required by the prior Wednesday at 10 a.m. To sign up, call the senior center.

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

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

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

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Local Martial Artist Inducted into National Hall of Fame

By Jack Lakowsky

Longtime Marlborough resident Robert Goral was, after a long and illustrious pursuit of the martial arts, recently inducted into the U.S. Martial Arts Hall of Fame and given a Gold Life Award, among the highest honors in the sport.

Goral, a 35-year resident of the town, wasn't expecting the honor, he told the *Rivereast* last week. One of his lifelong students took the step to see his sensei (a title Goral said he does not go by formally, believing one cannot bestow honor onto oneself, that it must be earned in the eyes of others) honored so prestigiously. The student has been with Goral since he was younger than 10 – and is now in his mid-30s.

The gold award is given to just one person a year. "It's kind of a high bar," Goral said.

Goral said he first took to martial arts, and what would become his specialty school of learning – one he essentially invented – Kaze-Kai Karate, also the name of his dojo in Newington, which he's run for 12 years, in the army.

Goral began his interest in the Martial Arts while serving as a hand-to-hand combat instructor in the U.S. Army in the late 1960s. Goral was also a boxer while stationed in Germany. After leaving the military, he explored several styles of martial arts. He was also a landmine specialist – a weapon of warfare he's since come to despise for its brutality and harm of innocents. There is much documentation of forgotten landmines killing people in countries like Vietnam, deadly leftovers of the U.S.-Vietnam conflict.

While attending a demonstration performed by a master, Goral quickly realized the art that he had been searching for was Shotokan Karate.

Goral began studying with a master in 1972 and achieved the rank of 1st Degree Black Belt in 1978. He continued training under this guidance until 1983 attaining his 3rd Degree Black

Belt, then studying Shobu-Kai/Shotokan under, receiving his 4th and 5th Degree Black Belts, at points working with masters who trained celebrities like Arnold Schwarzenegger

In 1992, Goral, while training under another master, discovered a new form of karate: Shin-do Jinen Ryu.

This style incorporates traditional Shotokan Karate along with Aikido, Jujitsu and Kenjitsu.

In 1998, Goral established a new form of Karate what is recognized today as Kaze-Kai Shotokan. Kaze-Kai is a culmination of Goral's 50 years of martial arts experience.

Goral takes a maverick stance on some martial arts traditions, like asking he not be called "master" – he doesn't like the term, its implications of power imbalance.

A relaxed speaker, Goral also runs a low-pressure dojo. Students are held to high standards of course, but parents or anyone paying for the student's enrollment don't have to contractually commit to, say, a year of classes. Goral prefers a month-to-month plan, saying it ensures students actually want to learn martial arts.

"We want people who want to be here," said Goral. "We never have students sign contracts." He said he's been advised to adjust this model – and has politely refused.

His dojo also doesn't do junior black belts; students must hit 16 before they earn this recognition of mastery, and he doesn't give trophies, which "are fine," but not for his dojo, and still his students do quite well in competition despite doing things so differently from the larger, more commercial dojos. The age limit is rarely a concern, as students have stuck with Goral for up to 20 years, sometimes more.

"I feel really good about this, it's something, but it's more for the students than it is for me,"



Longtime Marlborough resident Robert Goral received one of the highest honors in martial arts recently, an honor for a multidecade career teaching countless students at several different dojos, a love that began during his military service.

Goral said. "The plaque in the dojo, that's a lot of prestige."

The sensei said the reward is especially vindicating after losing some momentum at the height of the pandemic, when the dojo had to close.

To his fellow septuagenarians, Goral says you far from too old to start practicing martial arts, which benefits both body (physical exercise) and mind (focus, discipline, community),

and that though someone in their 70s may not be able to all the things as someone in their 20s, he believes older folks will surprise themselves with their abilities.

"It's good for everyone," Goral said.

Goral extended thanks to his wife and their grown kids, who've "always been supportive of everything I do," even his more dangerous pastimes like jai alai (high-lie), as well as his students and masters.

Richmond Library News & Notes

Richmond Memorial Library, located at 15 School Drive, has announced the following programs and events. For more information or to register, call 860-295-6210 or email richmond-programs@gmail.com.

Books for Babies: Town families with children ages birth up to 12 months are invited to stop into the library to pick up a Books for Babies Box and register for your baby's first library card. Advance registration is required and can be done online. At least one parent must have a library card but that can be done at the same time. This Books for Baby initiative has been funded by a Constellation Community Champions Grant.

Babytime: Fridays at 10 a.m., for ages 0-18 months and their caregivers. This is a baby-centered storytime with songs, rhymes, lap bounces and a story. Registration is recommended but drop-ins are welcome if space allows.

Digital Microscope Kit: Did you know the library has four digital microscope kits that can be checked out for a three-week loan period? Each kit contains one pluggable USB 2.0 digital microscope with a versatile observation stand and two sets of 25 prepared microscope slides. These kits have been donated in memory of Audrey Skorski.

Zoom Storytime: Mondays at 10 a.m. through April 3 (no storytime Feb. 20), for children ages 2-5. Register online.

National Take Your Child to the Library Day: Saturday, Feb. 4. At 10 a.m. there will be

a magic show with Matt Mathews Magic, followed by an all-ages storytime at 1 p.m. There will be drop-in activities and projects all day long. Registration is required for the magic show as space is limited. Both programs will be held in the upstairs meeting room unless an accessibility accommodation needs to be made.

Lego Club: Ages 4 and up are invited to come for STEM-based challenges involving Legos. Registration is recommended but not required. Lego Club meets every other Tuesday at 4 p.m., with future dates being: Feb. 7 and 21, and March 7 and 21.

Kids Crafting Club: Meets every other Tuesday at 4 p.m.. Future dates: Feb. 14 and 28, and March 14 and 28. Registration required.

Tween and Teen Crafters Club: Fridays at 4 p.m. through March 31, for ages 10 and up. Bring a craft project you're working on; there will also be projects available that you can make! Registration is recommended but not required.

Blind Date with a Book: Check out a book from the Blind Date with a Book display, write your name and phone number on the back of the book tag, and you could win a prize drawing for a Date Night Package. Prize drawing will be held on Thursday, Feb. 16.

Hearts at War: Thursday, Feb. 9, 6:30 p.m. In this virtual program, Kelly Hancock from The American Civil War Museum will discuss the history of Valentine's Day, the start of Valentine's Day traditions in America, and how the Civil War affected those traditions in the South. The program includes images of original valentines in the museum's collections and excerpts from letters between soldiers and loved ones. Register online.

Arts Center Tag Sale

Marlborough Arts Center, located at 231 North Main St., will hold a tag sale Saturday, Feb. 4, from 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Snow date for the tag sale is Saturday, Feb. 11.

Arts Center Exhibit at Town Hall

Marlborough Arts Center has a new exhibit at Town Hall. Featured is artwork by artists who are members of the center's board of directors.

There are watercolors by Audrey Carroll, acrylic paintings by Roy Wrenn, wire sculpture by Neal Alderman, mixed media and acrylic paintings by Laurie Gelston Alt, and watercolors by Mary Horriagan.

The exhibit is open to the public during business hours at Town Hall: Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.; and Fridays from 8 a.m.-noon.

Pre-Kindergarten Screening Information

All public school systems in Connecticut are responsible for the identification of children who may be eligible to receive special education services. The Early Childhood team at Marlborough Elementary School is accepting applications for current resident children interested in the pre-kindergarten screening for the 2023-24 school year.

If you are interested in your child participating in this process, eligible children must be at least 3 years old by Sept. 1 and parents/

guardians must complete and return a questionnaire no later than Thursday, March 23. Note: children identified as kindergarten eligible (those turning 5 by Dec. 31, 2023) are not eligible for the reK program for the upcoming school year.

Contact Marcy Spellman at 860-295-6236 or mspellman@marlborough.k12.ct.us to receive a screening questionnaire or for more information regarding the program.

Spring Watercolor Classes at Arts Center

Local artist Mary Horriagan will offer adult watercolor classes at the Marlborough Arts Center, 231 N. Main St., Tuesdays and Thursdays starting March 2 and running through April 11. Classes will run from 10 a.m.-noon.

Tuesdays' lessons are designed for "Basic Beginners," and will run March 7-April 11. This class will cover the basics: brush-handling, laying a wash, making simple shapes, controlling values, mixing colors. Subject matter will include still life objects and landscape elements.

Thursdays' lessons are designed for students with some basic experience in watercolor, and will run March 2-April 6. This class assumes knowledge of the basics, and will concentrate on composition, color theory, working from photos and still life setups.

Material lists will be sent once the class is confirmed with enough students registered.

Cost for the class is \$120. Registration forms can be downloaded from www.marlborougharts.org, and a check mailed to The Marlborough Arts Center, 231 North Main St., Marlborough, CT 06447.

Horriagan has taught watercolor classes for Manchester Community College, Middletown Adult Education, the Glastonbury Art Guild, the Guilford Art Center and for the Marlborough Arts Center. Her paintings have been exhibited in Maine, Massachusetts and Connecticut, and have won several awards.

For more information, contact Horriagan at mehorrigan@comcast.net or leave a voicemail message at the Arts Center at 860-467-6353.

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Schools Chief Requests Scant Budget Increase

By Jack Lakowsky

Last week, Superintendent of Schools Holly Hageman made her case for a small budget increase for the 2023-24 school year: about .7%.

Hageman said the small increase still maintains proper school services and functions, and continues her strategic plan for the district's facilities, which didn't exist before Hageman started at Marlborough Elementary School.

In all, Hageman proposed an operating budget of about \$8.5 million, a bump of close to \$60,000. While there was a significant increase in the school's operating needs by about \$400,000, a similar reduction in the school's capital needs largely negated that jump.

Hageman said the budget commits to class size guidelines, supporting programs that show "demonstrable results," supporting the "branding" of Marlborough Elementary school, considering new programs after studies and resident input, look to other high-performing schools to guide decisions, and aims for fiscal responsibility, collaboration with the finance and select boards, and to seek alternate funds through outside sources.

MES will continue seeking to share services with the town – a concept the town has met with coolly in the past – and with RHAM.

A notable request in Hageman's document is for more staff, namely, two full-time positions for operations like security, transportation and facilities and the newly-approved armed school resource officer (SRO), which the school board and town agreed to bring on in the wake of the mass shooting at an elementary school in Uvalde, Texas.

In public meetings last year dozens of Marlborough residents showed up to make their voices heard on the matter, the vast majority highly supportive of bringing an armed guard to the elementary school. The two new position

proposals make up about 2% of the 5% operations cost increase.

Last year the Board of Selectmen agreed to cover just 10% of the cost of the SRO.

"Without these necessary additions, the budget would have been closer to a 3% increase, on par with recent annual budgets, largely driven by salaries, benefits, and contractual obligations," Hageman wrote, going on to describe the armed guard as a "proactive and preventative deterrent to potential acts of criminal behavior and a direct liaison to law enforcement and emergency personnel.

The active-duty constable assigned by the town to MES is meant to be a "role model and resource for students, and an asset for instruction on topics deemed pertinent and appropriate" by school administrators.

The proposed combining the positions of facilities director and director, which would oversee security and other systems, as well as develop a long-term capital plan, as well as an annual plan.

Background on the SRO

Getting an SRO was not easy path for MES, with shuffling at the Board of Selectmen level sending more of the cost burden to the school.

The selectmen, in a 3-1 vote in December said the town would pay for 10% of the guard's cost, with the vast majority being placed on the school's tab. In December the selectboard also sought to have more control over the guard selection process.

At a December Board of Education meeting, school board member Sue Stolfi asked what would happen if the school board voted against the proposed agreement with the town.

Hageman said then the school simply wouldn't get the guard.

"There isn't room for negotiation," said

Hageman, explaining that because the town feels "many many" parents voiced support for adding an armed guard to MES grounds, they'll also support the necessary jump in MES's upcoming 2023-24 budget.

Hageman said at the December meeting that she'll clearly stress to the public that the guard is a major driver in any increase. In the end, "the budget still has to pass with voters," said Hageman.

The town's plan – which is technically cost-sharing – is something of an outlier, according to information Hageman provided in December.

Reading a survey the state conducted, Hageman learned in a sample of around 60 school districts, a majority of school guards are funded by their towns, with 12 funded totally by the district itself and fewer than five splitting the cost.

Selectman Betty O'Brien, who originally wanted the school to pay the whole bill, said in a December meeting of the Board of Selectmen that if those 12 are doing it "then it must be working out really well, I assume." O'Brien said she wanted the school to pay because the town has significant incoming costs.

O'Brien said, "I really believe the people will pass your [the school board's] budget." O'Brien also said she would like to send the question to the Board of Finance and "let them move things around" if they wanted, an idea Bourbeau quickly iced.

Also at that December meeting, selectman Joe Asklar advocated for a 50/50 split with the school, saying public safety is very much a duty of the town's, that the cost will come out of taxpayer pockets regardless of where the item's listed, adding the board was "debating a null point."

Other priorities in the 2023-24 spending proposal include retaining and recruit highly-skilled staff and keeping school tech up to date.

Hageman provided a timeline of the budget's development. The board will continue its talks until early- to mid-February, when it will likely adopt Hageman's budget as its own. Then in March, the school board will send the document to the finance board, which will make its own cuts and/or additions, then in April moving to public discussion before a final vote on May 2.

Senior Center News and Notes

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

Monday, Feb. 6: Not Just Quilting, 9:30 a.m.-noon; 8-Ball Pool, 10 a.m.-noon; Meals-on-Wheels, noon; Lunch, noon. Menu: 100% fruit punch juice, sweet and sour turkey meatballs, garlic smashed potatoes, chuck wagon blend vegetables, 12-grain bread, Jello cup; setback, 1-4 p.m.

Tuesday, Feb. 7: Grocery Shopping, 8:30 a.m.-noon; AARP Driver Safety Course, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., at the senior center (registration required by calling 860-295-6209); Meals-on-Wheels, noon; Mahjong, 1-3 p.m.

Wednesday, Feb. 8: Not Just Quilters, 9 a.m.-2 p.m.; Assistance, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.; 8-Ball Pool, 10 a.m.-noon; Meals-on-Wheels, noon; Congregate Meal, noon. Menu: baked pork loin with gravy, mashed potatoes, Capri-blend vegetables, 100% whole wheat bread, fresh fruit; setback, 1-4 p.m.; Sophisticated Ladies, 5-7 p.m.

Thursday, Feb. 9: AARP Income Tax Prep., 9 a.m.-12:15 p.m. (call the senior center for an appointment); Meals-on-Wheels, noon; Parkinson's Exercise with Anne, 3-4 p.m.

Friday, Feb. 3: Not Just Quilters, 9 a.m.-2 p.m.; Quilling, 9:30 a.m.-noon (The Paper Art); 8-Ball Pool, 10 a.m.-noon; Assistance, 10 a.m.-noon; Congregate Meal, noon. Menu: grape

juice, paprika-baked chicken quarter, long grain rice, broccoli Normandy, oatnut bread, cookie; setback, 1-4 p.m.

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

Free Baked Goods: Bread and bakery goods are available for free at the senior center, courtesy of Big Y and Stop & Shop.

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

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

Income Tax Prep: AARP will do free Income Tax Preparation at the senior center Thursdays, Feb. 9 and 23, and March 9 and 23, from 9 a.m.-12:15 p.m. each day. To sign up, call the senior center.

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

Second Blessings Reopens Today

Second Blessings Thrift Shop, located on the ground floor at Marlborough Congregational Church, 35 S. Main St., reopens today, Friday, Feb. 3. The shop will be open Fridays from noon to 3 p.m. and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. through June 24. Second Blessings accepts donations during shopping hours.

All shelves and tables in the shop are restocked with featured winter and spring merchandise along with vintage and antiques, including side chairs and furniture, toys and games, puzzles, baking and cooking, enter-

taining, decorating, gift-giving, and more. The corner nook displays quality handbags along with newly arrived jewelry including name-brand and artisan pieces. The Holiday Room is open year-round and showcases Christmas and winter holidays.

New merchandise arrives every week. Unique and higher-quality items are sold year-round through eBay at bit.ly/MCCEbay.

For more information, call the church office at 860-295-9050.

Parks and Rec Programs

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

CPR Certification: Saturday, Feb. 25, 9-11 a.m. What is covered: Adult, child and infant CPR, foreign-body airway obstruction, and automated external defibrillator (AED) usage. Cost is \$87/residents, \$92/non-residents.

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

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

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

Dog Obedience – Polite Dog Manners: Tuesdays, Feb. 7-March 14, 5:30-6:30 p.m., at

Marlborough Senior Center. These are beginner-level classes for dogs 5 months and older. Fee: \$120/resident, \$125/non-resident.

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

New York Knicks vs. Boston Celtics: Sunday, March 5, at the TD Garden. Trip includes charter bus, tickets to the game (balcony) and free time in Boston. Registration fee is \$170. Bus leaves from Glastonbury park and ride.

Reflective Number Signs Available: Cost of the sign is \$50. Help emergency services personnel find your home without delay. Vertical sign is double sided 8" x 24" with 4" numbers on blue highway reflective metal. Order forms are online and at Town Hall.

Dean's List

Parker William Davis of Marlborough has made the fall 2022 Dean's List at The Pennsylvania State University. Davis is studying computer science.

Stella Henderson of Marlborough made the fall 2022 Dean's List at Stonehill College in Easton, Mass.

Henderson is a graduate of RHAM High School, Class of 2022, and is studying political science and international studies.

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Mrs. Claus Heads to the Hall of Fame

By Michael Sinkewicz

Andover's "Mrs. Merry Claus" has spread Christmas cheer across Connecticut for years, and has received national fame after being featured in a recent HBO Max documentary film.

This week, her journey became even more magical. Dianne Grenier, an Andover resident of nearly 40 years, is now officially a Hall of Famer.

While most people associate that accomplishment with popular sports athletes, even mythical figures can receive the prestigious honor.

The New England Santa Society (NESS) included Grenier in the inaugural class of its Hall of Fame during its annual meeting last Sunday, Jan. 29, in Sturbridge, Mass.

Grenier has been working as a professional Santa since 2006, after she retired from a long career at Pratt & Whitney. She was a founding member of the NESS and has been dedicated to personifying Mrs. Claus ever since.

Now, in a secondary career full of memorable moments, including appearances at Dzen Tree Farm in South Windsor and Zamboni rides at a Hartford Wolf Pack games, her treasured moment arrived.

This recognition even topped being included in the film *Santa Camp*, which premiered in November and cemented her place as the Mrs. Claus.

"My head was pretty big and swollen from Santa Camp but oh my, this was so much bigger and serious," Grenier told the *Rivereast*. "This was from my peers who know the Santa world. They're professionals and for them to do this, it left me speechless."

On top of being honored along with a handful of other Santas, she also received a certificate, a plaque and a fancy pin. Of course, she was also able to enjoy the dinner put on by the NESS and interact with the Santa community who was gathering for the weekend.

"I'm part of the history now," she said.

Grenier, who was also asked to deliver a brief acceptance speech, tried to describe the significance of the moment. She expressed that the honor was both "gratifying" and "humbling" for her.

"I'm going to need a bigger bonnet," she joked, then added, "It was very touching. I'm still processing it and it's emotionally overwhelming."

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.

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. For all senior events and information, visit the senior page of the town website, andoverct.org.

Senior Luncheon Dates: Friday, Feb. 17. Reservation required by 2/15.

Rides to Fundraiser: The annual senior fundraiser will be Sunday, Feb. 5, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m., at the Andover Elementary School gym, and rides are available by calling Palazzi. There will be baked goods, basket and raffle tables, and several vendors. Pizza will be available for purchase at 12:30 p.m. If you would like to bake something for the fundraiser, let Palazzi know.

Rides to Food Pantry: The bus is now avail-

able for the Food Pantry on Mondays at 5 p.m. and for the Wednesday Foodshare or food pantry – all of which take place at Andover Congregational Church.

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

New Seniors Welcome: New seniors are welcome to all events. Call Palazzi for all luncheon reservations and transportation needs. For all Young at Heart events including movies, call Sue Schmidt at 860-604-1057, and call Georgia O'Brien at 860-742-9947 for all trip information.

Souper Bowl Grinder Sale
Andover Congregational Church, located at 359 Route 6, will hold its 31st annual Souper Bowl Grinder Sale Sunday, Feb. 12.

Grinder selections are ham, turkey or tuna. Chili, in quarts and pints, will also be sold, as will be garden salads. All options include chips and a soda. Pick-up will be on Feb. 12 from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Pre-order is requested.

To pre-order, leave a message at the church at 860-742-7696 or access an order form at www.andoverctchurch.org.

Dean's List
Lily Shevchenko from Andover made the fall 2022 Dean's List at the University of Vermont. Shevchenko is majoring in global studies.

Learn CPR
All are invited to learn CPR Saturday, Feb. 4, from 9-11 a.m., at the Andover Volunteer Fire Department, 11 School Rd. Classes include use of training materials, CPR/AED/Choking for adults/child/infant, and two-year certification from the American Heart Association.

Cost is \$20 and registration is required; to do so, call Deputy Chief Mindy Hegener at 860-706-3074.

Senior Fundraiser Feb. 5
Andover's annual senior fundraiser will be Sunday, Feb. 5, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m., at the Andover Elementary School (AES) gym, 35 School Rd.

There will be baked goods, baskets, books, crocheted items, decorated boxes, dip and soup mixes, greeting cards, home products, jewelry, Tastefully Simple, Color Street Nails, pizza, beverages, popcorn, and more.
Call 860-916-6122 for more information.

Food Pantry: Mondays from 5-7 p.m. Bring your own bags. The **Foodshare Van** comes to the church every other Wednesday from 9-9:30 a.m.; next date is Feb. 15. The senior food pantry is open the opposite Wednesdays, also from 9-9:30 a.m.; next date is Feb. 8.

AA Meetings: Saturdays and Mondays, 7 p.m.
Sonshine Stampers: Thursday, 9:30 a.m.

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working."

While most Hall of Fame athletes have already retired by the time they're inducted, Grenier sees no reason to hang up the coat. She has her favorite spots to interact with children and she still enjoys reading books and sharing stories.

"I have no intention of slowing down," she asserted. "With athletes, their bodies are dead when they make the Hall of Fame. As long as it's fun, I'm doing it."

She acknowledged, there is a time when it becomes appropriate for Santa and Mrs. Claus to retire. Perhaps it's not ideal for Santa to deliver gifts and move around with a walker, she quipped.

But for now, Grenier can do the events without a problem. And most importantly, she still loves making kids, and even adults, smile. As long as she's able to, she'll continue.

"It's like nothing else to see kids dive into this magical world," she said. "It's special."

Grenier also receives positive feedback from the Andover community. Residents reach out to her or talk about the documentary, which she always appreciates.

"They take great pride in their Mrs. Claus," she said, adding that the movie might have helped put "little Andover on the map and they're quite proud of it."

Her family and friends are equally supportive, she explained.

Grenier shared a story of when she watched the documentary with her relatives, who then proceeded to award her with a replica Oscar award. After the nominations were made and votes were tallied, it wasn't a close result.

"It was a biased audience," she joked. "My friends and family take great pride in this."

While her official Oscar speech may have to wait a little longer, her message to the NESS was one of gratitude.



After making her movie debut in November, Andover's own Mrs. Merry Claus – a.k.a. Dianne Grenier – is now a member of the New England Santa Society Hall of Fame.

"This group here, you're the ones who know about Santa and the responsibility of embedding Santa and the spirit of Christmas," she said during her remarks. "This is the group that knows what makes a Santa character."

She added, "This is a very special time for me and I appreciate it so much, thank you very much."



Singing for Seniors... Carolyn Brodginiski of Marlborough performed for the Andover seniors at a recent Friday luncheon. Brodginiski sang and also played the Celtic harp and mountain dulcimer.



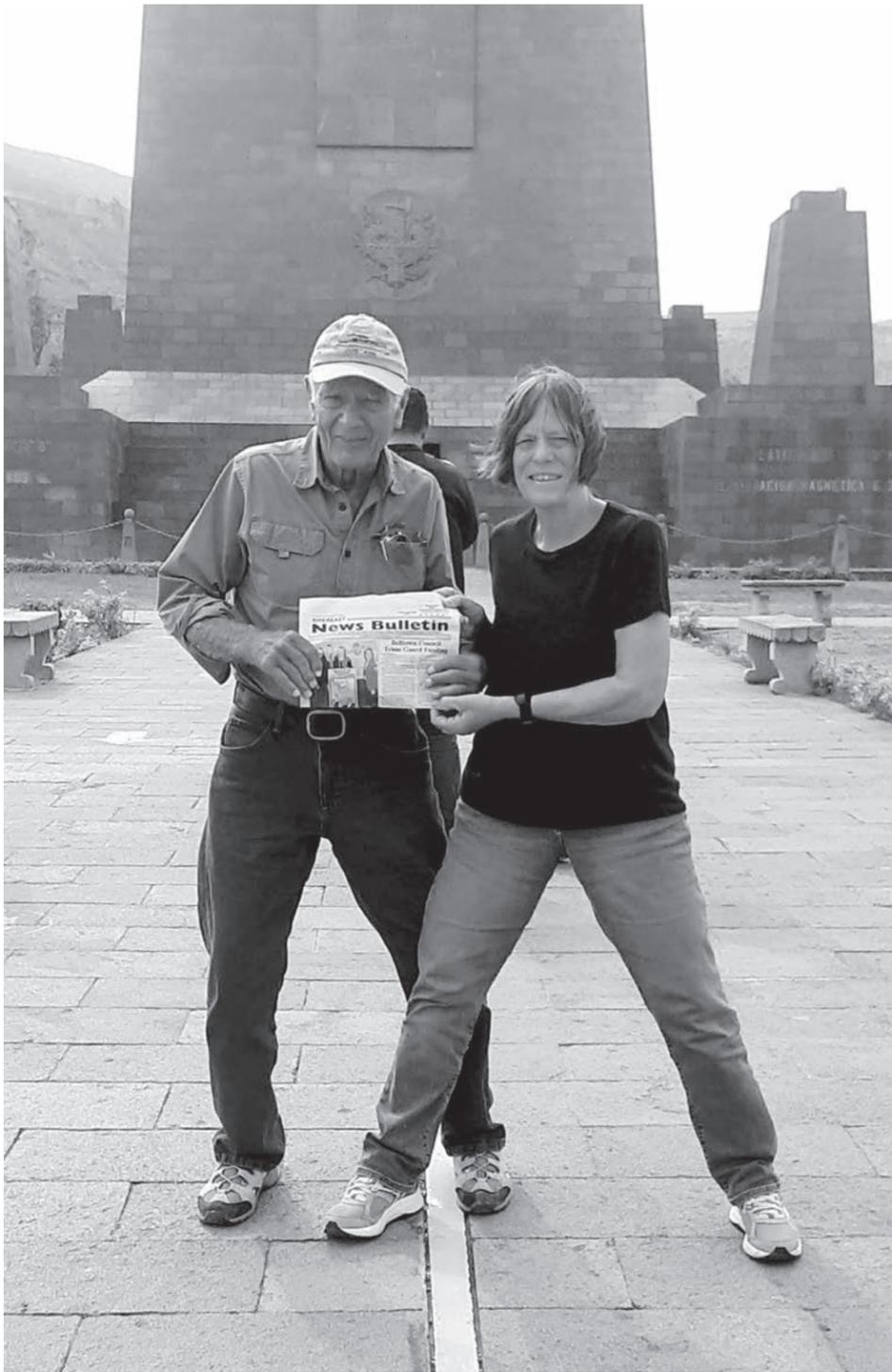
Rivereast Goes to Dubai... Rich Domonkos of Portland recently spent a week in Dubai. In the background is the skyline of Dubai and the Burj Khalifa skyscraper.

Where in the World is the *Rivereast*?

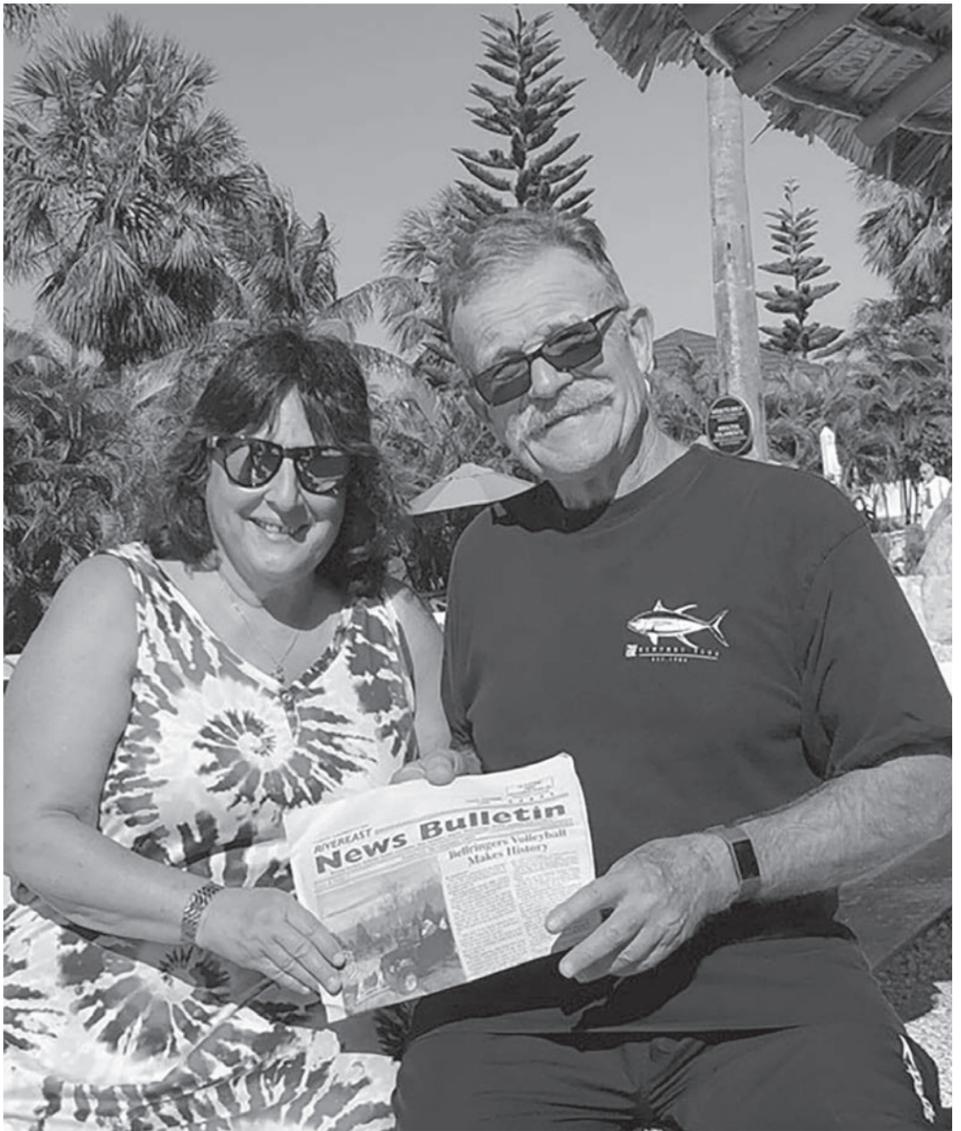
Hey! Are you taking a vacation or a day trip soon? Bring the *Rivereast* along with you, snap a picture with it, and email the photo and your address to bulletin@glcitizen.com.



The Millers in New Mexico... The Miller Family from Marlborough spent the Thanksgiving holiday skiing in Taos, New Mexico. Pictured are Scott, Stephanie, Chrissy, Max, Frima and Bert Miller.



A Tale of Two Hemispheres... Bill Drinkuth and Diana Tyler of Hebron are shown here at the Center of the World Monument in Ecuador, South America, holding the *Rivereast*. They are straddling the equator, each with one foot in each hemisphere – North and South.



Down in the Dominican... Jack and JoAnn Fairburn of North Westchester recently visited Puerto Plata in the Dominican Republic.

Where in the World?

**Going on a trip?
Bring along the *Bulletin*!**

Submit your travel photo holding the *Rivereast News Bulletin*, and you will win a \$25 Gift Card to Campagna Restaurant if your photo is one the four entries selected!

To enter, email your photo and address to: bulletin@glcitizen.com

\$25 GIFT CARD

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Restaurant & Lounge

Fine Italian & American Cuisine
151 Marlborough Street (Rt 66), Portland



Obituaries

Portland

Elizabeth Dawicki

Elizabeth Ann St. Paul Dawicki, 30, beloved wife of Michael Dawicki, sadly left this earth much too soon on Monday, Jan. 23. She leaves behind the loves of her life: daughter, Natalya Ledger, and son, Asher Dawicki.

Born in Middletown on July 30, 1992, to Joal Balzer Lentz and Robert St. Paul Jr., Elizabeth came into this world a beautiful soul inside and out. She graduated from Vinal Regional Technical School and was employed as a Registered Behavioral Technician at Meliora Academy in Meriden, where she was dedicated to assisting students on the autism spectrum.

In addition to her husband, children, and parents, she is survived by her brother, Troy Lentz, and sister, Stacey Lentz; grandparents, Carolyn St. Paul and Robert and Diane Lentz; father-in-law, Raymond Dawicki Sr.; sister-in-law, Kristy McDermott; brothers-in-law, Raymond Dawicki Jr. and Shaun Dawicki; aunts, Linda (Chris) Carlo and Diane St. Paul; and uncle, Scott Lentz.

She is predeceased by her adoring stepfather, Robert (Duster) Lentz; and grandparents, Albert (Butch) and Joanne Balzer, and Robert St. Paul Sr.; mother-in-law, Denise Williams; and Brandon Dawicki.

Family and friends may call to celebrate Elizabeth's life today, Friday, Feb. 3, from 3-6 p.m., at the Doolittle Funeral Home, 14 Old Church St., Middletown. Burial will be private.

To share memories or send condolences to the family, please visit www.doolittlefuneralservice.com.

A memorial fund is being set up to assist the Dawicki family with expenses. Contributions may be sent to tinyurl.com/3e9hrbhv.



Portland

JoAnne Tripp

JoAnne (Mello) Tripp, 79, of Portland, beloved wife, mother and grandmother, passed away peacefully in the early morning of Friday, Jan. 20. JoAnne was born Nov. 23, 1943, in New Bedford, Mass., daughter of Joseph Mello and Marguerite (Gaudreau) Pimental.

JoAnne is survived by her sister, Theresa Gomes; son Ronald and his wife Debra; son James and his wife Elizabeth; daughter Lori and her partner Daniel; and son David and his wife Anastasia. She is also survived by 12 grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren.

JoAnne grew up in New Bedford, Mass. She and David, her late husband of 55 years, moved to North Dartmouth, Mass., where they raised their four children. JoAnne was a longtime employee of the Office Supply Company. She also worked as a sales associate at Aaron Pools and Spas. Upon retirement, she lived for several years in Maine, enjoying activities such as fishing and snowmobiling. JoAnne and David ultimately retired to Florida, where they spent 15 years in North Fort Myers.

JoAnne was a member of the Red Hat Society. She loved dancing, reading, playing bocce, attending the theatre and hosting dinner parties. She will be greatly missed by family and friends.

In lieu of flowers, please consider donating to St. Jude's Hospital.

The family is planning a memorial gathering to be held at the Grange Hall, located at 17 Sage Hollow Rd., Portland, on Saturday, Feb. 18, at 11:30 a.m.



Colchester

Shane Thomas Graves

Shane (Zane) Thomas Graves passed away at home in Colchester Tuesday, Jan. 31, following the rapid onset of pancreatic cancer. Zane was born July 5, 1980, in Colchester, and studied film and video production at Brooks Institute of Photography. He carried his love for art throughout his life.

Zane was a painter, an artist, and an enthusiastic tabletop gamer. A long-time employee of Sarge's Comics and Games in New London, Zane loved the storytelling and comradery of the gaming community. His creativity, humor and booming voice were integral parts of the love and passion he brought with him into these spaces, and they will be deeply missed. One of his proudest achievements included being retweeted by Neil Gaiman. Something of a human tomcat, Zane gathered friends wherever he went, near and far.

He was predeceased by his grandparents, Joseph and Bernadette Daigle and Robert and Sophy Graves; his father, Jonathan Graves; his uncle, David Daigle; and friends Rose Nylund, Dorothy Zbornak, Blanche Devereaux and Sophia Petrillo.

He is survived by his mother, Adrienne "Dee" Graves of Port Charlotte, Fla.; his aunt, Suzanne Clifford of Port Charlotte, Fla.; aunt, Marie Kuper of Hebron; aunt and uncle, Louise and LTC Michael Griswold of Lacey, Wash.; a niece, three nephews, and many cousins.

Zane also leaves behind a large chosen family of friends, comrades, and accomplices.

Friends may call from 11 a.m.-12:45 p.m. today, Friday, Feb. 3, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. A memorial service will follow calling hours, at 12:45 p.m. Details for the reception will be announced at the funeral home following the service.

In lieu of flowers, please direct donations in Zane's memory to his memorial fund for his burial, to gofund.me/9f4879fc.

To share a memory or express online condolences, please visit www.auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.



Colchester

Diane Lynn Bartlett

Diane Lynn Bartlett, 65, of Colchester, beloved wife of Timothy Bartlett, went to her heavenly home on Thursday, Jan. 26. Born July 27, 1957, in Beaver County, Pa., daughter of the late Edward and Katherine Snyder, she had loved the Lord and her family with all her heart.

Early in life, Diane worked at Aetna and for C&D Construction and went on to own Twice as Nice consignment shop in Colchester. She had a positive impact on many of her loyal customers and friends.

Besides her husband, she is survived by her mother-in-law, Jean Bartlett; a daughter and son-in-law, Jennifer and Thomas Poland, their children Bryce, Avalyne and Cole; son, Christopher Fanelli and wife Meghan of Pennsylvania, their children Zachary, Aiden and Charolette.

She was predeceased by her brother, Douglas Snyder, and her father-in-law, Norman Bartlett of Glastonbury.

The family would like to thank all of the doctors, nurses, support staff for their care.

A small service will be held for immediate family members.

In lieu of flowers, donations in Diane's memory may be made to Hope Church, 230 E. High St., East Hampton, CT 06424. For online condolences please visit www.mulryanfh.com.



Marlborough

Rosalee Jane Boudreau

Rosalee Jane Boudreau passed away in a tragic accident Saturday, Jan. 21. Born Feb. 7, 1989, in Hartford, she also lived in Glastonbury but primarily grew up in Marlborough. Rosie attended Marlborough Elementary School, and RHAM middle and high schools. During those years she was an award-winning drummer. She was also an exceptional athlete in soccer, basketball, and softball. After graduating Porter and Chester Technical School, Rosie worked as a dental assistant and office manager for many years.

Rosalee is survived by her adoring family, parents, Mark Stephen Boudreau Sr. and Jennifer (McElwain) Boudreau; brother, Mark Stephen Boudreau Jr.; children, Jayson Joshua Lavoie and Jasmine Rose Lavoie and their father Joshua Paul Lavoie of East Hartford.

Although Rosalee's grandparents have also passed, her enormous family of aunts, uncles and cousins are devastated by her loss.

Rosalee will be missed by hundreds of people. Anyone who had the pleasure of knowing Rosie know she was one of the kindest and brightest people in the world. She lived life to the fullest with many plans for the future which were unfortunately cut short. Her final resting place will be at Cedar Hill Cemetery where her family will have a private service.

Thank you for all the flowers, food, donations, well-wishes and friendship from our friends and community.



Colchester

Kelsey Anne Wojcik

Kelsey Anne Wojcik, of Colchester, passed away Tuesday, Jan. 24, at Hartford Hospital following a brief illness. She was 29 years old. Kelsey was born in Meriden on Sept. 26, 1991. She was the daughter of Chet Wojcik and Kendall Keaveny.

Kelsey worked at 99 Restaurant for many years before taking ill. Kelsey was kindhearted, loving, quick-witted, and tenacious. She had the most infectious laugh that you couldn't help but laugh with her. Her upbeat personality made for countless friendships that she shared and enjoyed over the years. Kelsey had a kind word for everyone, even complete strangers. She wanted everyone to be happy and she went out of her way to make that happen. She had a great love for all living things and being outdoors. She loved astrology, astronomy, poetry, board games, hiking, music, swimming and cooking. Her favorite places were anywhere near water, especially the ocean.

She will be remembered as a loving daughter, an adoring sister to her brothers, and a friend unlike any other. Her beautiful smile will live on in the hearts of all who knew her.

Her loss will be mourned by many, especially her parents, Kendall Keaveny of Middletown and Chet Wojcik and his wife Becky of Tennessee; her brothers, Brandon Sinclair Matthews of Hartford and Evan Michael Wojcik of Middletown; paternal grandparents, Maria and Jacek Bok of Maiden, N.C.; aunts and uncles, Liz Keaveny and Bob McCusick, Bart and Kathy Keaveny, Erik and Sharon Young, Evelyn and Andy Jachmiec; and many other wonderful extended family members and a host of special friends who stayed by her side through it all. A special thanks to Nicole, Denise, Allie, Alyssa, Melina, Karolina, and Nicole R.

She was predeceased by her maternal grandparents, Bart Keaveny and Bonnie Jean (Williams) Keaveny; and a paternal grandfather, Chester Wojcik.

A celebration of Kelsey's life was held at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old



Hartford Rd., Colchester, on Wednesday, Feb. 1. Burial will be private.

Donations in Kelsey's memory may be made to the charity of one's choice.

We are blessed and humbled by having Kelsey in our lives. She was taken from us too young but she will live on in our hearts forever.

To share a memory or express a condolence to Kelsey's family, please visit www.auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

East Hampton

Aimee Michelle Soucy

Aimee Michelle Soucy, 35, of East Hampton and formerly of East Haddam, passed away Thursday, Jan. 26, at her home. Born June 26, 1988, in Middletown, she was the daughter of Rock Soucy of Colchester and Wendy Gorman of East Hampton. Aimee had attended school in East Haddam.

Besides her parents, she is survived by her maternal grandparents, Roger Davis and Mary (Gorman) Davis of Old Lyme; two brothers, Timothy Gorman of Moodus, Jeremy Gorman of East Hampton; two aunts, Sandra Percak of New London, Tammy Gorman of East Haddam, and uncle Ward Gorman III of Moodus; nephew Logan Gorman; and several aunts and uncles out of state.

Friends called at the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, on Wednesday, Feb. 1.

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

Andover

Curtis Walter Dowling

Curtis Walter Dowling, beloved husband of Marjorie Koczka-Dowling, together for 26 years, of Andover, passed away Friday, Jan. 27, at the Reservoir Rehab, after a short illness. He was born Sept. 29, 1953, in Manchester, to the late Donald and Bette (Tedford) Dowling. Curt graduated from RHAM High School in 1971 and has resided in Andover his whole life.

Curt (CD) was employed by CL&P/Ever-source in Willimantic and East Hampton. He retired after 43 years as chief lineman, also working as a union representative. Curt was active in the Andover Volunteer Fire Department from the age of 16, and still actively participated after 53 years. He served in many capacities during his tenure, including as the fire chief for 22 years, from 1982 to 2004. He then went on to become a member of the Board of Fire Commissioners, where he served dutifully for the remainder of his life.

Over the years, Curt was involved in many committees for the Town of Andover including the CIP Committee and, most recently, the Board of Finance. He was also a member of the Tolland County Fire Chiefs Association and Board of Directors. Continuing his love of the fire service, Curt even worked as a salesman for E-One Fire Apparatus and Firematic Supply, selling fire trucks for more than 25 years to many fire departments in eastern Connecticut.

In addition to his wife, Curt will be dearly missed by his sons, whose accomplishments he was so very proud of, Brian Dowling of Andover and Michael Dowling of Simsbury; his pride and joy, and best buddy, grandson Aidan Michael Dowling of Andover, along with Aidan's mom, Kelly Wood; his brothers, Donald Dowling and wife Christine of Rockledge, Fla., and Steve Dowling of Old Saybrook; along with Uncle Walter Tedford and wife Marie of Vermont; as well as his wife's sisters, Anne, Lynn, Kim and Susan (Joseph), all of Connecticut; and many nieces and nephews. He is also survived by his ex-wife, Wendy Dowling of Manchester, and his puppy, Bella Rose.

Besides his parents, he was predeceased by his sister, Debbie King, and brother, Mark Dowling.

Calling hours will be today, Friday, Feb. 3, from 4-8 p.m., at Holmes-Watkins Funeral Home at 400 Main St., Manchester. Church services are to follow on Saturday, Feb. 4, at 11 a.m., at the Andover Congregational Church, 359 Jonathan Trumbull Hwy (Route 6), in Andover, followed by a celebration of life at the Andover Volunteer Fire Department, located at 11 School Road. Burial will be later in the spring.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations in Curt's memory may be made to the Andover Volunteer Fire Department, 11 School Rd., Andover CT 06232.

To view Curt's tribute page or leave an online condolence, please visit holmeswatkins.com.



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

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

**LEGAL NOTICE
 TOWN OF PORTLAND**
 Notice is hereby given that the Audited Financial Statements of the Town of Portland for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2022, as prepared by Mahoney Sabol & Company LLP, Certified Public Accountants, are on file in the office of the Town Clerk of Portland, Connecticut, for public inspection.
 ATTEST: Michael V. Tierney
 Portland Town Clerk
 Dated at Portland, Connecticut, this 31st day of January, 2023
 1TB 2/3

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FREE
FREE: NEW VANITY MIRROR:
 Free 40" x 60" in original shipping container. Call or text 518-588-3388 to arrange pick up in East Hampton.

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

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NORTHEAST Auto & Truck Inc. We are located off Route 2 Eastbound between Glastonbury and Colchester.

HELP WANTED: DuBosar Irrigation Landscape Construction Company looking to hire laborers, technicians, and equipment operators. Great starting pay and work environment. Experience in industry helpful but will train. Reasonable workday hours, starting March-April. Valid driver's license a plus but not necessary. Immediate positions also available for snow removal. 860-206-4705

SHEET METAL MECHANICS & HELPERS: Full time, apprenticeship program offered, health insurance, 401(k) plan. Pay range \$20 - \$30/hour. Call 860-828-3762.

EMPLOYMENT

WELDER/FABRICATOR: Custom sheet metal fabrication, light structural, 45-50 hour per week with good benefits, health insurance, and 401(k) plan. Pay range \$25 - \$35/hour. Call 860-828-3762.

COOK WANTED: Stop in to The Greenleaf Cafe in Hebron for details. Or call 860 228-8148

WAREHOUSE POSITION: Seeking full time, energetic, organized individual for small local company. Great family type work environment. Occasional heavy lifting/Light phone duties/ Customer contact. \$20-\$25 an hour DOE /Plus benefits! Training provided. Apply in person at: Yost Associates 224 Eastern Blvd Glastonbury M-F 8:00-5:00 **POSITIVELY NO PHONE CALLS!**

HELP WANTED: CASO'S HVAC, LLC, East Hampton, CT is now hiring Commercial & Residential HVAC Mechanics/ Technicians. B2 or S2 License Required. Must have at least 5 years experience. We offer competitive hourly wages. Please email resume to caso-hvac@comcast.net or call 860-267-5851.

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 Nationally-recognized cheesemaker seeks a cheesemonger (sales person) for our farm shop. Job description at www.catocornerfarm.com/contact

FARM HELP WANTED: Horse Feeding at East Haddam/ Colchester farm. Call John for more info. 860-680-5149



Parks and Recreation – Seasonal Employment
 The Town of East Hampton is accepting applications for the following seasonal positions:
 • Lifeguards: \$16.50 per hour. Must have lifeguard certification.
 • Park Gate Attendant: \$15.00 per hour.
 Job descriptions and an employment application may be found at www.easthamptonct.gov. Please submit your application to the Town of East Hampton, Department of Human Resources, 1 Community Drive, East Hampton, CT 06424, or by email to lseymour@easthamptonct.gov by 2/23/2023, or until filled. EOE/AA/M-F. 1TB 2/3

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BOARD CLERK
 The Town of Marlborough is accepting applications for part time Board Clerks for approximately 3 to 6 hours per month. This position is responsible for transcribing minutes and motions for boards and commissions. The position requires attendance at meetings on weeknight evenings. Candidates must have excellent writing skills and be proficient in word processing on a personal computer. A Town of Marlborough Employment Application and Board Clerk job description are available in the Town Clerk's office, online at marlboroughct.net or by calling 860-295-6206. Completed applications are to be submitted to the Town Clerk, P.O. Box 29, 26 North Main St., Marlborough, CT 06447. Open until filled. We consider applicants for all positions without regard to race, creed, religion, gender, national origin, disability, age, marital or veteran status, sexual orientation, or any other legally protected status. 3TB 1/20, 1/27, 2/3

Senior Center Van Driver – P/T \$17/Hr.
 The Town of Marlborough is accepting applications for a part-time Senior Center Van Driver for Wednesday and Friday from 8am to 12noon. This position is responsible for safely driving seniors and persons with disabilities to appointments and outings on an assigned schedule. Valid Connecticut Driver's License and Class A/B Public Service License with Endorsement F is required. The full job description and employment application are available from the Town Clerk's office at Town Hall or online at www.marlboroughct.net. Please submit an application and cover letter to: Marlborough Town Clerk, 26 North Main Street, P.O. Box 29, Marlborough, CT 06447. This position will remain open until filled. The Town of Marlborough is an Equal Opportunity Employer. 2TB 2/3, 2/10

REAL ESTATE

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WANTED TO RENT / LEASE: House, apt or condo in Glastonbury area from May 26 to Aug 5. Would like 2 B/R's, furnished and pet-friendly. We have 2 y/o female Lab, house-trained and only barks at door bell ringers. Dates are flexible but daughter is delivering a son in mid-June. We have references and used to live in G-bury. Please call 860-918-1851 if interested. Thanks

RENTALS
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