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# News Bulletin

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

Volume 47, Number 51

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January 12, 2024



**Playing the Pipes in Pasadena...** In California, the New Year is celebrated with the annual Tournament of Roses Parade. This year, Coreyanne Armstrong (third from left), a full-time bagpiper from Portland, made the trip and performed with Pipes on Parade, dressed in full Scottish regalia. See story on page 15.

## Budget Freeze Enacted in Colchester

By Michael Sinkewicz

Colchester First Selectman Bernie Dennler III announced last week he was implementing a soft budget freeze due to “concerning” spending trends and accounting issues in the town finance department.

During a joint meeting of the boards of selectmen and finance on Jan. 4, Dennler informed officials that upon taking office in November, he discovered potential spending issues nearly halfway through the 2023-24 fiscal year, and problems with the town’s “overall accounting.”

As a result of the freeze — which Dennler proposed during the meeting before officially announcing the decision in a Facebook post afterwards — all town purchases must be approved by the first selectman and nonessential spending will likely be limited.

This week, Dennler told the *Rivereast* that the town was “assessing where things stand” and evaluating how long the spending freeze would ultimately last. However, he didn’t dismiss the possibility that the situation may escalate moving forward and that more aggressive action or a hard budget freeze may be necessary in the weeks and months ahead.

“The Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance members all share the goal of resolving this,” Dennler said. “We need to get this corrected.”

The spending freeze comes as the finance department faces serious pressure to complete the 2022-23 financial audit report on time; failure to do so may result in state oversight, according to a warning issued by the Office of Policy and Management.

That endeavor — at least in the immediate future — will be handled without the town’s finance director, Mary Williamson, who was

placed on paid administrative leave at the end of December.

At a separate Board of Selectmen (BOS) meeting last week, officials created a new position of deputy director of town finance. Michelle Marceau, an accountant for Colchester Public Schools, was appointed this week and will subsequently take over as acting director of finance as well.

A story about Williamson being placed on leave appears this week on page 21.

Officials are rapidly approaching the budget season for the 2024-2025 fiscal year, an undertaking further complicated by the turmoil in the finance department.

“We have balls to juggle and we’re going to keep juggling them,” Dennler said.

### Inaccurate Reports

Maggie Cosgrove, Colchester’s former long-time chief financial officer who is currently serving as the town’s finance advisor, told Dennler in an email that MUNIS reports — which officials review to track monthly town expenditures — appeared inaccurate.

Certain accounts “did not make sense” and there were “numerous transactions that need to be corrected between accounts.”

Identifying and resolving those issues, Cosgrove wrote, would take a significant amount of time and effort. Until then, the reports shouldn’t be relied upon to make decisions.

In his Facebook post, Dennler said that at last week’s joint meeting town department heads “highlighted serious discrepancies between their internal tracking of spending and the MUNIS reports.” Expenses, he said, “appear to be double-booked or need to be reclassified to the

See *Budget Freeze*, page 22

## A Snowplow Ride-Along in Andover

By Michael Sinkewicz

“We’re riding in truck number 7, giving you a live view of plowing in the town of Andover.”

Andover selectman Paula King showed off her social media skills this weekend during Connecticut’s first major snowstorm of the year, offering residents a unique perspective on what goes into maintaining the community’s roads during the winter season.

For over an hour and a half, King was broadcasting live on Andover’s Facebook page, providing a play-by-play commentary and relaying residents’ questions to Zach Zito, a Public Works crew member, as he progressed through his truck route.

The journey was both informative and fun, with King and Zito seemingly auditioning for their own talk show.

Snacks, Zito asserted, are always appreciated,

especially sweets.

“Nobody wants to plow and eat kale,” he said. “People want to plow snow and eat brownies.”

According to the National Weather Service, Andover recorded just over five inches of snow during the weekend storm — or “not enough,” if you ask Zito.

He was one of four drivers trekking through roughly 30 miles of local streets — they don’t plow state roads — and at the time of filming, largely running on many, many cups of coffee.

“I’ve had enough to kill a horse,” he joked.

It’s understandable, considering that Zito and the entire crew were called into action Saturday night at 7 p.m. to begin prepping the roads — the livestream took place at around 11 a.m. the next morning. By then, Zito had only taken a brief nap.

King put on a similar production two years ago with Zito, but was unable to do so last season mainly due to a lack of snow.

“I said, ‘Let me get out there and show the why and how,’” King explained.

Often, residents ask local officials why it takes so long for their street to be plowed, or how long it takes a truck to circle back to their road as the storm lingers on — all fair questions.

On a good day, Zito can probably drive his truck at 20 mph through the snow, but it’s often closer to 15 mph. He has to complete his 12-mile route both ways, and do the outsides of the road too — wider streets take even more effort to clear. So it takes at least a few hours to finish one cycle, and likely closer to four or five hours.

Residents participating in the livestream ap-  
See *Snowplow Ride-Along*, page 22

### Inside...

<b>Andover</b>	
<i>Project Making Progress</i> .....	pg 6
<b>Hebron</b>	
<i>Charter Revision Process Delayed</i> .....	pg 9
<b>East Hampton</b>	
<i>Mid-Year School Updates</i> .....	pg 13
<b>Portland</b>	
<i>Retiring After 50 Years</i> .....	pg 16
<b>Colchester</b>	
<i>Finance Director on Leave</i> .....	pg 21
<b>Regional</b>	
<i>Obituaries</i> .....	pgs 26 & 27

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RE10-7-22

## Chatham Health Launches New Website, Online Applications

The Chatham Health District has announced the launch of several new customer-focused information technology systems, including a newly redesigned website, an online application system, and a digital inspection platform.

The Chatham Health District serves as the municipal health department for Colchester, East Haddam, East Hampton, Hebron, Marlborough and Portland.

Paid for through generous National Environmental Health Association and United States Food and Drug Administration Flexible Funding Model grants, the application system and inspection platform (both part of a suite of regulatory public health solutions offered

by HS GovTech) will enable the public to apply for permits online, look up recent restaurant, cosmetology, pool, daycare, and campground inspection reports, and submit various complaints that the district investigates (housing, nuisances, restaurants) more conveniently from their home or place of business.

"The online application and inspection systems will go a long way to providing the convenience, flexibility and transparency our residents ask for," said Andrew Tierney, chairman of the Chatham Health District Board of Health. "And as a board member, I'm always pleased when the district can leverage federal grant funds to deliver major operational enhancements like this."

The website improvements, paid for through an Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity grant from the Connecticut Department of Public Health, include health alerts, data dashboards covering a variety of topics, information about services, and an interactive calendar of programs and events the Chatham Health District delivers.

"We are really excited to be able to modernize our public-facing information systems," said Russell Melmed, Director of Health. "We have a responsibility to assess the health of our population; to investigate and address health problems; to enforce regulations; to communicate with the public; and to do it all as transparently and efficiently as possible. Redesigning our website, developing data dashboards, and launching a digital application and inspection system will allow us to fulfill that responsibility more effectively."

To access the new website and explore the data dashboards, go to [www.chathamhealth.org](http://www.chathamhealth.org). To access the application and complaint submission system, first create an account by going to [www.myhealthdepartment.com/chd](http://www.myhealthdepartment.com/chd). To look up recent inspections conducted by CHD, go to [inspections.myhealthdepartment.com/chd](http://inspections.myhealthdepartment.com/chd).

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# Standout Athletes of the Week

By Josh Howard

Here are the Rivereast Standouts of the Week for Jan. 1-7:

**Erik Medvecky, Sam LaMalfa, Noah Decker, Kylon Martinez – Portland High School (Track & Field):** Medvecky, LaMalfa, Decker, and Martinez broke the school record in the 4x200 relay at the Shoreline Conference Track and Field Meet at Hillhouse High School on Jan. 4. The foursome ran a 1:38.63 to set a new mark and win the event, edging the runner-ups from Cromwell. LaMalfa, a junior, also won the 600 meters in the 12-school meet in New Haven.

**Liana Salamone – East Hampton High School (Basketball):** Salamone scored 33 points as the Bellringers defeated North Branford 82-45 on Jan. 5. With the convincing conference triumph, East Hampton remained undefeated

at 7-0. Salamone, a junior, is a two-time all-state player and the reigning Shoreline Conference Player of the Year. The defending state champion Bellringers next welcome Kolbe Cathedral to East Hampton High School this Saturday, Jan. 13, at 2 p.m.

**Rylan Sodhi – RHAM High School (Track & Field):** Sodhi finished second overall in the long jump at the Glastonbury Invitational on Jan. 4. Sodhi, a junior, jumped 16' 8.5" at the multi-school meet – featuring a dozen schools – at Glastonbury High School. The local meets are preparation for the Central Connecticut Conference (CCC) that is slated for Saturday, Jan. 27 at the Floyd Little Athletic Center in New Haven.

**Leah Hochholzer – Bacon Academy (Track & Field):** Hochholzer won the shot put, beat-



Portland High School's 4x200 relay team of Erik Medvecky, Sam LaMalfa, Noah Decker, Kylon Martinez broke the school record on Jan. 4, earning the four a spot on the Standout Athletes of the Week.

ing the competition with a distance of 27' 10" at the UConn Developmental meet on Jan. 5 at the University of Connecticut. Hochholzer was one of seven Bobcats to take home first place at the event, which featured a dozen teams. The Bobcats swept the high jump with Saniyah Otero winning it on the girls side and Weston

Dzvonchyk winning it on the boys side. The boys 4x200 relay team of Josh Fenton, Douglas Howard, Talan Ladyga, and Jay Wikarska was also victorious.

To nominate an athlete as a Standout or with sports-related comments, email joshhoward-sports@gmail.com.

## From the State Senator's Desk

Happy 2024 and Happy New Year! Just like that, the holidays are over as quickly as they started and we're back to a typical Connecticut winter. While there's a lot to look forward to, including beautiful snowfall and cheering on the UConn Huskies, it can also be a challenging time of year, as evenings come early and low temperatures and bad weather often keep us inside.

It's important for us all to be open and aware of our mental health and how it can be changed by the conditions around us. Winter can be a challenging time for many of us; whether you are struggling or a friend or loved one may be in a poor mood, following these tips can help improve moods until spring arrives two months from now.

While there's little sun in the winter, there's value in getting it when you can, even despite the low temperatures outside. On sunny days, try to step outside when you can, even if only for a few minutes. There are also UV lamps that provide light similar to sunlight and can improve moods.

It's also a good idea to get out of your comfort zone and try something new. Whether that means sticking to your New Year's resolution, trying out a new hobby or attending a new class, learning something different and getting new experiences will be valuable.

If you like to think of the future, planning a trip or event for the coming weeks and months can easily raise your spirits. Whether it's a quick weekend out of town to see friends and family, a big spring break trip or simply tickets to a movie, play or sports game, these can all lift the winter doldrums.

Finally, exercise is a very underrated way to get in a better mood during the winter. Working out, whether it's simply walking or going all-out, can release endorphins and make you feel better – especially if your resolution is to lose weight.

This year will be a big one, with lots of promise, and keeping positive and optimistic will help it be the best it can be.

State Sen. Norm Needleman  
D-33rd District

Note: The 12-town 33rd Senate District includes the Rivereast towns of Colchester, East Hampton and Portland.

## Radon Test Kits Available

January is Radon Awareness Month. If you would like a free radon kit, the Chatham Health District has acquired a limited number of radon test kits from the state Health Department.

One test kit is available per residence for those living within the district. Once the test is complete, you will need to mail the kit in for

analysis at no charge to you. The results will be sent to you and will not be public information.

Only take a test kit if you are committed to following the directions and mailing it out. If you are interested in a test kit, call 860-365-0884.

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We will be contributing 10% of all proceeds from any new projects to our local food bank until January 30<sup>th</sup>.

**From the Editor's Desk**

**Observations & Ruminations**

By Mike Thompson

Some nice news floated across my email inbox earlier this week, from the Connecticut Association of Schools. The association has named the top assistant principals in the state – and one of them is a Hebron resident!

Jarrid Clifton, who is assistant principal at Timothy Edwards Middle School in South Windsor, is the 2024 Middle School Assistant Principal of the Year.

Each year, applications are accepted for the Elementary, Middle, and High School Assistant Principal of the Year Awards. The winners are chosen by the Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS) Awards and Recognition Committee, a selection committee consisting of active and retired principals and assistant principals.

“The program recognizes outstanding school assistant principals who have succeeded in providing high quality learning opportunities for students,” CAS said in a press release. “These administrators have demonstrated excellent leadership, commitment to staff and students, service to their communities, and contributions to the overall profession of educational leadership.”

Clifton was nominated for the award by the principal at Timothy Edwards Middle School (TEMS), Candace Irwin, who told CAS she appreciates his “commitment to excellence and to ensuring the highest quality learning experiences for the students of South Windsor.”

“It is with great gratitude and genuine pride that I receive this award on behalf of the phe-

nomenal students, staff, families, and administrators of South Windsor,” said Clifton when notified of his award. “The South Windsor Public Schools has given me the opportunity to grow as an educator and administrator; and to work collaboratively to create an equitable, welcoming environment for our students and families. I am so fortunate to have been given the chance to help lead this special school and staff and I look forward to what all of them will do in the future. I could not have achieved this recognition without the incredible support of my family – Meg, Silas, and Andrew!”

According to CAS, Clifton is described by his staff as “kind and selfless to the core” – or, in the words of a group of TEMS seventh-graders, “Mr. Clifton is a cool, chill dude with a heart of gold.”

CAS says Clifton exhibits the characteristics that comprise the school's values system, R.O.A.R – Respect, Ownership, Acceptance, and Resilience – which he helped develop and embed in every facet of the school's operation.

In addition to revamping the safety protocols in place at TEMS, Clifton has spearheaded several new student programs that foster academic growth, encourage independence, and develop leadership skills. The initiatives include Student Alliance for Gender Acceptance (SAGA), Girls in STEM, TEMS Student Council, and TE Leaders.

Special education teacher Heather Sloate told CAS, “Jarrid's initiatives promote innovation and customization in learning while

**Editor's Desk continued on page 25**



**Funds for Food Bank... Members of Scouts BSA Spencer Neale, Jack Hutton and Hudson Visco, of Marlborough Troop 39, recently presented the Marlborough Food Bank with a check for \$1,000, collected donations from the community during the annual wreath sale this past fall. The troop also provided the food bank with 50 wreaths to help families celebrate the holidays.**

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**Real Leadership**

To the Editor:

I commend First Selectman Dennler for his transparent and honest approach to Colchester's financial challenges. His professional attitude, focused on constructive solutions and accountability, without blaming, is refreshing and vital for our community's progress.

**John Farrell – Colchester**

**Kuzminski Marks 50 Years**

To the Editor:

Not many people stay with a job for 50 years, but Dave Kuzminski has. Dave has been working for the Town of Portland since January 1974 when he started in the water department and gradually worked his way up to become the Technology Coordinator. Though many of you probably know him from other roles – host of the cable show “Portland on the Move,” emcee of numerous Holiday Tree Lighting ceremonies, announcer of the Portland Memorial Day Parade, unofficial photographer for any Town happenings (Halloween on Main, Veterans' dinners, Juneteenth celebrations, etc.), entertainment coordinator for the Portland Fair, co-founder of the high school Town Tech Partnership, creator of the Walter the Water Saver conservation program, podcaster highlighting careers in the water industry, and behind-the-scenes videographer for monthly committee and board meetings. Back in the day he used to drive snow plows, read water meters, repair pipes in ditches, and was even the commenta-

tor for a few bed races down Main Street. Dave's contributions to his hometown have truly been immeasurable.

Portland has been lucky to have such a loyal and tireless individual working for the betterment of this community for five decades. And we, his children, have been lucky to have such a wonderful role model of strong work ethic, perseverance, and dedication to look up to. Dave will retire from his duties on Jan. 19, 2024 to begin the next chapter in his life story; we know it will be amazing and we hope you all wish him well!

**Sarah Soboleski and David C. Kuzminski  
Portland**

**Real Enemy of Judaism**

To the Editor:

Hebron's Aravis Pasha implies Muslims don't belong in Palestine because “Saudi Arabia is the Muslim homeland, not Palestine” and that Islam “only came to the area in the 7th century AD.” Taking 699 AD as Pasha's 7th century reference leaves Islam there for the past 1,325 years. And that's not long enough to give Palestinians the right to live there and not be driven out by Zionists during the Nakba (catastrophe) when Israel took control? Native Americans will want to hire Pasha as their counsel, as the United States has only existed 247 years while the Natives held the Americas for 30,000 years before we took it from them.

We all agree that what Hamas did on Oct. 7 was a horrific crime against humanity. But Pa-

**Bulletin Board**

“Looks like we're going to have another easy winter,” observed a longtime friend the other day. I will refer to him here simply as “Mr. T” as he has threatened to go public with a highly exaggerated account of my involvement in an unfortunate childhood experiment involving matches and aerosol cans should I ever attempt to make him famous by mentioning his name in this column.

“Not a chance. We're going to get hammered,” I said. “Just you watch.”

“Is that what the ‘Farmer's Almanac’ says?”

I snorted. “You can't rely on the ‘Farmer's Almanac’ for a really accurate prediction.”

“I thought they had a pretty good record.”

“Actually, I looked that up one time and it turns out the almanac is accurate about half the time—which is better than relying on a mangy groundhog for a prediction, but not exactly something you'd want to bet the farm on.”

“Gee, I always thought it was pretty good.”

“It's vague. I looked up the almanac's forecast for New England for this month and it says stuff like ‘cold with some snow’ for Jan. 16-19. I mean, really. Cold with some snow? That's not exactly going out on a limb.”

“I guess not. My grandmother used to say when the woolly bear caterpillars get really woolly in the fall, that meant we were in for a tough winter. You know, those caterpillars that are kind of dark orange with black rings? The wider the caterpillar's orange band, the more severe the winter. That's what she used to say.”

“Total nonsense,” I scoffed. “Only an idiot would believe that.”

“Hey!”

“No disrespect to your grandmother,” I added hastily, “but it's a myth. You'd be better off trying to predict the weather by casting fortune sticks or examining chicken livers by the light of a full moon. Scientists have determined that the coloring of woolly bear caterpillars actually depends on the caterpillar's age and what it's been eating.”

“I don't mean to be critical of your all-knowing obnoxious smugness—which I should probably be used to by now—but you're kind of contradicting the age-old foundations of New England folk wisdom here,” remarked Mr. T. “Next you'll be telling me that a large crop of acorns in the fall or squirrels with especially bushy tails in November aren't a sign to expect a hard winter.”

“Yup. Also thicker than usual apple or onion skins, bees' nests built higher in trees, and folksy sayings like ‘Mushrooms galore, much snow in store; no mushrooms at all, no snow will fall.’ All have been pretty much disproved by science.”

“Okay, Einstein. So how can you be so sure we're going to get hammered this winter? Nothing I've seen so far indicates a hard winter.”

“I'll tell you how. Last winter, for the first time in living memory, I actually pulled out my snowblower in early November. I put on new belts and changed the oil. I made sure it would start right up and then I sat back and confidently dared Mother Nature to let it snow. So what happened?”

“I have no idea.”

“Nothing. That's what. We ended up getting maybe an inch of snow all winter. I never even took the snowblower out of the garage.”

“I'm thinking there may be a pattern here?”

“So this year, what did I do? Nothing. I haven't so much as looked at my snowblower. I haven't drained old gas, made sure it would start up, nothing. So not only is it inevitable that we're going to get at least one major blizzard, it's practically a sure thing that when it does come, my snowblower will refuse to start.”

“That's it? That's how you predict the severity of winter?”

“It works every time. Every single time. Mother Nature hates me.”

“Did it ever occur to you to go out to the garage and give your snowblower the once-over?”

“Why? Then I won't need it anyway.”

“You're messed up, man.”

“I hear that a lot.”

[Note: Saturday's snowstorm blew in after this was written. I am happy to report that the snowblower started on the second pull. Hallelujah!]

**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](mailto:bulletin@glcitizen.com).

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sha sells us fabrications by cherry-picking history. The Roman empire took it from the Jews but then Islam took it from the Romans, and allowed Jews and Christians to return and live in relative peace. But then the Pope's Christian Crusades attacked and expelled or killed all the Muslims and Jews. When Islam defeated the 3rd Christian Crusade, they let the Jews move back in. Palestine has since been Muslim dominant but shared with Jewish and Christian minorities.

The real enemy of Judaism has almost always been Christianity. Germany and Italy were more than 95% Christian when fascism and the genocide of 6 million Jews occurred. Fundamentalist Christians support Israeli Jews today only because their interpretation of Bible prophecy marks this as the beginning of the end times. When Jesus Christ comes again – goodbye (or will Christians say 'Good riddance') to the Jews, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists and all others. No wonder Thomas Paine wrote *Age of Reason* to expose Biblical fallacy in an attempt to divert us from religious self-destruction.

**Edmund Smith – Andover**

### Why the Grief?

To the Editor:

Much grief is currently vented over the prospect that Trump may be disqualified from some or all state ballots, as this is viewed as suppressing the right of voters to support the candidate of their choice. But all ballots include the option to name a write-in candidate, a valid preference that will be duly recorded. Thus anyone who wishes to vote for the vile ogre may do so, without contradiction or interference. Am I missing something?

**Douglas Bonoff – East Hampton**

### Insurrection and the Economy

To the Editor:

Michael Chotkowski: "What has Trump done to be excluded from ballots?"

He incited an insurrection, ending the USA's 240-year unbroken streak of peaceful transitions of presidential power. The 14th Amendment is clear: "No person shall [ ... ] hold any office, civil or military, under the United States, [ ... ], who, having previously taken an oath [ ... ] as an officer of the United States [ ... ] to support the Constitution of the United States, shall have engaged in insurrection or rebellion against the same, or given aid or comfort to the enemies thereof." There is no mention of conviction and few of the Confederate leaders excluded had been convicted.

Ken Hjulstrom: The economy was better under Trump.

Trump lost 2.67 million jobs, including 170,000 manufacturing ones. Biden gained 14.3 million jobs, including 790,000 manufacturing ones. Before crediting the COVID recovery, notice that employment under Biden is 4.89 million higher than Trump's pre-COVID maximum, including 160,000 more manufacturing jobs: under Biden, we've passed an Infrastructure bill, the CHIPS act, and a green manufacturing bill. Remember that every week was going to be Trump's Infrastructure Week? Under Biden, it actually happened.

The right is whining about the debt, which grew at 8.9% per year under Trump, but at 8.3% per year under Biden. They crow about energy independence but net oil imports have been falling steadily since 2006 and are much lower than during the Trump years. We've averaged a net export of 877,000 barrels per month under Biden (for better or for worse, when it comes to the environment.) Per-capita GDP rose at 1.5% per year under Trump and at an astounding 10.0% under Biden.

I'll take the Biden economy, thank you. And I'll definitely take a president who believes in our democracy. Sorry, Mr. Trump.

(References: <http://letters.sauyet.com/#/2024-01-12/>).

**Sincerely,  
Scott Sauyet – Andover**

*Note: Sauyet is a member of the Andover Board of Education but said he is speaking as an individual.*

## WANTED

### Buying Antiques & Old Stuff

Costume Jewelry, Pottery, Bottles, Crocks, Jugs, Toys/Games, Glassware, Silver Plated Items, Signs, Typewriters, Sewing Machines, Bar Items, Tools, Sterling, Gold, Watches, Coins, Kitchenware, Cookware, Automotive, Books, Radios, Clocks, Lanterns, Lamps, Knives, Hunting, Fishing, Military, Masonic, Fire Dept & more.

Donald Roy 860-874-8396

### Insurrection

To the Editor:

"President Trump is practically and morally responsible for provoking the events of the day. President Trump is still liable for everything he did while he was in office, as an ordinary citizen, unless the statute of limitations has run. Still liable for everything he did while he was in office. Didn't get away with anything yet. We have a criminal justice system in this country, we have civil litigation and former presidents are not immune from being accountable by either one." (Republican Senator Mitch McConnell, Feb. 13, 2021)

**Annie Steinbrecher – Marlborough**

### Hebron's First Open Space

To the Editor:

I would like to thank Chairman Brian O'Connell and the members of Hebron's Open Space Land Acquisition Committee for their consideration of the many important issues surrounding the land at 17 Kinney Rd., also known as the Horton Property. At the Jan. 3 Open Space meeting, several residents from across Hebron appeared to express concerns over development of the property and the desire that 17 Kinney Rd. be preserved as Open Space. Among those attending was Hebron historian John Baron, who noted, "In matter of fact, 17 Kinney Rd., which was assembled in 1808 and added to in 1820 by Governor Peters, is the earliest example of land preservation in Hebron... and probably that extends to Connecticut and New England as well. He predates Henry David Thoreau by two full generations." This remarkable connection between 17 Kinney Rd. and Gov. John S. Peters illustrates a new first, with Hebron as a leader in the preservation of Open Space, begun only 20 years after the ratification of the United States Constitution!

Mr. Baron continued, "Soil and history are interrelated. Without soil you don't have history." And clean water should also be added to this mix. The combination of fractured bedrock, fertile glacial till soil and abundant fresh water at 17 Kinney Road is a result of the last Ice Age, dating back between 100,000 and 10,000 years ago. This combination of soil, water and history is distinct and should be as highly prized today as it was by the Paleoindians in 7,000 BC, Hebron's first colonial settlers in 1704 and John E. Horton in the 1960s.

Please join the efforts to urge Chairman O'Connell, the Open Space Committee and the Board of Selectmen to preserve this historic and environmentally vital landscape. Visit Save Hebron Center on Facebook for details and #Save17.

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

### Trump Derangement Syndrome

To the Editor:

The phrase in common usage be it written here or spoken is Trump Derangement Syndrome (TDS). Syndrome defined as a characteristic combination of opinions, emotions, or behavior. Derangement defined as a disturbance of normal bodily functioning or operation. Trump defined as, "The depths of his dishonesty is just astounding to me...he is the most flawed person I have ever met in my life." -- John Kelly, White House chief of staff. "He is more dangerous than anyone could ever imagine." -- James Mattis, Secretary of Defense. "He puts himself before country. His actions are all about him and not about the country." -- Mark Esper, Secretary of Defense. "He will always put his own interests, and gratifying his own ego, ahead of everything else, including the country's interest." -- Bill Barr, Attorney General.

Syndrome has already been defined. Deficit defined as a lack or shortage; deficiency, a disadvantage, impairment or handicap. Truth defined

as that which is true or in accordance with fact or reality.

Ken Hjulstrom writes, "...while hoping you forget how great the economy was while Trump was in office." I along with many would like to forget that Trump was in office. Ken, how much better do you think the economy could have been had Donald actually addressed the public health emergency?

I think that adherents of Donald Trump suffer from TDS as well; Truth Deficit Syndrome.

And the video that rips off Paul Harvey's "So God Made a Farmer" is nauseating and I don't understand how "evangelicals" can support him? See Eleven Films' "TrumpsNewAmerica" video to see what a second Trump presidency would look like.

**Respectfully Submitted,  
Eric Manning – Andover**

### Pleased with New Leadership

To the Editor:

Just a quick note to say how pleased I am with our new leadership in Colchester. The boards are working together to understand and address the town's serious financial issues that have become evident. First Selectman Bernie Dennler seems to be taking a calm, transparent, and professional approach to the challenges.

Last week, I attended a joint meeting of the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Finance where I was struck with the tone of collaborative problem-solving between the boards. I find it reassuring that our elected officials are working together to address the needs of our community in an open and honest way. Keep it up!

**Susie Milner – Colchester**

### More Misconceptions

To the Editor:

Ed Kozlowski recently submitted another letter teeming with misconceptions and sophomoric assertions. In unapologetic fashion, Kozlowski attempted to defend a litany of abhorrent comments that have been submitted to the *Rivereast* over the last several months. However, the defense was thwarted by his own narcissism when he balked at the fact that he was not cited, and therefore denied proper credit for his callous statements. The reality is, leaving out the author's name associated with each quote was an effort to spare these individuals the public humiliation of being associated with such vile comments.

In his artless defense, Kozlowski went on to boast, with great satisfaction, his unique ability to offend others with his comments. However dimwitted a defense this might be, it completely misses the point. His comments are not simply offensive, they are also so stunningly superficial, they're embarrassing. The truth is, these are not characteristics that any self-aware, informed individual should aspire to, and certainly not beliefs that one ought to bellow in the public squares. It's unfortunate that some individuals deem themselves so academically deficient, the only value they feel capable of offering is to offend everyone.

**Joe Stevens – Hebron**

### Your Voice, Support Matters

To the Editor:

As advertised in December's *Rivereast*, the town of Colchester is holding a Republican RTC caucus that is open to all registered Republicans. The event will be held on Jan. 16 at 7:30 p.m. at the Town Hall in Room 1.

I can't stress enough the importance of this event. Every two years all members are elected to represent Republican interests on behalf of the town by all registered Republicans in town.

I have spent years attempting to clean up the origination, by exposing Democrat/union subversion and keeping our candidates accountable for their promises and actions.

People believe that as the chairman I can make unilateral decisions without the support of the membership and that simply isn't true. I am only the face of decisions made by a simple majority of a group.

In years past, Republicans only held seats that were given to them by state statute by minimum party representation rules. During this past election, as a result our two "Democratically" placed candidates for BOS, Art Shilosky and Cliff O'Donal's first order of business on Dec. 7 was to unanimously vote to support the union contract increase, without discussion!

During this past election cycle the Democrats' theme was a return to civility, which to me was funny as their membership were the instigators of poor behavior throughout, but they sold it and it stuck. In essence what they were really calling for was the days of zero discussion and 5 to 0 votes under minimum party representation rules.

My ask of you is to come and support me and hopefully what turns out to be a like-minded slate of candidates that can get the job done. If you would like to get involved contact me directly via email [trudko@yahoo.com](mailto:trudko@yahoo.com).

**Thank You,  
Taras W. Rudko, Chairman  
Colchester Republican Town Committee**

### Portland Spending

To the Editor:

At the Dec. 20 Portland Board of Selectmen meeting, there was discussion on purchasing a replacement fire truck. If approved this would be the second fire truck purchased under the Curley administration and the third fire truck purchased within three years.

In 2022, Portland received \$1.3M in American Rescue Funds, which were slated to be used to replace asbestos water pipes and a pump station on Russell and Coe avenues. However, after the press release, the BOS quickly moved the funds to purchase a fire truck totaling \$965K. Last year, Portland received an additional \$1.37M in ARFs and again allocated the funds to the Russell & Coe Ave project with the remaining funds spent on vehicles and miscellaneous expenditures.

In addition to ARF money, the BOS authorized a total of \$1.6 M in "supplemental allocations," which are not included in the general

*See Letters, page 25*

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# Community Center Project Makes Progress

By Michael Sinkewicz

Last week, Andover Town Administrator Eric Anderson provided an update on the town's new community center project, showcasing significant progress with construction and an optimistic timeline for its completion.

In a roughly 10-minute video posted on the town's Facebook page, Anderson — adorned with a hardhat — walked through the upper and lower levels of the new building, highlighting the work being done.

While many of the features are still limited to the folks' imagination, there is good news to report, Anderson asserted.

"We're a lot further along than people think," he told the *Rivereast*.

All the electric work is done, for example, and the remaining tasks will be finished in the months ahead. Anything who's stopped by the site — located on School Road, behind Town Hall, and in close proximity to the elementary school, fire department and police department — has likely seen that the building is steadily coming along.

Anderson said that realistically, the building will be completed by the middle of June. The hope, he continued, is that people will be

utilizing their new 2,200 square facility by July 1. Ground was officially broken in August, as members of Leading Edge Construction and PegArch LLC Architecture and Design Services joined local officials to shovel the first scoops of dirt.

A project that was years in the making will take less than a fraction of the time to finally be done.

The timing of the video comes after residents submitted several questions to officials, including why the entrance looks so high off the ground — a somewhat troubling feature for senior citizens.

Anderson explained in the video that the grade will be raised, alleviating that concern.

"We just wanted to take the feedback and put it into a video," he said. "It hopefully answered those questions."

Other features are currently hard to fully envision, such as the backyard, which ideally will be used for a variety of activities. For now, it's a field of dirt.

"The basement will be fully walkout and there will be direct access and a sidewalk that comes from the parking lot between the fire depart-

ment and Town Hall," Anderson said in the video.

The town administrator toured the entire building, bringing viewers to rooms that will eventually turn into offices, bathrooms and storage rooms. One of the bathrooms has a walk-in shower, which will allow the town to utilize the community center as an emergency shelter.

Other rooms remain full of potential. The largest room on the main floor could be used as a meeting room, a dining room, or for movie nights.

"Pretty much any event could be held in this space," Anderson said.

Executing the blueprint adheres to the major aspect of the town's Plan of Conservation Development, which has included the need for a

community center for generations.

Ed Sarisley, chairman of the Community Senior Center Building Committee, said during the groundbreaking ceremony that the goal was always to combine a community center with senior services.

"For four decades, the community has recognized that it needs both," he said. "However, we're a very small town with only 3,000 people. We had to have a combination building, which a lot of small towns do."

Anderson said that the cost of the building has remained unchanged. Roughly a million dollars of the town's American Rescue Plan Act funds will cover the construction budget.

"We're not going to the taxpayers for money," he said.

## Scholarship Opportunity Announced

The East Hartford Garden Club has announced the availability of one \$1,000 scholarship to any full- or part-time student who is a resident of Andover, Bolton, Bloomfield, Coventry, East Hartford, East Windsor, Glastonbury, Manchester, Middletown, Vernon, Storrs or Windsor Locks.

The student must plan on majoring in horticulture, floriculture, landscape design, conservation, forestry, environmental concerns, botany and other allied subjects.

Applications with the submittal instructions are available at the guidance department of the attending school. All completed applications must be received by April 1 to be considered.

## Vacancy on Finance Board

The Town of Andover currently has a vacancy on the Board of Finance. Interested residents should send a letter of interest with their resume and/or qualifications to the town clerk, addressed to the chair of the Board of Finance, by Feb. 9. The town clerk's address is 17 School Rd.

## PZC Alternate Sought

Any Andover elector who is interested in serving as an alternate on the Planning & Zoning Commission should send a letter of interest to: Town of Andover, P&Z Alternate, 17 School Rd., Andover, CT 06232 or email one to town-clerk@andoverct.org.

## Commission, Committee Members Needed

Any Andover elector interested in serving on one of the following committees or commissions should send a letter of interest via email to townclerk@andoverct.org:

Capital Improvement Plan Committee, Economic Development Commission, Ethics Commission, Inland Wetlands Commission alternate, Ordinance Review Committee.

## Vendors, Bakers Needed

Vendors and bakers are needed for the annual senior luncheon fundraiser to be held Sunday, Feb. 4, from 9 a.m.-2 p.m., at Andover Elementary School, 35 School Rd.

For more information, contact Cathy at 860-916-6122 or nanasworld@comcast.net. All money received goes to supporting the senior luncheon program.

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### Andover Veterans Ceremony Update

Lt. Gov. Susan Bysiewicz will host a ceremony honoring local Korean War-era and Vietnam War-era veterans Monday, Jan. 22, at 4 p.m., in the Andover Elementary School multipurpose room. Invitations have been mailed, and people are beginning to reply.

This ceremony is to honor all veterans who served during the Korean War era, from June 27, 1950-Jan. 31, 1955, and the Vietnam War era, from Feb. 28, 1961-July 1, 1975. If you or one of your family members is in this category, please provide name, rank, branch of service, and years of service to the Andover Veterans representatives via email, at Veterans@andoverct.org, or by calling Susan Camoroda at 703-472-3209 or John Botti at 860-839-3481.

This ceremony is to honor and recognize all veterans who served during these two eras, no matter where they were stationed, or their duty status – active or reserve. This is because, at any time, a person in the reserves could be called to active duty. This has occurred over and over and over again for the past 23 years in the post-9/11 era.

To clarify, this recognition is not related to the tax-exempt status the state allows for active service during times of conflict. They are separate.

All attending are asked to RSVP so that the AES multipurpose room is set up to accommodate all. Contact Camoroda, Botti, or Town Clerk Carol Lee for more information.

### Senior Citizen News & Notes

The following items have been updated for Andover seniors, veterans, and disabled. If you want to attend any events, call senior coordinator Cathy Palazzi 860-916-6122 to register. Also call Palazzi for all luncheon reservations and transportation needs, including rides to medical appointments. For all Young at Heart events including movies, call Sue Schmidt at 860-604-1057, and call Town Clerk Carol Lee at 860-742-0188 ext. 2 for all trip information. For all senior events and information, visit the senior page of the town website, andoverct.org.

New senior transportation calls are now only heard from 9 a.m.-noon. If you call at any other time, leave your name, phone number, date, time and address of your appointment. A return call will be given within 24 hours.

### Library Friends Annual Appeal

Library Friends acting president Julie Victoria and membership chair Janice Bazzani announce the launch of the annual campaign in support of the Andover Public Library. They ask all community members, including the already lifetime members, now 70 in number, to consider joining, renewing and giving generously.

Established in 1989, the Library Friends provide ongoing financial support for regular, large print and audio books, DVDs, children and adult programming, a \$1,000 educational scholarship for an Andover high school senior, a free summer concert, subscriptions, equipment, supplies and facility enhancements beyond the library's current budget.

A donation is required to become a member of this 501(c)(3c) non-profit organization: \$3 for senior or student; \$5, individual; \$10, family; \$25, business; \$150, lifetime; and \$500, pa-

**Shopping Dates:** Willimantic – Tuesdays, Jan. 16 and 30; Manchester – Tuesday, Jan. 23.

**Senior Luncheons:** Fridays, Feb. 2 and 16, at noon, at the Town Hall community room; no walk-ins accepted.

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

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

tron. Donations of any amount are appreciated and can be mailed to: Andover Friends of the Library, P.O. Box 117, Andover, CT 06232.

Membership forms are emailed to current and former members and are also available by visiting the library at 355 Route 6, or by calling 860-742-7428. To access the form online, go to [tinyurl.com/y79tnv8j](http://tinyurl.com/y79tnv8j). Included on the form is a section to volunteer, from baking, gardening, book sales and tech support to serving on a committee or sharing a talent or hobby via a program. The Library Friends welcome ideas and suggestions by emailing [andoverfol@gmail.com](mailto:andoverfol@gmail.com)

Library hours are Monday through Thursday, 10 a.m.-7 p.m., and Saturday, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. For library news, updates and photos, visit [facebook.com/AndoverPublicLibrary.CT](http://facebook.com/AndoverPublicLibrary.CT) or [www.andoverconnecticut.org/library](http://www.andoverconnecticut.org/library).

### From the State Senator's Desk

Happy New Year! As we enter 2024, I want to share with you some promising information regarding our state's finances. In the last half-decade or so, Connecticut has taken great strides in improving the quality and long-term value of its budget, with significant effort toward setting the state up for continued success for years to come.

In 2017 and 2018, state officials developed guiderails that encourage a focus on fiscal responsibility. Since then, the state has taken meaningful steps to pay down its debts, with nearly \$8 billion of outstanding pension debt paid down. That doesn't just mean the state is meeting its obligations on payments, but by making additional ones, it is freeing up hundreds of millions of dollars in the state budget every year due to reduced interest. State Comptroller Sean Scanlon recently announced that due to more than \$1 billion in payments made in the fall of 2023, Connecticut's payment obligations in the next fiscal year will be reduced by \$87.5 million. That's great progress!

Comptroller Scanlon went further in the state's recent economic outlooks. As Connecticut is months into the current fiscal year, it is headed toward budget surpluses for the sixth straight year, according to Scanlon. As of November, the state's General Fund is projected to have a surplus of about \$154 million at the end of the fiscal year, with the Special Transportation Fund also expected to have a surplus of \$208.4 million. While these figures are not as high as seen in recent years, indicative of changes in the economy, they also indicate that Connecticut is well positioned to continue its strong position if any headwinds appear.

Additionally, according to the Comptroller, Connecticut has now reached an achievement it hasn't seen since 2008. For the first time in 15 years, Connecticut's pension actuarial valuation shows that the pension fund is now funded to 52%. While that may not seem like a great statistic at face value, it is proof of hard work paying off – from 2016 to 2024, the number has grown 17%, proving that the state remains focused on keeping its financial house in order.

As a new legislative session will begin in February, my colleagues and I will remain focused on the important needs of our state and its communities. We'll be able to do so a little easier knowing that we are on the right fiscal track.

**State Sen. MD Rahman  
D-Fourth District**

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

### Congregational Church News

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

**Children's Church:** Sunday school is pro-

vided.

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

**AA Meetings:** Saturdays and Mondays, 7 p.m.  
**Sonshine Stamps:** Thursdays, 9:30 a.m.

### Historical Society Annual Meeting

The Andover Historical Society will hold its annual meeting Tuesday, Jan. 23, at 7 p.m., in the community room of the Town Office Building.

Election of officers will be held at this time, as well as discussions about activities for the coming year and the setting of a schedule for museum openings.

All are invited and encouraged to attend.

### Andover Veterans to Meet

The next Andover Veterans meeting will be Saturday, Jan. 20, from 1-3 p.m., in the Town Hall Community Room. There will be discussion on plans and ideas for future meetings to make them more interesting and worthwhile for folks to attend. There will also be a discussion on the upcoming state veterans recognition ceremony scheduled for Jan. 22.

For more information, email Veterans@andoverct.org or call Susan Camoroda at 703-472-3209.

### Bingo & Baskets

Andover Congregational Church, located at 359 Route 6, will hold a Bingo & Baskets night on Friday, Jan. 26 (snow date: Feb. 2), starting with dinner at 5:30 p.m. The game starts at 6:30 p.m.

Admission is \$12 and includes dinner, drink, dessert and bingo. No reservations required.

Leave a message at the church at 860-742-7696 for more information.

### School Budget Workshops

The Andover Board of Education will hold the following workshops on the 2024-25 budget:

Jan. 17: Special education, general supplies, Pre-K; Jan. 24: Salaries & Benefits, Insurance; Jan. 31: Facilities and Maintenance; Feb. 7: Public question and answer session.

All workshops will take place Wednesdays at 7 p.m. over Zoom. The Meeting ID is 872 2061 0398, and the passcode is 200920.

### Fundraiser for Lake Improvements

Andover Lake Property Owners Association (ALPOA) will hold a fundraiser for Andover Lake for improvements to the lake for 2024. The fundraiser will be a Comedy Night with Dinner Saturday, Jan. 20, at 6 p.m., at Andover Pizza.

Cost is \$35. Tickets available at [AndoverLakeCT.com](http://AndoverLakeCT.com).

### Kindergarten Registration

Andover Elementary School is registering kindergarten students for the 2024-25 school year. Andover's kindergarten program is full-day.

Parents of children who will be age 5 on or before Sept. 1, 2024, are asked to contact the school office at 860-742-7339 to obtain a registration packet or access it at [www.andoverelementaryct.org](http://www.andoverelementaryct.org).

Parents choosing to have their child attend an alternative kindergarten or not attend school until the following year, and parents who will be home-schooling, are asked to inform the school of this decision.

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# Council Moves Ahead with Environmental Evaluation

By London Brazal

The Environmental Protection Agency estimates that there are over 400,000 brownfield sites in the United States and East Hampton is no stranger to abandoned land caused by pollution from industrial use. For the past 20 years, the Brownfields Redevelopment Agency, originally the Brownfield Revitalization Steering Committee, has been evaluating the unutilized sites to draft future usage.

In a study published in 2015 by engineering firm Fuss & O'Neill, 23 properties within the Village Center were identified as potential brownfield sites. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) described these sites as properties that are difficult to expand, redevelop or use again because of the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant or contaminant.

In November, the council accepted the DECD Office of Brownfield Remediation and Development grant. The town's Brownfield Redevelopment Agency applied for a grant of \$200,000 to remediate 13 Summit St. and 1 Watrous St. as well as the vacant parcels at 13 Watrous St. and 3 Walnut Ave. The funding helps the agency cover environmental evaluations for future determination of demolition or other uses. Following this motion, the Brownfields Redevelopment

Agency conducted interviews with four firms for environmental site assessments, remedial action plans and site reuse assessments. One firm had the best qualifications and was presented to the Town Council.

At the Town Council meeting on Tuesday, the members were asked to consider the recommendation of approving VHB of Watertown, Mass., for environmental evaluation services. The motion passed unanimously. This grants the company to work with the Brownfields Redevelopment Agency and town staff to develop a scope of services and a cost proposal for the first phase of the work for the four properties noted prior. The proposal would return to the council for approval.

The town has received the state Department of Economic Community Development grant and a grant from the EPA amounting to \$700,000. The funds are meant to cover three phases of environmental assessments, hazardous building material assessments, remediation planning, and reuse planning for each of the four properties. The other purpose of the grants is to assist with the projects to make a significant economic impact on the respective communities in the future.

Councilman Jordan Werme suggested an open line of communication with the town's

Clean Energy Task Force because there is potential for solar money. Councilman Jack Solomon echoed that statement, he said that the state has a financial advantage for using solar on the brownfield sites.

## Redevelopment History

Since its creation in November 2003, the Brownfields Redevelopment Agency has made significant changes over the years.

At 103 Main St., the land was historically known as the site of the Gong Bell Manufacturing Company.

With the support of EPA brownfields funding, an assessment was conducted and pinpointed four potential areas of concern on the property. In 2011, efforts to clean up the site involved tearing down the remaining structure, leveling the ground, moving contaminated soil to another location on the site and placing a barrier to prevent substances from passing through beneath a layer of clean fill material. The area was later paved and transformed into a public parking lot next to the town library and

the senior center.

Another significant change was the former Metal Allied Finishing building at 10 Summit St. In 2012, the land was sold and redesigned for commercial use. It now operates office space with a couple of apartments on the upper level. Along the same level, the old Bell Town Cleaners and Laundry at 97 Main St. remained vacant and in disrepair for several years. In 2014, the building underwent extensive renovation and has been in operation as Po's Rice & Spice, a popular Thai/Chinese restaurant, ever since.

Over time, the Agency has been working to enhance the work of East Hampton's Economic Development Commission, Planning & Zoning Commission and other land use boards. Its goal is to offer residents and business owners a complete vision for redevelopment in the Village Center and remediate the contaminated sites.

The next Brownfields Redevelopment Agency meeting is on Monday, Jan. 22, at 6:30 p.m. at Town Hall.

## Senior Center News & Notes

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

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

**Weekly Activities:** **Quilting Group:** Mondays, 9 a.m.; **Mexican Train Dominoes:** Mondays, 9:30 a.m.; **Setback:** Mondays and Thursdays, 1-3 p.m.; **Bible Study:** Tuesdays, 1 p.m.; **Bingo:** Tuesdays, 1-3 p.m., in person and via Zoom; **Yoga with Kitch:** Wednesdays through Feb. 21, 1 p.m. (started Dec. 27; fee is \$20); **Cross-Stitch & Embroidery with Shannon:** Wednesdays, 1:30 p.m. -- Bring projects to share and work on together; **Tai Chi:** Thursdays, 10:30-11 a.m.; **Tap Dance:** Thursdays, 11:15 a.m. **Cribbage:** Fridays, 9:30-11 a.m. -- let the center know in advance if you plan to attend; **Mahjong:** Fridays, 10 a.m.-noon -- call also to put your name on a list if interested in learning how to play; **Textile Group:** Fridays, 1 p.m.

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

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

**Wonderfully Wicked Women's Group (WWW):** First and third Mondays of each month, at 10 a.m. This is an opportunity to meet others and share resources.

**Line Dancing by Video:** Begins Tuesday, Jan. 16, from 10 a.m.-noon.

**Stretch and Balance Classes:** Wednesdays and Fridays beginning Jan. 17, from 9:30-10:30 a.m.; classes continue for 10 weeks. Cost is \$50 for the session.

**Design and Create:** This craft session will take place Thursday, Jan. 18, at 1:30 p.m.

**Family Tree:** Friday, Jan. 19, 10:30 a.m. Ken Doney, East Hampton resident, will discuss the 'how to's of family tree research. Bring your own electronic device to start your journey.

**Blood Pressure Screenings:** Monday, Jan. 22, starting at 12:30 p.m., at the senior center.

**Makeup for Mature Women Forum:** Monday, Jan. 22, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Learn how to create your own unique makeup style with a professional makeup artist. Explore products and tools and participate in demonstrations. Cost is \$10. Bring your own makeup if possible.

**Chatham Health Chat:** Tuesday, Jan. 23, 10:30 a.m. The Chatham Health District will visit and provide a free informational discussion on eye health.

**Trips:** **Connecticut River Museum Train Show Exhibit:** Wednesday, Jan. 31, departing at 11 a.m. Lunch at Morina Restaurant in Haddam will be followed by a visit to the museum featuring a fully operational 30-foot train layout, "I Spy" scavenger hunts, a gift shop and more. Cost is \$14 and includes transportation.

**The Connecticut Flower Show:** Thursday, Feb. 22, at the Connecticut Convention Center, Hartford. Depart at 10 a.m. and return at 2 p.m. Cost is \$19 and includes transportation. Lunch is on your own at the event. Register in advance at the senior center.

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

## Police News

12/29/23: David Lafave, 19, of 78 Skinner St., was arrested and charged with reckless driving, failure to obey a stop sign, driving under to influence and driving without a license, East Hampton Police said.

1/1/24: Gordon Lafave, 21, of 1074 Portland Cobalt Rd., Portland, was issued a summons for failure to have proper tail lamps and driving a motor vehicle with a suspended license, police said.

From Jan. 1-7, officers responded to 15 medical calls, six motor vehicle accidents and six alarms, and made 17 traffic stops, police said.

## EHMS Volleyball Registration

East Hampton Middle School student/athletes in grades seven or eight who are interested in playing for the boys or girls volleyball teams can register at FamilyID.com. Athletes must have a physical within a 13-month period in order to participate.

Registration is limited to the first 60 girls. Deadline for registration is Monday, Jan. 28. For more information, call EHMS athletic director Michael Mercaldi at 860-463-6837.

## Local Real Estate Agent Honored

East Hampton resident Lynn Minnick, a real estate agent at Carl Guild & Associates, has been named the brokerage's Real Estate Agent of the Year for 2023.

Since joining Carl Guild & Associates, Minnick has consistently gone above and beyond to help her clients achieve their real estate goals. She is known for her extensive knowledge of the local market, attention to detail, and excellent customer service. She is also a valued mentor in the brokerage, helping new agents become successful in their careers.

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

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

"It's such an honor to be part of our brokerage," said Minnick. "Our brokerage has created this amazing culture of support, collabo-



**Carl Guild and Lynn Minnick** ration, and commitment to giving back to our local communities. It means so much to have received this award and be a part of this team."

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**Registration Is Now Open** for the Spring 2024 season for both our Recreational and Travel Leagues.

**Recreational Programs:** Pre-K 3-5 • Kindergarten • Juniors (1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade) • Seniors (3<sup>rd</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup> Grade)  
**Travel Programs:** U8 (Birth Year 2016) and up

**VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED** for both our Travel and Rec League teams -- please reach out if interested!

Registration deadline is March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024  
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# Shorthanded Bellringers Continue to Battle

By Josh Howard

Injuries and illness have not been kind to the boys basketball team at East Hampton High School this winter, but the Bellringers have persevered.

On Jan. 3, the Bellringers suffered a 70-43 home defeat at the hands of conference rival Cromwell, yet the final score only told part of the story.

East Hampton was without starter Jadin Sawyer (illness) and then lost all-conference guard Brady Lynch to an injury in the first quarter.

Following the loss, head coach John Antolini referred to his team as “young and emerging.”

“Every game we have improved up to this point,” added Antolini. “Turnovers will dictate how well we play every game and we had a couple too many turnovers tonight, but otherwise without the turnovers we hung with them for a bit. Cromwell played well and deserved to win, but honestly I am not upset with this one.”

Cromwell freshman Ben Symecka hit six three-pointers, leading all scorers with 20 points, and reigning Shoreline Conference (SLC) Player of the Year Victor Payne shined on both ends of the court as the visiting Panthers used an up-tempo approach to score 22 of the first 28 points.

But even without the services of Sawyer and Lynch – who account for 35 points per game on average – the Bellringers battled back to narrow the margin to 10 after scoring the final half dozen points of the opening quarter.

Austin Cuthbertson and Declan Russell led the surge in the first quarter, combining to score 10 of the team’s 12 points. Russell assumed the lead role in Lynch’s absence, scoring the final four points of the quarter on a baseline jumper in the closing minute and a layup to beat the buzzer.

Russell, a sophomore, finished the game with 12 points.

“[Declan] really stepped up when Brady went out,” noted Antolini. “He did a nice job leading the team and did a really amazing job overall.”

Freshman Bryson Milton led the team with 13 points, 10 coming in the second half.

Antolini said that Milton has the right combi-

nation of “size and ability.”

“As with any freshman he is learning the game and adapting to the game speed and finding his shots, but rebounding-wise he has been outstanding,” added Antolini, who is in his third year leading the program.

With no seniors in the starting lineup and a roster with only two seniors in general, Antolini is counting on group that is learning to play together on the fly.

The good news is that the experience the team is gaining now will pay dividends later in the season and beyond.

Forty of the team’s 43 points against Cromwell were scored by players slated to return next season.

“We got off to a little slow start and it took us a while to adjust, but the kids played their butts off,” noted Antolini. “Honestly there a lot of positives. We rebounded well at times and we penetrated well at times, just shots weren’t falling and that has been difficult for us all year at this point.”

Following the loss to Cromwell, the budding Bellringers rebounded with consecutive wins over North Branford and Hale Ray, improving to 4-5 overall.

On Jan. 5, they rallied to beat the Thunderbirds in North Branford. Playing without Lynch and down 13 points in the first half, Russell (18 points) led a comeback. Sawyer returned to the lineup, posting 11 points and nine rebounds.

Three nights later, the team returned to EHHS and beat Hale Ray 56-53 behind 19 points from Russell. Milton added 14 points and 11 rebounds.

The wins marked the second time this season that East Hampton has won back-to-back games, also defeating Valley Regional and Canton on consecutive nights (Dec. 19 and 20). Lynch combined for 44 points in the December wins.

Antolini said the key to a successful second half of the season will be the team’s ability to mesh, along with an added emphasis on rebounding.

“They are gaining some trust in each other,” Antolini said about his team. “We’re still learn-



East Hampton’s Declan Russell is defended by Cromwell’s Keanu Gomez during the Bellringers loss to the Panthers on Jan. 3. Russell, a sophomore, scored 12 points in the loss and then scored 37 points over the next two games, both wins.

ing where each person is going on court and they’re still learning their key spots and finding the right spots on floor, but it’s coming together.”

East Hampton next travels to Old Saybrook

tonight (Friday, Jan. 12) at 7 p.m. for the first of a pair of road games before returning to EHHS next Thursday, Jan. 18, at 5 p.m., for a border battle with Portland.

## Travel Author to Speak at Cabin Fever History Series

On Saturday, Jan. 13, at 11 a.m., author Stasha Healy will give a talk on her book *Secret Connecticut: A Guide to the Weird, Wonderful, and Obscure* at East Hampton Public Library, 105 Main St. The talk, which will be held in the community room, is part of the Cabin Fever History Series organized by the Chatham Historical Society and co-sponsored by the library.

Did you know that Connecticut has a Stonehenge, a safari park, and America’s smallest Native American reservation? Healy scoured the state and discovered 84 places and

stories that she collected in *Secret Connecticut*. In her illustrated in-person presentation, you’ll find out about the Connecticut resident who was technically president before George Washington, who inspired the character of Indiana Jones, and who flew before the Wright Brothers.

To register to attend the book-reading, call 860-267-6621 or register online at easthamptonpubliclibrary.org. For more information, contact Chatham Historical Society member Marty Podskoch at 860-267-2442 or podskoch@comcast.net.

## Dean’s List

Jillian V. Lockwood of East Hampton, a student in the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of New Haven, made the university’s fall 2023 Dean’s List.

Lockwood is working on a Bachelor of Arts degree in interdisciplinary studies with a concentration in graphic design and photography.

## Winter Harvest Farmers Market

There will be a Winter Harvest Farmers Market every Wednesday through March 27, from 5-8 p.m. each week, at Rule of 3 Brewing, 201 West High St.

There will be fresh local produce, dairy, eggs, and baked goods, all from a consistent lineup of local farmers and artisans. Check out the market’s Facebook and Instagram pages (@WinterHarvestMarket) for more information.

## Technology Tutoring Sessions

Middle Haddam Public Library, located at 2 Knowles Rd., Middle Haddam, will offer One-on-One Technology Tutoring Sessions with members of the East Hampton High School Interact Club on Tuesdays, Jan. 30, Feb. 13 and Feb. 27, from 3-6 p.m.

Sign up for your individual session in advance by calling or emailing the library and bring your cell phone or tablet to the session.

To register or request more information, email middlehaddamlibrary@gmail.com or call 860-267-9093.

## President’s List

Hannah Zimmitti of East Hampton made the fall 2023 President’s List at Southern New Hampshire University in Manchester, N.H.

## Bethlehem Lutheran Church News

Sunday services at Bethlehem Evangelical Lutheran Church, located at 1 East High St., are held Sundays at 10 a.m. Bible study precedes the services at 9 a.m., in the Church Hall. Church pastor is Jamie Stall-Ryan.

**Free Spaghetti Dinner:** Wednesday, Jan. 17, at 5 p.m., in the parish hall. All are welcome.



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## Spaghetti and Meatball Dinner

The Knights of Columbus St. John Paul II Council 6190 at St. Patrick Church will hold their semi-annual spaghetti and meatball dinner Friday, Jan. 26, from 4:30-7:30 p.m., at the church parish center, located at 47 West High St. In case of inclement weather, the dinner will be Friday, Feb. 2. Take-out and dine-in meals will be offered.

Meal prices are \$13 for adults and \$12 for seniors. Children 5 and under eat for free.

The meal will include a salad, bread, dessert, coffee and a punch drink. Canned soda and bottled water will be available for \$1. Proceeds will support local charitable programs. The Knights of Columbus will also collect non-perishable food items for the East Hampton Food Bank.

Contact Jim Radavich at 860-319-9288 or email [jradavich@yahoo.com](mailto:jradavich@yahoo.com) for additional information.

## Christ Episcopal Church News

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

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

**Sunday School:** Sunday School classes are in session. The Rev. Joanne Neel-Richard and Emi-

ly Vick lead the group, which meets at 9:55. New students welcome. Contact [neelrichard16@gmail.com](mailto:neelrichard16@gmail.com) for information/dates, as classes are sometimes rescheduled.

**Cobalt Lodge Service:** All are invited to attend the brief service at Cobalt Lodge immediately after church on Jan. 24.

**Bible Study:** Wednesdays at 6 p.m., via Zoom, led by the Rev. Bobette Reed Kahn. Contact her at [bobette@kahn.com](mailto:bobette@kahn.com) for further information.

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

## Capstone Grants Available for EHHS Students

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

The grants will help support the student's proposed Capstone project, a multifaceted assignment that serves as a culminating academic and intellectual experience for students. Cap-

stone projects may take a wide variety of forms including a long-term investigative project that culminates in a final product, presentation, or performance.

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

## 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](http://easthamptonpubliclibrary.org), or on Facebook at [facebook.com/EastHamptonLibrary](https://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, Jan. 15, for Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

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

**DIY Days: Grades K-8: Superhero Cape:** Saturday, Jan. 13, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Activities available while supplies last. No registration required.

**Nintendo Switch Game Play: Grades 1-5:** Saturday, Jan. 13, 2-3:30 p.m. Join us for free play on our Nintendo Switch. All skill levels welcome. This month, play *Super Smash Brothers Ultimate* (rated E 10+).

**Ready to Read Book Club:** Wednesday, Jan. 24, 4:30-5:30 p.m., for grades K-2. Share your favorite early reader books and play games to improve literacy skills. Registered participants

will receive a book to take home. This month's book is *Pizza and Taco: Who's the Best* by Stephen Shaskan.

**All About Art!:** Wednesday, Jan. 17, 10:30 a.m., for ages 18 months to 5 years. Explore process art with your child using a variety of different techniques and materials. Drop-ins and siblings welcome.

**Teen Programs: Exam Prep & Plan:** Tuesday, Jan. 16, 6 p.m., for grades 9-12. Find a quiet space to study alone or with friends. Snacks provided. Put together an exam survival kit to help you succeed.

**Dungeons & Dragons:** Wednesday, Jan. 17, 5:30-7:30 p.m., for grades 8-12. No previous playing experience required. The library will provide basic, fifth edition characters; all supplies included.

**Adult Programs: Book Club:** Tuesday, Jan. 16, 6:30 p.m. *Remarkably Bright Creatures* will be discussed. Copies are available for checkout at the circulation desk.

**Belltown Book Brunch:** Friday, Jan. 19, 11 a.m. Drop in for coffee or tea, a breakfast treat, and bookish banter. Get a sneak peek at new releases, find out what's popular, and chat about what everyone is reading.

**LibrarYoga with Amie Meacham:** Saturday, Jan. 20, 10:15 a.m. This is an hour of gentle yoga for adults in the Community Room. All levels welcome; bring your own mat if you have one and wear comfortable clothes.

## Congregational Church News & Notes

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

Church school classes meet every Sunday. The Yarners meet every Thursday from 10:30 a.m.-noon in the Fellowship Hall. All knitters

and crocheters are welcome.

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

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

## Joint Worship for Congregational Churches

Second Congregational Church of Middle Haddam and Haddam Neck Congregational Church will hold joint worship services during January at 10:30 a.m. Sundays in Middle Haddam, at 52 Middle Haddam Rd., Middle Haddam. Coffee hour follows the services, in the church's Fellowship Hall.

On Jan. 14, guest preacher will be the Rev. John Shaw of Southbridge, Mass. Shaw has provided pulpit supply for local churches in the greater Massachusetts area and served as an intern for United Church of Christ and American Baptist churches. He holds a Bachelor of Science

degree in education and a master's degree in education, as well as a Master of Divinity degree.

On Jan. 21 and 28, guest preacher will be the Rev. Suzy Rivera of Farmington. Rivera has pastored with several churches in Texas and currently serves with the Friendship Service Center in New Britain, a nonprofit organization that provides services to people in poverty, centering on homelessness.

All are welcome. Visit [www.haddamneckcongregationalchurch.org](http://www.haddamneckcongregationalchurch.org) for more information.

## Dean's List

Tyler Seifert of East Hampton made the fall 2023 Dean's List at Southern New Hampshire University in Manchester, N.H.

## Teen Game Night at Epoch Arts

Epoch Arts is joining up with The Portal in Manchester and offering a teen game night Friday, Jan. 26, from 7-9:30 p.m., at Epoch, 27 Skinner St., East Hampton.

Teens in grades six and up are invited to come hang out, eat some food, listen to music and play some games. There will be a variety of board games plus *DDR*, and Bryan Raddatz from The Portal in Manchester will head up the night.

Admission is \$10. For more information, visit [www.epocharts.org](http://www.epocharts.org). And for more information on The Portal, visit [www.theportalct.com](http://www.theportalct.com).

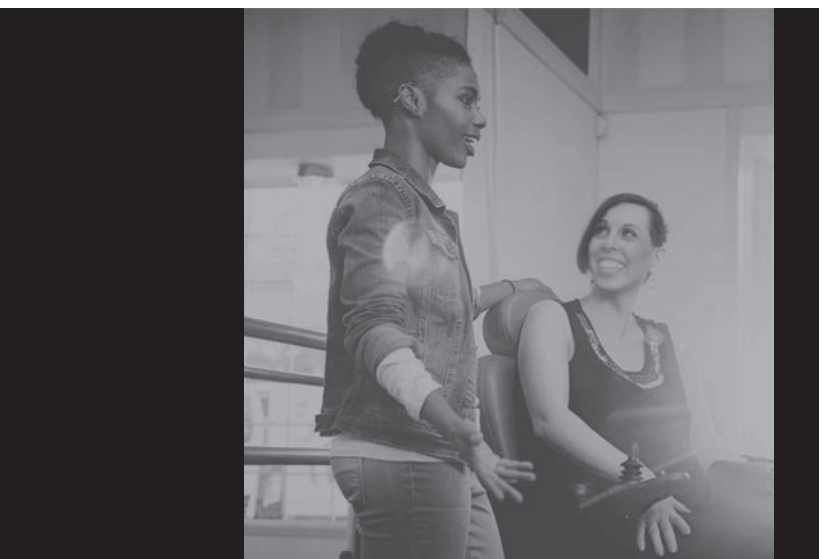
## Spring Soccer Registration

Registration is now open for the East Hampton Soccer Club's spring season, for both the Recreational and Travel Leagues. Visit [tinyurl.com/sxzyf5fn](http://tinyurl.com/sxzyf5fn) to register. Registration deadline is March 3.

Recreational Program offerings are: Pre-K (ages 3-5), Kindergarten, Juniors (grades one and two), Seniors (grades three-five).

The Travel Programs are U8 (Birth Year 2016) and up.

Volunteers are needed for Travel and Rec League teams. Contact the club if interested.



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

Together We Are Stronger.

**MS**

**National  
Multiple Sclerosis  
Society**

# Mid-Year Updates from the Public Schools

By London Brazal

After the long holiday season, schools start to approach the midway point of their year. At Monday's Board of Education meeting, local principals reported events and programs that they said showed success.

Memorial School Principal Joey Bauer explained the school's new program, the Memorial Cheetah Council led by Assistant Principal Andrea Montovani and Smart Start teacher Stacey Gibson. The council is dedicated to providing a voice for third-grade students and enhancing the school community. Students prepared and read speeches to their peers expressing why they were ready to take on leadership roles. Since November, the students have handled morning announcements and helped brainstorm upcoming events.

Earlier in the school year, the school collected over 300 pairs of socks and donated them to East Hampton Social Services for community members in need. This month, first-grade teachers launched a 100th day food drive. By the 100th day of school, currently set for Feb. 6, their goal is to collect 1,000 items to donate to people in need.

At Center School, Principal Chris Sullivan summarized many opportunities for the fourth and fifth graders. Students participating in the

annual Invention Convention recently turned in their "Intent to Invent" forms. The students meet with advisers in the coming weeks and the public can see the final presentations on Wednesday, Feb. 7, at the Center School Gymnasium.

Students are participating in the Scripps National Spelling Bee. The school final will be held at the end of January and the winner will go to the Connecticut finals hosted at the University of St Joseph in March. The school is also continuing its partnership with the Connecticut River Salmon Association. Last week, a few hundred salmon eggs were dropped off. Students began to chart the temperature of the Salmon River and match the rising temperature in the tank. By mid-April, the students release everything into the Salmon River.

Middle School Principal Christina Amaral shared about a youth leadership training hosted by the SAVE Promise Club, a program through the Sandy Hook Promise. Students at the middle school and high school worked to brainstorm activities that could be implemented in the future.

With half of the school year left, eighth-grade students start to prepare their capstone projects and work with the high school to connect about

the available courses and electives. For the capstone projects, this year's topics range from hands-on projects to outreach and educational ventures. Some examples include analyzing the impact of artificial intelligence in society, restoring and building a dump truck, training a dog and fundraising for a specific cause. Presentations will be held in May.

At the high school, Principal Eric Verner described how it was a busy time for students with midterm exams next week. The National Honors Society will be offering tutoring sessions to help fellow students. Counselors and student ambassadors met with the freshman class this week to offer study tips and good habits to prepare for a successful week. The high school guidance department remains busy as they work with eighth graders to review offerings and with the junior class as they begin their postsecondary planning.

**Superintendent Focus Group and Survey**  
The East Hampton Board of Education encourages involvement from both the school community and the wider public in the search process for a new superintendent of schools. Mary Broderick, a consultant working with the search committee, will conduct a survey and a

series of focus groups over the next few weeks in January. The objective is to assess the community's views regarding the qualities, experiences and characteristics they seek in a new superintendent. Students, teachers, administrators, staff, parents, town officials and community members are welcome to participate.

Feedback gathered from the research will be integrated into a leadership profile. This profile will serve as a guide for the East Hampton Search Committee in the selection of top-tier candidates who align most effectively with the requirements of the East Hampton Public Schools.

"We encourage the community to be a part of this important process and look forward to incorporating the results of their participation into the Search Committee's work," said Chairman of the Board of Education, Nancy Kohler.

Community members will be able to offer feedback during a Zoom meeting the board will hold Thursday, Jan. 18, at 6 p.m.; to join, use the meeting ID 4381110381. In addition, the anonymous survey will be available until Jan. 26 at [surveymonkey.com/r/EastHamptonSupt](https://surveymonkey.com/r/EastHamptonSupt). For more information or any questions, email [boardofed@easthamptonct.org](mailto:boardofed@easthamptonct.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](mailto:middlehaddamlibrary@gmail.com), visit [middlehaddamlibrary.com](http://middlehaddamlibrary.com) or call 860-267-9093. The library's P.O. Box number is 123.

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

**Fill a Bag Book Sale:** During January, bring a bag or take one of the library's and fill it with as many books and DVDs as you can, for \$1.

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

**Fiber Arts:** Thursdays, 10 a.m.-noon. Bring your spinning wheel, knitting, weaving, em-

broidery, etc. All are welcome.

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

**Introducing Pilates:** Thursdays at 6 p.m.; started Jan. 11. Cost is \$10 per class. To register, call 203-592-4448 or email [abstitt@sbc-global.net](mailto:abstitt@sbc-global.net).

**Introducing Yoga for Kids:** Fridays at 10 a.m. starting Jan. 12. Cost is \$12 for each child/caregiver pair. Children who are walking up through age 5 are welcome. Space is limited. Email [kmarshall0227@yahoo.com](mailto:kmarshall0227@yahoo.com) or call 860-638-9097 to register.

## 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. Communion will be served.

**Stewardship Dinner:** Saturday, Jan. 13, 5-7 p.m., in the Fellowship Hall.

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

**Children's Ministry:** For children in grades

K-5, held in Fellowship Hall during the worship service. The theme is "Friends with God." A toddler nursery is also available. All are welcome.

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

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

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



East Hampton Middle School and East Hampton High School last month hosted the SAVE Promise Club Youth Leadership Training.

## Belltown Students Learn SAVE Leadership

On Tuesday, Dec. 5, East Hampton Middle School and East Hampton High School hosted the SAVE Promise Club Youth Leadership Training.

It was a day in which the SAVE Promise Club staff members and students shared ideas and activities that each club has done over the last year. The schools in attendance gained knowledge of other schools' activities that are being implemented around the country.

In partnership with Sandy Hook Promise,

the SAVE Promise Clubs are youth-led organizations that encourage young people to take charge of keeping their friends, schools, and communities safe. The schools collaborated to share ideas and brainstormed new activities that could be implemented within their respective schools.

East Hampton Public Schools said they would also like to thank the East Hampton VFW for donating their room and supporting the efforts of the SAVE Promise Clubs.

## Be prepared, not scared.

Considering the number of disasters that have occurred in the past decade, chances are you'll experience some sort of emergency. Between school, sports and other activities, chances are you won't be with your kids when it happens.

Ready.gov/kids has the tools to make preparing easy and even fun, so your kids can feel...

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The annual Chill for Change will return Feb. 10 at Jobs Pond. Awards will be handed out that day for Best Team Theme. Pictured here are a previous year's winners of that award – the members of Team Nun-Brr One.

### 'Chill for Change' Coming Soon

All are invited to join Middlesex YMCA and Camp Ingersoll for the tenth Chill for Change on Saturday, Feb. 10, at Jobs Pond. At 1 p.m. that day, folks will take dip in the icy waters to raise money for scholarships for YMCA Camp Ingersoll.

The goal for this year is a record of \$35,000 raised, with over 70 jumpers. All funds raised go directly to supporting camp scholarships. Sign up and create a team at [campingersoll.org/chill-for-change](http://campingersoll.org/chill-for-change), and then ask friends, neighbors, co-workers and family members to either join your team or support your jump by donating online.

In the first nine years, the Chill for Change raised over \$130,000. Last year, YMCA Camp Ingersoll, along with the support of individual donors, jumpers (over 65 last year), community,

and sponsors Redi Rooter, Primesource, Butler Construction, raised over \$30,000, in the most successful Chill yet. Over 400 campers have been able to attend camp because of the funds raised at the Chill for Change.

Donate, register as a single jumper, or register a team at [CampIngersoll.org](http://CampIngersoll.org). All jumpers must preregister. Awards are given for Best Costume, Best Team Theme, and Biggest Piggy Bank (most funds raised). The individual who raises the most money will receive a certificate for a free session of camp. This certificate can be used for your own family, or gifted to anyone you know.

Contact Ben Silliman at [bsilliman@midymca.org](mailto:bsilliman@midymca.org) or 860-342-2267, or search 'YMCA Camp Ingersoll' on Facebook.

### Preschool Open House

Sunny Hill Preschool is holding an Open House for prospective parents and students from 4:30-6 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 17 (snow date Jan. 24). The preschool is located in the Educational Wing of Zion Lutheran Church at 183 William St.

Bobbi Teva is the director and head teacher of the program. She has more than 25 years of experience in early childhood education,

having worked in a variety of programs before coming to Portland.

Attendees at the open house will be able to meet Teva and the teachers, as well as tour the facility.

For more information or to RSVP, email Teva at [sunnyhillpreschool.ct@gmail.com](mailto:sunnyhillpreschool.ct@gmail.com) or call 860-342-2860 ext. 12.

### The Lives of Quarry Workers in the 1800's

Portland resident Mary Dickerson will present a program, "The Irish and the Portland Brownstone Quarries: 3 Stories," at the Portland Historical Society's annual meeting on Sunday, Jan. 28, at 7 p.m., at the Waverly Senior Center, 7 Waverly Ave.

Dickerson plans to follow the lives of three of her descendants — her great-great-grandfather, Hugh McManus, her great-grandfather Richard Dillon, and her great-great-uncle John Dillon; each is an Irishman, but each has a different experience and assimilation into life in Connecticut.

Dickerson has gathered a collection of quarry memorabilia, photographs of their homes in

Ireland, England and Scotland as they made their journey here, and personal possessions that have been passed down that portray their lives and the differences in their wealth and status in the community. At the conclusion of her presentation, there will be time for questions and answers.

After a brief meeting when the society's 2024 Executive Board will be elected, the program will begin. Refreshments will be served. The program, an effort to help community members gain an understanding of Portland's early history, is open to the public and free of charge.

### From the First Selectman's Desk

Dear Residents of Portland:

I trust this letter finds you and your family in good health as we embark on the new year of 2024. At Town Hall, we are diligently working on various projects, both new and ongoing. I am pleased to provide you with a brief update on our recent endeavors.

**School Facility Survey:** A heartfelt thank you to everyone who participated in the recent school facility survey. We received an overwhelming response, with over 1,000 residents sharing their valuable insights. This data will play a crucial role in shaping the long-term plan for our schools. The results of the survey will be presented by Great Blue Research at a Special joint meeting of the Board of Selectmen and Board of Education on Wednesday, Jan. 17, at 6:30 p.m., in the Buck-Foreman Community room, 265 Main St. The meeting will be accessible online via Zoom and streamed on YouTube. Please visit [portlandct.org](http://portlandct.org) for the links.

**Fire Chief Transition:** As of Jan. 1st, we bid farewell to Fire Chief Bob Shea, marking a transition in leadership for the Portland Fire Department. Congratulations to our new fire chief, Rob Puida, who brings over 14 years of dedicated service, including four years as deputy chief. I have full confidence that Chief Puida will excel in leading our fire department. A sincere thank you to outgoing Chief Bob Shea for his over two decades of service to the town.

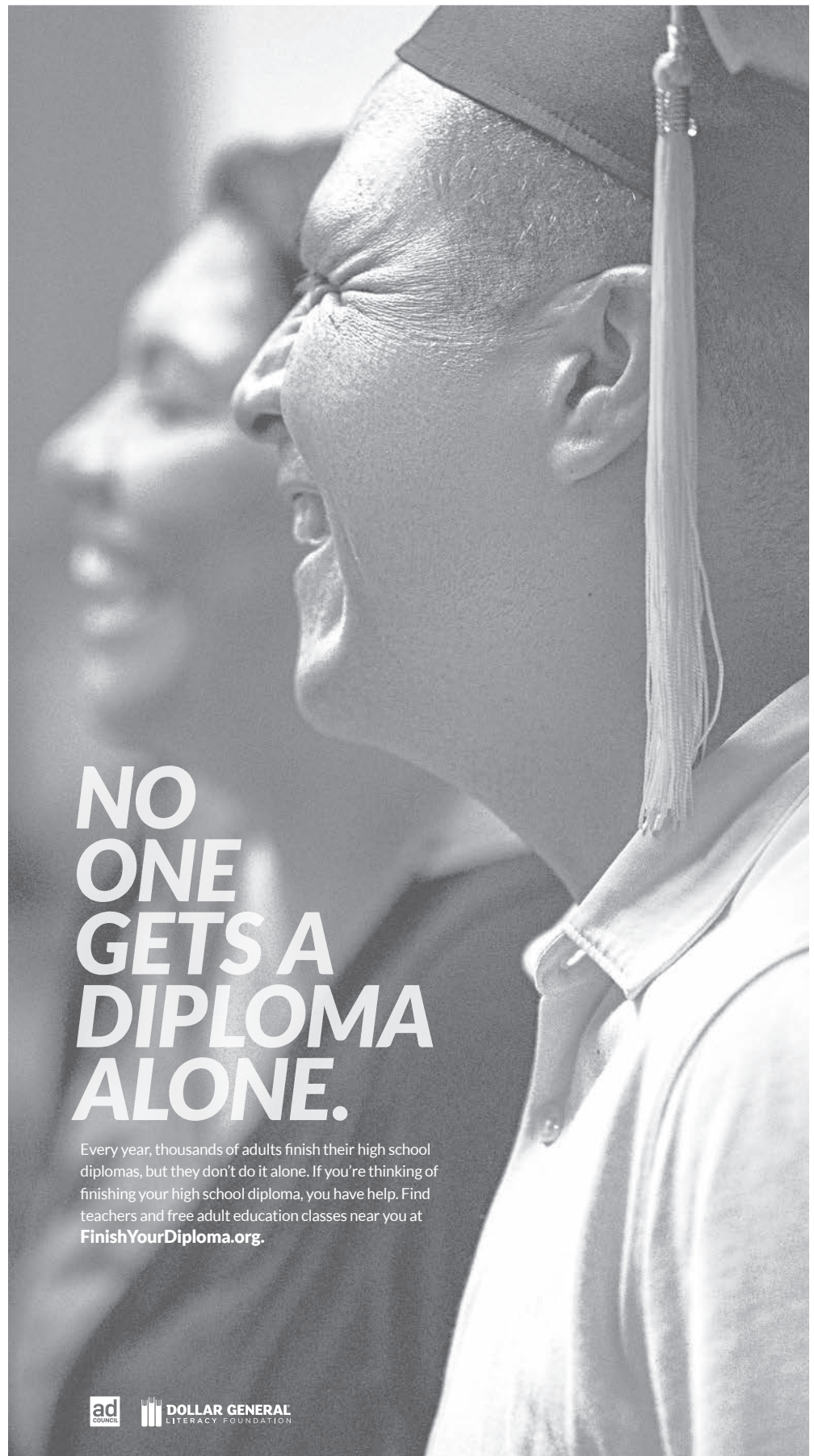
**Senior Center Bus:** Last week, we celebrated the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Town's brand new 12-seater, ADA-accessible bus. This acquisition was funded through the American Rescue Plan and will replace and aging part of our fleet that was well past its useful life cycle. Our new bus will greatly enhance the mobility of our seniors.

**Brownstone Avenue:** Progress continues on the remediation of our town-owned property along Brownstone Avenue. All areas of 284 Brownstone Ave. have been successfully remediated, and our contractor, ECR, is in the final stages of removing the remaining contaminants offsite. Later this spring, the town plans to issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) for private development of this parcel.

**Online GIS System:** We are excited to announce that Tighe & Bond has been awarded a contract to develop a new town-wide Geographic Information System (GIS). This system will empower residents to view parcel data in a more detailed and user-friendly manner. It is part of a trio of technology upgrades coming to the Land Use department, including full record digitization and online permitting.

Should you have any questions or comments, please feel free to reach out to me via email at [rcurley@portlandct.org](mailto:rcurley@portlandct.org) or by phone at 860-342-6715. Office hours can be scheduled by appointment or by stopping by Town Hall.

Sincerely yours,  
Ryan J. Curley  
Portland First Selectman



# NO ONE GETS A DIPLOMA ALONE.

Every year, thousands of adults finish their high school diplomas, but they don't do it alone. If you're thinking of finishing your high school diploma, you have help. Find teachers and free adult education classes near you at [FinishYourDiploma.org](http://FinishYourDiploma.org).

### Student Completes Research Project

At Worcester Polytechnic Institute in Worcester, Mass., all undergraduates are required to complete a research-driven, professional-level project that applies science and technology that addresses a societal need or issue.

Cassandra Zimmerman of Middle Haddam, a member of the Class of 2025 majoring in civil engineering and mechanical engineering, completed a project titled "Accessibility in Panama City, Panama."

### ADVERTISERS

The Glastonbury Citizen and Riverast News Bulletin will make every effort to see that all advertising copy is correctly printed. The publisher assumes no liability or financial responsibility for typographical errors in advertising, but will reprint, without charge, that part of an advertisement in which an error may occur, provided that a claim is made within 5 days of publication. The liability of the publisher on account of errors in or omissions from any advertisement will in no way exceed the amount of the charge for the space occupied by the item in error, and then only for the first incorrect insertion. Also, the publisher takes no responsibility for statements or claims made in any advertisement, and will upon request, reveal the name and address of the person or persons responsible for placing any display advertisement, political or otherwise, except for "blind" box ads. The Glastonbury Citizen Inc. reserves the right to reject advertisements which it deems unsuitable for its publications. Every effort will be made to verify the legitimacy and propriety of all ads for the protection of our readers. The Citizen will take requests for specific placement of ads and will try to accommodate everyone's requests. The Citizen cannot guarantee specific placement.

### Kindergarten Registration

Valley View School is holding Kindergarten Registration for the 2024-25 school year.

Parents/guardians whose children will be 5 years of age on or before Sept. 1, 2024, should contact Valley View School at [pgross@portlandct.us](mailto:pgross@portlandct.us) to indicate if you will be registering your child for kindergarten. Please provide your child's full name, date of birth, phone number and address.

Further information regarding kindergarten registration will be provided once you contact the school.

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# Local Bagpiper Participates in 135th Rose Parade

By London Brazal

A local bagpiper flew across the country to participate in the annual Tournament of Roses Parade on New Year's Day, with musicians from different countries.

Coreyanne Armstrong, 47, traveled to Pasadena, Calif., to march with the Pipes on Parade, in the 135th Rose Parade. The five-and-a-half-mile parade on Colorado Boulevard takes about two hours and thirty minutes to complete. Armstrong marched with the international ensemble with over 100 performers from Australia, Canada, Northern Ireland, Scotland and the United States. She was one of the youngest in the group of pipers. "It was such an amazing opportunity and everyone did so well," said Armstrong.

The ensemble was the largest massed pipe band to enter the Tournament of Roses Parade. The group consisted of bagpipers, highland-style drummers and drum majors dressed in full Scottish regalia. In addition, 16 highland dancers showcased the classic dances of Scotland.

Throughout the parade route, the band never stopped performing as the drums would continue with cadences between sets. Early in the procession, groups entered "TV Row" where giant cameras film the parade and stream across the United States. There, a man dressed in a classic white suit directs the bands to play for about 10 minutes straight. Armstrong is used to performing for long times as her gigs can last up to four hours. She has done carnivals and renaissance fairs but Armstrong said, "You're so exposed in the middle of the road, it was crazy. It didn't amount to other large performances I've done."

Armstrong flew out five days before the parade to start rehearsals with Pipes on Parade. In contrast to the school marching bands participating in the parade, this collaboration required remote and individual practice sessions for preparation. Armstrong said this was the largest challenge since they had little time to prepare. Pipes on Parade also performed at Bandfest at Pasadena City College on Dec. 30 and entertained thousands more at Disneyland on New Year's Eve.

Bandfest is an opportunity for the musical ensembles to perform in front of each other. Armstrong said a majority of the groups were university bands and were not familiar with pipers. She described her group's marching style as "distinctive" since the musicians will move towards the audience and the drummers will spin around.

The way Armstrong got involved with the ensemble was odd. She happened to be in Edinburgh, Scotland when a person took a photo of her and posted it in a Facebook group. A member of the Pipes on Parade saw the photo and reached out to ask if Armstrong was interested in performing. Though she missed some deadlines, she was able to join.

To Armstrong, participating was a bucket-list item, and was fortunate to have the opportunity to take part. However, since it was costly, she is content with doing it once and recommends anyone to do so. If she were asked, she would love to help more on the instructive side.

Armstrong was originally introduced to bagpipes when she was young. Her father joined a pipe band during college and would bring the

family to different events. "Instead of Disney on Ice we would go to Renaissance Fairs and listen to bagpipes," added Armstrong. Seventeen years ago, her father was visiting and said she should try to play. Now, Armstrong has traveled extensively and teaches solo students as a full-time bagpiper. She is a Grade 2 piper in the Eastern United States Pipe Band Association and helps lead the Talcott Mountain Highlanders in Simsbury.

This month, many of her gigs are for "Burns Suppers," a celebration of the life and poetry of the poet Robert Burns. The bagpiper will greet guests and pipe in the haggis, Scotland's national dish. Traditionally, a cook brings the food out on a large platter as the bagpiper leads the way to the host's table.

The end of February through March is an-

other busy time for Armstrong while celebrating St. Patrick's Day. A few gigs throughout the week turn into back-to-back performances. The bagpipes have brought on some unconventional shows like performing on a hot air balloon, on top of double-decker buses and even on a ski lift. She is fortunate to have her husband drive her to gigs so she can work on music in the car. Also, as a mom of eight, she gets a lot of help from her older children.

Armstrong invites people to check out her house concerts that she hosts regularly to promote Celtic music. Tomorrow, Jan. 13, Rats in the Attic will perform at the Jarvis House at 422 Main St. Twenty-dollar donations are accepted at the door but tickets should be reserved through Eventbrite. More information can be found on Facebook at Coreyanne.Armstrong.

## Senior Center News & Notes

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

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

**Next Week's Programs:** **Monday:** Center Closed for Martin Luther King Holiday; **Tuesday:** Bears on a Journey, 9:30-11 a.m., making fleece teddy bears for cancer patients - donations are sought of light fleece, one yard or more, for making bears (to donate, call 860-342-0809); Coupons for Troops, 1-4 p.m.; Setback, 1 p.m. **Wednesday:** Light Aerobics, 9:30-10:30 a.m.; SyncoCize Exercise, 10:30-11:30 a.m.; Social Duplicate Bridge, 12:30-4 p.m. on the second and fourth Wednesday, multipurpose room. **Thursday:** Stretch & Tone, 9:30 a.m.; Knit &

Stitch, 10 a.m.; Mahjong, 12:30 p.m.; Scrabble, 1 p.m. **Friday:** Light Aerobics, 9:30-10:30 a.m.

**UConn Nutritional Cooking Class:** Thursday, Jan. 18, 10:30 a.m. Seating limited; call Sarah or Alexis to register at 860-342-6761.

**Blood Pressure Clinics:** 10:30-11:30 a.m. on the first Monday of each month (note: if that day is a holiday, the clinic is the following week).

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

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

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

**Volunteer Drivers Sought for Meals-on-Wheels:** Meals would be delivered to the homebound Monday-Thursday. The delivery usually takes about an hour. For full details, call Alexis at 860-342-6761.

## KoC Free-Throw Tournament

The Portland Freestone Council 7 Knights of Columbus will hold its annual youth basketball free-throw event at the Brownstone Intermediate School (BIS) gymnasium, 314 Main St., on Friday, Jan. 26 at 7 p.m.

Town girls and boys age 9 through 14 are eligible to participate; registration forms will be provided for parents to fill out. Each participant

will get 15 free throw attempts from the foul line. Top finishers per gender and age group will receive medals. They will also be allowed to advance to state championship competition.

Those playing on travel teams or Parks & Recreation leagues are encouraged to attend. Chairperson John Bruni (860-342-0881) can be reached for more information.



**Attention Seniors & Loved Ones:**  
**Come for lunch... learn a bunch!**  
**Thursday, January 25<sup>th</sup>**  
**11:30AM - 1:00PM**



Come meet staff and residents of Arbors of Hop Brook, an Independent Retirement Community & Assisted Living. Listen to testimonials from old and new residents.

**SPACE IS LIMITED!**

Please RSVP by 1/22/24 to Mary at 860-533-2524.



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# ‘Last Man Standing,’ Portland Official to Retire After 50 Years

By London Brazal

Portland’s technology coordinator David Kuzminski is retiring, completing a distinguished career in town that spanned over five decades. In that time, his responsibilities shifted constantly and Kuzminski found himself busy with town and national programs.

His last day is Friday, Jan. 19.

Kuzminski started at Town Hall in the summer of 1974, originally with the highway department. Later on, the foreman of the water department asked him to do some part-time work. Throughout his high school and college years, water meters would be left on a bench and Kuzminski would rebuild them over the weekend. Interestingly enough, Kuzminski pursued a degree in music. He attended Berklee College of Music and graduated from the Hartford Conservatory.

After receiving his bachelor’s, Kuzminski landed a teaching job at the Loomis Chaffee School in Windsor. He continued to work 20 hours a week with the water department until the first selectman at the time gave him the option of, as Kuzminski recalled it, “full-time or no time.” With a child on the way, Kuzminski agreed to work full time, saying it would only be a “few years.”

When he first started, there were five people in the water department. “I’m the last man standing,” said Kuzminski in reflection. As the longest-tenured employee, he can be considered the town’s historian. Residents will ask questions and he can explain why past decisions were made. Going through many different administrative changes, Kuzminski described how he would miss the people the most when he retires.

In the water department, Kuzminski said he did all. He operated hoses, installed water meters and new systems, repaired leaks and much

more. He also became a Certified Distribution Operator and Cross Connection Inspector. He eventually became the town’s water conservation coordinator, and, 25 years ago, he transitioned to becoming the town’s technology coordinator. “It was by default,” Kuzminski described. “People would have technology questions and say, ‘Give it to Dave.’”

On a larger level, Kuzminski participated in several commissions and boards. He served on a national water committee under the Environmental Protection Agency with 12 people across the country. Each meeting was in a different geographical location and Kuzminski represented small municipalities. At the state level, he worked with the American Water Works Association (AWWA) as the chair of the Connecticut Section.

Among numerous accomplishments, Kuzminski is also a recipient of the George Warren Fuller Award presented by the AWWA. Awardees are selected for their “distinguished service to the water supply field in commemoration of the sound engineering skill, the brilliant diplomatic talent and the constructive leadership.”

The Town-Tech Program was developed by Kuzminski in 1991 as a partnership between Portland High School and the Town of Portland. It was designed to create an opportunity for students to engage in local government activities while working on projects that would contribute to cost savings for the town.

In 2009, Kuzminski also collaborated with the state Department of Public Health and Gateway Community College to develop a curriculum for a high school course titled Water and People. The class aimed at introducing seniors to potential career paths in the water sector. Recognizing the growing workforce shortages resulting from increased retirements, he found a need to offer students hands-on experi-

ence to stimulate their interest in water-related careers. The course was taught at Portland High School and Bloomfield High School. An expansion of that course is Water Boot Camp where students could learn and earn. Between 10 and 13 students would tour water departments and then express interest in a specific area. For two weeks, they would learn about the position and then work for another two weeks.

When describing some challenges, Kuzminski used the metaphor of the “grey tsunami” where older adults are starting to retire leaving industries with major gaps. “The average age for a water operator is 53,” stated Kuzminski. Much of his passion comes from sharing opportunities with younger people and creating work succession, which is described as the process of selecting and developing talent to ensure the continuity of critical roles.

### What’s Next

Kuzminski described his career as “go-go-go,” since he frequently had more than one job at a time. Slowing down is not quite in the cards and calls his retirement “a pivoting moment.”

During his career with Portland, Kuzminski also founded The ConnValley School of Music and Dance on Main St. which recently celebrated 40 years. There, he set up a podcast studio that people can rent and continues to give guitar lessons. In general, he is excited to devote more time to the school. Shortly after his last day, he will be flying to California to attend the NAMM Show, an annual event for music shop owners organized by the National Association of Music Merchants.

Furthermore, Kuzminski plans to take his podcast, *Careers You Didn’t Know About: The Future of the Water and Waste Water Industry*, on the road. For the last year and a half, he has interviewed people in the water industry to hear about their day-to-day responsibilities. By tak-



David Kuzminski

ing it national, he will have an opportunity to further promote the vast opportunities. The ultimate goal is to send episodes to high school guidance counselors since many students get involved in the industry by word of mouth.

In the next week, Kuzminski is checking off the final boxes on his to-do list. In his reflection, he lightly noted how it’s time for somebody else to take over. “Portland is such a supportive community,” described Kuzminski. “I want them to keep looking out for their own.”

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### PVFD Pancake Breakfast

The Portland Volunteer Fire Department invites everyone to an All-You-Can-Eat Pancake Breakfast Sunday, Jan. 14, from 7-11 a.m., at Engine Company No. 1, 7 Middlesex Ave., right behind the Post Office. (Note: the breakfast was scheduled for last Sunday but was postponed due to snow.)

The breakfast will feature sausage, all-you-can-eat pancakes (chocolate chip, regular, blueberry), and assorted beverages. Cost is \$8 for adults and \$4 for children.

PVFD will also have ceramic pancake coffee cups for sale, featuring the PVFD logo and a cartoon character squirting syrup on a stack of 'cakes. The mugs are \$20, and each time you return to one of the monthly breakfasts with the "clean" cup, PVFD will subtract one dollar from your breakfast total.

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

### Vocal Chords Seek Tenors, Basses

The Middlesex Hospital Vocal Chords, under the direction of Samuel Tucker and accompanied by a 10-piece orchestra directed by Alan Dougherty, is looking for men and women to enhance their growing tenor and bass sections.

There are no auditions and no experience necessary, and you do not have to be affiliated with Middlesex Health in order to join. Rehearsals begin Tuesday, Jan. 16, from 6:45-9 p.m., at St. Francis Church, Msgr. Fox Parish Hall, 10 Elm St., Middletown, for the upcoming spring concert, which will take place Saturday,

May 4, at Portland High School. New members will be accepted through Feb. 4.

Proceeds from the concerts and MHVC's annual patron drive are given back to the community in the form of scholarships given to Middlesex County high school seniors planning on majoring in nursing or music.

For more information, visit on the web at [vocalchords20.org](http://vocalchords20.org) or call 860-342-3120. The group can also be found on YouTube and Facebook.

### First Congregational Church News

The First Congregational Church of Portland, located at 554 Main St., will now celebrate the arrival of the Three Kings on Sunday, Jan. 14, with an Epiphany Star Celebration.

Epiphany is also known as the Twelfth Day of Christmas, and is a time of celebration and jubilation throughout the world. In many places, Epiphany begins a season of celebrations that culminates the day before Ash Wednesday, which marks the beginning of Lent.

Since the worship service for Jan. 7 was canceled due to inclement weather, the celebration will be held Jan. 14.

At First Church, Epiphany will be marked by a festive celebration when the congregation gathers for refreshments, music of the season, and the arrival of the Three Kings during coffee hour following the Sunday morning worship service. All are invited to attend worship at 10

a.m. and to stay for the Epiphany Star Celebration.

The Women's Fellowship is sponsoring a "Mardi Gras Fest" on Saturday, Feb. 3, from 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. The event will include authentic New Orleans food, music, a bake sale and candy booth. Valentine gift items, handmade photo cards, and a basket raffle featuring themed baskets filled with gifts and treats. In keeping with the mission focus this church is known for, a portion of the proceeds from the Mardi Gras Fest will be given to the Portland Fuel Bank.

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



Concert Coming... Tony Rome and his band The Excuses will kick off their 2024 World Happiness tour in Rome's hometown of Portland on Saturday, Feb. 17, at 2 p.m., at Concentric Brewing, 91 Main St. It is a free show, to benefit Portland Food Bank. Any donations can be sent to or dropped off at the food bank, 7 Waverly Ave. The band will perform two sets. Pictured are Rome, right, and guitarist Eddie Misenti from Los Angeles, Calif.

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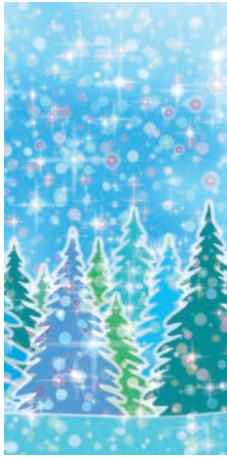
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## United Way Seeks Grant Applications

Middlesex United Way is currently seeking grant applications from new organizations to fund work in Middlesex County – including Portland and East Hampton – that falls within established “impact areas” of racial equity & inclusion, education, financial stability, housing, wellness, and youth development. Applicants must be a 501(c)(3) or have a fiscal sponsor that is a 501(c)(3). Funds are restricted for work serving the communities and constituents of Middlesex County. Middlesex United Way Community Impact Grant funds

cannot fund capital expenditures, scholarship programs, or any third party or contract. All grant funds must be spent on the intended purpose. Eligible organizations can apply for \$5,000 - \$30,000. Applications are reviewed and scored by volunteers and staff. Applications open Jan. 19. The last day to request an application review meeting is March 8, and the last day to submit a final application is March 29. To register or learn more, email Madison Baranoski, Director of Community Impact, at madison.baranoski@middlesexunitedway.org.

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Eggplant Rollatini Rolled eggplant stuffed with ricotta, prosciutto and roasted peppers  
Chicken Marsala Sautéed with mushrooms, shallots in a marsala wine sauce  
Balkan Meatballs Beef meatballs sautéed with scallions, roasted red peppers, grape tomatoes in a marsala cream 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

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## Christmas Tree Pick-Up

The town Department of Public Works is holding its annual Christmas Tree Pick-Up through Friday, Jan. 19. Residents may place their trees at the curb or edge of the road for pickup. Residents may also bring their trees to the transfer station on Sand Hill Road; permit required.

## Enhancing with Native Plants

On Wednesday, Jan. 24, at 7 p.m., at The Waverly Center, 7 Waverly Ave., the Portland River-Valley Garden Club will welcome Peter Picone, a DEEP wildlife biologist, who will present an educational program on ways to create and enhance wildlife habitat in your surroundings through the use of native plants. All are welcome to attend; light refreshments will be served.

## Parks and Rec. News & Notes

Portland Parks and Recreation offers a variety of programs for adults and children. For a complete list of programs, full course descriptions, or to register, visit portland.recdesk.com or call 860-342-6757. Advanced registration is required. Drop-In Basketball: Mondays (for women) and Tuesdays (for men), 7:30-9 p.m., through May, at Portland Middle School.


## Zion Lutheran Church News

Zion Lutheran Church, located at 183 William St., offers in-person worship Sundays at 9 a.m. Masks are optional. A recording of the service is posted to YouTube on Mondays by 9 a.m. Bulletins for the service are posted each week at zionlutheranportland.org. All are welcome to all worship services and special events. For more information or if in need of pastoral assistance, call 860-342-2860, email zion.lutheran@snet.net, or visit zionlutheranportland.org. Sara Stall-Ryan is pastor.

## Dean's List

Aaron Johnson of Portland made the fall 2023 Dean's List at Southern New Hampshire University in Manchester, N.H.

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Course 2  
Meiomi Pinot Noir PAIRED WITH Lobster Ravioli sautéed with sun-dried tomatoes, hot peppers & asparagus in a parmesan blush sauce

Course 3  
B.R. Cohn Cabernet PAIRED WITH 14oz Ribeye with parmesan risotto and grilled zucchini

Course 4  
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### Trinity Episcopal Church News

Trinity Episcopal Church, 345 Main St., holds Bible Study at 8:30 a.m. each Sunday, and services are held at 9:30 a.m. All are invited. Children, ages 4 to 12, are welcome to attend Church School.

On Fridays from 2-4 p.m., the church is open for prayer and meditation, and there is a gathering in the church office for Anglican prayer beading at the same time. No prior beading ex-

perience is required.

For more information, the church's calendar of events, to donate, or to listen to past sermons at [www.trinitychurchportlandct.org](http://www.trinitychurchportlandct.org). If you have prayer requests, email the church office at [trinitychurchportlandct@gmail.com](mailto:trinitychurchportlandct@gmail.com).

To make an appointment with the Rev. Darryl Burke, email [trinitychurchportlandct@gmail.com](mailto:trinitychurchportlandct@gmail.com) or call 860-342-0458.

### St. Mary Church News

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

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

**Weekday Mass:** Monday and Tuesday at 8

a.m., and Friday at 12:10 p.m.

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

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

**Bereavement Support Ministry:** Newly formed Bereavement Support Group every second Monday of the month. All are welcome. Next meeting is Monday, Jan. 8 at 6:30 p.m.

### Portland Library News & Notes

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

**Hours:** Monday through Thursday, 10 a.m.-8 p.m.; Friday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Masks are optional. **Holiday Closing:** The library will be closed Monday, Jan. 15, for Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

**Read and Recycle:** Saturday, Jan. 13, 10 a.m.-noon. Friends of the Portland Library will collect gently used, books, DVDs, CDs and puzzles. Donations help support library activities.

**All-Ages Winter Writing Challenge:** Cumulatively, if everyone writes at least 50,000 words, the library will have met its goal and one writer will get to pick a book to add to our collection. Decide on your personal word count goal for the month of January and register yourself online (or stop in to the library to pick up a tracking form), then stop in to share how far you've gotten or share your writing word count with us all month long.

**Winter Reading Challenge for Kids – Reading is Fun Any Way You Slice It:** Runs through Friday, March 1. This year's theme is Pizza. Visit the library and get a pizza tray to hang on our bulletin board. Each time you check out materials in January and February (up to once per day), you'll receive a slice to color and add it to your pizza. Once you've added eight slices and have a full pizza, you will have completed the challenge and will win a small prize.

**Youth Programs: LGBTQ+ Social and Support Groups:** Teens are invited to social meetings at the library on the first Wednesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. Support groups will meet on the third Wednesday of the month, with a parent and caregiver support group running concurrently in another room at the library. For more information, contact Jenn Renk at 860-342-6770.

**Let's Explore Italy:** Thursdays at 3:30 p.m., Jan. 18 and Feb. 1, 15, and 29, for grades 3-5. "Paint" the Sistine Chapel like Michelangelo, make mini pizzas, make "exploding" volcanoes and draw your own Mona Lisas.

**Turtle Power Teamwork!** Thursdays at 3:30 p.m., Jan. 11 and 25, and Feb. 8 and 22, Grades K-2): Get inspired by Raphael, Leonardo, Donatello and Michelangelo, and work together to complete challenges and earn a new colored bandana each week.

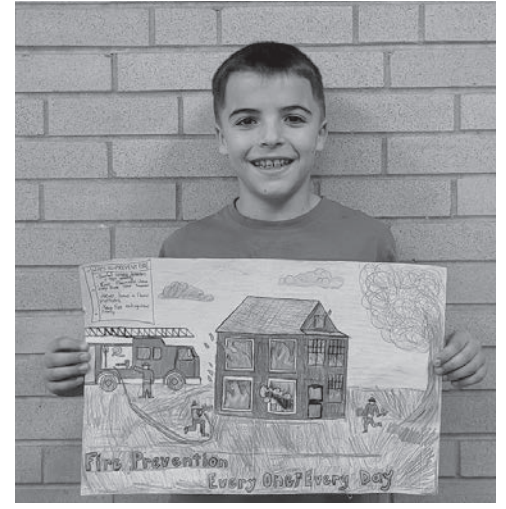
**Read to a Therapy Animal:** Lucy: Saturday, Jan. 13, 10:30 a.m.-noon. The library announces a new partnership with Middletown High School's animal ambassador program. Once a month, the library will have a therapy animal on-site to serve as a reading buddy. Kids between the ages of 6-12 can sign up for a 15-minute appointment. Reservations required and space is limited.

**Adult Programs: Art Exhibit:** Carol Ingram's

### Student Completes Research Project

At Worcester Polytechnic Institute in Worcester, Mass., all undergraduates are required to complete a research-driven, professional-level project that applies science and technology that addresses a societal need or issue.

Lucas Varano of Portland, a member of the Class of 2025 majoring in mechanical engineering, completed a project titled "Finding Purpose: Backpacking in Panama."



Fourth-grader Arlo Anzellotti, left, and fifth-grader Christian Quesnel are the local winners of the 2023-24 Fire Prevention Poster Contest.

### Fire Prevention Poster Contest Winners Named

Portland Fire Marshal Raymond Sajdak has announced Arlo Anzellotti and Christian Quesnel are the local winners of the 2023-24 Fire Prevention Poster Contest. This year's theme was "Fire Prevention – Everyone/Everyday."

Arlo is a fourth-grader at Gildersleeve School, and Christian is a fifth-grader at Brownstone Intermediate School. Arlo's teacher is Jennifer Martinez, and Christian's teacher is Elizabeth Baio. The art teacher is Patricia Allen.

Both Arlo and Christian will receive checks for \$75 and move on to the county level. Two county winners from each grade will then be chosen from this selection. The state winner's poster will be used to promote fire prevention throughout Connecticut and will be the Official State Poster.

All winning posters on the county level will be

exhibited at the state capitol during the month of October. The county winners will be awarded a \$150 check, and the state winner will receive a \$750 check. In addition, a matching grant will be awarded to the state winner's school in the amount of \$500.

The Connecticut Fire Prevention Poster Contest is a cooperative effort of the Office of State Fire Marshal, the Connecticut Fire Marshal's Association, Connecticut Fire Chief's Association, Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection, State Board of Education, and the Connecticut Fair Plan (representing the insurance industry).

Sajdak thanked all teachers for their assistance with the contest, as well as all fourth- and fifth-grade students for their participation.

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# TD Bank Robbed

By Michael Sinkewicz

Police are searching for a suspect who stole over \$7,000 from a Colchester bank last Friday, Jan. 5.

On Tuesday, First Selectman Bernie Dendler said there was not an update to share with the public regarding the case.

According to state police, at around 6 p.m., last Friday, troopers responded to a 911 call from TD Bank, located at 64 Norwich Ave — in the center of Colchester — for a reported bank robbery.

Police stated that the suspect was a light

skinned male in his 30's, approximately 6' tall and 225 pounds, wearing a black face covering, a black North Face hooded jacket, black jeans, and black and white sneakers.

The suspect demanded money from an employee and took off with over \$7,000, police stated.

The Eastern District Major Crime unit is overseeing the investigation. Anyone with information should contact Detective Patrick O'Brien at 860-896-3233 or Patrick.J.O'Brien@ct.gov.

## Ahavath Achim News

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

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

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

**Shabbat Schedule:** Friday at 6:30 p.m., live

and on Zoom – Shabbat; Saturday morning, 10 a.m., live and on Zoom – Shabbat service.

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

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

## Parks & Rec News & Notes

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

**Puzzlepalooza:** Fridays, Jan. 26, Feb. 23 and March 22, from 6-8 p.m., at Town Hall. Cost is \$25 per team. Register as a team or a single (you will be placed with others).

**Ukulele Lessons:** For ages 11 and up. You need your own ukulele. Mondays or Wednesdays, Jan. 22-Feb. 14, from 5:30-6:30 p.m. each week, online via Zoom. Fee: \$80/residents, \$85/non-residents.

**Men's Open Gym Basketball:** Tuesdays through March 26 (no basketball Feb. 20), at William J. Johnston Middle School. Must be 18 or older to play. Fee: \$75/session per resident, \$80/session per non-resident.

## Senior Center News & Notes

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

**Monday, Jan. 15:** Senior center closed for Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

**Tuesday, Jan. 16:** 9 a.m., Making Memories; 9:45 a.m., Tai Chi; 10:30 a.m., Book Club; 12:30 p.m., Pinochle; 1:30 p.m., Bingo.

**Wednesday, Jan. 17:** 9 a.m., Making Memories Program, Walking Group meetup at the Airline Trail in Amston; 10 a.m., Adult Coloring, Sit & Be Fit; 11 a.m., The Piano Bar Luncheon; 1:30 p.m., Line Dancing.

**Thursday, Jan. 18:** 9 a.m., Exercise w/Ann; 10 a.m., Sittercize, Wii Bowling; 11 a.m., Yoga; noon, Chair Massage; noon-3 p.m., Senior Benefits Counseling; 12:30 p.m., Dominoes; 1 p.m., Knit & Crochet.

**Friday, Jan. 19:** 10 a.m., Sit & Be Fit video, Card-Making; 10:15 a.m., Across the Ages; 10:30 a.m., Choral Group; 11 a.m., Yoga; 1 p.m., Tech Time with Harry; 1:30 p.m., Bingo; 2 p.m., Ham Radio.

**Potluck Pie Party:** Tuesday, Jan. 23, 11 a.m. Celebrate National Pie Day by sampling assorted pies. Sign up to make a pie and bring it in on

this day. Don't want to make a pie? Come and have pie for a cost of \$3/person.

**Cultivating Happiness in the New Year:** Wednesday, Jan. 24, 10:30 a.m. Look at what happiness is and ways you can build a happiness toolbox to bring more purpose and peace to your life. The program is free, but registration is required.

**Makeup for Mature Women:** Tuesday, Jan. 30, 9:30 a.m. Celebrity make-up artist and educator Joby Rogers will show people how to create a look that suits their personal features and skin tone and explore must-have products and tools for their own make-up collection. Rogers will evaluate your personal make-up products and answer any make-up questions you may have. Cost is \$15/person. Space is limited.

**Courageous Dissent:** Wednesday, Jan. 31, 1 p.m. Jan. 27, 2024, has been assigned by the United Nations as International Holocaust Remembrance Day. CSC member and author Kim Bingham will discuss his book *Courageous Dissent*. The book tells the story of Bingham's father, Hiram (Harry) Bingham IV, who during the early days of the Holocaust defied his government's restrictive immigration policies by running an underground railroad out of his villa in France. This is a free program, but registration is required.



## Fundraiser for Robotics Team

Bacon Academy's robotics team, Team 1699, is holding a collection drive fundraiser Saturday, Jan. 20, from 9 a.m.-1 p.m., at Bacon, 611 Norwich Ave.

Team 1699 is collecting gently-used housewares, textiles, small counter appliances and home goods. Items include:

Clothes: men's, women's and children's clothes, coats, shoes, scarves, handbags, wallets, fashion accessories, belts, backpacks, etc.

Household Textiles: bedding, comforters, blankets, sheets, towels, linen, tablecloths, curtains, pillows, etc.

Small Household Goods: kitchen items (such as pots/pans, dishes, silverware, glasses, serving

pieces and hand-held appliances), home decorative items, knick-knacks, toys, games, and small electronics

Books: paperback, hardcover – all genres; no encyclopedias or textbooks please.

Use bags for clothes and textiles and tightly pack boxes of small household goods. Separate books from household goods and media. All items must be clean and in sellable condition.

Collected items will be sold to Savers, and the robotics team will be paid directly.

The goal is to collect \$1,000 worth of items. For more information, email [team1699savers@gmail.com](mailto:team1699savers@gmail.com).

## 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](mailto:cfc06415@gmail.com).

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

**Sunday School:** Held during worship from

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

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

**Boy Scout Troop 72:** Meetings are held in the Stage Room every Monday at 7 p.m. from September through June.

## Christian Life Chapel News

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

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

**Women's Bible Study:** Tuesdays at 10 a.m.

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

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

## Dean's List

Logan Hubbard of Colchester made the fall 2023 Dean's List at Husson University in Bangor, Maine.

## CORE Commission to Honor MLK

The CORE Commission will celebrate the legacy of Martin Luther King Jr. with a community reading Saturday, Jan. 13, at 10 a.m., at Cragin Memorial Library, 8 Linwood Ave.

A variety of local leaders and residents will read and share their experiences on how they have applied King's teachings in their own lives. All are invited to attend.

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- Vote in national and local elections to ensure your elected officials share your vision of public safety.
- Donate to organizations, campaigns and initiatives who are committed to racial justice.



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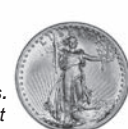


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# Finance Director Placed on Administrative Leave

By Michael Sinkewicz

Colchester Finance Director Mary Williamson has been placed on paid administrative leave until further notice, intensifying the uncertainty for a department already under significant stress.

First Selectman Bernie Dennler III confirmed the information this week with the *Rivereast*, but declined to elaborate on the circumstances that led to Williamson's absence.

In the official notice sent to Williamson on Dec. 28, Dennler stated that the town "learned of allegations regarding your conduct involving purchases made which circumvented the normal budgeting and purchase order process."

There were also "a number of allegations" relating to "deficiencies in the Finance Department."

"The Town treats matters of this nature very seriously," Dennler wrote.

Williamson will be relieved of her responsibilities while an administrative investigation is conducted, according to the town's notice.

While the timeline of the investigation is unclear, Williamson's removal represents a major disruption during a challenging and disorderly period for the Colchester Finance Department.

Accordingly, during its meeting last week on Jan. 4, the Board of Selectmen (BOS) unanimously approved the creation of a new deputy director of town finance. This week, Michelle Marceau, an accountant for Colchester Public Schools, was selected for the role, and will officially step up as the acting director of finance in Williamson's absence.

Marceau is also a former employee of the Town's combined municipal-Board of Education finance office before it was bifurcated in

2022.

During a phone call this week, Dennler said that Marceau brings "valuable experience" and "institutional knowledge" — something he said has been missing from the department.

"We don't have to keep reinventing the wheel," Dennler said.

Maggie Cosgrove, the town's former chief financial officer who retired in June 2022, was added to the finance department last summer as a consultant and continues to be on the payroll. Dennler did not comment on whether the town considered or approached Cosgrove about taking over as the active director.

At the BOS meeting, Dennler stressed the urgency behind devising a deputy director, not shying away from the reality that the individual would need to be hired immediately and would promptly begin leading the department.

"It's possible in the future, they may end up the finance director," he told the board, but emphasized that currently that position is not vacant. "We don't want to pre-judge outcomes in that area."

Details surrounding the finance director's leave of absence remain limited. Dennler simply stated at the meeting that there was a "broader situation" that "cannot be discussed in public setting."

But he added that without an active director, the finance department was effectively "paralyzed" and unable to perform essential functions, including paying the town's bills.

Because the position is entirely new, the funding is not included in the current municipal budget. Still, Dennler reiterated the importance of acting quickly.

"I do not believe that we can solve the pickle that we're in if we do not do something on this front," he told the board.

The town recently completed a long overdue financial audit report for the 2021-2022 fiscal year — nearly a full calendar year after it was originally required. The 2022-23 audit was then due Dec. 31, but the town requested a six-month submission extension.

The finance department is under pressure to work within that window, as the state Office of Policy and Management (OPM) has warned the town it would likely be penalized.

"Failure to produce a timely submission for another year would constitute a 'second trigger' that could put Colchester on a path toward state oversight," Dennler wrote in a Facebook post last month, adding that OPM said their meeting with the town should be treated as a "red flag."

Dennler has asserted — prior to Williamson's leave of absence — that the audit will be submitted on time.

"I believe that six months is a reasonable amount of time to get this audit completed," he previously told the *Rivereast*. "I'm confident we'll deliver."

Beyond the audit report, Dennler announced last week that there were "serious discrepancies between [department head's] internal track-

ing of spending and the MUNIS reports made available to Board members each month."

Because of the "many unknowns" with the town's financial reporting, Dennler implemented a soft spending freeze, further complicating the town's situation.

With the new position, the BOS decided to amend the title from deputy finance director to deputy director of town finance; the position of finance director will also change to director of town finance. Selectman Rosemary Coyle explained during the meeting that while the finance director is a non-union position, it got convoluted because there was previously (before the departments were bifurcated) a position with the same title who reported to the chief financial officer.

Williamson, meanwhile, was unanimously appointed by the BOS in February 2022 to take over the role.

At the time, then-first selectman Andreas Bisbikos said she was "an intelligent and hardworking individual with over 16 years of experience overseeing projects in financial and accounting operations for financial markets, risk management, and corporate finance management."

Williamson has worked for the Texas Department of Health and Human Services as a regional financial services manager.

## Members Sought for Honor Guard

Members are sought for the Colchester Veterans Honor Guard.

The Honor Guard was established in 2004 in association with the Connecticut National Guard to provide military funeral honors for a veteran's families and friends. Since its formation, the Colchester unit has performed at more than 2,900 honors ceremonies. In 2023, they participated in over 225 military honors ceremonies.

The 20-member unit is actively looking for veterans to become members, so that it can continue to provide funeral honors to all deceased

veterans. The Colchester Honor Guard meets the first and third Tuesdays of every month from 7-8 p.m. in the Veterans Room of the Colchester Senior Center, 95 Norwich Ave. The next meeting is Jan. 16.

Most funeral honors are performed between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. Monday to Saturday. So if you're available to give a few hours during the week or weekends, you're invited to stop by one of the Tuesday meetings.

Contact Al Letendre at 860-917-9391 or letendrej@sbcglobal.net for more information.

## Provost's List

Cierra Caron of Colchester achieved a perfect 4.0 GPA during the fall 2023 semester, earning a spot on the Provost's List at Hofstra University in Hempstead, N.Y.

Caron's major is psychology.

## Dean's List

Chelsea Kranc of Colchester made the fall 2023 Dean's List at Simmons University in Boston.

Kranc is in the graduate program at Simmons, where she is studying for her master's degree in social work.

## Giving Garden Fundraiser

The Colchester Stop and Shop, located at 99 Linwood Ave., has chosen Colchester Giving Garden to be the recipient of its Community Bag Fundraiser for the month of January.

For each reusable bag purchased at the Colchester Stop and Shop this month, one dollar will be donated to the Giving Garden.

In just a few months, volunteers will begin planning the new growing season, and all are welcome to join in. The garden is an all-volunteer-run vegetable garden that donates all of its fresh produce to the food insecure

in the community and to area soup kitchens. This past season, the Giving Garden donated over 2,360 pounds of food.

In March, the Giving Garden will hold an information night at Cragin Memorial Library, to kick off its 12th growing season. The date will be announced here in the *Rivereast* and also on the garden's Facebook page. For more information or to be on the garden's email list, email colchestergivinggarden@gmail.com.



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### Historical Society 2024 Calendars

The Colchester Historical Society's 2024 calendars are now available.

The limited-edition pictorial calendar highlights notable individuals who left a legacy in Colchester. The people include a military hero, a foreign-born patriot, a photographer, a farmer, a groundbreaking woman, a professional umpire, two store owners, an industrialist, a lawyer and two doctors. All are connected to Colchester and contributed to the development of the town.

Calendars are \$12 each and are available at the Colchester History Museum on Sundays, 11 a.m.-1 p.m., through Jan. 21. For \$20, folks can purchase the calendar and a copy of *Historical Landmarks: A Historical Tour of Colchester*.

This book features 50 historic sites throughout Colchester, many within walking distance from the center of town. Also available are the books *Images of America: Colchester* and *The Men Connected to Colchester, Connecticut Who Served During the Civil War*.

Calendars can also be found at Nathan Liv'erant and Son Antiques at 168 South Main St.; hours are Monday-Saturday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Calendars and any of the books can also be mailed for an additional shipping fee. Contact the Colchester Historical Society at: mail@colchesterhistory.org, or call 860 537-4230 to make a purchase. Calendars and books can also be purchased at [www.colchesterhistory.org/get-involved/shop-1](http://www.colchesterhistory.org/get-involved/shop-1).

### Abundant Life Church News & Notes

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

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

service is also broadcast live each week on Facebook. Visit [www.facebook.com/groups/abundantlifeCT](http://www.facebook.com/groups/abundantlifeCT) or look for the church on Facebook. For more information, call the church.

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

### Ukrainian Catholic Church News

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

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

### President's List

Trinity Georgens of Colchester made the fall 2023 President's List at Husson University in Bangor, Maine.

### Dean's List

Kaitlyn Mylly of Colchester made the fall 2023 Dean's List at Southern New Hampshire University in Manchester, N.H.

### President's List

Samantha Kinsey of Colchester made the fall 2023 President's List at Southern New Hampshire University in Manchester, N.H.

### Lions' Breakfast Buffet is Back

The Colchester Lions will hold a Breakfast Buffet at the St. Joseph's Polish Society, 395 S. Main St., on Sunday, Feb. 25, from 7:30-11:30 a.m.

This is a full breakfast with eggs, bacon, sausage, toast, home fries and pancakes, with juice, coffee, tea and water. Prices in advance are \$9 for adults, \$7 for seniors, \$6 for ages 5-12, and free for children 4 and under. At the door, tickets are \$10 for adults, \$8 for seniors, \$6 for ages 5-12, and free for children 4 and under.

Tickets may be purchased in advance at Dime Bank in Colchester, or call 860-537-1093 and leave a message for Julie.

### Troop 72 Recycling Project

Boy Scout 72 is continuing to accept recyclable containers from local residents. Containers can be dropped off on the lefthand side of the pavilion at the St. Joseph's Polish Club, 395 South Main St. Email [letendrej@sbcglobal.net](mailto:letendrej@sbcglobal.net) or text or call 860-917-8391 if you wish to schedule a pick-up.

Donations will help scouts go to summer camp and enjoy other outdoor activities that they might otherwise have to miss due to a family's ability to afford the costs.

### 50 Years of Bacon Wrestling

2023-24 is Bacon Academy Wrestling's 50th varsity season. All are invited to the following events:

Wednesday, Jan. 24: Senior Night. Prior to the meet, the seniors on the team will be honored. Wrestling starts at 6 p.m., but pre-meet activities will start around 5:15 p.m.

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

### Lions' Annual Appeal

The Colchester Lions Club wants to thank the residents and businesses of Colchester who contributed to its 2023 Annual Appeal letter campaign.

The money raised from the campaign will be distributed throughout the Colchester community in the form of scholarships to graduating seniors, grants at the Lions' annual Community Night of Giving, as well as through direct service projects this winter and spring.

If anyone would like to still contribute, mail your donation to Colchester Lions Charities, Inc., Attn: Annual Appeal, P.O. Box 423, Colchester, CT 06415.

### Westchester Church News

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

Sunday School for children meets during the worship service.

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

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

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★ *Snowplow Ride-Along cont. from page 1*

plauded the duo's efforts and thanked the Public Works crews for their diligent work.

With the storm falling on a weekend, perhaps more individuals were able to see the video in real-time; the videos are also still posted on the town's page ([www.facebook.com/townofandoverct](http://www.facebook.com/townofandoverct)) for anyone who wants to see them. Utilizing social media is a calculated decision to help bring more awareness to town functions and spotlight its services.

"I'm always pushing for our town to be transparent," King said. "Let's make sure we're using all the tools we have."

The stream wasn't without incident; a few dead-zones briefly interrupted the proceedings. But they didn't impact the overall experience, and, ultimately, hundreds of viewers tuned in.

"I really enjoyed it," King expressed. "I love talking to residents and employees. It's definitely fun."

It wasn't just informative; there was comic relief.

"I dropped my camera, sorry guys!" she exclaimed at one point.

King joked afterwards that moments like that are expected during live events.

"There's no editing; it's the first cut."

Town Administrator Eric Anderson endorsed the idea as well, stating that the livestream represented a valuable opportunity to clarify any questions or misconceptions regarding snow removal.

"Anything you can do to help the public with why, it really does help," he said.

Zito provided numerous helpful hints, or straightforward warnings to residents. For example, if you're driving during a storm, please remember to turn your headlights on.

Or perhaps even better, don't travel at all.

"I can get around a lot quicker without you in my way," he said.

While some people enjoy a snow-filled walk, maybe it's best to test out the treadmill during the middle of a storm, Zito expressed. If you do have to walk your dog, take the proper safety precautions.

"Put a vest on and bring a flashlight," he said. Vests are also available at Town Hall.

Zito added that if you're walking, don't try to hide behind a tree; you're still going to get pummeled with snow and it's safer if the driver can actually see you at all time. The driver, for their part, will make an effort to slow down and go around you.

Beyond the roads, the crews are also responsible for clearing the school parking lot and other public locations. They typically take turns shoveling and snow-blowing sidewalks too.

Riding in the truck undoubtedly proved to be a worthwhile endeavor for King, who said she learned a lot from her gig. She got a firsthand passenger view of the limited visibility drivers have during a storm; the snowfall picked up significantly during their livestream. And when the snow starts coming up over the hood of the truck, it becomes even more difficult to see even close distances.

Zito provided interesting insight into how the crews handle certain types of road features. With a cul de sac, the driver will open up the road, giving cars a path to travel, but won't clear the entire section until a later pass.

King generated her own questions throughout the livestream, but was relieved of any serious pressure because residents would type out their own comments to keep the conversation lively. There was seemingly never a dull moment, and King said she'd be interested in doing a similar type of broadcast in the future, or one that highlights a different aspect of the Public Works Department.

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★ *Budget Freeze cont. from page 1*

correct accounts."

The extent of the accounting errors is currently unknown.

"The reports you've been getting," Dennler told the board members, "don't paint an accurate picture for your decision making. I'm not saying that we are in an apocalyptic budget situation; I'm telling you I genuinely don't know where we are based on what data I have as first selectman."

Mike Egan, a Democrat on the finance board, highlighted the "unusual situation" the town was currently experiencing over six months into the fiscal year.

"We have no faith, really, in the numbers in front of us," he said. "We haven't had decent reports, as far as expenditures, and the reports that we have are all over the place."

The existence of inaccurate data doesn't necessarily mean that current year spending is exceeding its taxpayer approved budget. Dennler indicated that once the discrepancies are internally fixed, it could be a "wash," and departments that are currently projected to end up over-budget may be offset by those that have surpluses.

But because officials are given a "false sense" of the numbers, and cannot confidently rely on reports, straightening out the issue is Dennler's "number one goal."

What also remains unclear from the joint-meeting is how the MUNIS reports became inaccurate and why major discrepancies exist.

"I'm not going to speculate," Dennler said during his interview. "It's not a time to point fingers and my focus is not on casting blame."

He added that there is "no reason to believe there was anything malicious."

#### Budget Concerns

Combined with the overarching concerns regarding financial reporting is a fear that 2023-24 fiscal year spending will go over budget.

Each department head provided a detailed update to the boards during the joint-meeting, offering perhaps the most accurate perspective on the financial state of the town.

While some departments reported small overages, others revealed significant unexpected expenditures.

"Legal expenses are a place where we're hurting right now," Dennler said, referring to several ongoing town lawsuits.

The finance department will be over budget, resulting from two temporary Robert Half employees hired to assist with completing the 2021-22 fiscal year audit report, and the reten-

tion of Cosgrove on the payroll — all expenses that were not budgeted.

For Public Works, the town facilities budget will likely exceed its outline due to issues with buildings such as the local Youth Center, which underwent several repairs, including unforeseen renovations to remove mold.

There may be savings resulting from six Public Works position vacancies. Dennler expressed that staffing turnover throughout the town may cover some of the overages throughout the overall budget.

"However, without accurate financial reporting, it is difficult to say at this point where the town's spending year-to-date truly lies and even harder to project where things will land when the fiscal year ends," he wrote on Facebook.

Karen Belding, a Democrat on the Board of Finance, asserted that several departments appeared to be underfunded.

"What was budgeted this year was never going to cover what that line was going to cost," she said. "And that's a concern. We can't chronically underbudget line items and think that we've passed a successful budget."

The joint meeting underscored the challenges the Board of Finance will face with overseeing the budget process in the upcoming months.

Democrat Scott Chapman, chairman of the finance board, told the *RiverEast* that the town's goal is to conduct budget workshops in a timely manner in order to have both the school and municipal budget plans passed at referendum before July 1 — the start of the next fiscal year.

While Chapman indicated that resolving the issues in the finance department is the responsibility of the first selectman, his board "must keep a close eye" on the situation and ensure that budget information distributed to the public is accurate.

"We need to proceed with extreme caution," he said.

When asked about entering into a budget season without accurate financial reports, Dennler said it "definitely makes things more challenging."

He added, "We have a strong set of department heads who know their budgets."

The Board of Finance was expected to meet again on Wednesday evening, after press time.

Last week's joint meeting of the selectmen and finance boards was several weeks in the making. In November, immediately after being sworn in, Dennler stated that he planned on discussing potential overages with each department head and the finance board.

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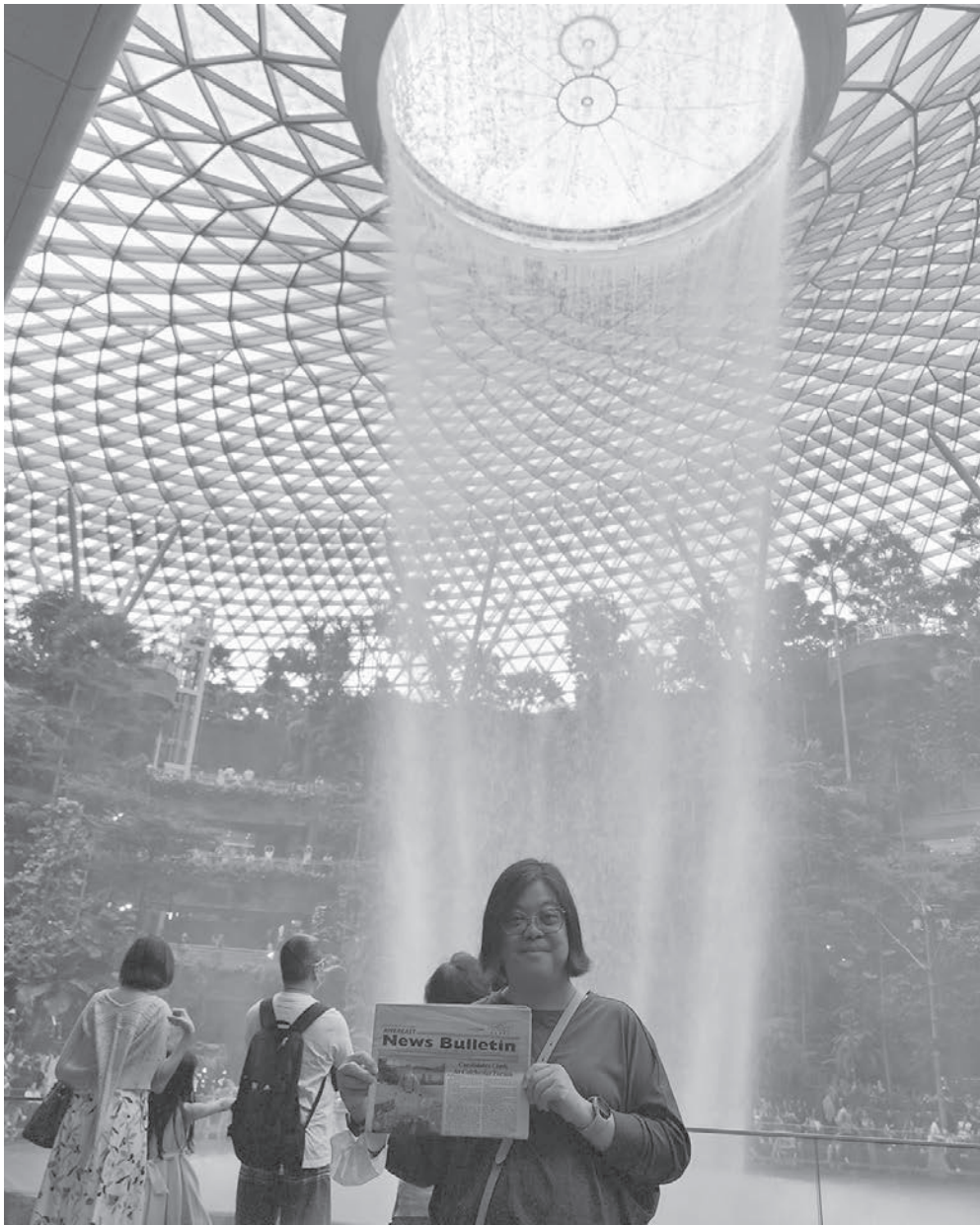
**Ready to Read...** David Rathbone from Colchester had to go to Toulouse, France, for work – so he brought along his Rivereast to read during dinner!

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

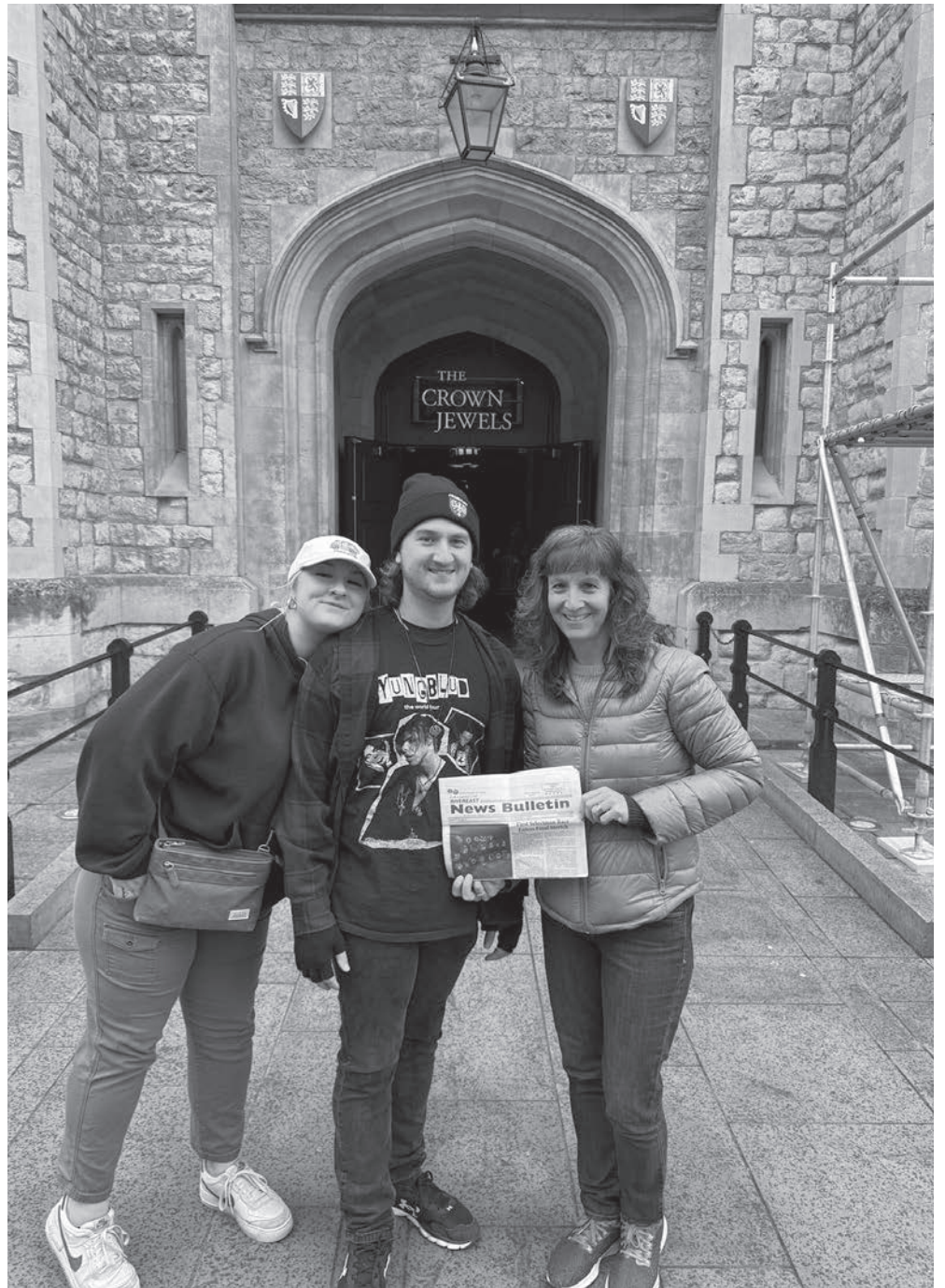
Hey! Are you taking a vacation or a day trip soon? Bring the *Rivereast* along with you, snap a picture with it, and email the photo and your address to [bulletin@glcitizen.com](mailto:bulletin@glcitizen.com).



**Bulletin in Beantown...** Jeanne Bishop and Jane Muskatullo, both of Portland, recently stayed at Hotel Commonwealth in Boston to see an Ian Munsick concert!



**Swinging by Singapore...** Portland resident Daphne Pierce recently went back to her hometown Singapore for vacation – and she decided to bring the Rivereast with her! It was her first time checking out Jewel Changi Airport, a nature-themed entertainment and retail complex surrounded by and linked to one of the passenger terminals of the airport.



**London Calling...** Chrissy St. Jean, Devin St. Jean, and Julia St. Jean of Andover recently traveled to England and saw the Crown Jewels at the Tower of London.

# Where in the World?

**Going on a trip?  
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### Monthly Bingo for Kids and Seniors

MAEVE RHAM is bringing bingo for kids and seniors to Marlborough Senior Center. All are welcome to attend from 2-4 p.m. on the fourth Sunday of each month, throughout the year. Open to residents of neighboring communities as well, it's free to play and there will be prizes.

"We are so excited about this opportunity because we've been looking for a service project where even our youngest can participate," says Anna Holden, president and founder of the local MAEVE chapter.

The kids of MAEVE members will take turns calling the games and playing alongside seniors.

"We're hoping this will be a way to develop cross-generational relationships as well," says Jillian LaCresse, service project chair.

RSVP is not necessary but is requested, by emailing rham@wearemaeve.org. Also email MAEVE if you have any new or gently used items to donate for prizes.

MAEVE is a national nonprofit, charitable organization that seeks to empower all who mother in support of one another and their communities. MAEVE RHAM supports those in Hebron, Andover, Marlborough, and neighboring communities. For more information, email rham@wearemaeve.org or visit maeverham.org.

### Congregational Church News & Notes

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

**Sunday, Jan. 14** is a Communion Sunday. Holy Communion is open to all, regardless of church affiliation, including children with parental guidance. The bread used is gluten-free. The worship service will be led by the Rev. Valerie Seaver. Her sermon title is "Word." At this new year service, "Star Words," to serve as a reflection in 2024, will be given to all.

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

**Outreach:** The church collects non-perish-

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

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

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

**277th Annual Financial Meeting:** Sunday, Jan. 28, at 11:15 a.m., in the meetinghouse.

**Second Blessings Thrift Shop** is closed in January for refreshing and reopens Friday, Feb. 2, from noon-3 p.m. The shop sells year-round through eBay at [bit.ly/MCCebay](http://bit.ly/MCCebay).

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

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### Donations Sought for Tag Sale

The Marlborough Arts Center is having its annual Winter Tag Sale this year Saturday, Feb. 3, from 9 a.m.-2 p.m., in the lower level of the Arts Center at 321 N. Main St. Donations are being accepted.

This is an opportunity to clean out your oldies but goodies. No books, TVs/electronics, or clothes donations, please. Drop-off

dates are on Tuesdays from 6-7:30 p.m. on Jan. 16, 23 and 30. Drop-offs can also be on Saturdays from 10-11:30 a.m. on Jan. 13, 20, and 27. Items may be left at the lower level next to the door at other times.

If necessary, the snow date is scheduled for the following week on Saturday, Feb. 10.

### Preservation Society Calendars Available

The Marlborough Preservation Society's 2024 calendars are now available.

This year's theme is "Marlborough's Notables," and will feature people who have a connection to Marlborough and who have made an impact to the state, country or world - past and present. This is a full-color, 11x17 calendar with history and accomplishments of 12 notable people from town.

The cost is \$22 per calendar. All proceeds go

to storing the historic Town Green mural.

For more information, visit [www.marlboroughhistory.org/store](http://www.marlboroughhistory.org/store). For mail orders, the society's mailing address is: Marlborough Preservation Society, P.O. Box 351, Marlborough, CT 06447.

And for more information on the society, visit [marlboroughhistory.org](http://marlboroughhistory.org), or email [mhs@marlboroughhistory.org](mailto:mhs@marlboroughhistory.org).

### St. John Fisher Church News & Notes

St. John Fisher Roman Catholic Church is located at 30 Jones Hollow Rd. Pastor is the Rev. Alvin LeBlanc, Bill Gilles is deacon John McKaig is deacon emeritus. Heather Mancini is church secretary and can be reached at 860-295-0001; hours are Monday-Wednesday and Friday, 8:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. People are asked to call before heading over or connect via email at [stjohnfisher30@yahoo.com](mailto: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:** Mondays at 9 a.m.

**Weekly Sacrament of Reconciliation:** Saturdays, 3-3:30 p.m., or by appointment

**Family Faith Formation:** Led by Cindy Bryan, this is an active family faith formation program for the church's kindergarten through elementary school population. Deacon Bill Gilles leads the middle school program. For more information, call the church office.

**Confirmation Community:** Led by Helena

Thomas, this is a 9th- and 10th-grade confirmation program. For more information, call the church office.

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

**Community Outreach and Service:** Food drives are held the second full weekend of each month for Marlborough Food Bank. You may also bring non-perishable food or household donations directly to the Marlborough Food Bank Monday and Tuesday mornings. Sandwich-making and collection is the last Thursday of the month for St. Vincent de Paul in Middletown. Other scheduled service opportunities can be found on the church website and are scheduled monthly.

**Other Programs and Offerings:** For more information on other programs, seasonal offerings, adult faith formation, youth group, RCIA, Knights of Columbus or other ministries, call the office, visit [www.stjfisher.org](http://www.stjfisher.org), or look for the church on Facebook (Saint John Fisher Roman Catholic Church).

### Parks and Rec Upcoming Programs

Marlborough Parks and Recreation has announced the following. For full program descriptions or to register, visit [marlboroughct.recdesk.com](http://marlboroughct.recdesk.com) and click on "programs," stop by the office at Town Hall, 26 N. Main St., or call 860-295-6203. Classes subject to cancellation if minimum registration isn't met. In-person classes subject to change to virtual based on state regulations.

**Youth Programs:** Kids Winter Yoga: Wednesdays, Jan. 17-Feb. 21, 5:15-6 p.m., in the Marlborough Elementary School cafeteria, for ages 3-10. Child must be accompanied by parent or caregiver. Fee: \$75/resident, \$80/non-resident, or a \$10 fee each week to drop in.

**Art-ventures with Penguins and Polar Bears:** Tuesdays, Jan. 23-March 5, 3:15-4:15 p.m., at MES, for grades K-6. Fee: \$115/resident, \$120/non-resident.

**Mad Science Eureka! Invention:** Thursdays, Jan. 25-Feb. 29, 3:15-4:15 p.m., at MES, for grades K-6. Fee: \$115/resident, \$120/non-resident.

**Lego - Winter Wonderland Engineering:**

Thursdays, Feb. 1-March 7, 3:15-4:45 p.m., at MES, for grades K-4. Fee: \$127/resident, \$132/non-resident.

**Acrylic Landscape Painting:** Wednesdays, 3:30-5 p.m., Feb. 14-March 6, at MES, for grades 1 & 2. Fee: \$90/residents, \$95/non-residents.

**Safe Sitter:** Saturday, Feb. 17, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., at the Marlborough Senior Center, for grades 6-8. Fee: \$110/resident, \$115/non-resident.

**Adult Programs:** Adult Self-Defense: Thursdays, Jan. 18-Feb. 22, 6:30-7:30 p.m., at Champions Karate in Colchester, for ages 16 and up. Fee: \$35/resident, \$40/non-resident.

**Zumba:** Thursdays through Feb. 10 (started Jan. 4), 6:30-7:30 p.m., at MES. Fee: \$50/resident, \$55/non-resident, or a \$10 drop-in fee.

**CPR Certification:** Tuesday, Jan. 23, 5:30-7:30 p.m., at Marlborough Senior Center. Fee: \$87/resident, \$92/non-resident.

**Outsmarting the Bad Guys:** Cyber and Phone Security for Seniors: Tuesday, Feb. 6, 3-4 p.m., at Marlborough Senior Center. Fee: \$25/residents, \$30/non-residents.

**Adult Programs:** Adult Volleyball: Thursdays, 8-10 p.m., at MES. Fee: \$5 per week.

**Adult Drop-In Basketball:** Sundays, 8-10 a.m., through March 31, at MES. Fee is \$5 per week.

**Trip: UConn Huskies vs. St. Johns Red Storm (Men's Basketball):** Saturday, Feb. 3, at Madison Square Garden. Trip includes charter bus, tickets to the game (200 level) and free time in New York. Registration fee is \$180. Bus leaves from Putnam Park and Ride in Glastonbury at 7 a.m.

### President's List

Jacqueline Killelea of Marlborough made the fall 2023 President's List at Southern New Hampshire University in Manchester, N.H.

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**Holiday Closing**  
Town Hall, Senior Center, and Public Works Garage will be closed Monday, Jan. 15, in honor of Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

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### Arts Center Exhibit at Town Hall

The Marlborough Arts Center is holding a new exhibit at Town Hall. Featured is artwork by Dianne Gorrick.

A resident of East Hampton, Gorrick is a former art teacher at Bacon Academy. Her work has been exhibited throughout Connecticut and has received various awards. Her current display presents a wide range of subject matter, from traditional landscapes to imaginative

themes.

This exhibit is open to the public during business hours at the Town Hall: Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. and Fridays from 8 a.m. to noon. The exhibit will continue through June 30. For more information, please check out the website [www.marlborougharts.org](http://www.marlborougharts.org), or contact the Arts Center at 860-467-6353, or email [marlboroughartscenter@gmail.com](mailto:marlboroughartscenter@gmail.com).

### Senior Center News and Notes

Marlborough Senior Center, 17 School Dr., is open for activities. Call 860-295-6209 for the center's hours and more information. Transportation is Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays; call 36 hours in advance of your appointment to guarantee a ride.

**Food Bank:** Located at 3 Wilhenger Drive (860-295-6008), it is open every Tuesday from 10 a.m.-noon and 3:30-5:30 p.m. The food bank is open to qualified residents in need of food.

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

**Monday, Jan. 15:** Senior Center closed in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

**Tuesday, Jan. 16:** Assistance, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.; Socialization, 10 a.m.-noon; Meals on Wheels,

noon; Tai Chi, 1-2 p.m.

**Wednesday, Jan. 17:** Not Just Quilters, 9 a.m.-2 p.m.; Assistance, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.; Socialization, 10 a.m.-noon; 8-ball pool, 10 a.m.-noon; Meals on Wheels, noon; Congregate Meal, noon. Menu: orange juice, Salisbury steak with gravy, mashed potatoes/green beans, wheat dinner roll, chocolate pudding; cards, 1-4 p.m.

**Thursday, Jan. 18:** Assistance, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.; Meals on Wheels, noon; Tai Chi, 1-2 p.m.; PD Exercise with Ann, 3-4 p.m.; Commission on Aging, 4 p.m., at Town Hall.

**Friday, Jan. 19:** "Not Just Quilters," 9:30 a.m.-noon; assistance, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.; Congregate Meal, noon. Menu: potato crumb fish, rosemary potatoes, baby carrots, 100% whole wheat bread, fresh fruit; Cards, 1-4 p.m.

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

#### ★ Letters cont. from page 5

budget and come from other funds such as savings. A total of \$700,000 in supplemental allocations were used to complete the track at the high school along with a \$500K state grant.

Now the BOS will be asking for an additional supplemental appropriation of \$525K for the third fire truck, which is just the chassis and will need to be outfitted with equipment. The cost to equip the truck has not been disclosed.

There seems to be no slowdown in spending

under the Curley administration, with little focus on Portland's infrastructure to grow our retail and commercial tax base. The finance director has warned against excessive expenditure.

Budget deliberations are starting this month with a vote on another fire truck within a few weeks.

What happened to Portland over politics? Still waiting for water pipes on Russell Avenue.

Rose Aletta – Portland

#### Editor's Desk continued from page 4

ensuring support for diverse student needs, fostering a dynamic and inclusive school environment."

A founding member of the South Windsor Equity Committee, Clifton also led a full-scale overhaul of the school schedule to promote greater inclusivity and expand academic and enrichment opportunities. As a result of his efforts, all TEMS students – regardless of their abilities or learning needs – now have access to the full array of academic offerings, CAS said.

"Fostering education equity is a continuous, intricate endeavor, and Jarrid is a vital leader in this mission," praises Sloate.

When designing the new schedule, Clifton incorporated block scheduling to promote student collaboration and project-based learning across the entire building. He also introduced the "WIN" (What I Need) period, which provides students with time for both remediation and enrichment. During the WIN block, students can receive personalized, targeted instructional support from teachers. They can also use the time to participate in extracurricular activities that align with their interests and passions. They can also take ad-

vantage of the time to receive personalized, targeted instructional support from teachers.

As parent Tara Holton told CAS, "Jarrid gives our kids the right tools to be successful and then lets them fly."

Science teacher Tanya Bynoe also praised Clifton to CAS, saying, "He is our strong tower. He is always here for us, providing us support as professionals and as people."

Fellow associate principal Frank Leòn added, "Jarrid strives to get better every day and to lead others along with him."

So impressed by Clifton was CAS that the association has selected him to represent Connecticut in the National Assistant Principal of the Year Program, sponsored by the National Association of Secondary School Principals. Clifton, along with assistant principals from each of the other 49 states, as well as the District of Columbia and the Department of Defense Education Activity Associations, will compete for the national honor.

Good luck in the national competition, Jarrid – and in the meantime, congratulations on your state honor! It sounds very well-earned.

See you next week.

### Little Church, Big Heart

To the Editor:

At a time when negative stories seem to get top billing in the news, I want to share a story about the little church with a big heart ... The First Congregational Church of Portland.

Founded more than 300 years ago, this little Main Street church has been known for many things, including the renowned musicals, church fairs, and rummage sales of years past, a great nursery school, and a Chocolate Fest that for 25 years enticed customers from throughout New England. In keeping with the tradition of fun-filled events to support the community, this year the church will hold a Mardi Gras Fest on Feb. 3, complete with authentic New Orleans food, homemade baked goods and candy, and a raffle of gift baskets. A portion of the funds raised will go to the Portland Fuel Bank.

The spirit of generosity lives in this church's congregation, earning the reputation as the little church with a big heart. Recently, the members provided Christmas gifts for 22 Portland families, donated \$740 to the United Church of Christ Christmas Fund Offering, collected \$1,200 for the Portland Fuel Bank, and donated \$300 to the Portland Food Bank. There is a food collection each week for the food bank. In 2022, the church formed the Portland Refugee Resettlement Group, settling an Afghan refugee family in Middletown. The Board of Missions sponsors "God's Work ~ Our Hands," when church members spend the day doing yard work and home repairs for Portland residents. The church regularly provides meals for St. Vincent DePaul and Streetfire Ministries in Middletown.

I am honored to be a member of a church that is making a big difference in this little corner of the world.

Jeannette Hodge, Member  
First Congregational Church of Portland

### Hope

To the Editor:

"Give them hope, give them strength, give them life. Like a candle burning in the black of nights. We are with you in our hearts and in our minds, and we'll pray for our nation through its darkest times." - Angelic Upstarts

Some say WWII pulled the USA out of the Great Depression, but others believe it was a small, brown, sleepy, racehorse named Seabiscuit. Seabiscuit did what no politician could do; he offered hope for the little guy. If that "imperfect" horse could win against all odds, then so too could USA workers. He was, in fact, the common man's champion.

It's been a dark few years and when it comes to our drinking water, we've learned, that things will only get darker. Sadly, most of the permanent pollution was preventable.

But there is still hope. For running under the middle of Kinney Road lies another underrated

champion, the Middle Stream. This unappreciated stream is a silent beacon of hope for surrounding neighborhoods. Residents know, as long as there is moisture, in this stream bed, we have hope that water is still making its way through the landscape and into our wells. In two decades I have only witnessed this stream corridor bone dry once, November 2020. The same year Hebron firemen reported record numbers of residents collecting water from the firehouse. Hebron wells were low. Several had run dry.

Above this stream lies its headwaters, a soggy, possibly spring fed, corn field slated to be the roadway connecting John Horton Boulevard to 17 Kinney.

The Middle Stream is respected and recognized by environmentalists but feared, and therefore ignored, by those hungry for development. Ironically, with hunger comes thirst and if we continually pollute and disrupt our landscapes, we'll have little or nothing left to drink. #save17

Jean Tulimieri – Amston

### Change State Law

To the Editor:

I chair the East Hampton Clean Energy Task Force. I am excited that our East Hampton Town Council is championing clean energy initiatives aimed at expanding energy choice, saving our residents money, reducing the burning of temperature increasing fossil fuels, and improving the quality of the air we breathe. To that end, our Town Council wants our state to allow wider access to clean energy supply.

State law allows municipalities to participate in solar projects for electricity generation without being physically connected through a process called Virtual Net Metering (VNM). And East Hampton is saving tens of thousands of dollars every year through that program. Many residents and businesses wanting to, but unable to, deploy solar panels, would love to opt for VNM, but law currently does not allow it. Our town is among many municipalities and groups that are working to allow just that. It is commonly called "Community Solar." So when you hear or read about efforts to expand Community Solar, think of access to more clean energy, and a way to save money to boot.

This is a topic on our monthly Task Force agenda. Our monthly Task Force meetings are the first Tuesday of the month, 5:30 at Town Hall, and are accessible via Zoom. All residents are welcome.

Thank you,  
Russell Kaplan, Chairman  
East Hampton Clean Energy Task Force

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## Obituaries

## East Hampton

## Carol Reneson

Carol (Romaneck) Reneson, 74, of East Hampton, passed away peacefully Thursday, Jan. 4, in her home, after a long struggle with Alzheimer's disease. Born in Middletown, she was the daughter of the late Edward and Helen (Armstrong) Romaneck. Raised in Portland, Carol graduated Mercy High School in 1967 and Central Connecticut State University in 1996.

Carol met her husband, Anthony, on Christmas Day in 1966, while attending a mutual friend's Christmas party. They married in 1970 and moved to South Dakota following Anthony's stationing assignment from the Air Force. In 1973 they moved back to Connecticut. They started their family in Middletown with the birth of their first son. They decided to settle in East Hampton and continued to grow their family, having another son and daughter.

A loving wife, mother and grandmother, Carol adored being around her family whenever possible. The holiday season spent at home with her family and summer vacations in York Beach, Maine, were Carol's favorite times. Carol was a stay-at-home mom until her children were school-aged, when she began waitressing and bookkeeping at Farrell's Restaurant in Portland. Eventually she found work closer to home at both Diamond Pizza and the Hathaway Inn restaurants in East Hampton.

Carol was known in the community as someone who would chaperon school field trips, a Cub Scout den mother who happily created arts and crafts for young cub scouts, helped out at school functions and participated in after school community events. This love for helping children and schools led Carol to go back to school where she eventually graduated from Central Connecticut State University with a Bachelor of Science in education. Carol found her forever teaching home at Saint Thomas the Apostle School in West Hartford where she taught first grade, making lifelong impacts on young minds. Carol spent much of her free time providing for her family, grading school work, planning her school days and reading novels.

Carol will be deeply missed and is survived by her husband, Anthony Reneson; her children, Michael and Joanna (Lapenta) Reneson, Robert and Danielle (Lineberry) Reneson and Rebecca Reneson; her grandchildren, Gabriel, Elise and Carter Reneson; her siblings, Bruce Romanek and his wife Louanne, Susan (Romaneck) Squires and her husband Barry, and David Romanek and his wife Eileen.

In lieu of flowers memorial donations may be made to the Alzheimer's assoc. at [www.alz.org](http://www.alz.org)

Funeral services were held Tuesday, Jan. 9, in the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton. Burial will be in St. Patrick Cemetery. Friends called at the funeral home on Tuesday morning, before the service.

To leave online condolences, please visit [www.spencerfuneralhomeinc.com](http://www.spencerfuneralhomeinc.com).



## Portland

## Adeeb S. Haddad

Adeeb S. "Ed" Haddad, 91, passed away peacefully at home on January 6, 2024. He was predeceased by his beloved wife, best friend and his high school sweetheart, Lynne (Hoisington) Haddad.

Adeeb was born in Willimantic July 4, 1932, the son of Said and Julia Haddad. Upon graduating from Windham High School, he joined the Navy during the Korean War and proudly served his country from January 1952-January 1956.

After graduating from the University of Hartford (Hillyer College) with a bachelor's degree in accounting, he joined the Internal Revenue Service as an agent and ultimately rose to the position of large case manager, in charge of examining the largest multinational corporations in the state.

He was a member of the Portland Exchange Club for over 50 years. Upon retirement, he worked in the sports field he loved the most, golf, as a ranger and starter for 21 years at the Portland Golf Course. He loved duckpin bowling and going to the casino with his family. He was an avid sports fan, coaching Little League for several years and enjoying the Boston Red Sox, Patriots, and Celtics. He and Lynne loved UConn men and women's basketball and were longtime season tickets holders from 1973-2018. His last night was spent watching his beloved Huskies win.

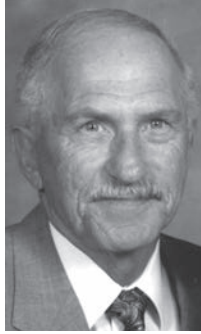
Adeeb is survived by his daughter Sharon and her husband Keith Roeder, his daughter Christine and her husband Thomas Manning, and his son Scott Haddad and his wife Linda (Cordone). He was a loving grandfather to Ryan Bernard (Bethany), Lucas Bernard (Erika), Valerie Bernard, Victoria Bernard, Nicholas Roeder, Lindsey Roeder, Taryn Schroll (Drew), Logan Hails (Alex) and Hayden Manning. He adored his 10 great-grandchildren, with one more on the way. He also leaves his sisters Jeanette Fitts and Margaret "Bunny" Sherman (Wayne), his brother Theodore Haddad, and many loved nieces and nephews.

Along with his wife and parents, Adeeb was predeceased by his sisters Elaine Haddad and Georgette Armstrong.

Funeral services will be held today, Friday, Jan. 12, at 10 a.m., at the Church of the Holy Trinity, 381 Main St., Middletown. Interment will follow in the Swedish Cemetery on High Street in Portland. Family and friends called Thursday evening, Jan. 11, at the Doolittle Funeral Home, 14 Old Church St., Middletown.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Adeeb's memory to Middlesex Hospice, 28 Crescent St., Middletown, CT 06457.

To share memories or send condolences to the family, please visit [www.doolittlefuneralservice.com](http://www.doolittlefuneralservice.com).



## Hebron

## Gail C. Fracchia

Gail C. Fracchia, 71, died at home in Hebron Thursday, Jan. 4, after a long illness. She grew up in Andover, and after graduating from RHAM class of 1970, she worked for many years at Pratt & Whitney.

Gail is survived by her husband, Jim Fracchia of Hebron; best friend and daughter, Alison J. Fracchia of Hebron; her brother, Lawrence Covell and sister-in-law, Dana Covell of Manchester; her sister, Barbara Francisco and brother-in-law, Carl Francisco of Simsbury; sister-in-law, Judy Covell of Andover; and many nieces and nephews.

Gail was predeceased by her parents, Sonny Covell and Barbara Covell of Andover; her brother, William Covell of Andover; and her beloved pets, Dewey, Ginger, Brandy, and Tiny.

An avid sports fan, Gail enjoyed watching the Red Sox, UConn basketball, Giants, Connecticut Sun and horse racing. She played softball, loved hitting the slots at the casino, and boating, clamming and fishing out of Niantic. Gail also loved vacationing at the Rhode Island beaches and especially vacationing for over 20 years with her daughter on Block Island.

Calling hours were Thursday, Jan. 11, at Tierney Funeral Home, 219 W. Center St., Manchester. Family and friends will meet today, Friday, Jan. 12, at 10 a.m., at Tierney Funeral Home for a brief service, with burial following at St. James Cemetery in Manchester.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be made to [www.accessiahealth.org](http://www.accessiahealth.org) or to [www.HealthWellFoundation.org](http://www.HealthWellFoundation.org). The organizations provide grants to eligible people to help pay for medications to combat pulmonary fibrosis and multiple myeloma.

For online condolences, please visit [www.tierneyfuneralhome.com](http://www.tierneyfuneralhome.com).



Manchester, CT, and Trenton Carlson (Monica Lopez) of Worcester, Mass.; his younger sister, Gail Hartzog Hesse and her husband Tom of Manchester; three grandchildren, Alexandra, Jacob and Gabrielle Carlson, all of Manchester; his sister-in-law, April Rupar of East Hartford; and brother-in-law, Thomas Perry of California; and many nieces and nephews whom he loved very much.

Services will be private and at the convenience of the family. Donations may be made to a veterans' charity of the donor's choice.

## East Hampton

## Michael A. Eremita

Michael A. Eremita, 97, of East Hampton, passed away peacefully Friday, Dec. 22, 2023, at Middlesex Hospital Hospice, after a brief illness. Michael was born April 5, 1926, in Hartford, to the late Pasquale and Eleanor (DeGregorio).

He is survived by his wife Dorothy (Kronenberger) of East Hampton; his sons, Michael (Heather), children Matt and Megan, James and daughter Stefanie; daughters, Susan Salafia, children Marc, Melissa, Raechel, Jamie and Chelsea Patricia Doosa (Steve), Janis Eremita, Beth McClure (Michael), sons

Willie and Toby; his stepdaughters, Deborah Foell, Melinda Dumond (Frank), children Ashlee, Matt and Damien, Beverly Butcher children Megan and Jacob; his granddaughter, Kelsey Fredrickson. He is also survived by 21 great-grandchildren and many nieces and nephews.

Michael was also predeceased by his sister, Anita; brother, Joseph; stepdaughter, Laurie Fredrickson; granddaughter, Jennifer; grandson, TJ; and his best friend and seeing eye dog, Frank.

He served his country during WWII with the 247th Army Air Force and the 245th bomb group out of Salinas, Kan. He owned and operated with his partner Paul Maynard, Eremita Maynard

Insurance Agency in East Hartford, until his retirement from insurance.

With his wife Dorothy they owned and operated restaurants in Holland, Mass., and Venice, Fla. Michael finished his working career as a real estate agent in Venice, Fla. He was an avid New York Yankees fan. He enjoyed spending time with family and going on driving adventures.

Burial will be in the Veterans Cemetery in Middletown at a later date.

Memorial contributions in his name may be made to the Guide Dog Foundation, 371 NY-25, Smithtown, NY 11787, where he and Frank trained together, Middlesex Hospital Hospice, or to an animal rescue of choice.



## Andover

## Ralph Carlson

Ralph Carlson was born in Hartford May 25, 1951. He died, peacefully, surrounded by the love of his family, on Saturday, Jan. 6, after a long battle with dementia.

Ralph currently resided in Andover. He graduated from Manchester High in 1970 where his lifelong interest in photography began on the Soman his yearbook staff. His work received recognition from the Scholastic Art Awards. He enlisted in the US Air Force, taking the by-pass test for photography, and was stationed in the photo lab at Richards-Gebaur Air Force Base in Missouri, where he photographed both presidential candidate Barry Goldwater and astronaut John Glenn Jr.

During his time in the Air Force, he also participated in the 21-gun salute for President Harry Truman's funeral, worked as a heavy equipment maintainer, and restored a TR-3. He was transferred to the photo lab at Kunsan Air Force Base, Korea. When he returned to Connecticut, he attended Manchester Community College and UConn on the GI Bill studying mathematics, physics and engineering.

Ralph was a talented classical and jazz guitarist who played with local bands until the early 1980s. He won second place in the U.S. Air Force Talent Contest in the '70s with a Villa Lobos classical guitar piece. His love of music continued throughout his life. He married the love of his life, Lea Perry, on April 4, 1975. They had two sons and remained devoted to each other throughout his lifetime.

Ralph loved his family more than anything else. He worked as a hardwood flooring installer for Patrick Daigle Flooring until opening his own business: Carlson Hardwood Floors, LLC, where he worked with both his sons. He was a master woodworker and installed many inlaid and one-of-a-kind floors. He continued to make beautiful pieces of furniture for his home and family including many hand-carved, unique pieces after his retirement.

Ralph was predeceased by his parents, Ralph G. Carlson Sr. and Ann Marie Petrella, and his older sister, Nancy Carlson; his brothers-in-law, Wolf Rupar, and Frank Perry. He leaves behind his wife of 48 years, Lea Perry Carlson; his sons and their wives, Travis (Karen) Carlson of



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**New Obituary Policy**

Effective immediately, there is now a \$100 fee to place obituaries. All obituaries can be sent to [bulletin@glcitizen.com](mailto:bulletin@glcitizen.com).

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## Portland

## Irene Hanna Nichols

Irene Hanna Nichols, 90, of Portland, passed away peacefully at her home surrounded by her family on Saturday, Jan. 6. Born in Middletown Nov. 18, 1933, she was the daughter of the late William J. and Marjorie (Hallberg) Hanna Jr.

She grew up in Middle Haddam, graduating from East Hampton High School at the top of her class. She lived in Portland most of her life and spent her summers at Stannard Beach in Westbrook. It was at the beach that she was happiest, and is most remembered for hosting amazing parties, and just relaxing on her patio overlooking the water. She worked at Portland Boat Works for much of her life handling boat sales and customer needs before retiring and enjoying her time at her beach house with family and friends. She was an avid reader, always seen with her nose in a book. Besides reading, she enjoyed teaching crafts, playing BUNCO, spending time in the sun, playing with her grandchildren and great-grandchildren, baking, and hosting holiday parties.

Her family was everything to her, and she never missed the chance to be at an event or support them in any way she could. Her daughter Debbie and son-in-law Carl emulated that by giving much of the last few years to see to Irene's care and comfort.

She is survived by her daughter, Debbie Nichols Johnson and her husband Carl of Portland; her granddaughter, Megan Lewis and her husband Ryan of Middletown; her granddaughter,



## Obituaries

Ashley Majorowski and her husband Daniel of Ephrata, Pa.; her brother, Robert Hanna of Middle Haddam; her sister, Carol Baretta of East Berlin; and her brother, William Hanna and his wife Kimberly of Portland. She had five great-grandchildren, Kayleigh and Ryan Lewis, Abigail, Savannah and Josie Majorowski, whom she adored.

She was pre-deceased by her parents, William James Hanna Jr. and Marjorie Hallberg Hanna; sister, Marjorie Hanna Schufer and brother-in-law John Schufer; brother, Donald Hanna; sister-in-law, Patricia Hanna; brother-in-law, William Baretta; and niece, Jodi Baretta Bjorklund.

The family would like to thank Middlesex Health Hospice Care, especially Hannah and Shannon, as well as her home health care aid, Nataylia, and family friend Barbara for their compassion and care during her last few months.

Funeral services will be held Monday, Jan. 15, at 11 a.m., at Biega Funeral Home, 3 Silver St., Middletown. Burial will be held at the Union Hill Cemetery, Middle Haddam. Visitation will be held prior to the service on Monday from 10-11 a.m. at Biega Funeral Home.

Those who wish may send memorial contributions to Middlesex Health Hospice Care.

To share memories or express condolences online, please visit [www.biegafuneralhome.com](http://www.biegafuneralhome.com).

## Portland

## Eleanor Fusari Lastrina

Eleanor "Ellie" Fusari Lastrina, 83, passed away Sunday, Jan. 7, peacefully surrounded by family in her hometown of Portland. She was born Oct. 1, 1940.

Ellie was loving and caring and devoted 15 years of her life to caring for others at Portland Care and Rehabilitation. She was an active member with her husband in the Portland Volunteer Fire Department for many years. She loved all of her grandchildren and great-grandchildren relentlessly. She enjoyed going to Outer Banks, N.C., every year with all of her nieces, nephews, and their children.

Eleanor is predeceased by her parents, Edna and Gildo Fusari; daughter, Tammy Lastrina; husband, Sebastian Lastrina. She is survived by her brother, Robert Fusari Sr.; two sons, Michael and Mark Lastrina; "third" son, David Opuszynski; daughters-in-law, Arlene and Lisa Lastrina. She also leaves behind her grandchildren, David (Sam), Keith (Kira), Kaylee (Erick) and Jenna (James) Lastrina; also, great-grandchildren, Kelsie, Karson, and Kenzlee Lastrina.

The family invites you to pay your respects at Portland Memorial Funeral Home, at 231 Main St. in Portland, today, Friday, Jan. 12, from 5-7 p.m. The funeral service will be held at St. Mary Church at 51 Freestone Ave., Portland, on Saturday, Jan. 13, at 9 a.m.

## Colchester

## Kathryn Lee Legato

Kathryn Lee Legato, 83, of Colchester, formerly of Salem, passed away on the early morning of Friday, Jan. 5, at Backus Hospital in Norwich. Born Dec. 9, 1940, in New York, she was the daughter of the late Edward Radigan and Mabel (Hunt) Radigan.

Kathryn worked for many years as a registered nurse, helping to support family needs and fund her children's education. She obtained her degree in nursing from Saint Vincent Hospital of the City of New York and shortly afterward married her husband, the late John F. Legato (Jack), sharing 57 years of marriage together before he predeceased her in December 2019. Kathryn and John settled in Ringwood, N.J., and began to raise their family. Later, they moved to Connecticut in support of Jack's career as an engineer. Following a brief stay in Farmington, they relocated for seven years to Granby before settling in Salem, where they would reside through early retirement.

Kathryn was an avid bowler and long-standing member of a league in Norwich with her husband. In her spare time, she enjoyed gardening, reading, and watching her favorite sports teams: the New York Yankees and the UConn men's and women's basketball teams. She was also known for her needlework, sewing prowess and cooking ability.

She is survived by her children, Christine (Paul) Luhman, John (Denise) Legato, and Michael (Lisa) Legato; grandchildren, Jennifer Luhman, Jonathan (Sara) Legato and Brian Legato; great-granddaughter, Madeline; siblings, Steven (Nancy) Radigan, Hugh (Malissa) Radigan and sister-in-law Roberta Radigan; and numerous other extended family and friends.

In addition to her parents and spouse, she is predeceased by her siblings, Mary Anne and Edward Radigan.

Visitation will be held Thursday, Jan. 18, from 10-11 a.m., directly at the St. Andrew Church, 128 Norwich Ave., Colchester, followed by an 11 a.m. memorial Mass. Burial to follow in the New St. Andrew Cemetery on Gillette's Lane in Colchester.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that memorial donations be made to the Colchester Senior Center, 95 Norwich Ave., Colchester CT 06415.

To share a memory of Kathryn, or sign the online guestbook, please visit [www.auroramcarthyfuneralhome.com](http://www.auroramcarthyfuneralhome.com).



## RHAM • RHAM • RHAM • RHAM • RHAM • RHAM • RHAM • RHAM

## Hulland Nets 35, Raptors Beat Bobcats

By Josh Howard

Senior Brady Hulland scored a career-high 35 points as RHAM High School boys basketball rallied to easily take down Bacon Academy 81-59 on Jan 2.

Playing in Colchester, the host Bobcats took a 15-14 lead after the first quarter behind eight points from Sawyer Naus. Naus and fellow sophomore Troy Johnson each finished with a team-high 17 points.

But Bacon's lead was short lived as Hulland took over in the second and third quarters, scoring 31 of his game-high 35 points over the 16-minute stretch. He scored 14 points in the second quarter as the Raptors easily erased the one-point deficit, scoring 28 points as a team and taking a 42-24 lead into the break. Hulland then dumped in 17 in the third quar-

ter as the Raptors scored 29 as a team, taking a comfortable 71-41 lead heading into the final frame.

Troy Miller added 21 points and Jack Ayer chipped in with eight points for the Raptors, who are 7-2 (as of publication) and play the next three on the road, starting at East Catholic High School on Tuesday, Jan. 16, at 6:45 p.m.

The Bobcats, who also got 12 points from Theo Koutsofavas and 10 points from Jace King in the loss to RHAM, currently stand at 2-5 overall. They too are in the middle of a three-game road trip, heading to Killingly High School tonight (Friday, Jan. 12) for a game at 7 p.m.

## Free Viewing of Screenagers

AHM Youth and Family Services will host a free viewing of the award-winning documentary SCREENAGERS: Growing Up In The Digital Age on Tuesday, Feb. 13, at AHM, 25 Pendleton Drive, Hebron.

Through stories and insights from authors, psychologists and brain scientists, this documentary reveals how tech time impacts kids' development and offers solutions on how adults can empower kids to navigate the digital world

and find balance. This movie was created for parents to watch together with their children in grades 6-12.

AHM welcomes residents of Andover, Hebron, Marlborough, Columbia and surrounding towns to this screening. RSVP to [jenniferb@ahmyouth.org](mailto:jenniferb@ahmyouth.org) with the number of adults and youth attending. Learn more at [www.screenagersmovie.com](http://www.screenagersmovie.com).

## Parent Support Organization to Hold New Members Event

Two years ago, a group of mothers established a local chapter of the national nonprofit organization MAEVE. MAEVE stands for motherhood, alliance, equity, village, and empowerment. MAEVE is a charitable organization that seeks to empower all who mother, regardless of gender or zip code, in support of one another and their communities.

MAEVE RHAM will hold an event for current and potential new members on Sunday, Jan. 14, from 2-4 p.m., in the Fellowship Hall at Marlborough Congregational Church. The event will include arts and crafts activities for

children of all ages. All are welcome. The hall is handicapped-accessible, and parking is available.

MAEVE RHAM has members in the RHAM region as well as East Hampton and Glastonbury. All parents throughout the RHAM region and surrounding communities are welcome to join MAEVE RHAM. No membership fee is required; members are instead asked to make an annual contribution to the organization, if they are able.

For further information, email [rham@wearemaeve.org](mailto:rham@wearemaeve.org).

## Youth Lacrosse Registration, Clinic

RHAM Youth Lacrosse (RYL) registration is open for the spring season – and RYL will also offer a clinic later this month.

RYL offers programs for both boys and girls in grades K-8. It is open to players that reside in Hebron, Marlborough, Andover and other local towns that do not offer a youth lacrosse program. Visit [www.rhamyouthlacrosse.com](http://www.rhamyouthlacrosse.com) for more information and to sign up. Registra-

tion deadline for the spring season is Saturday, Feb. 10. Email any questions to [rhamyouthlacrosse@registrar@gmail.com](mailto:rhamyouthlacrosse@registrar@gmail.com).

Also, there will be a free Learn to Play Lacrosse clinic, for any child grades K-8 interested in trying lacrosse, on Sunday, Jan. 21, at RHAM High School. No equipment is required to attend the clinic. Visit [www.rhamyouthlacrosse.com](http://www.rhamyouthlacrosse.com) to sign up and for more information.

## QPR &amp; Narcan Training

AHM Youth and Family Services is hosting two QPR and Narcan sessions – one on Monday, Feb. 6, and one on Monday, April 1.

Training will include: The Good Samaritan Law, support information and resources, and warning signs of a suicide crisis and how to respond. Participants will receive a QPR (Question, Persuade, Respond) training booklet and a two-dose supply of Narcan.

There is no charge for this training. Registrants must be 18+. Visit [ahmyouth.org](http://ahmyouth.org) for more information and to register.

## Internet &amp; Phone App Safety Discussion

All are invited to AHM Youth and Family Services on Tuesday, Jan. 23, from 6-7 p.m., and meet with members of the Connecticut State Police who will discuss digital trends and identify high-risk behaviors associated with some youth.

AHM welcomes residents of Andover, Hebron, Marlborough, Columbia and surrounding towns to this free discussion. RSVP to Jenn Bohler 860-228-9488 ext. 22 or [jenniferb@ahmyouth.org](mailto:jenniferb@ahmyouth.org).

## "PET OF THE WEEK"



One-year-old **Feliz**, is a charming black male cat with panther-like reflexes and a heart full of love. Feliz is not just your ordinary feline; he's a unique character with a penchant for shoulder rides, non-stop purring, and a passion for face smushing. If you're in search of a playful, affectionate, and entertaining feline friend, Feliz might just be the perfect match for you.

Two-year-old **Opal** is a super sweet and snuggly girl. The moment you sit down, she'll eagerly hop onto your lap and accept all the pets you can possibly give. There's no place she'd rather be. Her affection and affinity towards humans is limitless — cats on the other hand, not so much. She tolerates other cats, but Opal is most content by herself with just her human companions.



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# LEGALS

## MARLBOROUGH ZONING COMMISSION NOTICE OF ACTION

The Marlborough Zoning Commission at its regular meeting on January 4, 2024, took the following actions:  
APPLICATION APPROVED:  
APPLICATION #Z-09-23 - 198 E. Hampton Road (Applicant) change of use ERIC COLANTONIO, ZONING COMMISSION CHAIR

1TB 1/12

## PROPERTY AUCTION

The tax collector of the Princess Pocotopaug Association has levied upon the following properties in East Hampton and slated them for public auction to satisfy delinquent taxes and charges under C.G.S. § 12-157. Volume and page numbers refer to the East Hampton land records. Unless paid, these properties will be auctioned in "as is" condition at 1:00 p.m. on March 21, 2024 at the Princess Pocotopaug Clubhouse at 9 Seminole Trail in East Hampton.

27 Namonee Trail (Volume 541 Page 586) owned by Matt Bemont, owing \$1,704.08. Albert Maturio may have interests which will be extinguished by the sale.

12 Navajo Trail (Volume 244 Page 88) owned by Christopher J. Ewing and Joann Ewing, owing \$3,262.46.

12 Mohican Trail (Volume 531 at Page 977) owned by Kim Moon, owing \$1,853.62. Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. and Gold Star Mortgage Financial Group, Corporation, a Michigan Corporation may have interests which will be extinguished by the sale.

8 Sequonia Trail (Volume 477 Page 743) owned by Pamela L. Wilkinson and Dean M. Wilkinson, owing \$2,049.14.

The dollar amounts listed are through the end of last month. Additional taxes, interest, fees, and other charges authorized by law accruing after the last day of the month immediately preceding this notice are owed in addition to the amount indicated as due and owing in this notice.

Bidders must present \$5,000 per property in certified funds payable to "Pullman & Comley, Trustee" on the day of the sale, and the winning bidder must pay the balance of the sale price within 5 days or forfeit that deposit and the property. Absent a redemption, the purchaser will take title "free and clear" six months after the auction except for Town taxes and certain other encumbrances. Details at www.cttaxsales.com.

1TB 1/12

## ADVERTISERS

*The Glastonbury Citizen* and *Rivereast News Bulletin* will make every effort to see that all advertising copy is correctly printed. The publisher assumes no liability or financial responsibility for typographical errors in advertising, but will reprint, without charge, that part of an advertisement in which an error may occur, provided that a claim is made within 5 days of publication. The liability of the publisher on account of errors in or omissions from any advertisement will in no way exceed the amount of the charge for the space occupied by the item in error, and then only for the first incorrect insertion. Also, the publisher takes no responsibility for statements or claims made in any advertisement, and will upon request, reveal the name and address of the person or persons responsible for placing any display advertisement, political or otherwise, except for "blind" box ads. The Glastonbury Citizen Inc. reserves the right to reject advertisements which it deems unsuitable for its publications. Every effort will be made to verify the legitimacy and propriety of all ads for the protection of our readers. *The Citizen* will take requests for specific placement of ads and will try to accommodate everyone's requests. *The Citizen* cannot guarantee specific placement.

## TOWN OF PORTLAND

Legal notice is hereby given to the taxpayers of the Town of Portland that the second installment of real estate and personal property taxes on the October 1, 2022 Grand List and the Supplemental motor vehicle taxes are due and payable on January 1, 2024.

Taxes not paid in full on or before Monday, February 1, 2024 become delinquent and are subject to interest at the rate of one and one half (1 1/2) per cent per month from due date (3%, if paid in February). Minimum interest charge is \$2.00. Quarterly water and/or sewer usage bills are due and payable January 17, 2024. Payment not made in full on or before February 17, 2024 will be subject to interest of 1.5% per month from due date.

Failure to receive a bill does not invalidate the tax. Please contact the Collector of Revenue if you do not have a bill. Tax information is available on the Town of Portland website www.portlandct.org.

Online tax payments are accepted by visiting our website www.portlandct.org and are subject to convenience fees. Payments are accepted at the Collector of Revenue's office, 33 East Main Street, Portland, CT or by mail: Town of Portland Collector of Revenue, P.O. Box 71, Portland, CT 06480-0071. We do have a drop box for after hour payments by the back door. Office hours are as follows:

Monday, December 25, 2023: CLOSED  
Monday, January 1, 2024: CLOSED New Year's Eve  
Monday, January 15, 2024 CLOSED Martin Luther King Jr. Day  
Monday, Wednesday, Thursday: 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
Tuesday: 8:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.  
Friday: 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Cynthia L. Gotta, CCMC  
Town of Portland  
Collector of Revenue

3TB 12/22, 1/12, 1/26

## LEGAL NOTICE

### TOWN OF COLCHESTER ATTENTION COLCHESTER TAXPAYERS

Notice is hereby given to the Town of Colchester taxpayers that Motor Vehicle Supplemental taxes and the second installment of Real Estate taxes on the Grand List of October 1, 2022 are due and payable on January 1, 2024. The second installment bill for Real Estate taxes was mailed in October 2023. No additional bills for the second installment for Real Estate taxes will be mailed. Taxes not paid in full on or before February 1, 2024 become delinquent and are subject to interest at the rate of 1 1/2% per month or 18% annum, from the due date of the tax, as required by Conn. Gen. Stat. 12-130, 145 and 146. Mail postmarked (US Postal Service postmark only) on or before February 1, 2024 will be considered as having been paid on time. **Payments dropped in the town hall's drop box after 4:30p.m. on February 1, 2024, will be considered as having been made on the following business day and will be deemed as paid late.**

Failure to receive a tax bill does not invalidate the tax or any interest charged should the tax become delinquent. If you did not receive a bill and think you should please contact the office immediately. Conn Gen Stat. 12-130  
Please make all checks payable to the Tax Collector and mailed to: Tax Office, 127 Norwich Avenue Colchester, CT, 06415. If a receipt is desired, please send a self-addressed stamped envelope and two copies of the bill. Pay on-line by visiting our website [www.colchesterct.gov](http://www.colchesterct.gov); FEES APPLY. Hours of collection are Monday - Wednesday and Friday 8:30am - 4:30pm; Thursday 8:30am- 7pm. Questions concerning tax payments should be directed to the Tax Office, (860) 537-7210.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Michele Wyatt, C.C.M.C.  
Tax Collector  
Town of Colchester

3TB 12/22, 1/12, 1/26

## TOWN OF MARLBOROUGH LEGAL NOTICE

All persons liable to pay the second installment for Real Estate, Personal Property, Motor Vehicle and the Supplemental Motor Vehicle tax to the Town of Marlborough as levied on the October 1, 2022 Grand List are hereby notified the taxes are due and payable on January 1, 2024 and will be delinquent February 1, 2024. Delinquent bills will be subject to interest of one and one-half percent per month reverting back to the due date or 18% a year. Minimum interest is \$2.00 The Mill Rate for Real Estate and Personal Property for the 2023-2024 Fiscal Year is 34.73. The Mill Rate for Motor Vehicles is 32.46.

Tax payments may be mailed to Tax Collector, P.O. Box 29, Marlborough, CT 06447, placed in the DROPBOX at Town Hall, in person at the Tax Collector's office during normal business hours or paid online, [www.marlboroughct.net](http://www.marlboroughct.net) with Mastercard, Visa, or ACH. Tax Collector hours are: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Tuesday 8:30 a.m. - 7:00 p.m., Friday 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 Noon.  
Respectfully submitted  
Barbara Lazzari  
Tax Collector

3TB 12/22, 1/12, 1/26

## TOWN OF COLCHESTER ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS NOTICE OF MEETING RELOCATION

The Regular Meeting of the Colchester Zoning Board of Appeals scheduled for Tuesday, January 16, 2024, which was to be held at 7:00 PM in the Town Hall Meeting Room, 127 Norwich Avenue, Colchester, CT 06415 has been relocated to 7:00 PM at the Colchester Senior Center, 95 Norwich Avenue, Colchester, CT 06415.  
Zoning Board of Appeals  
Laurie Robinson, Chair

1TB 1/12

## TOWN OF EAST HAMPTON LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given, in accordance with §7-394 of the Connecticut State Statutes, that the audit of the financial statements of the Town of East Hampton for the year ending June 30, 2023 has been filed with the Town Clerk on January 3, 2024 and is available for public inspection in the Town Clerk's Office, 1 Community Drive, East Hampton, Connecticut.

Attest: Patricia Burnham, CCTC  
Acting Town Clerk  
Dated this 3rd day of January 2024 at East Hampton, Connecticut

1TB 1/12

## TOWN OF PORTLAND INLAND WETLANDS COMMISSION LEGAL NOTICE OF DECISION

At the January 2, 2023 regular meeting, the Inland Wetlands Commission took the following actions:  
IWC Application # 23-01: Portland Cobalt Road. Proposed retail fueling station and convenience store with work within the inland wetland regulated area. Application of Jannat LLC and property of MJS Realty Venture LLC. Map 31, Lot 23-2. Zone B-2.  
Dated in Portland, CT. this 9th day of January 2024  
Martha Dumas, Chairwoman  
Inland Wetlands Commission

1TB 1/12

## NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING HEBRON CONSERVATION COMMISSION HEBRON, CT

Pursuant to Section 9 of the Inland Wetlands and Watercourse Regulations of the Town of Hebron, the Conservation Commission has scheduled a Public Hearing on the following application: **Petition 2023-04**, Roderic A. McCarrison, 5-Lot Subdivision, Church Street, Map 12, Lot 18, Zone NC into 3 lots and Zone R-1 into 2 lots The hearing will be held Thursday, January 18, 2024 at 7:30 P.M., at a virtual meeting.

**Conservation Commission**  
Jan 18, 2024, 7:30 - 10:30 PM (America/New\_York)  
**Please join my meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone.**  
<https://meet.goto.com/707271837>  
**You can also dial in using your phone.**  
Access Code: 707-271-837  
United States: +1 (408) 650-3123  
**Get the app now and be ready when your first meeting starts:**  
<https://meet.goto.com/install>  
Dated at Hebron, CT this 2nd day of January 2024.  
James P. Cordier, Wetlands Agent  
for Tom Loto, Chairman, Hebron Conservation Commission

2TB 1/5, 1/12

## TOWN OF EAST HAMPTON PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION NOTICE OF ACTION

The East Hampton Planning and Zoning Commission held a regular meeting on January 3, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. at the Town Hall, Eaton Smith Council Chambers Room 107 and via ZOOM Virtual Meeting to consider the following:  
PZC-23-017: Salt Pond Apartments, LLC, Edgewater Circle, Re-subdivision approval for the creation of 2 lots. Map 10A/Block 85/Lot 5C - Approved with modifications.

1TB 1/12

## TOWN OF EAST HAMPTON ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS NOTICE OF ACTION

Notice is hereby given that the Zoning Board of Appeals held a Regular Meeting at 7:00 pm on January 8, 2024 at the East Hampton Town Hall - 1 Community Drive to consider the following:  
ZBA-23-010: ZBA-23-010: David Spinato, 7 Oakum Dock Road, Reduce front setback from 50' to 12.5" and rear setback from 50' to 40' for addition. Map 01C/Block 9A/Lot 2 - Approved

1TB 1/12

## TOWN OF HEBRON LEGAL NOTICE

At their meeting on January 4, 2024, the Board of Selectmen declared a vacancy on the Hebron Board of Education. The Selectmen designate Friday, January 12, 2024, as the posting date for the vacancy notice. The 35th and final day by which nominations shall be received is Friday, February 16, 2024. The Board of Selectmen are now notifying the political parties and the general public of this vacancy. Interested candidates should attend a meeting of the Commission and discuss with the Chairman the frequency of meetings and the time commitment involved. All residents of Hebron who are registered to vote are eligible. Letters of interest or questions may be addressed to Andrew J. Tierney, Town Manager, Town of Hebron, 15 Gilead Street, Hebron, Connecticut 06248 or call 860-228-5971.

1TB 1/12

# CLASSIFIEDS PAY

in The Glastonbury Citizen & Rivereast News Bulletin  
Fill out, clip and mail to:

The Glastonbury Citizen, P.O. Box 373,  
Glastonbury, CT 06033-0373

Citizen Deadline: Mon. NOON • Bulletin Deadline: Wed. NOON

Category (example: For Sale) \_\_\_\_\_

**Classified Text:** A word is anything with spaces around it. For example: Rd., 2BR, 6-cyl. are all one word each. A phone number is one word.)

Additional Words (20¢ per word): \_\_\_\_\_

Email Your Classified Line Ad  
to [admin@glcitizen.com](mailto:admin@glcitizen.com) and call with your credit card number.

PLEASE CHECK ONE

- \$10.00 per week for 25 words or less in *The Glastonbury Citizen*; 20¢ ea. add'l word
- \$9.00 per week for 25 words or less in the *Rivereast News Bulletin*; 20¢ ea. add'l word
- \$18.00 per week combination rate, 20¢ ea. add'l word for insertion in both in both papers.

Please make checks payable to: *The Glastonbury Citizen*.

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## LOST & FOUND

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CIT-1-12-23

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**SEEKING AUTOMOTIVE MECHANIC:** for immediate hire at fast growing shop in Middletown. Strong mechanical aptitude and troubleshooting skills. Must be able to diagnose and repair mechanical issues and be deadline and detail oriented. Ability to thrive in a fast-paced environment. 2-3 years automotive experience preferred. Diesel experience is a plus! Must have your own tools. Call George 860-346-5551.

**COOK WANTED:** \$18 to \$23 an hour depending on experience. Please apply at Eggs Up Restaurant on Rt.66 in Portland.

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CIT-12-23

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Medical, Dental, Vision, 401k, Meals...

Call Cheyenne Baker at 860-801-1114 or email [cbaker@colebrookvillage.com](mailto:cbaker@colebrookvillage.com)

**Clerk part-time**

Town of Portland, Connecticut (EOE)  
Deadline: 1/19/2024  
Send Town application to: **First Selectman's Office, P.O. Box 71, Portland, CT 06480**  
Starting \$22.20; 8 hours weekly at the Senior Center, non-union/non-exempt position. Subject to pre-employment drug/alcohol testing. All qualified applicants will be considered for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. Qualifications: High School diploma or GED equivalent; must have a valid Connecticut Driver's License. Must have good knowledge, skill and ability in general office procedures, secretarial techniques, bookkeeping and various word processing computer applications.

**Office Assistant-Recreation Department (Part-time)**

The Town of East Hampton is accepting applications for the part time (up to 19.5 hours per week) position of Office Assistant for the Recreation Department. Responsibilities include administrative support to the Director and Program Coordinator. Knowledge of general office procedures, including but not limited to, scheduling appointments, maintaining department records, receiving, and responding to telephone calls and visitors, preparation and posting of meeting agendas and program registrations notices. Experience in general office work and strong computer skills required. \$17.50 per hour. Please submit a cover letter, resume and an employment application by January 22, 2024, or until filled, to the Town of East Hampton, Department of Human Resources, 1 Community Drive, East Hampton, CT 06424. EOE/AA/M-F. [www.easthamptonct.gov](http://www.easthamptonct.gov)  
Posted: January 5, 2024  
Closing: January 22, 2024

**WELDER/PIPE FITTER POSITION AVAILABLE**

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Please send resumes to: **P.O. Box 186, Colchester, CT 06415** or email your resume to: [beth@eaglemanufacturinginc.com](mailto:beth@eaglemanufacturinginc.com)

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Eagle Manufacturing Company, located in Colchester, CT is seeking a dynamic & experienced Shop Manager/QC Manager to join our fast-growing team. As a leader in the steel fabrication industry, we require candidates with a minimum of five years' experience in the steel fabrication, along with expertise in welding, blueprint reading, & effective communication with both management and shop personnel. The ideal candidate for this position is a Certified Welding Inspector (CWI) with proven abilities in managing production staff. We value motivation and a strong team-oriented mindset, as we strive to foster a collaborative work environment that supports the growth of our company.

In addition to competitive compensation, we offer a comprehensive benefits package including paid vacation, holidays, employer funded HRA, medical & dental insurance, & generous matching 401k plan, STD, LTD and Life Insurance. Upon successful completion of the 30-day probationary period, these benefits will become available. Compensation will be between \$75-\$100,000 depending upon qualifications and experience.

To apply, please email your resume to: [beth@eaglemanufacturinginc.com](mailto:beth@eaglemanufacturinginc.com)

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