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News Bulletin

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

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May 26, 2023

Belltown Budget Vote is Next Week

By Jack Lakowsky

This year's budget season in East Hampton hasn't been light on fireworks. It's featured anger, rancor, raised voices, back-and-forth accusations among members of different boards – and even calls for resignations.

It will all come to a head next Tuesday, when local taxpayers will head to the polls to cast their ballots in the 2023-24 budget referendum.

Between the two, the school district's budget up to \$35.61 million, bumped up about \$1.34 million, or close to 4%. On the town side, spending's up about \$510,000, totaling \$17.99 million, an increase of 2.91%.

As the East Hampton budget is now bifurcated, residents will be faced with two separate numbers: The \$17.99 million proposed town government budget, which is an increase of \$510,000, or 2.91%, over the current year; and the \$35.61 million proposed Board of Education budget, which is up about \$1.34 million, or 4%, over current year spending.

If approved next week, the budget would feature a mill rate of 35.83, up from 34.66, a 1.17, or a 3.38%, increase. East Hampton had some healthy Grand List growth, up almost \$13 million, and now totals \$1.1 billion, a growth rate of 1.17%.

The school budget has garnered the lion's share of the public's attention this year. Just last week East Hampton students picketed along Main Street, advocating voters say 'no' to the budget. Not because it's too high, but because it's too low. Students, teachers, parents and the GOP-majority school board have been at odds with the Republican-controlled Town Council and Board of Finance, both of which made – largely unpopular – reductions to the Board of Education's budget request.



On Saturday, May 20, a rainy morning didn't stop East Hampton students from rallying the community to "vote no, too low" at the East Hampton 2023-24 budget referendum next Tuesday, May 30. Many in town have slammed the proposed spending package for what they feel is an inadequate budget for Belltown schools.

Until the finance board made about \$800,000 in cuts to the school board budget and some emergency service requests, the budget season had been largely uneventful. The finance board's cuts stoked some serious anger and frustration. The council heard, and ultimately rebuffed, impassioned pleas to return the budget to the finance board to restore what it cut. At one point, finance board Republican Richard Brown questioned if teachers were doing their jobs – a comment that sparked much criticism.

On the Town Council, the votes to send the budgets to referendum – as opposed to back to the finance board – were very close, with both passing 4-3, with Council Republicans for both the education and the town budgets split 4-3, with Republicans Mark Philhower, Alison Walck, Brandon Goff and Eric Peterson approving, and Democrats Pete Brown and Kevin Reich, as well as Republican Tim Feegel, voting against.

Disagreements drew the attention of all the

state's TV news outlets, joining residents in the crowded Town Council chambers twice.

These four councilors also voted to send the town budget to vote without the \$174,000 for the local East Hampton Ambulance Association, another item multiple locals wanted restored.

This year, when residents head to the polls, they'll be faced with advisory questions – asking whether the budgets were "too high" or "too low."

Water Prices Increase

In other news, the Town Council this week reviewed an increase in water prices, from \$11.50 to \$12 per gallon.

The council does not have power over the regional water supplier, the Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA), which serves Marlborough, Colchester, Hebron and Lebanon.

A public hearing is set for June 6, with further consideration by the council on June 13.

It's the first increase in four years, according to information from East Hampton Town Manager Dave Cox.

Public Utilities Administrator Scott Clayton presented the WPCA's proposed budget, which increases by \$3,806 (1.6%) to \$241,730. The proposed rate increase for the upcoming year would be the first in four years.

On Tuesday town council chair Mark Philhower complimented the small increase, saying he knows of towns facing 10% spikes in water prices.

Clayton said there was no choice but to raise prices.

The WPCA's budget is separate from the town's bifurcated school and town budgets.

Multi-Town Trail Committee Formed

Also, staff and representatives of the town's Air Line Trail committee have been participating in meetings with the other towns along the

See Belltown Budget, page 24

Andover Kicks Off 175th Celebration

By Jack Lakowsky

Last Thursday, a time capsule burial opened the monthslong celebration of the Town of Andover's birthday, still a bright-eyed spring chick-en at 175 years young.

The gathering, held at Town Hall, was just the start of a bunch of celebrations running from last week until the end of June, all celebrating Andover's present, past and future. Organizers passed out historical information and details about the town's rich farming community and history, a truly impressive compilation of detailed information.

Andover Elementary School (AES) choral students showed their stuff, clear as bells without mics and outside – not easy, any performer will tell you. They belted "America the Beautiful" and, a bit less traditional, a ditty from Disney's *Aladdin*, little voices reaching high to hit those wallops of notes before they broke off to nosedive into some cupcakes or earn some grass stains, as have generations of local kids, about

10 of them, to be a little more precise.

Also precise was the 175th kick-off, according to organizing committee chair Catherine Magaldi Lewis. Scheduled for a Thursday, a little different than the usual weekend gathering, the celebration began on exactly the day Andover earned its township in 1848, on May 18.

And it wasn't easy, according to town historian Scott Yeomans. It actually took about 130 years to get officially chartered as a town of the State of Connecticut. By time the state recognized Andover, colonizers had been here 110 years.

Scott Yeomans, town historian, went over Andover's long road, or cart path, to becoming an official town.

The town started as most New England towns after the arrival of European colonizers, an ecclesiastical society in the aegis of a church. Andover-ians were stuck between long trips to church in Columbia or Hebron or other towns,

quite literally over the river and through the woods.

So, in 1743, Andover's earliest got together and formed their own church-centered community. This was a temporary solution to the travelling issue, though, a far more strenuous undertaking 250+ years ago. Residents still had to travel to other towns for civic duties – voting, paying taxes.

The town applied to be chartered a few times in the 1750s, denied several towns.

Then as now, Yeomans said, persistence paid off. Took a century and some change, but it happened, and 175 years later, Andover has grown from a town of a few hundred to a few thousand – tiny by today's standards, but still a manifold, sustained growth.

State Rep. Steve Weir (R-55), who's been making the rounds in his towns, Andover included, said seeing so many friends gathered, hearing

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RE5-19-23



Awareness and Early Detection Are Key to Preventing Lyme Disease...

- After coming in from outside, immediately put your clothes in the dryer for 10 minutes. This will dry out and kill any ticks on or in the clothing.
- Do a full tick check, getting any ticks off as early as possible. If a tick is found embedded, pull it out by using fine point tweezers at the head, do not squeeze the body and send all the fluids in the tick into the person it is attached to.
- If you find an attached tick save it. Put it in a container with a moist cotton ball, so if you start to feel sick or get a rash the tick can be sent to a lab to see what infections it has.
- Don't wait or assume Lyme disease is hard to catch and easy to cure, as nothing can be further from the truth!

May Was Lyme Disease Awareness Month

Here are some facts, you may or may not know:

- 72% of chronic Lyme patients see four or more doctors before being diagnosed, creating delays which will profoundly impact their quality of life.
- Lyme disease is no joke and little tiny creatures can cause so much trouble. Ticks carry many bacteria, viruses, fungi and protozoans all at the same time and transmit them in a single bite.
- Tick bites affect animals too, make sure and do a full tick check on your animals when they come in from the outside. Close to 1 million canine positive tests results annually in the U.S. Checking for the animals health as well as a tick may just be on them and then get onto a person in the house.
- Neurological symptoms are amongst the highest reported with Lyme patients. These symptoms range from headaches, vision problems, vertigo, seizures, balance and coordination problems, insomnia, brain fog, memory problems where forgetting even the simplest tasks happens, to depression and mood changes. Be tick aware!

In the fullness of time, the mainstream handling of chronic Lyme disease will be viewed as one of the most shameful episodes in the history of medicine.

— Kenneth B. Leignor, MD

RE5-3-22

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Last Thursday kids and old timers of Andover got together to start a celebration of Andover's nearly 200 years in business. Here, town, state officials and students bury a time capsule and plant a commemorative tree.

★ *Andover Celebration, cont. from page 1*

kids laugh as they get those grass stains, is a far cry from three years ago, when the pandemic was raging full-throttle and forced everyone, particularly the elderly and the immunocompromised, into quarantines.

"It's great to see everyone having such a great time," said Weir.

Weir, stylish socks and all, said went he got to the legislature, mentioning he represents the 55th tends to tilt some heads. Where, they say?

"Pam Sawyer's old district," Weir tells them, invariably getting a response of, "Oh right!"

Sawyer ably served the 55th, which at the time also included Hebron, Marlborough and Bolton, from 1993 to 2015, serving as minority whip and assistant minority leader.

Weir went over some broader history that coincided, or nearly did, with Andover's inception.

The same year Andover put on its first pair of pantaloons, gold was found at Sutter's Mill in what is now Coloma, Calif., launching the legendary California Gold Rush, and the territory now called Wisconsin got its statehood.

Also, it was just a year before the end of the Mexican-American War, victory in which got the U.S. a huge swath of land, and just after the Potato Famine in Ireland spurred throngs of Irish immigrants to American shores. All the while, little Andover was growing and thriving.

"This is a vibrant community with engaged

town leadership," said Weir. "I hope this town stays so blessed."

Andover's First Selectman Jeff McGuire also had some nice things to share, along with a soft call to action for locals. He joked, "I thought we didn't get anything done now, then I heard it took them 130 years to get a town."

"There's so much history here," he said, "and we need to learn more about it."

Andover had about 500 people at its start, and on their backs the town sprouted to what it would grow into in the coming 175 years.

McGuire finished up with a call for volunteers – the lifeblood of a town, he said, and it was volunteers that have planned the rush of events between now and the end of June.

"The more we do together the stronger we will be, the longer we will last" he said.

Young Andover poet Rebecca King delivered her "Ode to Andover" a contemplative poem appreciating Andover's natural beauty, its bucolic pace.

The time capsule buried behind the school was very on-brand, with all sorts of 175th gear and literature about the town.

Organizers listed the fun stuff planned between now and the "finale" the 175th beach party at Andover Lake, starting at 11 a.m.

For a full list of events, check andoverconnecticut.org/175th-anniversary-committee.

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

Standout Athletes of the Week

By Josh Howard

Here are the *Rivereast* Standouts of the Week for the week of May 15 - 21:

Maddox Burton - Bacon Academy (Lacrosse): Burton had a record-breaking week, becoming the all-time assist leader and then setting the record for career points with the program. Burton, a senior, set a new assist mark during an 18-5 win over Killingly when she scored a season-high 11 points, scoring five goals and dishing out six helpers on May 17. The following night, she tallied nine more points (three goals, six assists) to set a new points mark in a home win over Fitch, extending the Bobcats winning streak to eight games.

Aiden Niderno - East Hampton High School (Track and Field): Niderno took first place and set a personal-best mark in both the high jump and long jump at the League Meet #5 in Clinton. Niderno, a freshman, cleared 5' 8" in the high jump and then covered 19 '9.75" in the long jump as the Bellringers won the tri-meet, defeating Cuginchaug (77.75-62.25) and Morgan (104.67-30.33).

Josh Hanna - Portland High School (Base-

ball): Hanna connected on a pair of doubles, driving in three runs and scoring two more as the Highlanders knocked off East Hampton 13-3 at Palmer Field on May 17. The 13 runs were a season-high for Portland, who also got three hits and three runs from Austin Vess, and another three hits from Ethan Krasniewski. The win also avenged a 9-2 loss to the Bellringers from April 20.

Chase Massey - RHAM High School (Baseball): Massey pitched a gem, throwing seven scoreless innings and striking out 10 as the RHAM blanked East Hampton 3-0 on May 15. Massey, a senior, did the damage from the mound and the Raptors' bats provided insurance runs early, scoring all three runs over the first three innings. Ethan Polochanin provided the highlight when he drove in a pair of runs on a double, scoring Fayz Baig and Camden McPeck in the third inning.

To nominate someone as an Athlete of the Week, or to offer sports-related comments, email joshhowardsports@gmail.com

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From the Editor's Desk

Observations & Ruminations

By Mike Thompson

Memorial Day, one of the most solemn American holidays, is on Monday. Schools and many businesses will be closed – as they should be. It's a day to remember the fallen; those who gave their lives in the hopes that their brothers, sisters, children, neighbors could have a brighter tomorrow.

So on this occasion, I thought I'd share a few Memorial Day poems – all in the public domain, of course – starting with the classic "In Flanders Fields." As longtime *Rivereast*-area residents will recall, for years this poem was read at various local Memorial Day ceremonies by beloved former state representative Pam Sawyer.

In Flanders Fields – by John McRae
In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

Before Marching, and After – by Thomas Hardy - 1840-1928
(In Memoriam F. W. G.)

Orion swung southward aslant
Where the starved Egdon pine-trees had
thinned,
The Pleiads aloft seemed to pant
With the heather that twitched in the wind;
But he looked on indifferent to sights such
as these,
Unswayed by love, friendship, home joy or
home sorrow,
And wondered to what he would march on
the morrow.

The crazed household clock with its whirr
Rang midnight within as he stood,
He heard the low sighing of her
Who had striven from his birth for his
good;
But he still only asked the spring starlight,
the breeze,
What great thing or small thing his history
would borrow
From that Game with Death he would play
on the morrow.

When the heath wore the robe of late summer,
And the fuchsia-bells, hot in the sun,
Hung red by the door, a quick comer
Brought tidings that marching was done
For him who had joined in that game over-
seas

Editor's Desk continued on page 5

Bulletin Board

Some ruminations this week about random stuff.

--I saw a TV news story the other day where a city fire department (New Haven, if I remember correctly) asked people to display a red light on their front porch to demonstrate their support for firefighters. Now, don't get me wrong. I'm all for supporting firefighters, but a red light? Really? Did it occur to the organizers of this red-light tribute that participants are likely to find drunken sailors lining up to knock on their doors at all hours of the night? Just sayin'...

--Also in the news recently was a fatal crash involving two cars that were engaging in a race— weaving in and out of traffic at high speeds—on Blue Hills Avenue in Bloomfield. One car hit a utility pole, severing it; the other hit a building and caught fire. One person was killed and four others were hurt—two of them suffering "life-threatening" injuries. A TV news reporter caught up with a local town official or councilman of some sort who, if I understood him correctly, blamed the road for the accident. Right. Two morons race recklessly through traffic at high speeds, end up in a serious accident, one gets killed, and it's the road's fault. How could I have been so blind? This sounds more like something a lawyer would come up with.

--In another road-related incident, royal expatriates Harry and Megan claimed last week that they'd been the victims of a high-speed two-hour "near catastrophic" chase by a horde of paparazzi in New York City. Call me cynical, but I don't know how you could have a high-speed chase of any kind in New York City traffic, never mind one that lasts for two hours, unless the two royal pains in the butt had to keep stopping so the paparazzi could keep up. Still, my heart goes out to poor Harry and Megan. I'm guessing that for them the only thing worse than being hounded by paparazzi would be if they were completely ignored. But, please, just go back to California (or, better yet, England) and spare us the drama, will you?

--You may have seen that the term "homeless" is being increasingly replaced by the term "unhoused" or "our unhoused neighbors" in the latest current speak. My first reaction was that this is a marketing ploy, much as "used cars" became "pre-owned cars" and "car thieves" morphed into "joy riders." Still, presuming that the term "homeless" evolved from the more derogatory "bums" or "vagrants" of days past, I guess "unhoused" might be considered a step in the same more empathetic direction, though I do find it a bit awkward. Will we now find ourselves referring to the toothless as the "untoothed" or the witless as the "unwitted?" And do the semantics of referring to the homeless as the "unhoused" do anything at all to alter the reality of their unfortunate situation? Maybe it's just nicer. Anyway, if you think I'm missing the point here, I'd appreciate it if you'd just consider me "unclued" as opposed to clueless.

--I've been reading and hearing a lot over the past couple of weeks about raising the debt ceiling. I can't help but wonder, at what point does constantly raising the debt ceiling send our debts through the roof? (Sorry, sometimes I can't help myself.)

--Apologies to partisan Democrats and Republicans, but how is it that we find ourselves with one presidential candidate who looks like he needs a diaper change and another who (in my humble opinion) needs to be hauled off in a straitjacket? Is this the best our country has to offer? (Please, please, say no.)

--I was intrigued to read that an elderly couple in India is suing their only son for not giving them a grandchild. The couple says they spent a lot of money on raising their son, giving him a good education and helping him to become an airline pilot, but the darn ingrate has yet to give them a grandchild, which has caused them "a great deal of sadness." Now, with no grandchild apparently in the offing, they want a \$643,000 repayment of their estimated expenses. While this may seem a little off the wall to most people, I totally understand where they're coming from. I spent an untold fortune raising two now adult sons (most of it in grocery bills) and I'm still forced to shovel my driveway in the winter and cut my own grass in the summer. It never occurred to me that I might be able to sue them for failing to live up to my unreasonable expectations. I can honestly say that their disregard for my misconceptions has caused me mental anguish, not to mention what may have been two or three near heart attacks and at least two bee stings (suffered simultaneously when I ran over a bees' nest with the lawn mower). I now intend to fully explore my legal options.

--Well, that's my venting for this week. Hope I didn't raise your blood pressure to unsafe levels, but as my proposed family motto declares, *suus semper aliquid* ("It's always something").

Jim Hallas

Rivereast Hours of Operation

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



Planting of Veterans Memorial... On Monday, May 22, members of the Portland River Valley Garden Club and the Portland Garden Club met for the annual planting of the Veterans Memorial Garden just outside of the Town Hall. The red, white and blue flowers planted were a memorial to honor the lives of the veterans who served the U.S. All the flowers for the garden were donated by Gotta's Farm. From left are Susan Dwyer, Sue Wesoloski, Sue Ferguson, Janice Cross, Jane Klemba, Colleen Brede, Rose Bucheri, Sue Anderson, Bonnie Jackson, Diane Bascom, Lucinda Patrick, Mary Ellen Nocera and Mary Ann Libera. The clubs also gave a special thanks also to Bill Willinsky, chair of the Veterans Affairs Committee, who helped with the watering of the garden.

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

Deadline Still Tuesday

The *Rivereast* offices will be closed next Monday, May 29, for Memorial Day. However, the deadline for next week's issue – the June 2 edition – will remain the same. All copy must be received by noon Tuesday, May 30. No exceptions will be made.

East Hampton Budget

To the Editor:

The proposed education budget includes an increase of \$1.3 million over the present budget and an increase of \$527,000 for general government. Please vote at Town Hall on May 30.

Ray Zatorski – East Hampton

Note: Zatorski is chair of the East Hampton Planning and Zoning Commission, but is speaking as an individual.

Divided Society

To the Editor:

A lesson everyone can benefit from:
I was recently scammed out of \$500. There is no way to recoup this money. I will have to pay the credit card. While frustrated with this monetary loss, it made me think of where we are as people. The scammers are here to stay. Quite frankly they are smarter than most of us! However, their attitude of 'me first, and too bad for the other person' is prevalent throughout our society.

As a terribly divided society, we are so centered around our own beliefs, politics, world views and faith we are slamming closed doors rather than opening them to listen, to lend a helping hand and to discriminate less. Each week in this paper we see a constant diatribe between several people, strongly expressing their political views. Do you really think expressing yourself this way while mocking others will convince others to go along with your beliefs?

How do we fix such a divided society? It's not that hard. Education is the key to most of what we don't know or don't understand. Giving of yourself to others is neces-

sary. Volunteer, do something kind for others. Money is nice but actually helping a neighbor, a child or someone in need is a far greater gift. And the bonus is, you feel better about yourself.

Do the right thing. It is not always easy but if you do things for the right reason, people respect you and even if they don't agree with you they will see you as a fair person. Going forward, we need to do what is right. Listen more, argue less and lend a helping hand. By doing so, the world will become a more peaceful and integrated society rather than one so divided.

Marilyn McGrath – Portland

Let Your Voice Be Heard

To the Editor:

For about the last two months, the town of Colchester and the Board of Finance have pondered over the recently proposed education budget for the next fiscal year. The Colchester Public Schools Board of Education proposed a 9% increase in the education budget as compared to the previous year to Colchester residents. The increase has been met with mixed opinions as well as various questions regarding the new budget proposal. One of those questions asked what a less severe increase at around 5% looks like in terms of cuts to the budget. Superintendent Dan Sullivan III answered with a slew of cuts including the offering of strictly half-day kindergarten, removing world language from our middle school, as well as cutting the band program entirely from Jack Jackter Intermediate School and WJMS.

As a student at Bacon Academy High School and lifetime resident of Colchester, I cannot stand to witness such drastic cuts to our children's education system. I personally went through the district's music education and world language programs. I can say that without a doubt, the music program became an integral part of my life and childhood. Thanks to the support of my educators, I've developed a strong passion for understanding musical concepts and instruments. Stripping the art of music away from our future students here is an unacceptable cut the school will be forced to make if the budget is not passed. Town residents would not be pay-

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ing more money, but investing that money back into our community of Colchester.

To the residents of Colchester, I urge you to support the Board of Education and attend the budget hearings open to the public. Let the board hear your input because it is very important.

Ian Sargent – Colchester

Colchester School Budget

To the Editor:

The current school budget is unreasonable. The recent proposal made in March for the budget increase, its placed a negative impact on future students and their education. With a school budget increase of 9.83%, the Board of Education had decided that it's more beneficial for teachers and staff to have a salary increase, rather than keep the elective teacher. Even though the town has increased its per-pupil spending on education by 42% over the last decade, LaChapelle once said, "It's not about the money. It's how we spend the money."

As a current student in the local high school, Bacon Academy, my peers and I have found it extremely important to have those extracurricular activities and teachers involved in the education system. These elective and language teachers not only are the most positive and kind role models we have in our school, but these are classes that show students that there are more opportunities in the world besides college. Electives like pre-engineering, manufacturing, video productions, and woods allow students to broaden their horizons. As one of the many students that attend Bacon Academy, please take into consideration how important it is to keep elective courses.

Sincerely,

Kalie Purcell, Bacon Academy student

Charlatans and Evidence

To the Editor:

Sam Prentice defends Tony Heller from charges of being a charlatan. Heller runs the blog <https://realclimatescience.com>, rated Conspiracy-Pseudoscience and Quackery (<https://mediabiasfactcheck.com/real-climate-science/>). It's possible Heller is not a charlatan. If he believes the nonsense he's peddling, he's not a charlatan, only a badly informed menace. Still, he convinces the gullible that he understands NASA's and NOAA's data better than NASA and NOAA; he sounds like a charlatan.

Mr. Prentice says I never back up my claims and in the next sentence complains about URLs I post. Sam, those are evidence backing up my claims! I use easy-to-type URLs in my letters. For instance, I created a link to the fact-check above. Now you can type just <http://link.sauyet.com/77>. If you don't trust these, you can now append "preview" to them. Visiting <http://link.sauyet.com/77/preview>, you'll see the actual URL and can decide whether to click the link.

Prentice's letter – falsely chiding me for not provid-

ing evidence – itself provides no evidence. Don't you love irony? Let's examine one of his claims: that Joe Biden is the worst president in history. This is opinion, but there are actual experts who rank presidents. I know only one poll covering Biden, from Sienna College in 2022 (overview: <http://link.sauyet.com/78>, data: <http://link.sauyet.com/79>), ranking Biden number 19, in the top half. Trump, by contrast, is 43rd out of 45. The other surveys covering Trump place him 41st, 42nd, and last. (Details: <http://letters.sauyet.com/#/2023-05-26>). While Sam Prentice sees Biden as the worst, experts see him as above average and see Trump among the worst. Evidence!

I respond to Prentice's ridiculous outbursts on climate because this is today's defining crisis. I want my grandchildren to inherit a livable world. We're on a path away from that. The nonsense that Heller promotes and Prentice parrots could keep us from finding a better path.

Sincerely,

Scott Sauyet – Andover

Thank You

To the Editor:

St. Patrick Church Guild has placed American flags at the gravesites of veterans buried in St. Patrick Cemetery. This Memorial Day we honor their service to America. May we never forget their contribution to our freedom.

Thank you to the volunteers who helped in this endeavor.

Ann DeMarchi – East Hampton

School Start Times

To the Editor:

Being a teenager and getting up in the morning for school is a struggle, but sleep for teens is more important than you think. Teenagers need at least 8-10 hours of sleep per night and 70% of high-schoolers have reported they don't get this. The main reason for teens not getting enough sleep is school. It would be important to have later school start times, for more benefits.

Teenagers' brains are wired differently when they go through puberty, causing them to be sleepier later at night and causing them to wake up later due to shifts in biological rhythms. Not getting enough sleep is linked to being overweight, having mental health issues, drinking alcohol, smoking tobacco, using substances, and poor academic performance. 93% of high schools in America start before 8:30 am, even though the AAP recommends high schools to start at 8:30 am or later so teens can get their sleep. Schools in California have delayed their start times and already have better proven results including improving grades, better attendance, higher graduation rates, better mental and physical health, and reduced risk of car accidents.

Not only could later school start times benefit teens, but also teachers. More than 40% of teachers get inadequate sleep on weekdays and work start times play a role

in sleep deprivation for teachers. Teachers experiencing sleep deprivation can be more nervous and irritable in the classroom. Putting these negative emotions on high school students reduce their motivation to work.

Pushing back school start times can cause teachers to be less stressed and more effective. Delaying school start times can benefit teens and teachers in many ways, so why not start?

Sincerely,

Ariel Nair – Colchester

Support the EH Budget

To the Editor:

As many of us were told by our parents and likely have said ourselves, let's appreciate what we have and focus less on what we don't have. Here's a sampling of what we have in the budget to be voted on next week:

- \$35.6M for education
- \$1.3M (3.9%) increase over last year
- A bigger dollar increase than approved last year (\$1.3M vs \$1.2M)
- 5% increase in Per Pupil Expenditures over last year
- Salary increases for certified and classified staff

In addition to the \$35.6M in the education budget, there's an additional ~\$700,000 for the Board of Ed in capital improvements. This includes ~\$400,000 for new technology such as high school lab computers, laptops for middle school teachers, projectors for Memorial School, etc. It also includes ~\$100,000 for school security upgrades such as window security film and new electronic access system for the high school, an entry system and camera for the middle school and Alertus mass notification safety system.

Seems like a reasonable budget that deserves support.

David Arcidiacono – East Hampton

Have Some Empathy

To the Editor:

This is what I thought of when I saw the budgets and some may agree and some may disagree. Which is all of our right. But, I want you to think of this before you vote. Gas prices have gone up. Heating oil has gone up. The price of groceries has increased. The cost of going out to eat has gone up. Our electric bills have gone up. This will only get worse. The more our government raise taxes, the more the cost of everything goes up. There are many people who are struggling to get by, and it appears a recession is coming. So now is not the time.

When you go to vote on May 30th at the Town Hall, remember all these things. And if you can afford an increase in taxes, all the power to you. But have some empathy for those who can't.

Respectfully,

Erika Bonaccorso – East Hampton

Project Against Budget Cuts

To the Editor:

I am writing to express my deep concern and strong opposition to the recent budget cuts proposed by the East Hampton Board of Finance and Town Council. As a resident and a concerned member of our community, I believe it is crucial to address the potential negative consequences of these cuts and advocate for their reconsideration.

First and foremost, I want to emphasize the significance of maintaining essential public services that directly impact the quality of life for all citizens. These services are the backbone of a thriving community. Drastic budget cuts can seriously compromise these vital sectors, leading to a decline in the well-being and prosperity of our town.

It is important to recognize that any short-term savings achieved through budget reductions can result in long-term consequences that far outweigh the initial benefits. Neglecting investments in education, for example, can have a detrimental impact on our children's future, limiting their potential and hindering the development of a skilled workforce. Similarly, neglecting key town services such as the East Hampton Ambulance Service can create public health risks in the long run.

Moreover, budget cuts often disproportionately affect the most vulnerable members of our community. Reductions in mental health services for children and healthcare services can have devastating effects on those

who rely on these resources for their basic needs. As a compassionate and inclusive town, we should strive to support and uplift all residents, ensuring that nobody is left behind.

In conclusion, I urge everyone to vote "No" and "Too Low" to force the town's elected officials to reconsider the proposed budget cuts and prioritize the long-term interests of our community. Together, we can find more sustainable and equitable solutions that preserve the essential services and support systems that make our town a great place to live.

Marlene J. Geary – East Hampton

Really?

To the Editor:

The East Hampton Board of Finance carefully and responsibly reviewed the Board of Education budget, which proposed an increase in excess of \$2.1 million. The Board of Finance determined that was not warranted and sent the budget to the Town Council with an increase of \$1,335,058 over the current budget. The Town Council voted to send that amount to be voted on by the taxpayers.

The Board of Finance did the job that we elected them to do. I will be voting 'yes.'

Linda Ursin – East Hampton

East Hampton Referendum

To the Editor:

While name-calling and innuendo have been banded about by certain Board of Ed members towards certain Board of Finance and Town Council members, it remains critical that we are all aware of the facts.

The BoE would have us all focused on a "cut" of almost \$800,000. The important figure which the board and Supt. Paul Smith fail to mention is the actual dollar figure of \$1,300,000 which the schools will actually receive.

The BoE would have us all believe that this projected increase of \$1,300,000 is inadequate and that any increase less than the full amount will leave students inadequately prepared for college or pursuing a trade. I would imagine that as adults, most of us had a school budget reduction once or twice in our educational years and we still managed to find a way to get a good college education, learn a trade and manage to adequately function as adults in the real world.

So regardless of your position on this referendum, every tax paying resident should make the effort to cast their ballot on May 30th. Your vote counts, so please cast your ballot. Please vote for the budget as proposed....it's your wallet!

Mark Cunningham – East Hampton

Incompetent, or Purposefully Misleading?

To the Editor:

After the last Colchester Board of Finance meeting on May 10, the public is left with two equally bad conclusions: the board's chairwoman is either incompetent or she is lying. Even worse, she is followed by two similarly inept or lying minions – John Thomas and Tim Vaillancourt.

How did I come to this conclusion? The chairwoman was unprepared for the last meeting – or was that part of the act? She posted a slide during the Public Hearing with an inaccurate mill rate. Then, she continued to claim that the cuts to education were only \$1.3 million, when the cuts were more than \$1.5 million. I want to think that it was a simple mistake – but the process over the last few weeks has demonstrated her gross incompetence. How can we trust a board that makes over a \$200,000 error and displays an incorrect mill rate? The only other option besides incompetence is that the chairwoman, and her pals John and Tim, were lying – which is even worse. At best, they were incompetent; at worst, it was most definitely ethically deficient, maybe even illegal. In any case, the three members of the BOF that voted to forward this budget failed to fulfill their fiduciary duty to the town.

This budget will decimate our schools. A full current services budget, which is a budget that would provide for 100% of the services afforded this year to our students, would have been a 13.86% increase. Thus, the BOF essen-

See Letters, page 6

Editor's Desk continued from page 4

Where Death stood to win; though his memory would borrow
A brightness therefrom not to die on the morrow.

Dulce et Decorum Est – By Wilfred Owen
Bent double, like old beggars under sacks,
Knock-kneed, coughing like hags, we
cursed through sludge,
Till on the haunting flares we turned our
backs
And towards our distant rest began to
trudge.
Men marched asleep. Many had lost their
boots
But limped on, blood-shod. All went lame;
all blind;
Drunk with fatigue; deaf even to the hoots
Of tired, outstripped Five-Nines that
dropped behind.

Gas! Gas! Quick, boys!—An ecstasy of
fumbling,
Fitting the clumsy helmets just in time;
But someone still was yelling out and stum-
bling
And flound'ring like a man in fire or lime...
Dim, through the misty panes and thick

green light,
As under a green sea, I saw him drowning.

In all my dreams, before my helpless sight,
He plunges at me, guttering, choking,
drowning.

If in some smothering dreams you too
could pace
Behind the wagon that we flung him in,
And watch the white eyes writhing in his
face,
His hanging face, like a devil's sick of sin;
If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood
Come gargling from the froth-corrupted
lungs,
Obscene as cancer, bitter as the cud
Of vile, incurable sores on innocent
tongues,—
My friend, you would not tell with such
high zest
To children ardent for some desperate glo-
ry,
The old Lie: *Dulce et decorum est
Pro patria mori.* * * *

See you next week.

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★ Letters cont. from page 5

tially unilaterally instituted a 10% plus cut to our schools. And they instituted this cut despite a clear majority of public comments voicing grave concern about the impacts on our community. This is the definition of tyranny – a small minority grabbing the reins of power to enact their own selfish agenda. How long until November?

Jeremy M. McKenzie – Colchester

We Won't Forget

To the Editor:

In her self-aggrandizing letter last week, Christina Tammamo-Dzagan, the current BOE chair, praised herself for her humility (?) and decorum. She claimed to refuse to berate people and that she sets an example for children.

Perhaps she forgot her atrocious behavior as she ran down the Town Hall hallway screaming profanities!

Don't worry, Ms. Tammamo-Dzagan; we remember and we will remember in November too.

Richard Brown – East Hampton

Note: Brown is a member of the BOF but said he is writing as a concerned parent and voter.

Tyranny

To the Editor:

America's democracy was founded on the idea that tyranny is easy and democracy and republics are hard. The whole system was set up to prevent one man or one party or one religion from accumulating all the power. If you believe that America should be one white straight Christian nation, ruled by white straight Christian males, the tyranny is you.

Annie Steinbrecher – Marlborough

It's Your Money!

To the Editor:

With all of the drama that is playing out over our budget process in East Hampton, I ask that you understand the facts of the proposed budget and cast your ballot according to what you can afford!

The Facts:

- 3.9% increase for the Board of Education which equates to a \$1.3 million addition to their current budget \$34.2 million. That's \$1.3 million over the current budget! And this does not include the potential \$600K over budget that the BOE will be asking for a bailout from our

'General Fund'!

- 2.9% increase for General Government which equates to an increase of \$527,000 to their current budget of \$17.5 million.

The combined budgets will be a 1.17 mill increase over our current mill rate of 34.66.

It is your money, your family budget! The important thing is to cast your vote on May 30th at the Town Hall from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m.. This is your town and your right to cast your ballot as a taxpayer of East Hampton!

Deborah Cunningham, Member
East Hampton Board of Finance

Vote No, Too Low

To the Editor:

Back in 2021 I ran for Board of Education in the town of East Hampton. We all know what the #1 issue was back then, and many parents sent letters to the editor urging voters to vote Republican to "unmask our kids." When asked by Jack Lakowsky my concerns if Republicans won the BOE, it was unequivocally cuts to the education budget, because of what the Republicans on the Town Council did before the 2019 election.

Thankfully, most of the Republicans on BOE have

shown they put education first. The rest of the Republicans on boards, however, continue to show their disdain for education. I know parents will remember this in November, but please, I urge parents to remember in 2025 and beyond. This is who they are.

Before I moved to town in 2019 Republicans eliminated the budget for Chromebooks for younger students. I remember going to town council meetings back then and watching in disgust as they joked and laughed about how right they were in doing so. Thankfully parents responded and voted them out in 2019 and the Democratic majority restored this funding just in time for the pandemic. Vote no, too low on May 30.

Paul Wisniewski – East Hampton

What Can You Afford?

To the Editor:

The budget you will be voting on May 30 is a budget that delivers all the needs of the town without overtaxing its residents.

If you vote 'no/too low' your property tax bill could increase by \$600. Think about what you can afford before you vote. Your vote is personal. Everyone's situation is different. If you are one of those people (or know someone) who is having trouble buying food, paying the mortgage, affording prescriptions, or paying credit card debt maybe you can't afford to vote 'no/too low'.

Vote for the budget in front of you.

Vote 'yes' on May 30.

The vote will be at the Town Hall.

Alannah Coshow – East Hampton

Note: Coshow is a member of the East Hampton Board of Finance, but is speaking as an individual.

However You Feel, Vote

To the Editor:

By now the pressures from both sides of the issues have probably made you want to find some hole in the ground and hide in it until after the 30th of May referendum on the budget. I can't blame you either.

Bitterness and acrimonious remarks have been fired back and forth. The issues are numerous and some will affect us all in one way or another.

It is your wallet and you know what you can afford or not. That is the issue.

However you feel, please vote. That's important. Whether you agree or disagree with the budgets presented, it is important to do your due diligence and drop a ballot in the box. This we often forget is democracy and the voices of those able to vote should be heard and recognized.

When the final votes are tallied, there will still be some last minute jabs hurled at the opposition. In a referendum there is a winner and a loser. There is no 100% agreement on much, especially now.

You have your options. Please exercise them and make your voice heard. And to all, we say thank you for doing such.

Alison Walck – East Hampton

Note: Walck is a member of the East Hampton Town Council but is speaking as an individual.

Pillars of Our Community

To the Editor:

I am writing to express my unwavering support for the pillars of our community that ensure public safety: the police, ambulance association, and education system.

Our police force plays a crucial role in maintaining law and order. They are the guardians of our community, facing complex challenges on a daily basis. Their unwavering commitment to protecting our lives and property deserves our utmost respect and gratitude. We also owe it to these heroes to make sure they have the resources and personnel necessary to be a successful force.

Similarly, our ambulance association, composed of dedicated paramedics and emergency medical technicians, saves countless lives every day. These professionals work tirelessly, often in high-stress situations, to provide critical medical care and transport those in need to the appropriate healthcare facilities. Their swift response, compassion, and expertise are crucial in saving lives and reducing suffering during times of medical emergencies.

Furthermore, our education system plays an instrumental role in shaping the future of our community. Teachers and educators are the unsung heroes who equip our children with the knowledge, skills, and values they need to succeed. They are the catalysts for personal growth and intellectual development, fostering a sense of curiosity, critical thinking, and lifelong learning. Their dedication to molding the minds of the next generation is commendable and essential for the progress and prosperity of our community.

It is important to recognize the immense challenges

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faced by these pillars of public safety and education. They often work under difficult circumstances, grappling with limited resources, long hours, and a demanding workload. It is incumbent upon us as a community to support and advocate for their needs, ensuring they have the tools, training, and resources necessary to carry out their duties effectively.

Sincerely,
Craig Frost – East Hampton

Prioritize Students

To the Editor:
The definition of a representative is, “(of a legislative or deliberative assembly) consisting of people chosen to act and speak on behalf of a wider group.” However, when four out of the seven members of the Town Council vote against the interests of the ‘wider group,’ they directly contradict their role as representatives. This not only jeopardizes the future of education in our town, but also sets a dangerous precedent in local politics. What purpose does it serve to elect these individuals if they fail to listen to the very people they represent? How can we maintain faith in a system that neglects our concerns?
Besides this, education is the cornerstone of progress and prosperity. It equips youth with the knowledge, skills, and values needed to become responsible citizens. By investing in education, we invest in our collective future.

Yet, these proposed education budget cuts threaten to undermine this foundation. On top of this, our schools are already struggling with an ever growing mental health crisis, with data from the CDC showing over 18% of teen students have considered suicide. If this isn't alarming enough, almost 9% have attempted suicide. In addition, suicide is the 3rd leading cause of death in adolescents. If you're overwhelmed with these statistics, think of how overwhelmed myself and the countless other students who have to deal with this on a daily basis are!

Cutting any teacher increases risks mentioned above, as they are often students only support systems. If there's 30+ kids in a class, teachers simply don't have the time nor ability to recognize when a student is going through a crisis.

It is imperative that we prioritize the well-being and future of the students in East Hampton. I urge everyone to vote 'no, too low' on May 30th at the Town Hall!

Enja Barry
East Hampton High School junior

Brown Should Resign

To the Editor:
Richard Brown, at an April 2023 meeting of the East Hampton Board of Finance: “Why aren't teachers doing their jobs?”

Richard Brown, in a letter published in this newspaper on May 12, 2023: “I commented that teachers needed to do their job.”

Richard Brown, addressing anger directed at him over his previous statement, in a letter published in this newspaper on May 19, 2023: “I told them that I never said that.”

There are a few explanations here. Maybe Mr. Brown has trouble recalling the things he says. Maybe he attends finance meetings in a fugue state. It's entirely possible that he knows what he said, recognizes the error, but is so unwilling to acknowledge his mistake that he instead doubles and triples down on his incredibly poor judgment. Then, following the May 15 BOF meeting, he further criticized the educator that confronted him directly by saying “maybe if you had the English skills you'd realize it.” It was captured on video, so don't bother with the “I didn't say that” garbage.
Mr. Brown, at this stage in my life and career I don't expect to be quoting Looney Tunes characters very often. But you, sir, are despicable. You and your party-line BOF colleagues are quite clearly incapable of understanding the needs of this age-diverse community or the impacts of a three-year pandemic that can't be overcome within a timeline convenient to your own personal or political agendas.

To the Board of Finance: your budget recommendations are incompatible with a thriving community. Without the necessary funding to education, police, ambulance, and other services, East Hampton will suffer.

On May 30, I will be voting No, Too Low on both of your budget recommendations.

Jordan Werme – East Hampton

Yes for Affordability

To the Editor:
The budget developed by our Board of Finance was publicly put together by much hard work and evolved to be an affordable means to achieve what is needed. Our board recognizes that taxpayers must provide for themselves and their families. We all require food, shelter and care – now and in the future.

The board should be supported and thanked for its work in offering a town budget to get the important things done – including education, town government and building maintenance.

A 'yes' vote will provide for the town's needs without an onerous tax burden that would affect our interest in living in East Hampton.

George Coshov – East Hampton

Invest in Colchester

To the Editor:
My wife and I moved to Colchester four years ago. Now we are thinking about leaving. The biggest monetary investment most of us will ever make is buying a home, but since Colchester is not being run like a business, our investment is not being protected.

Without a good school system, taxpayers like my wife and I, who as retired individuals cost the town almost nothing, will leave. And what businesses will want to come to a town with declining schools and a poorly run town government?

One gentleman wrote, in the May 19th edition of *Rivereast*, that we shouldn't give the schools more money because school enrollment and test scores are declining, and college enrollment is down. When a business is failing, any good businessperson knows you have two choices: dissolve the business or figure out the cause and effect and put money into the business to fix what's broken. Perhaps school enrollment is down because people are sending their children elsewhere or not moving to our town. Perhaps test scores and college enrollment are

down because there are not enough teachers or paraprofessionals to teach our children. Perhaps special education is costing more because the school is not adequately equipped to properly handle the needs of the children, causing parents to hire advocates and lawyers, which costs us even more, and then requiring the special education services to be outsourced.

A town's major source of pride is its schools. With the direction we are heading I see no reason to be proud of Colchester. We need to invest in the future of our children, our schools, and our town. I urge you to attend the May 31st meeting and force this budget to go back to workshop. Let's get it right and protect our investments.

Joe Fougere – Colchester

Don't Be Irrelevant

To the Editor:
The facts of a budget are relevant (3.9% increase for BoE and 2.9% increase for general government).

Public discourse and debate about that budget is relevant.

Demoning those who disagree with you – sadly journalists and elected officials ~ makes them completely irrelevant.

Don't be irrelevant.
Vote for what you can afford.

Sincerely,
Melissa Engel – East Hampton

Referendum Vote May 30

To the Editor:
On Tuesday, May 30, the voters of East Hampton will be voting on a referendum to decide on a town budget.

The polling place is at the Town Hall, 1 Community Drive.

Please vote, vote your mind and vote what you personally can afford.

Sincerely,
Susan McCann – Middle Haddam

Community Will Rise

To the Editor:
I am one who is happy that the budget was sent to the people and not back to the East Hampton Board of Finance. Sending it back to them to take another look may not have gotten us anywhere. Sending it back with a clear message, that the budget is too low, will get us headed in the right direction. They showed us how they felt. The message was loud and clear. Mr. Brown doesn't think teachers do their jobs (he doubled down on this again in the *Rivereast* last week). They also think they are sending a message to the state. Really? Cop-out in my opinion. I would rather put my faith in this amazing community. The community that has risen above politics, that puts our children first, that believes in education and the safety of our town.

I know this is a gamble, but my money is on our community. We've got this, East Hampton! I am so proud of the fight you are fighting. May 30th is right around the corner and I will be voting no, too low.

Augie Arndt – East Hampton
Note: Arndt is a member of the East Hampton Board of Education, but said he is writing as an individual.

Pot, Meet Kettle

To the Editor:
Now that it's election season, Democratic leaders in Colchester have taken up a campaign of “civility.” They refused to help me hold our first selectman accountable for his bad behavior, only caring now that it can be used politically. They also forget that they have in their ranks a widely supported elected official with a long history of violent behavior.

Mike Egan, a sitting member of the Board of Finance, once was arrested and charged with criminal mischief and disorderly conduct, and his then-wife also charged with disorderly conduct, after getting involved in a fight between two minors. At the time he was a member of the Board of Education. *Mr. Egan and his wife went on to lie to the police and blame the young boy! That false report ended up costing him the chance to attend Navy Seal training.* The incident led to court and the Egan's were banned from school sporting events for six months.

Beyond that, Egan has repeatedly called and left threatening voicemails for elected officials and candidates. He once threatened a citizen during a town meeting, requiring them to need a police escort to the next board meeting. Egan continues to be a belligerent and unruly elected Democrat, frequently unable to control his anger and stop himself from screaming expletives at people or storming out of board meetings.

Given the Democrats' outspoken opinion on Andreas' behavior you'd think they'd have strong commendation of Mr. Egan's behavior. Quite the opposite. They continue to nominate, elect, defend, and rally behind him. If you ask a Democratic leader or candidate in town to condemn Mr. Egan's behavior, they'll refuse. In fact Mr. Egan's current wife, the chair of the Colchester DTC, is in this very paper every week attacking Andreas's behavior and yet she continues to ignore the violent behavior of her husband.

Their calls for “civility” are nothing but political grandstanding and gaslighting.

Jason LaChapelle – Colchester
Note: LaChapelle is a member of the Colchester Board of Selectmen but said he is speaking as an individual.

Flag Thank You

To the Editor:
On behalf of the Portland Veteran Affairs Committee, the American Legion Post 69, and the Town of Portland, I would like to thank all those who assisted with placing American Flags on the graves of veterans over the last few weeks in the Portland cemeteries. We would especially like to thank Tim Dickerson, Jim Landry, Andrea Farrington, Rodney & Nancy Spooner, Richelle Carlone, along with coordinator Bill Willinsky for all their help. If residents notice that a flag was inadvertently missed for a Portland veteran, or because a grave marker does not list them as a veteran, the Portland town clerk's office has additional flags.

Michael Tierney
Portland Town Clerk

CT Rental Housing Bill

To the Editor:
Senate Bill 4 is bad for Connecticut renters and small investor landlords.

At the beginning of COVID, state and federal legislators put their thumbs on the rental housing market by imposing more regulations to slow down evictions, resulting in a recent rise in landlords filing to take possession of their property once restrictions were lifted. The actions of the legislators influenced the rental market resulting in higher rental and security fees as landlords try to recoup losses from unpaid rent, nuisance renters, and property damages, and minimize the risk of a possible high eviction fee.

Senate Bill SB 4, if enacted by Connecticut legislators, will rip at the fabric of lease contracts, and stop any legal recourse by property owners to take possession of their property between Dec. 1 and March 31 with an expected yearly rise in evictions in the spring. Presently, the eviction process averages 85 days. If enacted, SB 4 will extend the time up to 6 months with the pause in winter evictions.

Senate Bill 4 will not address housing storage or reduce rental fees. The result will force small investors out of the housing market, reduce affordability and lower the quality of housing with absentee landlords purchasing rental properties.

Landlords will look for other avenues, to reclaim their property that will weaken housing stability with short-term leases, or no lease, to protect their investment outside of government restrictions.

Connecticut legislators need to look at real options to increase housing, that would increase competition in the

rental market and result in lower market rental fees without inhibiting property owners' rights.

SB 4 fails Connecticut's housing crisis and will have a negative effect on the rental housing market.

Time to change course on rental housing.

Rose Aletta – Portland
Appraiser/small investor

Remember in November

To the Editor:
It is clear that the governing boards of East Hampton are not representing the will of the people as is their duty they have sworn to uphold. Well over 400 residents have attended recent Town Council meetings to support education, support local police, and to support ambulance services.

Residents of all ages and political affiliations spoke at these meetings pleading with the council to send the budget back to the BOF for review.

High school students and even middle school students got in front of the podium to fight for their right to a good education. These are not normal cuts you might see year to year. These proposed cuts of nearly \$800,000 will directly and adversely affect our community.

Two elementary school teachers will be cut, forcing young students to pile into already-packed classrooms.

One high school english teacher will be cut, forcing the active duty librarian/English teacher to take on more students and classes. This act alone will render the high school library largely unable to be used during school hours due to lack of staffing.

A school psychologist, part-time math specialist and BCABA (autism specialist) would also be cut.

Even after hearing well over 50 people speak and seeing 400 people attend these two meetings, the Town Council still voted to push this frankly insultingly low budget through to referendum.

The four Town Council members who voted this through are: Mark Philhower, Brandon Goff, Alison Walck, and Eric Peterson. I encourage all registered voters of East Hampton to vote no, too low this Tuesday, May 30.

I also encourage East Hampton voters to remember these names come November. When someone shows you who they are, believe them.

Brian Avery – East Hampton

Hospitality

To the Editor:
It's time for Hebron residents to push the pendulum back towards common sense, core values, positive leadership and responsible decisions that benefit both this generation and the next. Rebuilding our Public Works, on Old Colchester Road, demonstrates intelligent, long-range thinking and so does moving 17 Kinney over into Open Space. Let's do this right.

Recently, the newspaper contained a letter which included complaints about Hebron's diminishing volunteers. The letter illustrates that, apparently, not everyone fully understands Hebron's constituency. After all, when it comes to volunteers, generally, you get what you give. Pay attention. The *Rivereast* is online and so are town Zoom meetings. If people are concerned or confused about Hebron's lack of volunteers all they have to do is read and listen. A good place to start is July 15, 2021,

See Letters, page 9

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

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Zuppa D' Mussels	Penna Marinara
Sauteed in fresh tomato sauce	Penna Alla Vodka
or white wine sauce	Asparagus, sun dried tomatoes in a vodka blush sauce
Fried Mozzarella	SOUP OR SALAD
Topped with marinara sauce	Cup of soup of the day or Garden Salad

DINNER CHOICES

Chicken Parmigiana
Eggplant Rollatini
Rolled eggplant stuffed with ricotta, prosciutto and roasted peppers

Chicken Marsala
Sauteed with mushrooms, shallots in a marsala wine sauce

Stuffed Pork Chop
Stuffed with broccoli, gorgonzola cheese and ritz crackers in a brown cognac sauce

Stuffed Sole
Crab meat stuffing served over spinach

Balkan Meatballs
Beef meatballs sauteed with scallions, roasted red peppers, grape tomatoes in a marsala cream sauce

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illegally enriched the Biden family through his shady business dealings with Ukraine and China. But Saayet idiotically compares him to Trump's young son, Barron. After fraudulently concealing its existence for a year, Democrat-partisans in the FBI and DOJ criminally obstructed justice and interfered in the 2020 election by intentionally lying that Hunter's laptop was Russian disinformation.

Sam Prentice – Andover

Friends Auction Thanks

To the Editor:
The Andover Friends of the Library wish to thank everyone who made this year's Goods and Services Auction a wonderful event. Special thanks to Carol Lee, our events manager, to Andover Pizza, to all the bakers for their delicious treats, to the volunteers and to all the bidders who pre-bid or were present to make the evening such a success. We are appreciative of your continued generosity.

Julie Victoria
Acting Friends President

Who is Mark Philhower?

To the Editor:
He is a dedicated family man, a loyal friend, and an honest businessman.

He is a lifelong East Hampton resident who has volunteered in countless town roles for 30 years.

We are proud to have known Mark for 15 years, both professionally and personally. He is a man strong in his convictions. He is knowledgeable, responsible, and makes decisions based on common sense.

It is unfortunate that some choose to slander Mark's name rather than articulate an argument of factual information and engage in a substantive debate.

East Hampton is fortunate to have Mark as a public servant.

Respectfully,
Randi and Deborah Demers
Recent Residents of East Hampton

Support Teachers, Staff, Town

Dear Registered and Future Voters:
Mark Twain once said, "Out of the public schools grows the greatness of a nation." Please think about that statement carefully. It is a known fact that our students are being shaped and molded for the future. And it is our job as registered voters to make sure that we set in place a solid foundation for our students. Our children depend on us to make responsible decisions that they cannot. We are their role models and their voice, so please think carefully about your vote when you go to the polls on May 30th.

After the last TC meeting, I left feeling very vulnerable and deflated. Why are some adults so "scared" of taking a risk to do what's right for our town and our children? Even our very own, well-educated high school students had more courage to stand up and speak out to the TC members. Doesn't that show you that our teachers are "doing their job?" If we can continue to help support our teachers, staff, and town, please vote this May 30th! Please vote no, too low!

Alexis Tammara – East Hampton

Note: Tammara is a paraprofessional at Memorial School, but said she is writing as a parent and resident.

Hebron Greenhouse Effect

To the Editor:
The profound effect of the Hebron Green Committee's report continues to spread through the atmosphere. This detailed document offers evidence of the significant danger a Public Works facility in Hebron Center would pose to the environment and community. After a year of investigation, the report was delivered to the Board of Selectmen on May 1st and posted in the BOS Agenda on May 18th. A copy of the report is also posted at Save Hebron Center on Facebook. I urge all residents to read it and circulate it to their friends and neighbors.

Among the most important messages from the HGC is included on page 1, "The operations of the new DPW facility entails activities such as salt storage and handling, truck maintenance operations, fuel storage and dispens-

ing, and other related activities which have the potential to be detrimental to the environment. As you have acknowledged, a new DPW facility is required to be built and operated to the most up-to-date standards... However, as we all know, even at well designed, constructed and operated facilities, accidents happen, and even small releases of pollutants can, over time, cause major problems. This is why we are concerned about the long-term effects of these activities on the quality of the surface water and ground water, including future water supplies in the area, regardless of the design and construction of the new DPW facility."

The report continues and on page 5 acknowledges the necessity of keeping Public Works at the current location on Old Colchester Road where the groundwater has been compromised due to "activities already on the property, such as the closed landfill." The HGC states unequivocally, "this site is a better alternative for the higher risk DPW activities..."

Thank you, Hebron Green Committee, for your diligent effort and thoughtful expertise.

Sincerely,
Kevin J. Tulimieri – Amston

Responsibilities

To the Editor:
Living in a community means having certain responsibilities. As individuals, we all work hard each day to do what is best for ourselves and our families. But as citizens, we also have a responsibility to contribute to the greater good. I have often heard, especially during budget season, "my children are grown and I have done my part," or "I chose not to have children so why should I pay for the education of someone else's?" Unless you live in complete isolation, we all benefit from educating the children of our community...our future health care professionals, mechanics, engineers, farmers, and teachers.

As citizens, we are responsible for fostering growth and progress within our community and that cannot happen without investment. Economic difficulties are real, inflation is real and schools and local government are not immune to these challenges and rising costs. But growth and progress cannot happen in our education system, and our community as a whole, when we reduce staff across departments, increase class sizes, offer fewer options for high school English classes, close the library media center, provide less support from math specialists and psychologists, provide fewer opportunities for our senior citizens and hinder our first responders. In fact, we can't even maintain the status quo. Instead, we risk significant steps backwards.

Elected officials have responsibilities too. They are charged with putting forth a reasonable budget, yes, but equally important, they are responsible for listening to their constituents, for providing for the needs of the community and for understanding the ramifications of the decisions they make. I do not believe the members of the BOF and TC have upheld those responsibilities. Out senior citizens, our police department and our students deserve better.

The people of East Hampton deserve better. Vote No! Too low! on Tuesday, May 30.

Nancy Kohler – East Hampton

Note: Kohler is a member of the East Hampton Board of Education, but said she is writing as a citizen.

Bomb the Ceiling

To the Editor:
Another presidential administration, another fear-mongering struggle session about the "debt ceiling." While our country is functionally bankrupt, as all the annual income taxes collected don't even cover the interest on the national debt, that won't stop politicians from exploiting another made up crisis to further collapse America while pretending to be heroes of the working class.

Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen says we must raise the debt ceiling so other countries don't think of us as a "deadbeat nation." It makes sense...everyone knows that the best course of action when you're completely unable to pay your credit card bill – or even the monthly interest – is to just call up the company and have them increase your spending limit. That should fix it!

Most people give economists, government officials, and bureaucrats a lot of credit, thinking that these people must know something they don't and are experts in their fields. They wouldn't be in charge unless they knew what they were doing...right? The truth is that these people know exactly what they are doing, which is constantly eroding the value of our dollar, the economic stability of our country, and our children's future of freedom.

Since 1913 it's been a fiat system operating under a fractional reserve banking Ponzi scheme - it was designed to fail. As more and more banks collapse and countries dump the dollar, our problems will only accelerate. A deal must be made by June 1st and rest assured that it will...we can't allow ourselves to be seen as "dead beats" on the global stage, especially not while we are engaged in a proxy war with Russia through Ukraine. Maybe with a little luck, this conflict can go hot and we can finally get our war economy back on track.

It's what we do, Build Bombs Better!
Colin McNamara – Marlborough

Done Their Due Diligence

To the Editor:
Just a quick note commenting on the up-and-coming town referendum to be held Tuesday, May 30, at Town Hall. There is a need for additional funds for all town services. The Board of Finance has done their due diligence and will distribute funds as fairly as possible.

Vote 'yes' on Tuesday, May 30.
Bill McCann – Middle Haddam

Draconian Vision

To the Editor:
The Colchester Board of Finance chair has morphed a process that has always looked to balance the needs of the community with its ability to pay for those services through community input into a process that public, department head, and the Board of Education input have been ignored. Instead, it has been replaced with her own vision of draconian reductions to programs and services at both the town and school. How those reductions impact our schools or our students have been ignored. Why have a budget survey, multiple budget forums, budget workshops, and public meetings if none of the input is ever taken into consideration.

The goal has been distraction and a complete lack of transparency by the chair and this Republican controlled board. Amazingly there is still not one single budget document that shows the assumed revenue, expenditures and calculation of the resulting mill rate. In past years the Budget book was presented and adjusted as the process proceeded. This year, process has been a series of canceled meetings and a dizzying series of incomprehensible excel spreadsheets that attempt to show the approved expenditure adjustments and assumed revenue, yet none of these are presented on the town's website or even depicted in the meeting minutes.

The BOF has department-level authority for the town budget, yet when adjustments to those departments were made at the May 8th Budget Hearing, none of those adjustments were documented in a revised town budget or even reflected in the posted minutes. This is anything but transparent. The only transparent thing in this year's budget is that your opinion or concerns on the impacts of this budget are of no concern to this Board unless you

share their fiscally draconian vision for this Town.

Mike Egan – Colchester
Note: Egan is a member of the Colchester Board of Finance but is speaking an individual.

Budget Season Voice of Reason

To the Editor:
Colchester, this is the second of several installments I will be providing to keep you, the taxpayer, educated going into the referendum. This week I am going to share my thoughts on the town budget.

The town had roughly \$1.2M in additional revenue added to the grand list via motor vehicle assessments, \$500K for taxes on the gas pipeline and \$675K for the energy plant. Again, rough math \$2.3M in additional revenue and yet the town is coming forward with close to a zero-dollar increase. Sounds good right! Wrong! That \$2.3M has been committed to spending (as opposed to tax relief) and if this budget passes it will almost certainly result in a ~10% tax increase next year when motor vehicle revaluations go down and leave the town's grand list shy of \$1.2M to \$1.5M.

This backdoor math is most certainly not the transparency nor the affordability that was promised to us during campaign season, it's more like a boldfaced lie to the taxpayer. What is worse yet is the fact that these elected officials believe that they can pull one over on the taxpayer because we are not educated and/or engaged enough to catch them. Let that sink in for a minute! We as an electorate made a social contract with those individuals that run for public office, and they need to keep their promises or be held accountable.

Not to mention that as soon as the town passes a budget, they are going back to the taxpayers for another \$1.5M to cover the shortfall in the senior center project.

This does nothing more than gentrify our community, keep minorities out and chase lifelong residents out. Both Republicans and Democrats alike should be ashamed of this budget, I know I am!

Thank You,
Taras W. Rudko – Colchester

'Advocates'

To the Editor:
Accountability is a funny thing. Make a mistake, acknowledge it, apologize, ask how you can help to fix it, and move on. In the end, accountability will earn you more respect than doubling-down on missteps. Mike Buck and I have recently been told we need to apologize for "twisting" a finance member's words. Aside from this being laughable (since the person's statement was during a public meeting) it's equally hilarious that someone thinks we know every person who has demanded accountability from this finance member (and his board). It's flattering, but false.

Back to accountability: The only apology I have offered is for the egregious mistake I made in November 2021, which I take accountability for. I'm trying to fix my mistake by being the best volunteer I can be, in support of education and common sense education funding. On a separate note: a "Vote No, Too Low" sign must get its wings every time parents see their concern for education being patronized, by being called Education "Advocates" (advocates always in quotes) by a finance member. We

See Letters, page 31

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Better Dental HEALTH

by George M. Mantikas, DMD

INNOVATIONS IN IMPLANTS

Today's restorative dentistry innovations create precise, less invasive replacements for failing or missing teeth. New designs in implants create stronger, more natural replacements without affecting surrounding teeth, improving both tooth appearance and functionality. The use of computer assisted design (CAD) in dentistry now facilitates the creation of an exact replica of the implant, eliminating much of the loss of bone during positioning. Perhaps the most remarkable advancement is the employment of computer-guided surgical maps to precisely plan out the implantation to ensure exact positioning. Additionally, the use of new, antibacterial coatings in implants provides protection from commonly ingested acids, which prolongs the life of the materials. These major advancements enhance the dental implantation procedure and longevity of the restoration.

Modern implants have been in use since the 1970s, and today these substitutes for missing natural teeth have never been more effective, comfortable, and natural-looking. However, you still need to take care of them as well as your oral hygiene with regular professional checkups and scrupulous home care. Complete dental care for all members of your family is available at our office, where we utilize only the latest in dental technology for your care and comfort.

P.S. The first recorded case of a metal tooth implant dates back to 1000 BC, when an Egyptian king had a copper peg driven into his jawbone.

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New Water Line Coming to Perry Avenue

By Jack Lakowsky

Due to some unforeseen developments at the Brainerd Place project, the town has to pay about \$70,000 to get a new water line under Perry Avenue, near the Brainerd site.

Public Works Director Ryan O'Halpin said DiMarco Constructors, the site's developers, agreed to pay only \$10,000 on top of the town's cost. The town gave the work to Mizzy Construction, voting to waive bid requirements. Mizzy is a contractor working for DiMarco.

The Perry Avenue work will disrupt traffic, but should be finished quickly.

The selectboard unanimously agreed to spend the money, with selectman Shaun Manning saying there was no benefit to delaying.

Specifically, the town will put in seven new service connections, and has to because of "unforeseen" shallow rock at the site. This was an issue for the town's plans to work on Perry Avenue's water main, as the company now has to do work that could disrupt it.

The new service connections will avoid service disruptions for Perry Avenue residents, O'Halpin said. He also said he expects to work to take a week of work, finished by the end of the month.

When digging for the new water line for a new building, workers found that the proposed

line is very close to the existing line. To avoid damage to the existing line, it'll move the line to the west side, and extend it south.

The town says this will benefit the Perry Avenue residents. Digging into the rock so close to a water line would be a public health issue, O'Halpin said.

Portland residents and commuters may have noticed the recent visible progress at Brainerd Place, especially over the last couple months.

In a Facebook post First Selectman Ryan Curley said he expects the first apartment building to be ready in the next 12-15 months.

The perennial project is a mixed-use residential apartment/retail/medical/office development in Portland, Connecticut. The developers, Bright Ravens and the DiMarco Group are moving on construction of the 15-acre, 7-building project, including 99 residential apartment units, a Starbucks, the Sage House restoration (for a future restaurant), and the Brainerd House restoration (for a central clubhouse with amenities).

The deluxe studio, one- and two-bedroom apartments mix with the retail and office to create a true "town village-feel" in the center of town, according to the company's self-description.

This indicates a rosier picture than last summer, when Brainerd was struggling hard. How many of its issues it alleviated since then hasn't been publicly stated. Brainerd could not secure more business tenants other than Starbucks, which committed quite some time ago, and hat-in-hand had to ask the town's permission to change its plans.

Last year Dan Bertram, manager of the firm overseeing the project, asked the Portland Planning and Zoning Commission to let him delay development of major business spaces until after more apartments and a smaller commercial space are leased.

Bertram believes having this space full will be more attractive to businesses looking to lease a spot. Brainerd has struggled to lease with businesses, Bertram said. He said this is a nationwide issue, Portland no exception.

To put it in Bertram's terms, the project went from two phases with equal amounts of business and apartment development to a less concurrent three phases.

Now, most of the apartments will be developed in the first two phases with some commercial buildout, including a 10,000 square foot restaurant space. A majority of retail buildout will now occur in the third phase, about 60%.

Though members were skeptical and wary of the change, grilling Bertram and several engineers, zoning commissioners unanimously approved Bertram's request.

At least at first commissioner Victoria Tchetchet questioned if Portland's regulations even permitted Bertram's proposal, saying this type of change can't go through without the applicant proving hardships caused by circumstances beyond their control.

"The proposal we're making here is to try to do more now, not change the plan," said Bertram before the approval, given last year.

Bertram repeatedly said leasing commercial spaces is incredibly difficult right now, a factor beyond his firm's control. He said he's gone through three different leasing brokers.

"Our headwinds are significant," he said.

Bertram said when he came on in 2015, CVS was supposedly "locked in" to lease a large piece of the property. That is no longer the case, Bertram said, mentioning CVS' recent announcement it plans to close hundreds of stores.

Town planner Dan Bourett added the commission still has power to withhold occupancy certificates if the project doesn't meet deadlines and requirements.

Bill Peterson Memorial Scholarship

The Portland Soccer Club (PSC) Board of Directors will award the \$500 Bill Peterson Memorial Scholarship again this year. The scholarship is awarded to high school seniors who are headed to college or a post-high school institution. Applicants must be a Portland resident and have played a minimum of two years with the PSC.

All applicants must submit a 250-word essay entitled "How Soccer Inspired Me to Give Back to the Community." The essay needs to demon-

strate the role soccer has had in the applicant's development and how the applicant has used that influence to give back to Portland's soccer community.

Scholarship applications are at www.bluesombrero.com/portlandsoccerclub, under the "Community Link" drop-down. All scholarship applications must be received no later than June 1.

For more information, email PSC President Chad Wilson at nosliw.dahc@gmail.com.

YFS News & Notes

Portland Youth & Family Services has announced the following pieces of news. For more information, visit www.portlandct.org/youth-services, www.facebook.com/PortlandCTYouth or www.instagram.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.

Youth LGBTQ+ Drop-In Night: Wednesday, June 7, 6-8 p.m., in the Wagner Room of Portland Library. There will be games, art supplies and other activities, along with snacks.

Little Hikers: Friday, June 9, 10:30 a.m., at

Juneteenth Celebration Returns This Year

On Saturday, June 24, the Portland Committee on Solidarity will host a Juneteenth celebration from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. at Riverfront Park. There will be speakers, a food truck, games and entertainment.

Among the food vendors present will be the Middletown-based Crab Shack King seafood truck, the Hartford-based No Pork on Dis Fork hot dog cart, and the Ice Cream Emergency truck.

Sponsors are welcome; sign up your business/organization for a table at the event.

For more information, email portlandctsolidarity@gmail.com.

Flags for Portland Veterans' Graves

The Portland Veterans Affairs Committee and American Legion Post 69 members have placed flags on graves of veterans buried in Portland cemeteries for Memorial Day.

If residents notice that a flag was inadvertently missed for a Portland veteran, or because a grave marker does not list them as a veteran, the Portland town clerk's office has additional flags.

Preschool Screening May 26

Valley View School will conduct a preschool screening Friday, May 26, for children ages 3-4. The screening is designed to answer questions about a child's development, as well as identify children who may be eligible for the preschool selection process.

During the screening, children will meet with members of Valley View's preschool team and participate in a variety of activities that assess different such developmental areas as cognition,

communication, fine and gross motor skills, and social interaction. During this time, parents/caregivers will meet with another member of the team to discuss the child's adaptive and personal social skills.

Following the screening, parents/guardians will be sent a letter stating their child's results. For more information and to schedule an appointment, call Valley View at 860-342-3131.

Parks and Rec. News & Notes

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

Kids' Blast After School Program: Mondays-Fridays, 3-6 p.m., at Brownstone Intermediate School, for grades K-6. Cost to attend is \$18 a day. Children who live or attend school in Portland may participate. Bussing is provided from Valley View and Gildersleeve schools.

Lady Highlanders Hoops Camp: For grades 3-6. Wednesdays, June 7-28, 6-8 p.m., at BIS. Portland High School basketball coaches and players, as well as members of the 2011 PHS championship team, will instruct. Cost is \$20 for this 4-week class.

Summer Quest Camp: Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m., at the Portland high/middle school complex. Week one begins June 26 and week seven ends Aug. 11. Base Camp is for grades 1-6, and Teen Camp is for grades 7-9. Teen campers will go on an average of two field trips per week. Cost for the camps varies by week.

Themed Ballet and Tap Classes: For ages 3-6, held at The Inner Circle. **Bluey & Bingo's Big Ballet** is Wednesdays, June 21 and 28, from 4:30-5:15 p.m.; **Fancy Dancy** is Wednesdays, July 19 and 26, from 4:30-5:15 p.m.; and **Enchanted Fairies Dance** is Wednesdays, Aug. 9 and 16, from 4:30-5:15 p.m. Fee per two-week class: \$25.

Themed Dance Classes: For ages 6-8, held at The Inner Circle. **Barbie Blowout Jazz & Ballet** is Thursdays, June 22 and 29, 5:15-6 p.m.; **Magical Unicorns Ballet & Tap** is Thursdays, July 20 and 27, 5:15-6 p.m.; and **Rhinestone Round-Up Tap & Jazz** is Thursdays, Aug. 10 and 17, 5:15-6 p.m. Fee per two-week class: \$25.

Adult Tap Dance Exercise: Wednesdays, June 21 and 28; July 19 and 26; or Aug. 9 and 16, at The Inner Circle. All levels welcome. Cost

is \$50.

Come Dance with Me: For ages 18 months-4 years. Thursdays, June 22 and 29; July 20 and 27; or Aug. 10 and 17, 4:30-5 p.m., at The Inner Circle. Fee: \$50.

Slamma-Jamma Basketball Camp: Monday, June 26-Friday, June 30, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., at Portland High School, for boys and girls in grades 3-8. Cost: \$150.

Kiddie Camp: For ages 3-5. Weekly sessions start July 17, from 9 a.m.-1 p.m., at PHS. Cost: \$115/residents, \$125/non-residents.

Little Ninjas: For ages 3-6. Thursdays, July 6-Aug. 10, 4-5 p.m. or 5-6 p.m., at The Inner Circle. Cost: \$72.

Kids' Gymnastics: For ages 6 and up. Saturdays, July 8-Aug. 12, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., at The Inner Circle. Open to all skill levels. Cost: \$72.

Kids' Karate: For ages 6 and up. Tuesdays, July 11-Aug. 15, 4-5 p.m., at The Inner Circle. Cost: \$72.

Self-Defense for Women: Sundays, July 9, July 23, or Aug. 13, 6-7 p.m., at The Inner Circle. Cost: \$30.

Tiny Tumblers: For ages 2-4. Mondays, July 10-Aug. 14, 11:45 a.m.-12:15 p.m., at The Inner Circle. Children will learn the basics of gymnastics. Cost: \$72.

Kickboxing: Mondays, July 10-Aug. 14, 7-8 p.m., at The Inner Circle. For both the beginner and advanced student. Cost: \$72.

Skyhawks Tennis Camp: Monday-Thursday, July 17-20, 9 a.m.-noon, at the Portland High School tennis courts. For beginning, intermediate or advanced players. Cost is \$145.

Restorative Yoga Workshop: Wednesday, July 19, 6-7:15 p.m., at Portland Riverfront Park. Space is limited to just five people. Cost is \$20.

Skyhawks Camps: Monday-Thursday, Aug. 14-17, 9 a.m.-noon, at Portland Riverfront Park. Cost is \$189 for Sports and Games Camp, and \$145 for Mini-Hawk Camp.



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Earthquakes Rattle Bloomfield

The Portland Soccer Club's U10 Earthquakes squeaked out a nail-biter vs. Bloomfield on Sunday. The team, down 3-2 with 10 minutes to play, rallied to notch a 5-4 victory. Beckett Warner and Liam Xiao both connected with the back of the net, while Tucker Parmelee tallied his first hat trick of the season to round out the scoring.

Police News

5/15: Kasey Dykas, 37, of 354 Main St., was arrested and charged with third-degree assault, Portland Police said.

5/16: John Coppola, 43, of 604 Main St., was arrested and charged with disorderly conduct, second-degree threatening and third-degree assault, police said.

Resident Graduates

Jonathan Oliveira of Portland recently graduated with a Master of Science degree in applied behavior analysis from Regis College in Weston, Mass.

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Fire Engine Cost Jumps to Nearly \$1 Million

By Jack Lakowsky

The Town of Portland's fire department got some tough news this week – the new engine they're trying to get to replace a moribund truck spiked in price...again.

Late last year the town decided to spend \$850,000 of its American Rescue Plan stimulus money to buy a new fully equipped fire engine. But in just a few weeks that price, Portland fire chief Bob Shea told the town's selectboard last week, rose more than \$1,000, and now the town has to shell out just shy of \$1 million, around \$960,000.

"The whole industry is changing so fast," said Shea.

Shea said the situation's difficult, further complicated by the town's pressing need to replace the old engine.

"In a nutshell," Shea said, "the [fire] committee has no choice but to recommend" the town spend the \$960,000.

"We can't not buy trucks," Shea told the board. He said this price is triple what engines cost when he first took the job. It's that same old rock and hard place – high need, high cost.

Shea said companies can't even keep up with demand. Trucks, Shea said, are off the lot and sold very shortly after factories slap on the last coat of paint.

The town has to ask residents to approve the extra \$115,000 and is doing so at a public hearing set for June 7 in the Buck-Foreman building on Main Street.

Shea said companies are so pressed, they can't accept the normally hundreds of pages of specs towns seek for their trucks; customers have to slash it down to four pages of requests and needs, not easy, the chief said.

Further, of the bids the town got, just one met an acceptable amount of the town's needs, from general contractor Marion Construction. It was the only one that met the town's needs – for another 100 grand.

Shea said he and other town officials spent hours and hours comparing bids. Because of demand, the process has reversed, and the town now has to contract a truck without pre-engineering data from the vendor. Companies just don't have the time, Shea said he was told.

"This has been a long process," Shea said.

The truck's price hike is another in a bombardment the town has been contending with. It has managed to buffer a deal of it with payments of its American Rescue Plan money. Portland First Selectman Ryan Curley said price bumps slow progress toward the town's goals. With the additional \$115,000 brings the town down to a little more than \$200,000.

Over the past few years the money has been used on several projects.

Over the winter the town opted use \$120,000 in ARPA money to buy a new van for the senior center. The current one, procured in 2009, has seen better days, Curley told the board.

A year back, the town used it to modernize the land use department, which has been, for a while, reputedly sluggish.

The selectboard and Curley opted to use \$120,000 of the town's then-remaining \$1.5 million American Rescue Plan funds to bring the department into the 21st century.

Curley said the project is a one-time expense that will quickly pay dividends.

The money will help digitize records and introduce online permitting. Possibly the most substantial change is allowing credit card use at the land use office.

Dan Bourett, land use administrator, said the department's current processes are "labor intensive" and "very tedious." Employees have to cache the department's immense load of files the old-fashioned way – in the bowels of drawers.

Bourett said without credit card payments, the department often has a lot of cash on hand, which can be a little nerve-wracking, he said, and makes for laborious accounting.

Curley said this is the first in a plan to modernize the whole of town departments, saying public works might be next.

Portland also doled out about a million for a water/sewer project and another \$184,000 for police body cameras.

United Methodist Church News

Portland United Methodist Church, located at 381 Main St., is a member of the New England Conference of the United Methodist Church. The church is an open and affirming congregation, welcoming everyone. The building is accessible.

In-person worship services are held Sundays at 9 a.m., with a Fourth Sunday weekly Communion service at 1 p.m. replacing the regular 9 a.m. service on those Sundays. However, due to

the Memorial Day parade on Sunday, May 28, the 1 p.m. service that will be at 9 a.m.

The Portland United Methodist Crafters meets alternate Fridays at 2 p.m., at the Pastor's Residence. If interested in joining, call 518-729-8215.

The church mails a monthly newsletter from the pastor, the Rev. Dr. Judith Johnson-Siebold. To join the church mailing list, email Portlandtunc@gmail.com.

Trinity Episcopal Church News

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

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

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

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

On Saturday, June 10, at 7 p.m. Brownstone Vital Connections presents the Sharades, featuring music from the '50s, '60s and '70s. Tickets

are \$12 in advance and \$15 the day of the show and are available by emailing trinityvitalconnections@gmail.com or calling 860-342-4321. You can also purchase tickets on Eventbrite for an additional fee. All proceeds will be donated to the Middlesex Land Trust. Come out and join the fun for a great cause!

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

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

Registration for Fall Travel Soccer

Portland Soccer Club (PSC) has announced registration for the fall 2023 travel soccer season is now open. All eligible players must register online, at www.bluesombrero.com/portland-soccerclub.

Cost per travel registrant is \$170. All players must prepay for registration prior to evaluation.

Registration closes June 7. Any registrations received after this date will be charged an additional \$30 late fee, and are not guaranteed a spot on a travel team.

Evaluation sessions will be Sunday, June 11, at the Portland Recreational Complex, located on Route 17 (Gospel Lane) in Portland. Evaluation times will be by birth year: those born in 2015 and 2014 will be evaluated from 5-6 p.m.; 2013 and 2012 will be 5:15-6:15 p.m.; and 2011 and 2010 will be 5:30-6:30 p.m.

If you cannot come for your time slot, a make-up slot will be available from 7-7:45 p.m.

All players must attend the evaluation sessions. Players are directed to wear cleats, shin guards, and bring a water bottle and an appropriately sized ball. The wearing of any PSC uniform by players is prohibited.

New players will receive a uniform kit; ordering information and instructions will be sent after evaluations from PSC's uniform vendor.

PSC said it anticipates fielding gender-based teams within the U9-U14 levels for the fall season, depending on player registration totals. The club reserves the right to combine birth-year players when forming teams. Refunds will be issued if player is not placed on a team.

For more information, contact PSC president Chad Wilson at nosliw.dahc@gmail.com or 205-999-8842; vice president Chris Donahue at donahuecj@sbcglobal.net or 860-638-7400; or registrar Stephanie Bolstridge at stephaniebolstridge@gmail.com or 860-478-9693.

Connecticut Trails Day

On Connecticut Trails Day, Saturday, June 3, at 10 a.m., the Portland Air Line Trail committee and the Middlesex Land Trust are partnering to provide a hike through the Palmer Taylor Preserve including a detour onto the Air Line Trail – see how these two trails intersect to provide a varied walking experience.

The hike will be at a slow to moderate pace, with some moderate inclines for short dis-

tances and occasional tricky footing, but generally suitable for new hikers. Hiking boots are recommended, as the trail crosses some wet areas. Bring water and snacks. Well-managed dogs are welcome.

Rain date is Sunday, June 4, at 11 a.m. Complete details and sign-up information is at trailsday.org/events/portland-air-line-trail-palmer-taylor-preserve.

Library Friends Book Sale

The Friends of the Portland Library groups has fiction, romance, teen and children's used books, as well as DVDs, at the Second-Hand Prose Bookshop at Portland Library, 20 Freestone Ave. The sale takes place during regular library hours.

Books are 50 cents for paperbacks and children's books, \$1 for trade paperbacks and \$2 for hardcover. DVDs are 50 cents each unless marked otherwise. There are large-print mystery and general fiction books that have been removed from the library collection on sale for 50 cents each, as well as TV series on DVD for

50 cents each disc.

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

All proceeds benefit programs funded by the Friends, such as the library's museum pass program, children and adult programs, and the library's DVD collection.

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

Student Completes Internship

More than 100 Eastern Connecticut State University students completed internships this spring 2023 semester. Among them was Anna Maselek of Portland, a senior majoring in elementary education and communication.

Maselek interned with a fourth-grade classroom at Waddell Elementary School in Manchester.

"With the help of my host teacher, staff and administration, I have gained valuable experience that will prepare me for my future as an elementary school teacher," said Maselek. "My time at Waddell has been a major highlight of my college experience at Eastern, providing me with many opportunities to grow as an educator and individual."



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Town Posts Full School Guard Job Details

By Jack Lakowsky

This week the Town of Marlborough posted the fully detailed job description for the new armed school guard, or school resource officer (SRO), to start at Marlborough Elementary School next school year.

In the wake of the mass killing of children in Uvalde, Texas, a year ago, many area schools brought in armed guards or added more to their contingent, Marlborough no exception.

The topic drew great attention, with advocates believing it would make kids safer to the tragedy of school shootings, and opponents doubting the effectiveness of armed guards, citing data showing mixed results at best.

School board chair Wes Skorski, MES superintendent Holly Hagemen helped devise the plan, with Skorski telling the *Rivereast* Hagemen drafted the description's first version.

Now, the armed guard, once hired, will be a regular presence at MES, in the building during

school time, at events and activities.

"The SRO is an active and visible law enforcement figure at the school, serving as a deterrent to potential acts of criminal behavior."

The description goes into a thorough list of duties.

The guard is to "protect students, staff and community" when they're on MES grounds, or at any school-sponsored event.

The guard brings more police surveillance to the local school. They'll surveil entry points, making sure they're locked and secured, preventing entry by unauthorized people, patrol parking lots at arrival and dismissal. According to the town's document the guard won't be involved in student discipline – except when other options "have been found ineffective."

There's also language saying the guard can conduct searches and interviews.

Also, should the guard's "legal responsibili-

ties as a sworn police officer" conflicts with their school duties, the police duties take precedence, notifying the school and suggesting ways to avoid scheduling conflicts.

They're also asked to report any delinquency or arrests. Like teachers, they're required to report any knowledge or suspicion of a child being abused or neglected.

The guard will "immediately and without hesitation" intervene in "any incident of violence on school grounds, up to and including" an active shooter to stop or "mitigate" the loss of life and/or injury.

They must act as a first responder to situations, routine or emergency, or high-risk situations, notifying appropriate public safety and school administration.

The guard can also help the school nurse in medical emergencies.

There is an intent to have the SRO not just be a presence for security, but also for that other thing so key to anyone's health and well-being – education.

For example, the town lists teaching about "stranger danger" and internet safety, healthy interpersonal and intrapersonal relationships,

alcohol and drug use education and prevention, "violence diffusion, and other topics deemed pertinent and appropriate by school administration"

In a nutshell, the guard serves as the law enforcement liaison between the school and the town and to support the school administration and staff in maintaining a safe and positive school environment.

There'll be a pretty strenuous application process - candidates will be required to successfully complete a written exam, physical agility test, oral interview, thorough background investigation, polygraph, psychological, and physical exam. A copy of active POST certification must accompany the application.

An application and current resume must be submitted to the Marlborough Town Clerk, 26 North Main St., P.O. Box 29, Marlborough, CT 06447 by noon on June 20.

More information is available on the town's website.

The guard's estimated to cost around 100 grand, with the school footing 90% of the bill and the town 10% – a major sticking point in talks late last year.

'Horsepower' Car Show

All are invited to the first-ever car show at The Farm at Carter Hill, 86 E. Hampton Rd., Marlborough, on Sunday, June 11, to benefit the horses of the CT Draft Horse Rescue. Car entries must arrive between 9 and 11 a.m., and general admission starts at 11 a.m.

Car entry tickets and general admission tickets are available at tinyurl.com/3xk7yz5b. Cash entries are available during the day of the event. Awards will be presented at 2:30 p.m. There will be live music by local band Beth and the Boys.

Food and drinks will be available for purchase. There will be raffles and games, trophy awards and more.

The CDHR is a nonprofit organization located in East Hampton, dedicated to saving the lives of neglected or abused draft horses as well as draft horses heading to slaughter.

For more information, visit www.ctdraftrescue.org or www.facebook.com/ctdraftrescue, or email ctdraftrescue@aol.com.

Memorial Day Parade Info

The annual Memorial Day parade will take place this year Monday, May 29. The parade is organized by the American Legion Post 197 in conjunction with the town of Marlborough.

A short Memorial Day service will take place at the rear of the town cemetery off Route 66. Flowers will be presented at the memorial, followed by taps and a firing squad salute. After the short ceremony, the parade will step off at approximately 1:30 p.m. The parade will be assembled in front of Marlborough Elementary School on School Drive.

The parade will proceed to South Main Street and then march north to the Marlborough Green, after crossing Route 66. At the Green, a Memorial Day service will be held.

Participation will include town and state officials, the American Legion Post 197 Color Guard, East Hampton VFW Color Guard, senior and junior bands from RHAM, the Marlborough Fire Department, several Fife and Drum Corps, the scouts, youth groups, East Hampton VFW, Marlborough American Legion 197 and more.

If your Marlborough group would like to participate, or you would like to enter a car to carry individuals, submit a request through post197.com. The parade length is limited, due to closing Route 66 for parade crossing.

In the event of rain at the time of step-off, the service will move to the elementary school.

Lions 'Round the Lake 5K

The Marlborough Lions will hold their 39th annual 'Round the Lake 5K Road Race Sunday, May 28, starting promptly at 10:30 a.m.

The entry fee is \$30 and runners must be registered by the day prior to the race. There is also a \$60 package price for groups of immediate family members participating in the race. Same-day registrations need to be signed in by 10 a.m. Runners will start near the entrance to Blish Park on Park Road and will proceed on a course, which circles Lake Terramuggus.

To register or for more information, contact

Ken Hjulstrom at 860-490-9116 or Lions Club President Megan Lloyd at 413-687-5537 or MarlboroughCTLions@gmail.com. Registration forms are also available at various locations. People can also register online at itsy-ourrace.com; search for Marlborough Lions.

Race sponsorships are available; the business sponsor's information will be printed on the shirts handed out to runners. Businesses that wish to provide sponsorships should contact Hjulstrom or Lloyd.

Congregational Church News & Notes

Sunday Worship and Sunday School at the Congregational Church of Marlborough, United Church of Christ, 35 South Main St., is at 10 a.m. Worship is streamed every Sunday at mcc.marlconchurch.org and recorded for later viewing at the website. Childcare for infants and toddlers is provided downstairs in the nursery but children are always welcome at the worship service.

May 28: Worship service will be led by singer and songwriter Steve Pozzato.

Outreach: The church supports a variety of mission projects. Second quarter mission-giving will go to AHM Mental Health Fund. The

church collects non-perishable food items year-round for Marlborough Food Bank with a basket located in the narthex for Sunday worshippers to bring their donations. The Drive Thru Café provides a take-away hot meal at the church for Marlborough Food Bank clients usually on the last Sunday of every month (except July and August). Once a month the youth groups prepare and serve a meal to residents at Florence Lord Housing. Once in May and November, the church sponsors the evening meal at the St. Vincent DePaul Soup Kitchen in Middletown.

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

Second Blessings Thrift Shop: Closed Memorial Day weekend and re-opens June 2 with its annual year-end 50% off through June 24 of handbags, totes, jewelry, framed artwork and Christmas. The shop is open for selling and donations Fridays from noon-3 p.m. and Saturdays from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. The shop also sells items year-round through eBay at bit.ly/MCCebay.

General Info: Worship services and programs are open to all. The church is an Open and Affirming faith community. For more information on the church or its programs, call the church office at 860-295-9050 or email office@marlconchurch.org.

SOOP Returns to Arts Center

The Marlborough-based group Seat of Our Pants (SOOP), is starring on the stage at the Marlborough Arts Center's 4th Friday @ the Arts Cafe on Friday, May 26, at 7:30 p.m.

SOOP features original award-winning songs performed by Carolyn Brodgerski, Mark Hall, Jeff Gorman and Michael Frantzen. The group's instrumentation now includes a Celtic harp.

The arts center is at 231 North Main Street in Marlborough. Doors open at 7 p.m. Admission at the door is \$10. The building is handicapped-accessible and there is on-site parking. See www.marlborougharts.org and seatofourpantsmusic.com for greater details.

Red Cross Blood Drive

There will be a Red Cross Blood Drive Thursday, June 1, from 1-6 p.m., at Marlborough Elementary School, 25 School Drive.

All who donate will receive a \$10 gift card by email to a merchant of their choice. They'll also be automatically entered for a chance to win a backyard theater package including a projector and screen, projector tripod, smokeless firepit, Adirondack chair set and a movie night snack package.

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Arts Center Activities and Events

Marlborough Arts Center (MAC) has announced the following activities and events: Artist members of the Board of Directors at the MAC continue to display their work at Town Hall until the end of June. Acrylic paintings by Roy Wrenn, wire sculpture by Neal Alderman, mixed media by Laurie Alt, and watercolors by Audrey Carroll Prucnall and Mary Horrigan can be viewed during business hours at Town Hall. MAC's Members' Art Show is currently on

display at the arts center gallery, 231 N. Main St. The gallery will be open Friday, Saturday, and Sunday afternoons from 1-4 p.m. The show runs until May 28. Two outdoor rock concerts are planned for August. A juried regional art show, East of the River, is scheduled for October, and a Holiday Gift and Art Sale will take place in November. Watercolor classes will be offered in October.

Lions Club Raffling Kayak

The Marlborough Lions are raffling off a 10-foot Ascend kayak with paddle and a one-year rental of a kayak rack at Marlborough's Blish Park. Note that use of the rack at Blish Park is limited to Marlborough residents, but the raffle for the kayak is open to everyone. Raffle tickets are \$20 each. Tickets will be sold at various locations through May 28 or can be purchased from Marlborough Lions Club members. Proceeds will support the Lions.

This year there is also a second prize of four two-hour kayak rentals valued at \$240 from Black Hall Outfitters in Old Lyme or Westbrook. The raffle drawing will take place at Blish Park Sunday, May 28. Winners need not be present. For more information or to purchase raffle tickets, call Lions Club President Megan Lloyd at 413-687-5537, or Lions Jean Paul Bolduc at 860-798-2054 or Ken Hjulstrom at 860-490-9116.

Fife and Drum Corps Accepting New Members

The Marlborough Jr. Ancient Fife and Drum Corps is now recruiting children between the ages of 8 and 17 to join the ranks. The Corps has been a source of music, marching, and living history for children/teens in Marlborough and surrounding towns since 1964. Members learn to march and play the fife, snare drum or bass drum from our very capable instructors, free of charge. Members have opportunities to travel throughout New England

while the Corps performs at parades, musters and other events. This year's performance schedule includes performances at Minuteman National Park in Massachusetts, Fort McClary in Kittery, Maine, and Fort Griswold in Groton. The Marlborough Jr. Ancients meet every Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. for musical instruction and marching practice. For more information, visit www.MarlboroughJrAncients.com or email MarlboroughJrAncients@gmail.com.

Parks and Rec Programs

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

plies are included. Fee: \$48/resident, \$53/non-resident.

Adult Programs: Adult Volleyball: Thursdays, 8-10 p.m., at Marlborough Senior Center. Cost is \$5 per week; drop in. Session runs until June 2.

Netto Summer Day Camp: For grades K-7. Weekly sessions run June 19-Aug. 11, at Blish Park. There will be camp games, arts & crafts, swimming, sports, field trips and special events. All campers are supervised by counselors and lifeguards trained in CPR/First Aid. Fee per week: \$175/residents, \$185/non-residents.

Zumba: Thursdays, June 1-27, 6:30-7:30 p.m., in the Marlborough Elementary School gym. Fee: \$50/residents, \$55/non-residents, or \$12 drop-in fee each week.

Swim Lessons: Lessons will begin the week of June 20, at Blish Park. All lesson levels are offered. Fee: \$65/residents, \$70/non-residents.

Trips: New York Yankees Bus Trip: Sunday, May 28. See the San Diego Padres vs. New York Yankees, at 1:05 p.m. Fee: \$120 for upper-level outfield, \$165 for sections 232-234. Bus departs Putnam park and ride in Glastonbury at 7:30 a.m., and returns at 6 p.m.

Kids Summer Beach Yoga Nights: For ages 3-6. Meets biweekly on Wednesdays, June 21-Aug. 16, 5:30-6:15 p.m., at Blish Park. Each week, children and their parents/guardians will embark on a "yoga adventure" centered around movement, play and mindfulness. Fee: \$60/residents, \$65/non-residents, or a \$15 per week drop-in fee.

Boston Red Sox vs. New York Yankees Bus Trip: Saturday, June 10, at 7:35 p.m., at Yankee Stadium. Fee: \$209. Bus departs Putnam park and ride in Glastonbury at 3 p.m. and returns at around 1 a.m.

Skyhawks Basketball Camp: June 26-30. Ages 5 & 6 are 9 a.m.-noon, and fee is \$139/residents, \$144/non-residents. Ages 7-12 are 9 a.m.-3 p.m. and fee is \$179/resident, \$184/non-resident.

Sip and Shop Bus Tour: Saturday, June 17. Trip includes a charter bus, a wine-tasting at Brotherhood Winery in New York, lunch, shopping at Woodbury Commons Premium Outlets (over 220 stores), and games and prizes on the bus. Bus departs Putnam park and ride in Glastonbury at 3 p.m., and returns at 1 a.m. Fee: \$80.

Horseback Riding Lessons: For ages 5 and up. Days and times are flexible. Fee: four lessons for \$175/residents, \$180/non-residents.

Youth Programs: Family Sewing - Beach Tote: Saturday, June 10, 10-11:30 a.m., at Marlborough Senior Center. For ages 8 and up. Students will learn the basics of machine operation, and create and take home a beach tote. All sup-

Acrylic Landscape Painting: July 5 and 6, 9 a.m.-noon, at Marlborough Elementary School, for grades 3-6. Students will learn techniques to guide them through a landscape painting on canvas. Fee: \$90/resident, \$95/non-resident.

Skyhawks (Soccer, Baseball and Basketball): July 5-7, 9 a.m.-noon, at Blish Park. Mini-Hawk is for ages 4-6, and Multi-Sport is for ages 7-10. Fee: \$115/residents, \$120/non-residents.

Input Sought on Food Security

The Marlborough Sustainable CT Team has been formed to examine the town's sustainability and resiliency policies and to engage the community in conversations that lead to new community actions that promote what the team calls "a more inclusive and sustainable Marlborough." As part of this effort, the Marlborough Sustainable Team is seeking community input on food security. The team requests that residents fill out a short survey available on the town website (www.marlboroughct.net), and copies are available at the Richmond Memo-

rial Library, Senior Center, and Town Hall. Drop your surveys off by June 16 in the survey return box in the foyer of Town Hall. You can also mail them to Land Use Office, P.O. Box 29, Marlborough CT 06447. The Marlborough Sustainable Team members are citizen volunteers working with the Marlborough Planning Commission to achieve state certification. If interested in joining the team, email Peter Hughes, Planning & Development director, at planner@marlboroughct.net, or call 860-295-6202.

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, May 29:** Senior center closed for Memorial Day. **Tuesday, May 30:** Grocery Shopping, 8:30 a.m.-noon; free bread and bakery goods donated by Big Y, 10 a.m.; Meals-on-Wheels, noon. **Wednesday, May 31:** 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. Salisbury steak with gravy, cornbread stuffing, asparagus, wheat bread, fresh fruit; setback, 1-4 p.m.; Sophisticated Ladies, 5-6:30 p.m. **Thursday, June 1:** Tai Chi, 10:30-11:30 a.m.; Meals-on-Wheels, noon. **Friday, June 2:** Socialization, 8-Ball Pool, Mahjong Playing Cards, 10 a.m.-noon; Meals-

on-Wheels, noon; Congregate Meal, noon - call for menu; Setback, 1-4 p.m. **Congregate Meals:** All meals are served with milk, bread and margarine. Suggested donation: \$3 or what you can afford. **Transportation:** Available Monday, Tuesday and Thursday. 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 Tuesdays 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 physically challenged individuals is available; call the senior center for a ride.

St. John Fisher Church News & Notes

St. John Fisher Roman Catholic Church is located at 30 Jones Hollow Rd. Pastor is the Rev. Alvin LeBlanc; John McKaig is deacon emeritus. Heather Mancini is church secretary and can be reached at 860-295-0001; hours are Monday-Wednesday and Friday, 8:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. People are asked to call before heading over or connect via email at stjohnfisher30@yahoo.com. **Weekend Masses:** 4 p.m. Saturday and 8:30 and 10:30 a.m. Sunday. All are welcome. **Weekday Mass:** Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, 8:30 a.m. **Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament:** Sundays, 4-5 p.m. **Weekly Sacrament of Reconciliation:** Saturdays, 3-3:30 p.m., or by appointment **Family Faith Formation:** This is an active family faith formation program for the church's kindergarten through middle school population. For more information, call the church office. **Confirmation Community:** The church's active 9th- and 10th-grade confirmation program

continues. Registration is required as well. **Adult Worship Choir:** Meets Wednesdays from 5:30-7 p.m. All are welcome to join. More information can be found on the church website. **Community Outreach and Service:** Food drives are held the second full weekend of each month for Marlborough Food Bank. Sandwich-making and collection is the last Thursday of the month for St. Vincent de Paul in Middletown. The Community Garden is once again breaking ground to benefit Marlborough Food Bank and supply fresh produce in season. Garden volunteers are always welcome. Other scheduled service opportunities can be found on the church website and are scheduled monthly. **Other Programs and Offerings:** For more information on other programs or adult faith formation, youth group, RCIA, Knights of Columbus or other ministries, call the office, visit www.stjfcchurch.org, or look for the church on Facebook (Saint John Fisher Roman Catholic Church).



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Attention Seafarers, Theatergoers: Come to Epoch Arts in June

By Jack Lakowsky

East Hampton's local youth theater is set to put on the original show *Voyagers* June 9, 10 and 11 at 7 p.m., and what a journey the show's had getting to Epoch Art's mainstage.

Like all Epoch shows over its 25 years, *Voyagers* is an original script, written, produced, directed and staged in-house.

This week the *Rivereast* caught up with Epoch Arts director Elizabeth Namen, cast and crew, to learn more about the show, its premise and themes, and to hear about how Epoch has used some recent grant money from the State of Connecticut.

The show is set in a timeless, surreal, dream-like archipelago of islands full of people ranging from angry to unhappy, pretty much all of them complacent and unwilling or unable to make change. Echoing life beyond the show, the people who help the most are the most ostracized, the fate of the nonconformist, no matter what it is they do.

Following a distress signal sent out on the Island of Lies, mighty *Voyagers* take to the high seas in search of those in need of help!

On the voyage the story encounters a litany of eccentric characters: Lael, a lost sailor; Sardis, a complacent mayor; the famous copycat Re-Petes; the brave warrior Jalen; and Sachi, a scared, broken, "soon to be," *Voyager*.

All searching to find peace, it takes a community of truth bearers to show them that peace can only be found in the midst of the heaviest storm.

Each character, Namen said, embodies a different response to the "storms" of life – complacency, fear, valor.

Performer Zackary Howland plays the tragic, crestfallen Lael, whose tragic past has him down and, unable to move past the death of his family. Lael was once a great voyager, but tragedy killed his drive, made him bow to an unfulfilled life.

All the people in the fictional world, Namen said, have lost sight of the fact that life is meant to be lived, riding the choppy seas a far more enriched existence than watching them from shore.

Namen, along with playwright, co-director and all around "maker of cool things and co-everything" Sam Bolton, said the show was supposed to go on in 2020. For reasons needing no explanation, it didn't work out.

The show originally planned for a larger cast of close to 30, but after some rewrites and working with smaller post-pandemic enrollment, those have been reduced to about 16 roles overall. The delay, while frustrating, allowed for a deep, deep dive into the story, getting to know its ins and outs far better than a show written, rehearsed and performed in a matter of weeks was a boon to the story, the actors and the set, which, let's just say, is heady.

"We thought, just hang tight, but it never happened that year," said Namen. "It's just been us following it, like this secret little society. It's special, it's like 'Voyagers! We're doing it!' It's a big deal that we're putting it on."

Actor Jackie Laboy, playing Tadeo, said in a way, because it's been such a long haul and with the story meaning so much to its resolute performers, *Voyagers* could be Epoch's magnum opus.

Epoch had to temper its ambitious plans for the show, originally wanting a way more intricate set with way more pieces. The extra time gave them a chance to scale it down.

The show was, and is, timely. Set on stormy seas, what was a more tempestuous time than 2020 and the height of the pandemic, which derailed live performances from Broadway to Belltown, and what's more emblematic of the time than the flaws the characters have to overcome – uncertainty, complacency, misplaced guilt, self-delusion.

Madison Whillock, playing Sachi, first heard of the show right before quarantine, and wanted to go out, but 2020 went south fast. A theme Whillock interpreted – everyone's story matters, the grimy parts and the pretty.

"You always feel with theatre, there isn't enough time," said Namen, calling the show a "beefy bison" of a play, with a complex story and grand, over-the-top set pieces – a giant head, complete with enormous claws, for one.

Namen's daughter, Mikayla, plays the heroic, valorous Jalen, the type to teach you swimming by pushing you right in the water, she said. She said Jalen's quite different from her previous soft-hearted roles.

"She'll throw you straight into the storm," said Mikayla.

In short, she's a warrior, a refreshing departure



With fresh grant money and an upcoming show, East Hampton's Epoch Arts youth theatre is on a roll. Colorful costumes and all, pictured are performers (L to R), Evangeline Hale, Jackie Laboy, Mary Rainville and Mikayla Namen, Epoch artists ready to play and slay across seas high, low, in-between, whatever the weather brings.

from the epic seafaring tale, which is waterlogged with testosterone.

Along with putting on a long-awaited show, Namen and other Epoch Arts leaders are sprucing up and repairing their building on Skinner Road. Since the start of the year Epoch has received a few grants from the state, each worth a very helpful couple thousand dollars.

Last year, Namen and assistant director Rachel

Martin said the pandemic slowdown let them get tons of work done on the building, and they recently redid the building's HVAC.

To pre-order tickets, email elizabeth@epoch-arts.org.

For more information, or to donate, volunteer and/or get your young ones involved in Epoch (highly recommended by its cast), visit epoch-arts.org.

Parks and Recreation News

East Hampton Parks and Recreation has announced the following upcoming programs. For full descriptions, call 860-267-7300 or visit easthamptonct.myrec.com.

Kick Back and Bowl: June 14, 1-3 p.m., for grades 4-9. Cost is \$30.

Adult Tennis: Monday, Wednesday and

Friday, 9-10:30 a.m., at the high school tennis courts. Pre-registration not required. For more info, call or text Natalie Hurt at 860-227-8538.

Water Olympics: June 26-30, 9 a.m.-noon, Sears Park, \$100.

Adult Pickleball: June 7, 14, 21, 28, 5:30-6:30 p.m. Cost is \$25.

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. **Holiday Closing:** The library will be closed Monday, May 29.

Friends of the Library: Booksale Donation Dropoff Begins: Saturday, May 27, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. This is the first day to drop off gently used book donations at the library. Books must be in good condition, free of mold, stains or smells. The book sale will then take place June 9 and 10.

National Trails Day Bike Rodeo! Saturday, June 3, 10 a.m.-noon, at Center School. Learn about bicycle safety, practice your skills on an obstacle course, register for Summer Reading, and more.

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.

Hatch the Chicken! Stop by and visit the library's newly-hatched baby chicks before they go back to the farm on June 6.

DIY Days – Kinetic Sand: Saturday, May 27, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Children and families in grades K-8 are invited to create a different toy, game, or treat together. No registration required; just drop in. Available while supplies last.

Teen Programs: Teen Friday: Friday, May 26, 3:30-4:30 p.m., for grades 6-12. Kick off your weekend with a variety of games, activities and crafts.

Nintendo Switch Game Play for Grades 6-12: Saturday, June 17, 2-3:30 p.m. Come to the library to play *Mario Party: Superstars*. All skill levels welcome.

Adult Programs: Cookbook Club – The Salad Days of Summer: Tuesday, June 6, 6:30 p.m. Bring your favorite salad and copies of the recipe to share.

Daniel Corr Classical Guitarist: Tuesday, June 13, 6 p.m. Listen to an evening of music, with light refreshments to follow.

Belltown Book Blast: Friday, Jun. 16, 10 a.m. Come for coffee or tea and bookish banter. No registration needed; just drop in.

LibrarYoga with Amie Meacham: Saturday, June 17, 10:15 a.m. Meacham, a Yoga 200 certified instructor, will lead an hour of gentle yoga in the Community Room. All levels welcome.

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.

Pentecost: Sunday, May 28. All are asked to wear red to church to celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit.

Sunday School: New students are welcome. Contact the Rev. Joanne Neel-Richard for information at jneelrichard16@gmail.com.

Diaper Drive: This is the last Sunday to donate! Diapers in sizes 3 and 4, and Pull-Ups in

sizes 3, 4 and 5, can still be dropped off in the Parish Hall.

Donations: Food items may be placed in the black totes at the rear of the church. Clean returnable bottles and cans go in the designated cans by the shed.

Church Directory: It is not too late to have your picture taken for the updated church directory. See Dick Napoletano after the service. If your information needs to be updated, contact Regina Starolis at regina.starolis@yale.edu.

For more information or if in need of assistance, call the church office at 860-267-0278 or contact Donna Hryb, senior warden, at 860-633-0472.

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-Pope John XXIII

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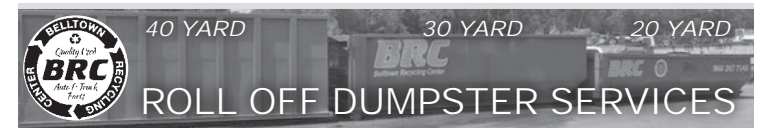
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East Hampton Public Schools Top Ten Students of the Class of 2023



The East Hampton Board of Education is pleased to announce the Top Ten students in the graduating Class of 2023. The Valedictorian is Daniel Drlik. The Salutatorian is Melanie Hurt.



Daniel Drlik, son of Christina and Vaclav Drlik, is the valedictorian of the class of 2023. In his junior year, Dan was a recipient of the Society of Women Engineers Certificate of Merit and the Rensselaer Medal, both which recognize students who excel in math and science coursework and have significant involvement in extracurricular activities and the larger community. Dan exemplifies the award criteria as an incredible student and active member of his school community and is proud of the balance he has been able to maintain throughout his four years at East Hampton High School. While taking the most challenging courses the school has to offer, Dan has been the class president junior and senior years, the National Honor Society president, an integral member of the track team for three years, and a member of the cross country team for four years, where he currently serves as the captain. Dan has also been a dedicated member of the Save Promise Club for the last three years. After graduation, Dan plans to attend University of Connecticut and major in civil engineering. His goal is to be the proud designer of famous structures and buildings.



Melanie Hurt, daughter of Natalie and Scott Hurt, is the salutatorian of the class of 2023. Melanie has had many impressive accomplishments as a student at EHHS. In her junior year, she was the recipient of the Clarkson University Leadership Award, which recognizes a student with outstanding leadership qualities who has been a positive contributor to both the school and greater community. She also received the Computing Medal and Scholarship Award from Rochester Institute of Technology, which are awarded to a student-leader pursuing challenging courses and demonstrating interest and ability in computing. Within the school community, Melanie is a member of National Honor Society, Tri-M Music Honor Society, Interact Club, Ski Club, Concert Band, Library Interns, Jazz Band, Puppet Club, and the tennis team; she is also the vice president of Bring Change to Mind Club. Outside of school, Melanie is part of the Teen Advisory Board at the East Hampton Public Library, a teacher's assistant at Epoch Arts, and a lector at St. Patrick Church. This fall, Melanie will be attending University of Connecticut, where she plans to study computer science and neuroscience with the goal of becoming either a neurosurgeon or cybersecurity specialist.



Eshani Karkun, daughter of Vivek Karkun and Shashi Ghodake, is ranked third in the class of 2023. As a junior, Eshani was awarded the George Eastman Young Leaders Award from the University of Rochester due to her strong leadership skills, academic success, and extracurricular involvement and the Gettysburg College Book Award as a top performer in the study of American history. Eshani has made many positive contributions to EHHS as the treasurer of the National Honor Society, the co-president of the Save Promise club, a student representative for the East Hampton Board of Education, a member of Interact Club, and a Student Ambassador. She has also served as both the membership director and current president of the Spanish Club, and the president (9th grade) and treasurer (10th-12th grades) of her class. Additionally, she is the team captain of the girls' tennis team, and the team manager for the girls' basketball team. Eshani is most proud of her involvement in a wide variety of activities during her high school experience, as it made her more confident socially and academically. This fall, Eshani plans to attend University of Connecticut, where she will study biological sciences in hopes to pursue medicine with a specialty in either patient care or lab research.



Jordan Murphy, daughter of Tim and Carolyn Murphy, is ranked fourth in the class of 2023. Jordan has excelled both academically and athletically during her time at East Hampton High School. In her junior year, Jordan was a recipient of the Society of Women Engineers Certificate of Merit, provided to students who have completed math and science courses with distinction and have been active citizens within their school and community. Jordan has been a member of both the varsity volleyball and basketball teams for four years and the track and field team for three years. She was selected as captain for all three teams this past year, an indication of her dedication and leadership abilities. In her high school athletic career, she also contributed to State Championships for both basketball and volleyball and was selected as a CIAC Scholar-Athlete Award recipient. Jordan further contributes to EHHS as a member of National Honor Society, Bring Change to Mind, Interact Club, and DECA. This fall, Jordan plans to attend University of Hartford to study occupational therapy and represent the Hawks as a member of the track & field team. Jordan's goal is to work with children and adults as an occupational therapist to help them reach their highest physical potential.



Caidyn Galovich, daughter of Brian and Kristin Galovich, is ranked fifth in the class of 2023. Caidyn appreciates the many opportunities provided to her during her high school experience and is most proud of how she has balanced her academic and personal life throughout the past four years, noting her parents' support as a major contributor to her successes in both areas. Caidyn took advantage of the challenging academic courses available to students, and excelled in them while still finding time to dedicate to various extracurricular activities in and outside of school. Not only is Caidyn highly involved in the East Hampton High School community as a member of National Honor Society, Student Ambassadors, Interact Club, Spanish Club, and Yearbook Club, but she also served as her class secretary in her junior year, volunteered for the Special Olympics, participated in Relay for Life, and maintained employment as a physical therapist aide. Her experiences have helped her determine her future career; Caidyn plans to attend University of Delaware after graduation, where she has been accepted to the School of Nursing with the goal of becoming a nurse practitioner.



Sophia Cahoon, daughter of Susan DeRossa and Jeff Cahoon, is ranked sixth in the class of 2023. As a junior, Sophia was the recipient of the Clarkson Achievement Award and was inducted into the National Honor Society, where she currently serves as secretary. A well-rounded and involved member of the East Hampton school community, Sophia is a four-year member of the Interact Club where she has contributed in various roles, including serving as the holiday chair, creating the idea to make a community garden, and collaborating with the Environmental Club to build and grow gardens then donate the produce to the food bank. As a dedicated member of the music department, she was inducted into the Tri-M Music Honor Society, has performed at Disney World, and was selected to perform at the Shoreline Music Festival with the concert choir. An artist, Sophia is a member of the Art Club and passionate about the field. Sophia's senior capstone project allowed her to combine her love of art and science; she titled it "Junk to Art." Sophia collected recycling and turned it into artwork, then sold the items at the Art Show and donated all proceeds to the World Wildlife Foundation. Sophia has also competed on the cross country and track and field teams. This fall, Sophia will be attending University of Vermont, where she was accepted into the Liberal Arts Scholars program. She plans to study biological sciences with the intention of going into the field of research.



Julia M. Stone, daughter of Tammy and David Stone, is ranked seventh in the class of 2023. As a junior, she was the recipient of the University of Rochester Frederick B. Douglas and Susan B. Anthony Award, which is presented each year to a student who is committed to understanding and addressing difficult social issues. Passionate about the arts, Julia is a talented musician and performer. She is a member of the Tri-M Music Honor Society, in addition to participating in chorus, Julia sings soprano for the Voices a cappella group and plays piano for the Jazz Band. An actress, Julia is a member of the Drama Club and has helped lead ensembles for multiple productions, including starring as Sandy in Grease and as Morticia in the Addams Family. Julia has been hired to perform as a scare actor at Terror at Quassy and as an elf for the North Pole Express through the Essex Steam Train. Julia takes dance and vocal lessons as well as writes her own music; she has performed her original pieces at the annual Cabaret show for the past three years. This fall, Julia will attend Eastern Connecticut State University, where she will study psychology with the intention of becoming a certified therapist. Julia will continue working on her craft as an actor and singer and would love to make a career as an entertainer.



Jenna Murphy, daughter of Tim and Carolyn Murphy, is ranked eighth in the class of 2023. Jenna has shown incredible dedication to the East Hampton High School community over the past four years through her involvement in athletics, leadership, and extracurricular activities. She was inducted into the National Honor Society in her junior year, holds the historian position for DECA, and is a member of Spanish Club, Interact Club, and Bring Change to Mind, which all provide opportunities to support the school and town at large. In addition, Jenna has been an important member of the volleyball team all four years and track and field the past three years. Her commitment to both sports earned her the role of team captain for both volleyball and track and field this past year. A true athlete, Jenna is most proud of winning the Class S State Championship with her volleyball team. She has continued to dedicate much of her time to the sport through participation in Husky Volleyball and is planning to play at the collegiate level. Jenna will be attending University of Hartford in the fall and will major in occupational therapy.



Ben Fazekas, son of Jill Fazekas, is ranked ninth in the class of 2023. In his junior year, Ben's academic and personal achievements were recognized through receipt of the Xerox Award for Innovation and Information Technology from University of Rochester, as well as the Computing Medal and Scholarship Program Award from Rochester Institute of Technology. Both awards are presented to students who have high levels of academic achievement, interest and clear abilities within the fields of technology and computing, and leadership qualities displayed through community or school involvement. Ben has shown these traits through his participation in cross country for four years, indoor track for four years, and outdoor track for three years during his time at East Hampton High School. He was selected as team captain for outdoor track in his junior year. Ben is most proud of his perseverance over the past four years, shown through his ability to try different approaches to problems should his first attempt not work. This quality will surely do him well as he enters college. This fall, Ben plans to attend University of Connecticut, where he will study computer science and engineering.



Jenna Field, daughter of Toni Spano, is ranked tenth in the class of 2023. Jenna is a member of the National Honor Society, Student Ambassadors, Youth Forum, Business Club, Interact Club, Yearbook Club, and Spanish Club. She is also a volunteer for the Special Olympics, a youth cheerleading program assistant coach, and a dance teacher. In reflecting on her high school experience, Jenna believes her mom pushed her to be the best version of herself; she is most proud of staying true to her own beliefs, building confidence to try new experiences, and creating positive relationships with peers and staff alike. Her meaningful relationships with her teachers have been influential in shaping her academic and career goals. Their dedication to and support of her and others' success have inspired her to pursue a career in education, something she has had the opportunity to practice this year through an independent study working with preschoolers. This fall, Jenna plans to continue her studies in early childhood education with a goal of becoming a certified teacher who can build positive relationships with students to inspire them just as her teachers did for her.

This Memorial Day, remember to take the time to honor the Men and Women who have served our country.

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Sponsors Sought for Old Home Days

Old Home Days is July 6, 7 and 8 – and sponsors are sought to help pay for the three-day Glorious Celebration.

East Hampton Old Home Days is run entirely on donations from the community and local businesses. All donations are welcome. To donate, visit www.ehohd.org. For sponsorship information, call Carl Guild at 860-813-2275 or carlguild@gmail.com.

Class of '88 35th Class Reunion

The class has entered a float in the Old Home Day Parade on July 8, followed by a get-together at Kick Back n' Bowl beginning at 1 p.m.

Everyone is welcome to be on the float or walk in the parade. Alumni from classes of '85, '86, '87 and '89 are also welcome to attend.

Contact Lisa Loffredo if interested or for more information, at 860-930-0689 or Lloffredo@comcast.net.



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Haddam Neck Covenant Church News

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

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

Kids Church: Music and hands-on interactive activities about God's love are offered for kids in the Fellowship Hall during the worship

service. All are welcome.

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

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

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

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.

Yoga: With Erin Day of Ten Summit Yoga. Mondays at 9 a.m. and Tuesdays at 7 p.m. No Saturday classes until summer. Cost is a \$10 drop-in fee. Register at tensummitst@gmail.com.

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

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

CommuniTea: Saturday, June 10, 10 a.m.-noon. Take out a book, have a cup of tea, and see the library's new art displays. Coffee drinkers welcome.

Writer's Workshop/Meet-Up Group: Wednesday, June 21, 7-8:30 p.m. There will be constructive criticism, writing exercises and more. Get the opinion of other writers. Registration requested.

Senior Center News & Notes

East Hampton Senior Center, 105 Main St., announces the following. Registration is required for all programs unless noted; register at myactivecenter.com or by contacting the center at 860-267-4426 or seniorcenter@easthamptonct.gov. Senior center hours are Monday-Thursday, 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m.; Friday, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Masks are encouraged, but not required. Visit the senior center online at www.easthamptonct.gov/east-hampton-senior-center.

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

Weekly Activities: **Quilting Group:** Mondays, 9 a.m.; **Mexican Train Dominoes:** Mondays, 9:30 a.m.; **Setback:** Mondays, 1 p.m., and Thursdays, 1:15 p.m.; **Bible Study:** Tuesdays, 1 p.m.; **Bingo:** Tuesdays, 1-3 p.m., in person and via Zoom; **Cross Stitch:** Wednesdays, 1:30-2:30 p.m. - all levels welcome; **Tap Dance:** Thursdays, 11:15-11:45 a.m.; **Cribbage:** Fridays, 9:30-11 a.m. - let the center know in advance if you plan to attend; **Mahjong:** Fridays, 10 a.m.-noon - call also to put your name on a list if interested in learning how to play; **Textile Group:** Fridays, 1 p.m.

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

Old Home Day Parade Meeting: Wednesday, May 31, 10 a.m. Discussions will take place about how the senior center will participate this year.

Hayride on the Air Line Trail: Tuesday, June 6, at 1:30 p.m. Call the senior center to sign up and for more details.

Church Tag Sale

St. John Paul II Parish will hold a tag sale at its St. Patrick Church location, 47 W. High St., on Saturday, June 3, from 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

YPCCA to Present *Rent* This Summer

The Young People's Center for Creative Arts is now accepting registrations for its summer theater camp for students in grades 6-12. YPCCA will run Monday through Friday June 26-July 23, from 8:30 a.m.- 2:45 p.m., at East Hampton High School.

Mornings at the camp are devoted to various workshops, while afternoons are spent in rehearsals for the summer mainstage production - which this year is *Rent*.

For teens interested in a leading role in the show, auditions are held a few weeks before camp. Auditions, however, are not mandatory and students who do not audition will be fea-

tured in the ensemble. There are also opportunities to learn behind-the-scenes skills involved in theater work and many campers work as stage and set crew.

Admission is \$675 per child; additional children in a family are \$625 each. A \$100 deposit is required at registration, and payment in full is due by the first day of camp.

Registration and more information on the camp is available by visiting www.yppcca.org. Scholarships are also available for students with financial need. Email info@ypcca.org for more information.

EV Owners Sought for Electric Car Show

The East Hampton Clean Energy Task Force (CETF) invites owners of electric and hybrid vehicles to show off their cars at the Electric Car Show on Saturday, June 3, from 11 a.m.-3 p.m., at East Hampton High School, 15 North Maple St. Rain date is June 4.

More and more people want to know what it is like driving electric, the CETF said, adding that no one is better to answer those questions than existing owners.

Owner registration is fast and free. Go to www.tinyurl.com/ehcarshow and complete the online registration.

No Services at Haddam Neck Congregational

During May, Haddam Neck Congregational Church members will worship at the 2nd Congregational Church of Middle Haddam, 52 Middle Haddam Rd., Middle Haddam. All are invited to the 10 a.m. service there.

No worship services will be held at Haddam Neck Congregational during May.

Visit www.haddamneckcongregationalchurch.org for information and upcoming events.

President's List

Shannon Cunningham of East Hampton made the winter 2023 President's List at Southern New Hampshire University in Manchester, N.H.

Budget Referendum Location Change

The location of voting for the budget referendum is now Town Hall.

Voters will enter through the front door of the building and proceed to the community room. Signs will be posted. Curbside voting will be available at the entrance on the left side of the building.

CCEH Spring Market

On Saturday, May 27, from 9 a.m.-2 p.m., the annual Spring Market will take place on the grounds of the Congregational Church of East Hampton at 59 Main St.

The market will include a tag sale, plant sale, food, Tastefully Simple, Photos by Barbara, WarmFuzziesSoftHugs, Syd's Shenanigans, Debby's Sweet Treats, Vinyl Fusion, Autumn Olive Farm, Book Boxes, maple products from Rick's Sugar Shack, and more. The Belttown Garden Club will also sell perennials.

Visit the downtown merchants during their Village Stroll from 11 a.m.-5 p.m. that day.

For more information or to reserve a vendor spot, call Lisa at 860-918-1170.

Dean's List

Patricia Casura of East Hampton made the winter 2023 Dean's List at Southern New Hampshire University in Manchester, N.H.

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RE5-12-23

EHHS Scholar-Athletes: Ireland and Murphy

By Josh Howard

Seniors Nate Ireland and Jordan Murphy were selected as East Hampton High School's Scholar-Athletes of the year.

The Scholar-Athlete Program annually recognizes two high school seniors from each member high school of the Connecticut Association of Schools/Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference (CAS/CIAC) whose academic and athletic careers have been exemplary, whose personal standards and achievements are a model to others, and who possess high levels of integrity, self-discipline and courage.

The pair was honored at the 40th annual Scholar-Athlete Awards Banquet at the Aqua Turf Club in Southington on May 7.

Ireland Leads the Way

Ireland did a little of everything at East Hampton High School, starting on the basketball courts and competing on the cross-country trails and track during the other two athletic seasons.

This past winter on the hardwood, he earned All-Shoreline Conference Honorable Mention after averaging a double-double (10+ points, 10+ rebounds), serving as the team's frontcourt presence and team captain as the Bellringers made the state tournament for a second consecutive season, winning a total of 23 games over the last two seasons.

East Hampton boys basketball head coach John Antolini called Ireland a "true leader" and praised him for his approach to the game.

"He plays the right way," added Antolini. "He

plays unselfishly, respects his teammates, plays hard, and most importantly, has fun."

Along with playing basketball at the high school for three years, Ireland also made a name as a distance runner, competing for the cross-country team for three years and a member of the outdoor track team the past two springs.

Antolini added that Ireland was deserving of the award, stating, "His attitude and the example he sets is contagious and his teammates thrive off the way he plays and the example he sets on and off the court. I look forward to hearing about his successes for years to come."

Ireland will attend Nova Southeastern University in Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

Murphy Leaves Championship Legacy

Murphy was a four-year member for the volleyball, basketball and outdoor track teams, helping bring home state championships in all three sports.

This past school year, she was a captain for all three teams and has been an all-conference selection in all three sports.

On the volleyball courts, Murphy was a two-time all-state recipient and was named the Class M tournament's Most Valuable Player her senior year as the Bellringers captured the program's first state championship this past November.

East Hampton volleyball coach Molly Grabowski said that Murphy is an outstanding athlete, yet it's the intangibles that make her special, stating, "her work ethic is second to none."

"She comes to practice every day ready to give 100%," added Murphy. "She is self-disciplined



Nate Ireland and Jordan Murphy were selected as East Hampton High School's scholar-athletes.

and constantly looking to make herself better. She also has a great deal of mental toughness."

Grabowski added that Murphy played varsity since her freshman season and grew into a leader by setting an example on a daily basis.

"She walks the walk and this drives her teammates to want to be there with her," stated Grabowski. "Jordan has developed into an athlete who leads her team demonstrating an outstanding skillset, attitude, work ethic, discipline, and enthusiasm for the sport."

Following the volleyball title, Murphy was the only senior starter and team captain for a Bellringers basketball team that won the program's first state title since 1980.

Over her four years on the basketball team, the Bellringers captured four straight Shoreline Conference (SLC) championships.

She is currently finishing up her senior season in outdoor track where she helped the program win a state title in 2021.

Murphy will attend University of Hartford where she will be a member of the Hawks track and field team in West Hartford.

Grabowski said no matter what sport Murphy continues to play, she will be successful, adding, "She will prove to be an asset and an integral part of any college program and for any sport she decides to pursue, because that's Jordan."

Early Memorial Day Ceremony

The Haddam Neck Cemetery Association will hold an early Memorial Day ceremony Sunday, May 21, at 2 p.m., at Rock Landing Road Cemetery.

New flags along with flowers will be put on all veterans graves starting at 1:45 p.m. The

Moodus Drum and Fife will provide patriotic songs. A veteran from East Hampton will give a speech.

Children are encouraged to decorate their bikes or wagons for prizes.

The Haddam Neck Fair Association will provide ice cream and cookies.



Capstone Charity Clinic... For his capstone project, East Hampton High School senior Nicholas Chunko recently held a charity basketball clinic for boys and girls in grades 3-5. He raised \$334 for the March of Dimes.

Bethlehem Lutheran Church News

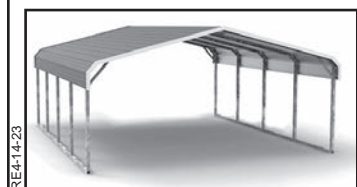
Bethlehem Evangelical Lutheran Church holds services Sundays at 10:45 a.m. All are welcome. The church is located at 1 East High St. Bible study is Sundays at 9:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall Lounge.

Honor Society Inductee

Alexis Abbotts of East Hampton was recently inducted into Quinnipiac University's chapter of Lambda Pi Eta, the National Communication Association's official honor society.

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Official Ballot Budget Referendum East Hampton, Connecticut May 30, 2023

Sheet 1 of 1

INSTRUCTIONS TO VOTERS
To vote, fill in the oval completely next to your choice, like this .

1. Shall the Town Government Annual Budget for the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 in the amount of \$17,995,316 as recommended by the Town Council be approved? Yes No

2. Is the Town Government Budget of \$17,995,316 Too High Too Low

3. Shall the Board of Education Annual Budget for the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 in the amount of \$35,608,655 as recommended by the Town Council be approved? Yes No

4. Is the Board of Education Budget of \$35,608,655 Too High Too Low

Residents next Tuesday will vote not just on the town and school budgets, but will also be faced with advisory questions on whether the budgets were "too high" or "too low."

★ *Belltown Budget, cont. from page 1* trail.

Recently, that group received a grant to formally create a "Twelve Town Air Line Trail" organization with the primary purpose of coordinating activities, providing a unified voice with the state for maintenance and other efforts and other joint efforts to promote the Air Line Trail, which runs from Thompson to Portland.

Finally, a Ford

The department finally took delivery of its Ford F-150 pick-up that was ordered back in July 2022. The vehicle is being outfitted with its graphics, emergency equipment, radio, computer and in-car camera system and is expected to be on the road in three weeks.

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Troop 72 Court of Honor

Scout Troop 72 recently held its Court of Honor, and the following scouts earned rank advancements:

Tenderfoot – Logan Cleary, Lucas Jodoin, Bryce Berta, Zackary Jodoin, Adam Laspino; Second Class – Scout Alex Laspino, Sai Parekh, Benjamin Salemi; First Class – Anthony DePaola; Star Scout – Chase Vendrillo; Life Scout – Kevin Reas.

Also at the Court of Honor, merit badges were earned by the following scouts:

Johnathan McAllister – First Aid; Brendan Reas – Family Life, Personal Management, Citizenship in Society; Kevin Reas – First Aid, Emergency Preparedness, Camping, Citizenship in Society.

Several scouts also earned special awards. The Fireman Chit is awarded to scouts who have been trained and can demonstrate fire

safety in building a campfire. Those scouts were Anthony DePaola, Alex Laspino, Sai Parekh, Benjamin Salemi

The Totin' Chip is awarded to scouts who have been trained and can demonstrate safe handling and proper use of a knife, ax and saw. Those scouts were Anthony DePaola, Lucas Jodoin, Zackary W Jodoin, Alex Laspino, Sai Parekh, Benjamin Salemi.

To see highlights of troop events, look for Boy Scout Troop 72 on Facebook.

The troop holds regular meetings at Colchester Federated Church, 60 Main St., on Mondays at 7 p.m., from September to June. Parents/guardians of children age 11-17 who may be interested in the program should email scoutmaster@troop72ct.org, attention Ben Smith, or stop by for one of the troop meetings.



Scouts Donate Cookies... On Wednesday, May 17, Ambassador Girl Scout Troop 63317 made a surprise visit to the Colchester Hayward Volunteer Fire Department. The scouts donated hundreds of Girl Scout cookies as a way to thank the many fire and EMS volunteers and employees for keeping the community safe. Pictured from left are Noah Dombroski, Josh Braga, Judi Didato, Ash Waterman, Troop Leader Jennifer Waterman, Makayla Gale, Allison Deane, Rubert Russell, Kellie Gale and Will Collins.

Parks & Rec News & Notes

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

Card-Making Class: Thursdays, June 15, July 20 and Aug. 17, 6-8 p.m., at Town Hall. Cost: \$15 per class, per person (\$20 for nonresidents).

Gentle Yoga: Online with Facebook Live. For ages 45 and older. The four-week classes are held Mondays from 4:45-5:45 p.n. Choose June 12-July 17 (no class June 19 or July 3), or July 24-Aug. 14. Cost per four-week session: \$35/residents, \$40/non-residents.

SPT Summer Soccer Camp: For ages 5-15. Monday-Friday, June 19-23, from 9 a.m.-3 p.m., at the RecPlex. Cost is \$225/player for full-day (9 a.m.-3 p.m.), and \$150/player for half-day (9 a.m.-noon). There will also be a camp Monday-

Friday, July 24-28, from 5-8 p.m., at the RecPlex. Cost is \$150/player.

Volunteer Opportunities: Parks and Rec. is always looking for volunteers to help with events and programs. Call the office if interested.

Internships: College students looking for an internship in the recreation field can contact Parks and Rec. to set something up. Internships are available any time of the year. Call the office to discuss options.

Aging in Place

Aging in Place, a vendor fair sponsored by the Colchester Commission on Aging, will be held at Cragin Memorial Library, 8 Linwood Ave., on Wednesday, June 14, from 4-7 p.m.

Several agencies will be present to provide information on the resources available to help you or a loved one remain in home safely. Vendors present will include services such as homecare, assistive equipment, transportation and more.

Colchester on the Green

The 43rd annual Colchester on the Green event is happening on June 11 (rain date of June 25) and the Colchester Business Association is accepting applications for tag sale booths, craft fair and business booths, non-profits and entertainment.

The Colchester Business Association organizes this annual event and you can learn more about it and apply for a booth online at www.ColchesterCBA.com or by sending an email to info@colchesterctbusiness.com.

A Civil War Christmas

St. Andrew Ladies Guild is promoting a new travel opportunity, and all are invited.

A Civil War Christmas will take place in Gettysburg, Pa., from Nov. 29-Dec. 1. Cost: \$555/person double, \$639/person single. Includes: Transportation, hotel, two breakfasts, two dinners, admissions, gratuity for the driver, and escort. Trip protection coverage is strongly recommended.

For full details or to make a reservation, contact Barbara Gozzo at 860-537-0179 or barbgozzo@gmail.com. The trip is first-come, first-served, so early registration is suggested.

Carnival on the Green
The Colchester Lions will hold its annual Carnival on the Green from May 31 through June 3. Hours are Wednesday and Thursday, 6-9 p.m.; Friday, 6-10 p.m.; and Saturday, noon-9 p.m.
Presale vouchers for ride bracelets are available at Noel's Market and Mel's Downtown Creamery for \$27 until Tuesday, May 30. Tickets are limited. There will be food vendors and a variety of rides. Ride bracelets will be available for purchase at carnival for \$30 daily, as well as, tickets.
Bracelets cannot be purchased and are not valid after 5 p.m. on Saturday. Tickets must be purchased to ride on Saturday after 5 p.m.

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INSOMNIA SUFFERERS: If it's hard for you to get to sleep or stay asleep, there are now eyeglass lenses that block the wavelengths of light that have been shown to interfere with going to sleep and staying asleep. Wearing these lenses for at least 2 hours before bed helps the brain prepare to release natural sleep hormones to help you fall asleep and stay asleep. Studies at Tulane University have identified the offending wavelengths, so special filtering lenses can eliminate them. They are similar to the "Blue Blocking" lenses that have helped so many computer users relieve eyestrain.

FLOATER SUFFERERS: Floaters are those annoying, shadowy spots that many people see in their vision that move away whenever you look at them. Most people have them. Some are annoying; some really interfere with vision. A study from Ireland concluded that almost 70% of participants who took a new once-a-day supplement reported a reduction or elimination of floaters after 6 months of use. Our office can identify your floaters with our imaging systems as you follow the study protocol for at least 6 months. We stock the supplement at the Palmer Eyecare Center.

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Annual Top Dog Contest

All are invited to enter the town clerk's 31st annual "Top Dog" Contest to win the No. 1 dog tag from the town clerk's office and a basket donated by Wagging Tails Pet Shop in Colchester.

To enter the contest, you must pre-register your dog for the 2023-24 license year. Return the application with payment to the office by 4:30 p.m. Friday May 26. The drawing will be held Wednesday, May 31, and the winner will be notified. The application can be found at colchesterct.gov under Town Clerk.

A copy of a current rabies vaccination certificate and, if it is not listed on the rabies certificate, a current spay/neuter certificate must be included. Checks/money orders should be made payable to Town of Colchester. Your license and tags will be mailed to you after registration begins on June 1.

You can mail the application to: Colchester Town Clerk, 127 Norwich Ave., No. 101, Colchester, CT 06415. Applications may also be returned via the drop box located outside Town Hall or emailed to dogowners@colchesterct.gov. Email can only be done with a credit/debit card and there is an additional \$2 convenience fee the vendor charges to use your credit/debit card.

License year: July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024.
Spayed/neutered: \$8; not spayed/neutered, \$19.

June is dog licensing month by state law, penalty charges are added if licenses are not renewed by June 30. The penalty is \$1/month starting July 1.

For more information, email townclerk@colchesterct.gov or call 860-537-7215.



Local real estate brokerage Carl Guild & Associates recently sponsored a fire department cadet from the Colchester Hayward Fire Department to attend the Introduction to the Fire Service Summer Camp. Pictured from left, with realtor Barbara Royea, are cadets Garrett Geleney, John Marks, Nick June, Gina Didato and Zerrin Ratzer.

Colchester Federated Church News

Colchester Federated Church is an Open and Affirming church located at 60 Main St. Pastor is the Rev. Lauren Ostrout. The church office is open Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. The office can be reached at 860-537-5189 or cfc06415@gmail.com.

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

Anniversary Service: All are welcome Sunday, June 4, at 9 a.m., for a special worship service to celebrate the 10th Anniversary of being a Welcoming, Open & Affirming Church. All are

encouraged to wear colorful clothing to show their support.

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

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

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

Local Realtors Support Fire Department

Carl Guild & Associates, a real estate brokerage in Colchester, recently sponsored a fire department cadet from the Colchester Hayward Fire Department to attend the Introduction to the Fire Service Summer Camp.

The Introduction to the Fire Service Summer Camp is a program that offers a curriculum designed to enhance the skills and knowledge of cadets interested in pursuing a career in firefighting. This summer camp provides participants with training, leadership development and hands-on experience in various firefighting techniques and emergency response scenarios.

Carl Guild & Associates has donated the necessary funds to cover the expenses associated with sending a cadet to attend the Introduction to the Fire Service Summer Camp. This sponsorship will enable the cadet to gain knowledge, cultivate skills, and form connections with seasoned professionals in the firefighting industry.

Debi Czarkowski Marvin, cadet advisor of the Colchester Hayward Fire Department, expressed her gratitude for the sponsorship, stating, "These cadets are the Colchester Fire Department's next generation of volunteers, and we need to educate and support them in any way we can."

Carl Guild, owner of Carl Guild & Associates, said, "We are immensely grateful for the support our brokerage receives from the citizens of Colchester, which allows Carl Guild & Associates to give back to the community in meaningful ways. Sponsoring a fire department cadet is just one of the ways we demonstrate our commitment to supporting local organizations."

This year, the Colchester Hayward Fire Department will be sending five cadets to the summer camp, showcasing their commitment to developing a skilled and dedicated firefighting force. To learn more about the program or if you're a business that wants to sponsor a cadet, please contact the Colchester Fire Department at 860-537-2512.

Pasta Dinner Fundraiser

The St. Joseph's Polish Society, located at 395 South Main St., is hosting a pasta dinner to benefit Boy Scout Troop 72 on Friday, May 26. Dinner will be baked ziti, meatballs, sausage, peppers and onions, tossed salad, and garlic bread.

Dinner will be served from 5-7 p.m. and is available for dine-in or take out. Tickets are \$20 for adults and \$10 for children under 12. Limited tickets available.

Purchase tickets from 4-10 p.m. weekdays or noon-9 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. For more information, call 860-537-2550.

Memorial Day Activities

Colchester Boy Scout Troops 13, 72 and 109 and Cub Scout Packs 13 and 109 will work with the American Legion and VFW to replace all the American Flags on veterans' graves on Saturday, May 27. This will entail visiting all 11 Colchester cemeteries and installing new flags.

Should a veteran's grave be missed, write to the Legion or VFW at P.O. Box 54, Colchester, CT 06415, and provide the name of the veteran, the cemetery and the location of the gravesite.

Also, all scouting units in Colchester will march in the Memorial Day Parade on May 28. Scouts urge all Colchester residents to either march in the parade with their group, social club or sports team or attend the parade.

Dean's List

Hannah Aldridge Kellaher of Colchester made the winter 2023 Dean's List at Southern New Hampshire University in Manchester, N.H.

President's List

Elizabeth Cross of Colchester made the winter 2023 President's List at Southern New Hampshire University in Manchester, N.H.

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----- Upcoming Events -----

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Families in Nature – June 24th

Joint Movement Series – July 23rd

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Upcoming Land Trust Events

The Colchester Land Trust has announced the following upcoming events:

Forest-Bathing in the Salmon River State Forest: On CT Trails Day, Sunday, June 4, at 10 a.m., at the Air Line Trail (hairpin parking lot) on Bull Hill Road. CLT board member Andrea Stannard will lead this moderately slow-paced three-mile, adults-only hike. The hike involves the engagement of all senses, with stopping points along the way for re-centering and observation. Call Stannard for directions at 860-912-0144.

Fairy Solstice Event at the Bulkeley Hill Pre-

serve: Sunday, June 25; time to be announced. CLT board member Liza Sivek leads this all-ages day of walking along the trail, seeking fairy houses and creating forest-friendly fairy homes from found natural materials. Includes a make-and-take fairy house craft.

14-Mile Goodwin Trail: Sunday, July 9, at 10 a.m. Cost is \$5 for non-members. Meet at the beginning and get a ride back at the end. CLT Board member Lisa Hageman will lead this long hike on the local Goodwin Trail for intermediate to experienced hikers. Visit www.colchester-landtrust.org for updates/cancellations.

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, May 29: The center is closed for the Memorial Day holiday.

Tuesday, May 30: 9 a.m., Making Memories; 9:45 a.m., Tai Chi; 11 a.m., Memorial Day Picnic; 12:30 p.m., Pinochle; 1:30 p.m., Bingo.

Wednesday, May 31: 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; 10:15 a.m., Across the Ages; 1 p.m., Inspired by Art (Aging Unbound).

Thursday, June 1: 9 a.m., Exercise with Anne; 10 a.m., Wii Bowling; 11 a.m., Yoga; noon, Chair Massage; noon-3:30 p.m., Senior Benefits Counseling with Ellen; 12:30 p.m., Dominoes; 1 p.m., Knit & Crochet.

Friday, June 2: 10 a.m., Sit & Be Fit; 10:30 a.m., Choral Group; no Yoga today; 1:30 p.m., Bingo.

Cows On Parade: Create the cows from June 1-23, and there will be the parade June 26-30. Join the parade by picking up a cardboard cow starting June 1. Decorate the cow any way you wish (pencil, crayon, paint, collage, yarn, mosaic, etc.), and return it to the senior center by June 23 to be displayed. Members will vote on their favorite cow and the winner will receive a prize.

Summer Safety for Dementia Care: Tuesday, June 6, 10:30-11:30 a.m. Safety concerns for a person living with dementia may change as the disease progresses. Hartford Healthcare's Center for Healthy Aging will present a discussion on safety considerations to plan for and to help you be better prepared. This is a free program, but registration is required.

New Sewing Circle: Wednesday, June 7, 10 a.m.-noon. You can complete a quilted potholder or feel free to attend with your own project. This will be a chance to meet like-minded stitchers. At this first meeting we will open it up to your ideas and thoughts as we move forward with this program. Registration is required as space and sewing machines are limited.

Ice Cream Truck: Friday, June 9, 12:30-1:30 p.m. National Health Care will bring an old-fashioned ice cream truck to the senior center. Walk up and select your favorite from several flavors of frozen treats, then head indoors to enjoy your treat. This is a free event for senior center members only; registration is required. Sign up by June 6.

Party Like It's 1993 & 2013: Friday, June 16, 11 a.m. Ginny Stephenson and Patty Watts are both celebrating milestone work anniversaries, so all are invited to celebrate their dedication and commitment to the center. Refreshments will be served, and there will be a decades trivia game. Registration is required for this free program.

Father's Day Breakfast: Friday, June 10, 9 a.m., sponsored by Apple Rehab. You don't have to be a dad to enjoy this free breakfast of your choice of egg and cheese or bacon, egg and cheese breakfast sandwich served with yogurt, fruit cup, coffee and orange juice served at the senior center. This is a free event for senior center members only; registration is required, and space is limited. Register by June 5.

"Fintastic" Father's Day Luncheon: Wednesday, June 21, 10:45 a.m. Celebrate all the important men in your life, both past and present, with a fishing-themed luncheon. Wear a silly tie or hat. Enjoy a barbecue chicken lunch with baked beans, coleslaw, and strawberry shortcake. Musical entertainment will be provided by the hilarious Elderly Brothers. Register by June 14 or until full. Cost is \$9 per person.



Catholic Scout Award Recipients!... On April 23, several Catholic scouts in Boy Scout Troop 13 received Catholic Scout Emblems presented to them by Bishop Michael R. Cote (seated) at the Catholic Scouting Award Ceremony held at the Cathedral of St. Patrick in Norwich. Catholic scouts are recognized each spring upon completion of a religious program designed for the scout's rank or age. Pictured with Cote are members of Troop 13: Nicholas Peck (who received his Light of Christ and Parvuli Dei Emblems), Timothy John Crowell and John Dalton (who received their Ad Altare Dei Emblems), John Paul Peck (who received his Pope Pius XII Emblem and Pillars of Faith pin - for achieving all four religious emblems) and the Rev. Martin Noe. Not pictured is Garrett Schuth (who received his Ad Altare Dei Emblem).

Ahavath Achim News

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

Tuesday: Aggadath class, 6 p.m.; Talmud, 6:30 p.m.; 8 p.m., Kabbalah.

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

Friday night service, 6:30 p.m., Zoom and in-person with cantor Tami Cherdack Sherman; 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.

Upcoming Events: Friday, June 9: Friday Night Service with Cantor Tami Cherdack Sherman at 6:30 p.m., followed by birthday dinner for Rabbi Ken Alter. RSVP by June 5.

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

Fish & Game Club Steak Night

Colchester Fish & Game Club will have a Steak Night, featuring live music by Vic, on Friday, June 2, at 7 p.m., on Old Amston Road (near the town transfer station). Cost is \$20 per ticket; tickets will be available at the club bar.



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After Heated Meeting, Budget Sent to Voters

By Michael Sinkewicz

The Colchester Board of Selectmen last week unanimously advanced both of the proposed 2023-24 town and school budgets; the spending packages will now go to town meeting and referendum.

The school board's budget is slated at \$43.68 million — a \$1.65 million, or 3.9%, increase over the current year. Municipal spending is billed at \$15.63 million — around \$10,000 more than current year spending. The mill rate would be 27.22, a .4 increase.

The town meeting is set for May 31, with the referendum scheduled for June 13.

During the meeting, the selectmen agreed to move the location of the town meeting from Town Hall to William J. Johnson Middle School on Norwich Avenue, which would be able to accommodate the anticipated large crowd.

While the board voted in unanimity, it remained divided on the budget process itself and the role of the community during the Town meeting.

The discussion during the nearly four-hour meeting was often contentious. Several items on the agenda were debated thoroughly — more will be covered in next week's RiverEast — but the culmination was the board's budget deliberations.

Several board members read prepared statements expressing their viewpoints.

Democrat Rosemary Coyle described the budget season as "disjointed," stating that the standard reports showing year-over-year line-item changes were absent this year, making it difficult for the public to grasp to nature of the proposed spending plans.

"This has been the most confusing budget process that I have ever witnessed," she said.

Perhaps most notably, Coyle indicated that both budget proposals were too low.

With school spending, she said the \$1.5 million reduction from the Board of Education's original request, imposed by the finance board, would result in significant program cuts.

"As a Board of Selectmen member, I believe

that people should have the right to vote on a fair, clearly presented budget — not one stripped to the bare bones," she said.

She continued by stating that the town meeting was an opportunity for residents to voice their concerns. The options available to the public during the meeting, she said, were to send the budgets to referendum, reduce the budgets further, or the reject the budget.

Coyle expressed that she would be advocating for changing both budgets, in search for more funding.

"This is about saving our town and the education system."

Fellow Democrat Denise Turner, in her own statement, echoed Coyle's sentiment that the budgets were too low and that the town meeting was a chance for residents to push back.

"I think both of these budgets should be moved on to a town meeting so the citizens can again voice their concerns and either vote to accept them and send them on to a referendum, or vote to reject them and send them back to the board," she said.

However, there was disagreement between the board members as to whether the budgets could actually be rejected at the town meeting.

First Selectman Andreas Bisbikos stated that by approving the motion on the floor, the board was setting both the town meeting and referendum dates.

The Colchester Town Charter states that at the town meeting, voters may "reduce, but not increase" the municipal or school budget upon the passage of a "proper motion."

If the amount differs by more than 1% from the original request, the town meeting would be continued to a second meeting, at which "proper motions" would again be made.

The town meeting is "automatically continued" to the referendum.

Bisbikos pushed back on the interpretation that the budgets could be turned away from the subsequent referendum. In general, he disagreed that there had been a lack of transparency with the town budget, which the finance board unan-

imously pushed forward.

"It must be a political year; it must be an election year," he said, referencing the rhetoric of the meeting.

With the school budget, Bisbikos said, "Could things have been done better with the Board of Education and the Board of finance? Of course."

He continued by stating that boards should not try to influence a budget from moving forward simply because they disagree with the numbers.

"Then what's the point of having a Board of Finance? This is a terrible precedent."

Instead, he argued for following the charter, or at least his interpretation of the charter.

"We should follow the process."

Republican Jason LaChapelle expressed that some of the concerns being raised about the budgets were unwarranted.

One specific issue, which numerous citizens have spoken about, is whether the reduction made to the school budget request was a \$1.3 million or \$1.5 million slash.

Board of Finance chairman Andrea Migliaccio has consistently stated that she proposed, and then adopted, a \$1.3 million reduction. School business director Rachel Linkkila, however, determined that the finance board was effectively asking for a \$1.57 million reduction.

Accordingly, Board of Education adopted a series of cuts totaling \$1.5 million to absorb the bottom-line reduction to their spending plan.

The board delayed the implementation of the new school security initiatives — saving \$168,432.

Other significant reductions included the elimination of World Language for grade 7, eliminating a business teacher at Bacon Academy, implementing a pay-to-play fee of \$180 a year for instrumental music instruction at JJIS and WJMS, increasing preschool tuition and transitioning to a half-day pre-K program.

LaChapelle stated that Migliaccio produced documents weeks ago outlining exactly how she arrived at a \$1.3 million figure — confusion on this topic, he said, was "political hogwash."

Regarding the function of a town meeting, LaChapelle's understanding was that residents could only reduce the bottom-line numbers. Still, the selectmen, during their meeting, had to power not to send the budgets to a Town meeting.

Last year, LaChapelle, and other members, did just that — voted against the spending plan. He indicated that choice was justified because he believed a specific line-item in the budget was fraudulent. This year, though, the selectmen have failed to raise similar red flags.

"I think there's got to be a legitimate concern and questions about budgets to not send them to referendum, like I had last year," he said. "Nobody's made that claim."

In an attempt to address one concern, Bisbikos

stated that the finance department might be able to produce a full budget book, which would likely contain the in-depth breakdown requested by Coyle, by the day of the town meeting.

"That's a great time to get it with no chance to look at it ahead of time," Coyle quipped.

In response, Bisbikos said the finance department has been "short staffed and under the gun." Certain elected officials, he expressed, have targeted that department, "applying unnecessary pressure," which he said was "absolutely disgusting."

After the budget motion was approved, the meeting dissolved quickly.

Bisbikos, again reiterating his stance on the town meeting and town charter, indicated that "there's no brining [the budget] back."

Coyle disagreed.

"It's a town meeting, people get to vote," she said. "It's not a dictatorship — this is a democracy in Colchester."

Following this comment, Bisbikos made a reference to Stephen Coyle, chair of Colchester's Sewer and Water Commission, and Rosemary Coyle's husband.

LaChapelle then attempted to steer the conversation back to the town meeting debate, which he acknowledged he didn't have a certain answer for. However, before that issue could be settled, Bisbikos again referenced Stephen Coyle and claims about the commission.

Coyle expressed, "Grow up and act like a first selectman."

Simultaneously, Turner made a motion to adjourn, which Coyle then seconded, ending the meeting.

Bisbikos remarked, "We'll let them go, but some people should be embarrassed."

Coyle responded, "Yes, Andreas, you should."

Bisbikos stated, "You and your husband."

The meeting ended before a clear resolution on the town meeting function was determined and before citizens had an opportunity to address the board.

Resident Presents at Fashion Show

Liah Brown of Colchester was a designer who presented original work at the RUNWAY undergraduate fashion show recently held at Lasell University in Newton, Mass.

Library Friends Seek Donations

The Friends of Cragin Memorial Library group is accepting donations for its June Book Sale.

All are asked to donate their books, movies, music, games and puzzles at the Cragin Memorial Library, 8 Linwood Ave., during May. People are asked to donate complete games and puzzles. The book sale will run from June 2-7.



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Scouts Take a Hike... Some of the Scouts from Troop 72 of Colchester had a great hiking Bear Mountain in Salisbury last month. Bear Mountain is the highest mountain in the state whose summit is entirely in Connecticut. The troop missed the day's rain; however, the temperatures were in the 40s, with gusty winds that made standing on the summit monument difficult at times. Pictured in front are Bryce Berta, Logan Cleary and Ben Salemi, and in the back row are Alex Laspino and Zack Jodoin.

Christian Life Chapel News

Christian Life Chapel, located at 392 S. Main St., holds worship in person at 10 a.m. Sundays. Follow the church on Facebook for the livestream. For more information, call Pastor Don Rivers – the church's bi-vocational pastor, who also serves as president for "Racing with Jesus, Inc." – at 860-398-9119 or visit christianlifechapel.org.

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

Study for women: Tuesdays at 10 a.m.; Community Bible Study and Prayer: Wednesdays at 7 p.m.; Fridays: Donuts with Don at 10 a.m. -- this is an open discussion on how God fits in your life.

Vacation Bible School: Monday-Wednesday, July 24-26, from 9 a.m.-noon. This year's theme is "Army of God." Contact the church for more information.

Book and Bake Sale Returns

The Friends of Cragin Memorial Library will hold the Book and Bake Sale at Cragin Memorial Library, 8 Linwood Ave. All are invited.

The sale begins Friday, June 2, from 4-7 p.m., with a pre-sale admission of \$5. The sale continues with no admission charge on Saturday, June 3, from 10 a.m.-4 p.m.; Sunday, June 4, from 11 a.m.-3 p.m.; and June 5-7 during regular library hours. Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday are the \$5 special days; fill a box or bag for \$5.

The sale will feature books, music, movies, puzzles and games. Baked goods will be individually wrapped for safety. All proceeds benefit programs funded by the Friends. These programs include, but are not limited to, museum passes, adult programs, children's programs, summer reading programs, and other materials to benefit patrons of the library.

Guardian Angels Parish Offering Italy Trip

Guardian Angels Parish – which encompasses St. Andrew Church in Colchester and St. Francis of Assisi Church in Lebanon – is making a pilgrimage to Italy from Oct. 30-Nov. 9.

The Rev. Richard Breton will lead pilgrims through Florence, Assisi, Sorrento, Amalfi Coast, Pompeii and Monte Cassino, ending in Rome. The trip will include an audience with Pope Francis.

Cost is \$3,479, and the trip departs from New York. All admissions, fees and hotel services are included.

For more information, contact Angela Corentin at 860-402-8316 or acorentin1219@gmail.com.

Land Recording Fraud Alert

The town clerk's office offers a service designed to help people protect their home from fraudulent recordings.

This program allows users to sign up and receive email alerts whenever a document is recorded in Colchester under their name, such as a deed, mortgage or lien. To access this option, go to colchesterct.gov, click on Town Clerk and then Important Links, or go directly to searchiqs.com/fraudalert. For more information, call 860-537-7215.



School Readiness Program

Colchester's School Readiness Program is offering grant-subsidized preschool for the 2023-24 school year. Spaces are limited. Parent fees are based upon a sliding scale.

There are three options available, including part-day at Colchester Elementary School, school-day at Castle and full-day at Town & Country Early Learning Center.

Colchester residents who want a five-day-a-week program and may find it difficult to pay for preschool are invited to apply. For the application and more information, go to ColchesterC3.org/school-readiness.

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
Water Pollution Control Authority
Town of East Hampton
June 6, 2023

The Water Pollution Control Authority of the Town of East Hampton, Connecticut, will hold a public hearing pursuant to Chapter 102 of the Connecticut General Statutes at the Town of Colchester – Town of East Hampton Wastewater Treatment Plant, 20 Gildersleeve Drive, in East Hampton, Connecticut, on the 6th of June 2023, at 6:30 P.M. to consider whether or not the Town should adopt the proposed 2023-24 water budget and recommended water rates for the customers of the Village Center and Royal Oaks systems, copies of which are available at the Town Clerks office, 20 East High Street, East Hampton, CT 06424.

Affected property owners, electors and citizens qualified to vote in town meetings of the Town of East Hampton, Connecticut, are invited to attend and participate in such public hearing. Dated at East Hampton, Connecticut, this 2nd day of May, 2023. East Hampton Water Pollution Control Authority
By Scott Clayton
Its Public Utilities Administrator

INVITATION TO BID
RHAM HIGH SCHOOL
ATHLETIC FIELDS IMPROVEMENTS
HEBRON, CONNECTICUT
MAY 26, 2023

Regional School District 8 ("Reg. 8") Board of Education is seeking competitive bids for construction services related to the Improvements to the 316 North Field and the Competition Field, located at RHAM High School/Middle School Campus in Hebron, CT.

Scope of work for this project generally includes surveying, general earthwork, erosion control, site preparation, drainage improvements and establishment of lawn, as more fully described herein and in the plans and specifications.

This Invitation to Bid, Instructions to Bidders, and other Bidding Documents (as defined in the Instruction to Bidders) are available for viewing and downloading on Reg. 8's website https://reg8.ss19.sharpschool.com/departments/business_office/rfp_bids and the Riverast Newspaper. The plans and specifications for "RHAM HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC FIELDS IMPROVEMENTS," will be available to bidders through Advanced Reprographics from <https://advancedrepro.net> on May 26, 2023.

Sealed Bids for "RHAM HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC FIELDS IMPROVEMENTS" may be mailed or delivered in person to: Eva Gallupe, Business Manager, in the Central Office for Reg. 8 at 85 Wall Street, Hebron, CT 06248 until 2:00 pm on June 23, 2023. All bids will be publicly opened and will be read aloud. Bid Results will also be posted on the on-line plan service website for review within 24 hours of due date. Emailed or faxed Bids will not be accepted. To obtain or review Bids refer to the bidding instructions.

Reg. 8 reserves the right to reject any or all Bids, in whole or in part. Any or all Bids may be rejected if there is any reason to believe that collusion exists among the bidders.

Individual Bids may be rejected for irregularities of any kind, including without limitations, alteration of form, additions not called for, conditional Bids, incomplete Bids and unexplained erasures. Reg. 8 retains the right to waive any formality or procedural irregularities in the Bids received. Nothing should be construed to limit in anyway the right of Reg. 8 to reject any and all Bids, should Reg. 8 deem it to be in its best interest. No bidder may withdraw his Bid within sixty (60) days after the actual date of the opening thereof.

Any questions regarding the proposed work should be addressed, in writing, by e-mail to Michael Schlehofer, Director of Facilities at michael.schlehofer@rhamschools.org. Questions will not be considered past 2:00 pm on June 9, 2023 and responses will be posted via addendum no later than 2:00 pm on June 15, 2023.

Eva Gallupe
Business Manager
Regional School District 8
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eva.gallupe@rhamschools.org

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Where in the World is the *Rivereast*?

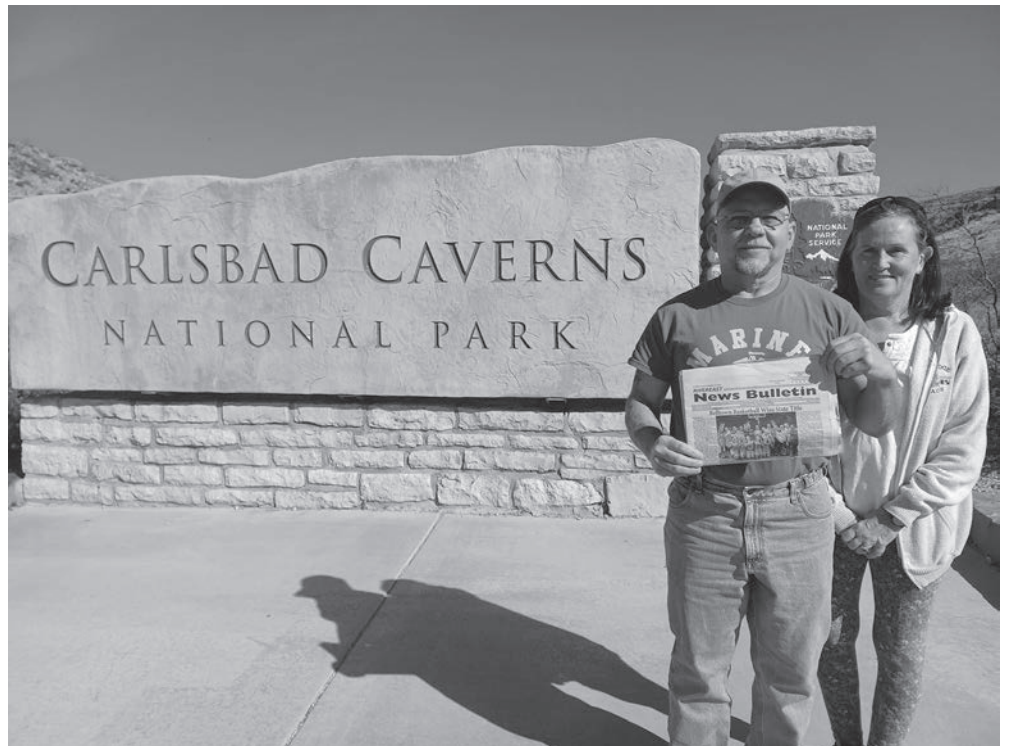
Hey! Are you taking a vacation or a day trip soon? Bring the *Rivereast* along with you, snap a picture with it, and email the photo and your address to bulletin@glcitizen.com.



Incredible Indonesia... Stephen and Alexia Lichenstein of East Hampton recently returned from a trip to Misool in Raja Ampat, Indonesia, where they did a ton of snorkeling and diving! They said the marine biodiversity and coral reefs were truly amazing and unlike anything they've seen before.



Animal Kingdom.... Faith Fraulino of Portland and her grandson Brady took along the *Rivereast* to Animal Kingdom at Disney World in Orlando, Fla., recently.



Checking Out the Caverns... BethAnn and Michael Voiland of Colchester are shown at Carlsbad Caverns National Park in New Mexico, the furthest point in a four-week, 5,000-mile road trip.



Down in the Dominican... Sharon and Glenn Genzlinger of Hebron traveled to the Dominican Republic for spring break with their son's family. Luckily, the hotel newsstand carried the latest *Rivereast News Bulletin*!

Where in the World?

**Going on a trip?
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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!

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saw what motivated parents to vote in the last election cycle. You'll see parents and engaged community members motivated again this time, for other reasons. This education "advocate" (see what I did there?) will be voting No, Too Low on May 30.

Keep paying attention, neighbors. More false rhetoric will undoubtedly continue to be peddled by these representatives who have awoken the masses. See you on May 30.

Christina Tammaro-Dzagan, East Hampton
Note: Tammaro-Dzagan is chair of the East Hampton Board of Education, but said she is speaking as an individual.

What Do You Value Most?

To the Editor:

East Hampton has a decision to make on Tuesday, May 30. At the heart of the budget question is another, more basic question – what type of town do we want to live in?

Is East Hampton a town that values its people and wants to keep them safe? Do we value our children and want them to excel in an increasingly demanding world?

Or is East Hampton a town that values only money? A town that puts cash over quality of life?

I doubt any of us chose to live in this town for the tax rate. People come here – or choose to stay here – to build more than a bank account. We are here to build a life. And a good quality of life requires adequate police and ambulance coverage, a vibrant and active senior community, and a competitive education for our children. The proposed budget doesn't support these things.

On Tuesday, please remember why you chose East Hampton as your home – and Vote No, Too Low.

Emily Cronin – East Hampton

Save the EHHS Library

To the Editor:

Libraries are critical to a town's important duty to prepare students for college and professional success, as well as enriching quality of life for residents. The proposed East Hampton budgets imperil our commitment to an informed community and our ability to educate our children.

From safeguarding East Hampton to supporting the ambulance service, there are many reasons why Belltown residents need to "Vote No, Too Low" on May 30. Here's one that hasn't been discussed enough: the high school library is in danger of severe reductions in access and expertise.

If the proposed budget passes, a beloved English teacher would be laid off, leaving the department inadequately staffed. The high school would then transfer the library media specialist (LMS) to teach several English classes daily. As a result, the library would be closed to students for most of the day.

Such a decision would negatively impact accreditation, deprive students of chances to develop necessary research skills, and waste the significant investment East Hampton has made to build a first-class Library Media Center.

Moreover, the change would devastate students and teachers who rely on the LMS for instruction. This year, the LMS has co-taught 200 periods of collaborative lessons with classroom teachers. She is a leader in technology integration, provides differentiated instruction to suit student needs, and dozens more functions that would be rendered moot.

Also, one of the community's main combatants against censorship and misinformation would be seriously compromised. East Hampton has already seen efforts to censor classroom libraries and collections. We cannot let our guard down.

Please vote 'no' and help save one of the high school's greatest assets, not just to ensure access the LMC, but to preserve incomparable knowledge and the future success of East Hampton students.

Sincerely,

Matt Engelhardt – East Hampton

Thank You, Postal Workers

To the Editor:

Once again, it is time to thank the Portland Postal Workers for their efforts in the annual food drive that helps replenish the Portland Food Bank, with a special "thanks" to Paul Carey who coordinated the entire effort. In addition to their daily route, they are responsible for picking up all the donated food from the community.

This year, as usual, the residents of Portland made it a very successful drive with their very generous donations.

I would also like to thank the volunteers that helped carry in, label and put away all the food that was donated, which was no easy task. It encompassed the better part of the day on Saturday. All this to benefit those in need for which we are entirely grateful.

Sincerely

Ruth Maio, Director Portland Food Bank

Many Thanks to the Rivereast

To the Editor:

Rivereast has been reminding readers each week now for over a month that an important clean energy event is happening about a week from now. While the *Rivereast* ride can be raucous, public service is always front and center, and I thank the editor and staff for their efforts.

The fifth annual East Hampton Electric Car Show is Saturday, June 3 (rain date June 4) at East Hampton High School at 15 North Maple St. from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. It seems energy costs and availability, and climate calamity, are in the news almost daily. While there has been some welcome relief recently in gasoline prices and the same expected soon for electricity prices, the energy and climate future is usually disquieting. At the same time, the message about going electric for personal and business transportation is gaining momentum and is more upbeat. As an EV owner, I'm often stopped and asked about what it is like to own one. What's it like "tanking up"? Do I worry about "finding fuel"? How do costs compare?

Well, EV and hybrid owners and several dealerships will all be gathered in one place to answer your questions and show you options. This is the perfect opportunity to learn about vehicle charging, vehicle range, servicing, costs and savings. Electric bicycles will be there too. You can also speak with clean energy companies and get information on other ways to save energy and money. There will be ice cream and music. Snacks and drinks

benefit high school athletics.

Right up to the day of the show, electric vehicle owners that want to be in the show can go to www.tinyurl.com/ehcarshow and complete the free online registration. It's that easy.

So come on out Saturday, June 3, and talk with current owners, check out many different cars, learn more about what it's like to drive electric. You won't get a better opportunity!

Russ Kaplan, Chairman
East Hampton Clean Energy Task Force

A Response To Mike Buck

To the Editor:

I backed you when you wanted to run for BOE, I stood beside you to unmask your children, I defended you during the election when you were attacked on social media, and I ultimately supported your recommendation to put security guards in every school.

Now that we disagree on the budget, you unfairly slander me and attempt to intimidate anyone who disagrees with you while claiming I am the bully! In fact, you so bullied BOE chairman that he ultimately resigned before his term barely began.

Thankfully, the residents of East Hampton know me by my many years of service to this town and my commitment to them. I hope they will not be swayed by the "noise" of a few new BOE members with little experience. I believe in responsible fiscal spending. I will not resign.

Thank you to the Board of Education members who have not adopted this line of assault. I respect your professionalism, even if we agree to disagree, as adults often do.

Respectfully submitted,
Mark Philhower, Chairman
East Hampton Town Council

Project Grad Thanks

To the Editor:

East Hampton High School Project Graduation would like to thank the volunteers, businesses and community who donated their time, energy and items to help make this fundraiser a success! A huge thank you goes to East Hampton Global Self Storage (267 W. High St.) who donated a storage unit, Carl Guild & Associates for providing a moving truck, and Badger Plumbing for coming to the rescue with a truck to load the overflowing of donations.

We would like to thank the EHHS Interact Club members for helping to organize donations and load the moving truck, including Holly Pugo, Sam Pugo, Aiden Sullivan, Neha Sidana, Sonja Venetianer and Abbie Miller. Thank you to Forrest Belucci, Mary, Eden and Maren Milewski, Cyndi Buchan, Jim Vick, Jeff Urban, Kellie Santillo, Marissa Taylor, Candy Miller, Pam Gardiner, Patty Burnham and Linda Stanford (and others who have helped!) for your time and dedication.

We would like to thank the community for providing your treasures and gently-used donations to support an alcohol-free and drug-free graduation event for our high school seniors.

Thank you,
Tania Sones – East Hampton
On behalf of EHHS Project Graduation

Let's Fight for Our Services!

To the Editor:

For 70 years, the East Hampton Ambulance Association has been selflessly helping our families, friends and neighbors.

Our first responders from the Ambulance Association have sacrificed countless hours, missed birthdays, holidays and family gatherings to spend them helping others – to make a positive, lifesaving impact. They did so voluntarily, selflessly, never asking for anything in return.

And it is only seven decades later they had to ask for help to continue doing what they do best: provide high-quality emergency service to the community that they have been a part of for 70 years. They have taken care of us through some of the hardest times, pandemic included. Now it is time for us to take care of them!

This is a critical time for us to unite for what's right and support the allocation of funds for the East Hampton Ambulance Association to ensure that we continue to have neighbors helping neighbors in times of need.

East Hampton residents, this is our time to join forces and fight for a budget that is supportive of our emergency services, our schools and the quality of life that we, as taxpayers, deserve.

Vote "No, Too Low" at the budget referendum Tuesday, May 30, at Town Hall (1 Community Drive), 6 a.m.-8 p.m.

Ekaterine Tchelidze – East Hampton

Not Properly Concluded

To the Editor:

The Colchester Board of Selectmen meeting on May 18 not only concluded in acrimony, it wasn't properly concluded at all. A motion to adjourn was put forth by Denise Turner, who did not have the floor. It was seconded by Rosemary Coyle without receiving general consent, and it was never voted on because Rosemary (a BOS member but not the chair) exclaimed out of order that the meeting was adjourned. First Selectman Andreas Bisbikos just tiredly acquiesced to Rosemary's impertinence, leaving the remaining agenda item, Citizens Comments, unaddressed to the dismay of the attendees.

Prior to the specious conclusion, discussion occurred surrounding the forthcoming annual budget meeting (ABM), during which Rosemary declared that citizens can vote down either the BOS or Board of Education budget and send them back to the Boards to be modified. That actually occurs as a result of the annual budget referendum, not the ABM. Andreas attempted to correct Rosemary, reading directly from § C-1105a of the Colchester town charter, but she cut him off, exclaiming that this is a democracy, not a dictatorship, and the citizens get to vote on the budgets (yes, at referendum, as Andreas identified).

At the ABM on May 31, town voters have the opportunity to review the full budgets with comparisons to the current year and pose questions to representatives present from the boards. After electing a meeting moderator, they will vote on any proper motions consistent with § C-1105a, including motions to reduce either budget, or a motion to send the budgets as they were approved by the

BOS to referendum. Unless or after the annual budget meeting is continued in no less than two business days, it shall be automatically continued to the annual budget referendum, which is scheduled for June 13.

DeAva Lambert – Colchester

Shameful

To the Editor:

As a resident of East Hampton for over 50 years, I have witnessed elected officials in both party's debate and argue, agree and disagree, and stand for their convictions.

However, we still attend the same gatherings, as well as celebrate and mourn together. In the end, we put politics aside and come together as neighbors and friends, showing humanity towards one another.

The residents of East Hampton deserve representatives who can do that!

Sadly, that is not happening now. The personal attacks against fellow civic volunteers are shameful.

The definition of civic responsibility is: "active participation in the public life of a community in an informed, committed, and constructive manner."

Respectfully submitted,
Melody Philhower – East Hampton

Celebrating Pride Month

To the Editor:

Colchester's Openness to Respecting Equity (CORE) Commission will celebrate Pride Month on June 11 by hosting a table at the 43rd Annual Tag Sale on the Green. Members of the CORE Commission and other Colchester residents will be at the table to create connections, provide educational materials, and pass out stickers and balloons.

Pride Month is an opportunity to celebrate LGBTQ culture and to honor those who fought and continue to fight for equal rights. The June date commemorates NYC's Stonewall Uprising of 1969, a catalyst for gay rights activism.

The CORE Commission believes that community awareness and support make Colchester a better home for every resident. Please join us on the Green on June 11 as we recognize Pride Month and build a stronger community.

Shawn Pelletier, Nancy Nelson and Susie Milner
Colchester

Thanks for Taking a Stand

To the Editor:

Thank you, East Hampton BOF and the Town Council for taking a stand when it comes to keeping the education budget in check. The BOE every year asks for more money and yet 65% of my property taxes are spent on the school budget and there is no tangible return on investment. The good folks advocating increased BOE funding make numerous pleas based on emotion and innuendo (loss of teachers, increased class size, etc.) claiming "cuts" to the budget will do irreparable damage to EH, yet no one seems to have any facts or numbers. A recent letter from Mr. Philhower clearly pointed out that the "cuts" that residents decry, are not "cuts" at all, but rather reductions to a poorly substantiated increase in budget.

The CT Department of Education 2023 reports EH spends \$19,146 per student, whereas the state average is \$16,186, and the U.S. expends \$12,383 per student. The pupil-to-teacher ratio in EH is 12.5 versus 16.8 nationwide. So how does the BOE justify demanding more money? We hear the same old story that more money for the schools "grows towns". So if that is true, why has the East Hampton population declined by 8.74% since the 2021 census?

I know that as a good citizen, I must contribute to the schools as part of living in EH. All I'm asking for is fiscal restraint. Unfortunately, speaking out against the schools in this age of being bullied, verbally abused and ostracized for voicing a contrary opinion poses a risk to our safety and mental health. I support a 'yes' vote on the proposed budget.

To the TC and BOF during this stressful time, thank you for looking at the big picture by keeping all of the EH residents in mind, not just the ones with children.

Bob Yenker – East Hampton

Come Out to Vote

To the Editor:

Make no mistake about it, the budget for the Board of Education for the Town of East Hampton is being increased by \$1.3 million over last year's budget. This is the single highest increase to the BOE budget in the town's history. Combined with the \$1.2M increase in last year's budget, plus the potential \$600K shortfall that will need to be covered this year, the BOE budget will have increased by \$3.1M over two years. This equates to approximately \$1,700 per student. Your taxes in East Hampton will be going up again with this budget.

It is imperative that the voters of East Hampton come out to vote at the Town Hall on Tuesday, May 30, to be heard.

Russell J. Bonaccorso Jr. – East Hampton

Sports Addiction

To the Editor:

Every day Connecticut residents who read newspapers will encounter multiple pages and stories with pictures of students or adults competing in a variety of sports. Every day residents listening to the radio or watching television will hear summative reports on professional and high school athletic outcomes. Many residents will spend hours watching sports each week on ESPN or any other major broadcaster. We are saturated with sports.

Few Connecticut residents know that Farmington's Irving A. Robbins Middle School finished 8th at the 2023 National Science Bowl Middle School competition in Washington D.C. Or that East Lyme High School finished 12th at the high school nationals. How about Coginchaug High School of Durham, the top Connecticut team going to the national Oceans Science Bowl. Or Greenwich Academy Middle School being the top Connecticut team at the Raytheon MATHCOUNTS nationals. Last week, Nonnewaug High School won the CT Envirothon and will be sent to New Brunswick, Canada, to compete in the international NCF-Envirothon.

Of all those teams, their students and coaches, we have heard almost nothing. These are the brightest and most academically advanced students in our country.

We ignore their achievements. We treat them as third-class citizens compared to athletes. Young people in this country grow up immersed in athletic promotion. If you want your picture in the paper then play a sport. Forget about joining the academic teams – if they even exist at your school.

Small wonder American students underperform academically compared to other countries. We blame the teachers but forget they operate in our culture of athletic addiction. The total budget provided the CT Interscholastic Athletic Conference (CIAC), each town's expenditures for their athletic directors, coaches, uniforms, refs, field and facility costs, etc. is immense. Almost nothing is provided for the athletic competitors. There is no balance.

Edmund Smith – Andover

Apologies...

To the Editor:

Character is often defined not by what one does for themselves, but by what they do for others. No one is perfect and we all make mistakes. Adversity rarely builds character, but it does reveal it. Instead of simply admitting that they were wrong, people like Mr. Brown choose to triple down, even denying statements that are recorded....twice. It truly is disappointing. Others choose to share their "moral dilemma" over the funding for pickle ball courts but not about hundreds of citizens who pleaded to them to do the right thing. Some even chose to relate the speeches of students who felt compelled to stand up for what is right to some kind of Vietnam-era war mind games. All shameful.

I will apologize. I am sorry for ever associating myself with people who are too stubborn to admit when they are wrong. I am sorry that I ever stood alongside people who obviously ran for public office to help themselves and their friends versus listen to their community. I am sorry that I allowed my frustration for politics on a national stage to cloud my judgement of character on a local level. I know this is not the apology some were looking for, but these are the things I am sorry for.

On the 30th, vote. Remember, the BOE presented a budget that was almost an exact copy of last year's that included this years costs with inflation. Instead of in-fighting, Council and Finance should have communicated with the BOE better. If they are so smart and so tenured, where was the mentorship and the guidance? Where was the open communication? Where were the invites to conversations, phone calls, emails, etc? You wanted to lead, so lead. Stop imposing your will on everyone and actively listen to others.

Michael Buck – East Hampton

Note: Buck is a member of the East Hampton Board of Education but said he is writing as an individual.

Memorial Day

To the Editor:

Memorial Day is a time to remember those who gave their lives fighting for our country. There are parades to demonstrate this publicly. I ask you to attend one if at all possible. If not, reach out to someone who served and thank him or her for their service. It would be best if you did both.

I was in a line in a store in Marlborough last week and saw a man come in wearing a Vietnam veteran hat. I walked over to talk with him. My brother-in-law served there in the Air Force as a forward air controller, a dangerous role.

The gentleman I met in the store was in the Army, ground troops. Dangerous. Our talk was too short. I thanked him and learned a little about his experience. As with so many, he brought home one injury, to one eye.

The letter to the editor I wrote about Veterans Day last November spurred a friend I hadn't seen in years to contact me about his brother dying doing similar work to my brother-in-law in Vietnam. His brother was highly decorated before he even arrived in Vietnam. So sad he died days before departing, bravely protecting our soldiers on the ground.

Reach out and show respect for those who served. You may learn more of the lives from those you know as well as meet strangers. And you can show them that, no matter what you think about the war/conflict (the political cover name for a war) in which they served, you respect them for serving our country, for putting their lives on the line for freedom. It's the least we can do.

Dave Porteous – Marlborough

Budget Thoughts

Dear Colchester Residents:

The education budget is on many people's minds this week as we head for a Town Meeting on May 31 to potentially send Colchester's budgets to referendum.

This year's education budget process has been especially challenging because of two seemingly contradictory things: both big increases and big cuts are on the table. These include harsh impacts to kindergarten, band, business, and world language. I think it's important to understand the challenge facing the school district, Board of Education, Board of Finance, and taxpayers with this budget.

The single biggest driving factor for this year's increase is not salaries or expiring grants. The biggest driver is a historic increase in out-of-district special education costs – totaling around \$2 million in new expenses. These are funds that the town is obligated to pay but which do not go toward the cost of general education in Colchester, including our in-district population of special education students. Students who benefit from out-of-district placements are not to blame, but this is a financial reality Colchester needs to grapple with this year.

In budget meetings, I asked many questions about this situation as a citizen. Through this, we've learned that over a million dollars in these out-of-district placements will age out in the next couple years. I believe BOF should have done more to address this by using the unassigned fund balance to offset a portion of these temporary expenses. This could have saved at least some positions on the chopping block without greater impact to taxpayers.

My own feelings aside, I strongly encourage residents to attend next week's Town Meeting. It is an important civic responsibility and a chance for all of us to speak and participate directly.

Sincerely,
Bernie Dennler – Colchester
Candidate for First Selectman

Obituaries

Colchester

Bonnie Jean Johnson

Bonnie Jean Johnson, of Colchester, peacefully passed away Saturday, May 20, at the William W. Backus Hospital in Norwich after battling multiple illnesses. She spent the last days of her life here on earth surrounded by those who meant the most to her. She was 75 years old.



Bonnie was born in Hartford on Feb. 7, 1948. She was a daughter of the late Edwin and Irene (Coates) Johnson. Bonnie was a hard worker and spent the majority of her career at Schuster's Trucking Company in Colchester and Arrow Paper/U.S. Foods in Norwich. In her free time, she enjoyed playing cards, especially setback. She spent many Sundays cheering on the New England Patriots and betting on the football games. She enjoyed being outdoors watering her rose bush and feeding the birds. She also loved the beach. She had spent many of her younger days at Rocky Neck with her twin sister, Barbara, and her granddaughter, Stephanie.

Most of all, she enjoyed spending time with her family. She was a devoted mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother. Her loss will be mourned by many, especially her daughter, Kim Johnson of Colchester; granddaughter, Stephanie Peruccio of Colchester; and her great-grandchildren, TJ McDermott (7) and Gianna McDermott (6) of Colchester. She was so proud to become a great-grandmother and was affectionally known as Nana or Nana-banana as the kids loved to call her. She loved her family with every ounce of her being. She never failed to make you smile and laugh and was always there with open arms.

She is survived by: a brother, Lee Johnson of Chaplain, a sister, Donna (Johnson) Selleck of Windham; and many extended family members and friends.

In addition to her parents, she was predeceased by her twin sister, Barbara (Johnson) O'Meara, and sisters, Geraldine Higgins, Gail (Higgins) Billington, Beverly (Higgins) Popovich, Zeldia (Higgins) Nowsch, and Madeline (Higgins) Varni; brothers, Gordan Higgins, Glen Higgins and Harold Johnson.

The family would like to thank the staff at Apple Rehab (Colchester), where Bonnie resided prior to her passing. It is no surprise that she made many friends while there, just as she did throughout her life. She was a true friend to everyone who had the pleasure of meeting her. Her carefree personality and funny stories will be missed dearly.

Anyone who knew Bonnie can attest to what a kind and special person she was. She would open her heart and door to anyone no matter

what. Despite all of life's obstacles she endured, she always remained strong and conquered through things without complaining. She was truly selfless and always put others first.

If you knew Bonnie, then you know how much she loved animals, especially cats. She talked about her cats up until the very end. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Connecticut Humane Society.

The services will take place at Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. The wake will be held on Wednesday, May 31, with calling hours from 5-7 p.m. Burial will take place Friday, June 2, at 10 a.m., directly at the Marlboro Cemetery located on East Hampton Road/SR 66, East Hampton Road, Marlborough, CT 06447.

To sign the online guest book or share a memory of Bonnie, please visit www.auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com. She will be sadly missed but always remembered with love.

"When each day starts without me, And I'm not there to see, If the sun shall rise and find your eyes, filled with tears for me. I wish so that you wouldn't cry, the way you did today, While considering the many things, we didn't get to say. I know the love you hold for me, is as much as I love you, Every time you think of me, I know you'll miss me too. When each day starts without me, know that we're not far apart, for all the times you think of me, I'll be right here in your heart"
~ M. L. Wichryk

East Hampton

Deborah C. Mott

Deborah C. (Lanzi) Mott, 59, of East Hampton, beloved wife of William P. Mott, passed away peacefully at Middlesex Hospital. Born May 4, 1964, in Hartford, she was the daughter of the late Morris J. and Joanne (Hedrick) Lanzi Jr. Debbie was a lifelong resident of East Hampton and a graduate of East Hampton High School.

To those who knew her, knew that she was an outgoing personality always putting others first and being the hostess with the mostess. Her love of gnomes and the outdoors was always evident as her garden was full of them! Deb and Billy were absolute best friends even though there was a Green Bay and San Fran rivalry, the cheese head and the 49er cheered for opposing teams, they enjoyed watching and going to games together.

Her family was the focal point of her life. While marrying her best friend, her daughter held the title of maid of honor. The union of the Mott and Lanzi families was an absolute joyous occasion with fun, festivities, and special memories of family members past and present.

She is survived by her husband, William P. Mott of East Hampton; her daughter, Amanda Silveria of Southington; her three sons, Henry Stone (Asia) of Tolland, David Stone of Ashford, Daniel Stone of Colchester; her brother,

David Lanzi and his wife Nicole of East Hampton; grandchildren, Adrien, Sabina, Bentley, Nash, Hudson, Iayla, and Autumn, her loving nephews Ryan and Dylan Lanzi, the entire Mott family, several aunts, uncles, cousins, and many friends. She was predeceased by her nephew, Jayson Lanzi.

A memorial service will be held at the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, on Saturday, May 27, at 11 a.m. Friends may call at the funeral home on Saturday from 9 a.m. until the time of the service.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to American Legion Post 197 of Marlborough.

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

Hebron

Irene O. Jones

Irene O. Jones, 85, formerly of Hebron, passed away Tuesday, May 16, at the Jefferson House nursing facility in Newington, where she was well cared for. Born in Manhattan, N.Y., in February of 1938, she was the daughter of the late Stefan and Veronica (Zajac) Okapal.



In 1968, she married her best friend and love of her life, Edward Jones. They shared 25 years together until he predeceased her in 1994. After graduating from Hunter College in New York, Irene helped people by working for the State of Connecticut as a medical social worker for 26 years until her retirement in 1995.

She loved to embark on cruises and travel the world with Ed and her friends. She was a serious bridge player even attending many bridge bootcamps. Her home was the site of many happy gatherings of extended family and friends. She made sure that all felt welcomed, comfortable, and important. She was a woman of considerable faith and was both a communicant and former treasurer of St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Hebron.

Irene will be forever loved and remembered by her brother and his wife Edward and Margaret Okapal and their children, her godchildren, numerous nieces, nephews, extended family and friends.

On Wednesday, June 7, calling hours will be

held from 10 a.m.-noon, with Mass at noon and burial immediately following, all at St. Peter's Episcopal Church, 30 Church St., Hebron, CT 06248.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that memorial donations be made to St. Peter's Church, or to the Russell Mercier Senior Center, Hebron.

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

Colchester

Richard Clyde Bedell

Richard Clyde Bedell, 72, of Colchester, passed away suddenly at his home Monday, May 1. Born July 13, 1950, in Sanford, Maine, he was the son of the late Clyde Norman Bedell and Edith Marion (Steere) Bedell.



Richard was a 1969 graduate of Bacon High School in Colchester. Shortly after graduating high school, he enlisted in the United States Marines and served our nation during the Vietnam Era. He trained as a diesel mechanic in the Marines, a trade that stayed with him throughout his life. He worked for many years as the owner and operator of Richard's Diesel Services. He was an avid fan of NASCAR and loved to relax at the beach in his spare time.

He will be forever remembered as a hard-working family man by his children, Richard M. Bedell and wife Janeene, William Bedell, Raymond Hutchison and wife Patti, Tammy Swinson and husband Davie and Lisa Williams and husband Joseph; sisters, Joyce Wilson and Gloria Fillon; grandchildren, Ashley, Macausey, Kaylan, Tiffany, Eli, Lacey Jomae, Davie Ray, Lil Joe, Kyle, Cody, Chelsey and Isaac; great-grandchildren, Elena and Ellamarie; his cat, Abby; and numerous other extended family and friends.

In addition to his parents he is predeceased by his wife, Eleanor Bedell; brother-in-law, Jerry Fillon; and grandson, Lucas Williams.

The family asks that memorial donations be made to the ASPCA, at www.aspc.org.

Colchester

Audrey Wolcott Memorial Gathering

A memorial gathering will be held for Audrey Wolcott on Sunday, June 11, from 1-4 p.m., with remembrances at 2 p.m.

The location will be at the Wolcott Farm, Marvin Road, Colchester. Look for the farm sign at the entrance to the picnic area. Dress is casual and if possible, bring a folding chair. A light lunch will be served.

Waterford

Domenico Arico (1941-2023)

Domenico Arico passed peacefully Friday, May 19, in Waterford. He is survived by his wife, Marie Pelletti Arico; four daughters, Diane Arico Forster, Michele Arico, Jayne Joyce and Joanne Anderegg; one stepdaughter, Toni Means; brother, Anthony; and sister, Anna. As well as several grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

There are no calling hours.

Obituary Policy

Obituaries must be submitted no later than noon Wednesday for inclusion in that week's paper. There is a \$75 charge for all obituaries.

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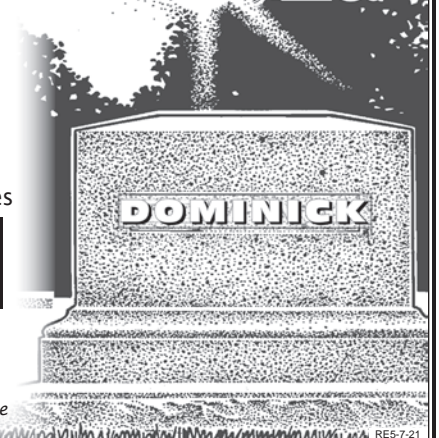
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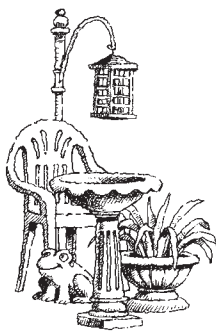
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FOR SALE: 1988 21ft Sea Ray Cabin Cruiser with trailer. \$5000. Please call Dave 860-759-8209 for pics and additional info.

DUMP TRAILER BUSINESS FOR SALE: Owner retiring. One truck and eight trailers. \$120,000. No financing. Rich 860-881-4745

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FOR SALE: 2004 F-150 Truck. \$9250. 146,000 miles. One owner, 8 cylinder, gas. Power steering, power brakes, air conditioning. Tilt wheel, trailer hitch, truck cap, AM/FM, alloy wheels. Comes with extra set of snow tires. Call 860-338-0023.

TAG SALES

ESTATE/TAG SALE: 148 Rutledge Rd, Wethersfield, CT. May 27th 9-1 (Please no early birds) items featured: Household appliances, dishes, cooking items, bedroom furniture, couches, chairs, outdoor furniture, tools, etc.

TAG SALE: Saturday 5/27, 9-1p. Rain or Shine. 2 Victoria Rd, Portland. Fishing poles & gear, golf clubs, perennial plants & garden, clothing, household & more.

2-FAMILY GARAGE/TAG SALE: Sat-Sun, 5/27-5/28, 9-2p. Rain or Shine. 45 & 51 Hope Valley Rd, Hebron. Offering a great selection of items for your apartment, house, garage, shed and yard, plus lots of other "great stuff" for everyone. Please no early birds.

HUGE TAG SALE: Saturday May 27th, 9-12p. 317 Waterhold Rd. East Hampton. Liquidating all items. Mega mens tools. Rain or Shine. We negotiate all fair offers.

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