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News Bulletin

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

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February 23, 2024



Scout Sunday... Scouts from Cub Scout Pack 57 and Troop 57 in East Hampton celebrated Scout Sunday at St. John Paul II Parish on Sunday, Feb. 11. Pictured with the scouts are the Rev. Dariusz Dudzik and Deacon Dan D'Amelio.

Time for Turf at Bacon Academy?

By Michael Sinkewicz

Following last week's Colchester Board of Education (BOE) presentation spotlighting the need for substantial upgrades to the athletic complex at Bacon Academy, the school district's high school, the *RiverEast* spoke to a few local leaders who provided further insight and perspective into the potential project.

On Thursday, after press time, the BOE was expected to receive additional information from FieldTurf – a company that Superintendent of Schools Daniel Sullivan III said had already assessed the complex – regarding what a possible proposal for a new turf or natural grass field at the school could entail.

But during the board's prior meeting on Feb. 13, district leaders emphasized the urgency for action to address a problem that impacts hundreds of student athletes. The information introduced by Sullivan, along with Bacon Academy Principal Amy Begué and Athletic Director Kevin Burke, didn't include any specific schematics or cost details for any upgrade or maintenance plan.

The core of the problem at the athletic complex is the condition of grass fields, which Burke said have significant draining issues that result in up to 10 outdoor practices being canceled during both the fall and spring sports seasons. The lacrosse and football programs have each rented practice space at a facility in Montville

to allow early-season practices to take place on schedule.

Dating back to 2012, the district conveyed that numerous sports teams have had to relocate important games — including state tournament contests or "senior night" events — to neighboring towns.

District administrators asserted that a turf field would dramatically reduce the amount of game cancellations due to weather. But installing one would most likely be a substantial undertaking that would ultimately require taxpayer approval at referendum.

During a phone call, Begué explained that the BOE's facilities subcommittee had been looking into the prospect of a rehabilitation of the complex.

"It's not getting any better," she said. "We've admired the problem for a long time."

Bacon Academy's fields also do not have lights, which is somewhat of an anomaly in Colchester's district reference group — a collection of schools with similar socioeconomic conditions. Out of 26 included schools, 21 have turf fields and 23 have lighted fields. Just one other district, East Granby, is in a similar situation, without either turf or lights.

Begué said during the fall sports season, when the sun sets much earlier, many soccer athletes have to be dismissed from class as early as 1 p.m. — long before the school day officially ends. This is largely due to the absence of lights, which forces home games to kickoff at an earlier than ideal start-time.

With both turf and lights, there would be "a lot of benefits," Begué expressed. The amount

See Time for Turf, page 28

Commission Chair Reinstated in Colchester

By Michael Sinkewicz

The Colchester Board of Selectmen (BOS) last week appointed four individuals to the town's Sewer and Water Commission – including its former chairman, who was forcibly removed last summer.

During the Feb. 15 meeting, the BOS approved three new regular members: Chris Ozmun, who is politically unaffiliated, along with Democrats Katherine Hall and Stephen Coyle. Republican Jeff Duigou was approved as an alternate member.

The fresh appointments came after the seven-member commission was operating with just four people, making it difficult to achieve a quorum — the minimum number of members required in order to proceed with a meeting.

The bloc of candidates was approved by a 4-0 tally; Selectman Rosemary Coyle recused herself because she is married to Coyle.

Stephen Coyle previously served on the commission for 13 years dating back to 2010. However, he was dramatically removed from his chairmanship last June following numerous allegations of wrongdoing levied by former Republican first selectman, Andreas Bisbikos.

Coyle was ousted by a 2-1 vote, with Bisbikos and former unaffiliated selectman Jason LaChapelle supporting his removal and Democrat Denise Turner objecting to the dismissal; Rosemary Coyle recused herself and former Republican selectman Deborah Bates abstained.

Following November's municipal election, the new makeup of the BOS appeared more sympathetic to Coyle's place on the commission.

The board interviewed applicants during a special meeting on Feb. 1, including Coyle, whose controversial conclusion on the commission was briefly addressed. First Selectman Bernie Dennler III stated that he had an "uncomfortable question" relating to the events that took place over seven months ago.

"This is not a trial; this is an interview," Dennler conveyed before asking if there was anything about his prior situation that Coyle would like to speak to as the board considers his reappointment.

Coyle expressed that he "didn't understand" the accusations made against him.

"They were pretty outrageous, so I just didn't feel that I wanted to get into that," he told the

board — with the exception of Rosemary Coyle, who left the meeting room during her husband's interview. Coyle added that he perceived the allegations as "politically motivated."

Ultimately, Coyle's appointment received bipartisan support. Art Shilosky, the board's Republican vice chairman, asserted that he didn't care about "all that other stuff."

"I only care about sewer and water in the town of Colchester," he said, adding that "it's time for our board to do their job."

Coyle was given notice on May 17, 2023, that the BOS intended to remove him from his position on the commission. Nearly one month later, Bisbikos presented information to the board outlining the grounds for his recommendation.

"I feel that the evidence here presented is extremely strong and I'm disgusted by Mr. Stephen Coyle's behavior," Bisbikos told the selectmen at the time. "And he has no business serving on any of our boards."

The former first selectman cited numerous email communications from Coyle and town employees that he said served as evidence of

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From the Editor's Desk

Observations & Ruminations

By Mike Thompson

As I wrote about recently, the Connecticut Flower & Garden Show is this weekend, for those who want a nice little reminder that spring is in fact coming.

But what if flowers aren't your thing? No judgment; they're not really mine either. If spring make you think more about taking to the open waters than kneeling in soil, there's a show coming up at Mohegan Sun next month that might be more your bag.

The Connecticut Fishing & Outdoor Show is coming to the Mohegan Sun Earth Expo & Convention Center in Uncasville from Friday, March 22, through Sunday, March 24.

Hours are: March 22 from 1-7 p.m.; March 23, from 9 a.m.-6 p.m.; and March 24, from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Discounted admission tickets are on sale now. If bought online, tickets are \$12 for adults; if bought at the door, they will be \$15. The event is free for kids under 12.

"Fishing is the highlight of this annual three-day family event that showcases a wide variety of outdoor activities including freshwater and saltwater fishing, hunting, kayaking, paddle boards, safaris, hunting dog training, and more," show producer Kristie Gonsalves said in a press release. (Gonsalves is also producer of the Connecticut Flower & Garden Show in Hartford.)

"This show is designed for longtime fishing and outdoor enthusiasts, as well as anyone who wants to learn more about angling and

other kinds of outdoor adventure," she added. "Our special focus on boys and girls this year features our new Kids Fun Zone with hands-on activities like a live trout fishing pond, archery, live animals, and contests."

Unique to this year's show will be the celebration of longtime fisherman and custom lure designer Al Gag (a.k.a. Albert Gagliar-ducci). Gag is one of only six individuals in the world who recently was named to the 2024 International Fresh Water Fishing Hall of Fame. In addition, the Hall of Fame has recognized "The Al Gag Super Mac Paddle Tail" as one of the Top 100 Lures of All Time.

Gag's official public Hall of Fame installation ceremony will be held during this show on Saturday, March 23, at 4 p.m.

The show will also feature: more than 200 booths, including over 125 exhibitors selling latest fishing, hunting and outdoor equipment, and fishing boats; fly-casting demos by experts atop a 5,000-gallon Hawg Trough Live Fish Tank; an Animal Adventures Family Zoo & Rescue Center (Saturday and Sunday only), which will feature an alligator, Burmese python, tortoise and more; and daily expert speakers and demonstrations - which are all free with admission.

A particularly fun-sounding activity is a Laser Shot Range from the Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental & Pro-

Editor's Desk continued on page 7



Undeclared and it feels so good Hebron's 7/8 boys basketball team finished 11-0 and won the 2024 Lakes League Basketball Championship. Head Coach Lee McPeck (far right) and assistant coach Pat Sullivan (far left) led the undefeated team that featured (from right) Caleb McPeck, Owen Borque, Tyler Luca, Lucas Fortin, Trevor King, Peyton Sullivan, Vince Quiros and Declan Dougherty.

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

Affordable Housing Forum

To the Editor:

The Marlborough Planning Commission and the Marlborough Sustainable Housing Team will be holding a public forum on Tuesday, Feb. 27, at 7 p.m., at the Marlborough Senior Center, to discuss "housing affordability."

Erin Boggs with the Open Communities Alliance on Housing Affordability and Fair Housing will participate in the discussion. (For more information on this organization, visit www.ctoca.org.)

No matter what your position might be on this subject, I would encourage every Marlborough homeowner to attend this forum to learn more about the topic and to provide your thoughts to the Marlborough Planning Commission.

I hope to see you there.

Ken Hjulstrom - Marlborough

These inspirations are important today. We agree that we need to work to create a more inclusive and understanding society. Working together locally has proven to be a positive yet challenging idea. We have made many positive steps and like our history shows, we can work collectively to improve our relationships.

Our local leaders are working together to inspire more conversations with East Hampton residents. They look forward to your thoughts and ideas. It is worthwhile to attend the Town Council, Board of Finance and Board of Education meetings in person or via Zoom.

**Sincerely,
Barbara Moore, Chair
East Hampton Democratic Town Committee**

Bobcat Classic Thanks

To the Editor:

The Bacon Academy Wrestling team would like to thank the local businesses listed below for their generous donations. Without them, the Matt Bishel Bobcat Classic would not have been possible. Their support helped make our event a success and made it memorable for the 175 wrestlers and hundreds of fans who attended and the members of the Bacon Academy Wrestling community. We deeply appreciate their partnership. And finally, the team would also like to thank all the Bacon Academy Wrestling parents as well as the support from the Colchester Youth Wrestling parents for all their time and effort in making the tournament a success.

Colchester Donuts and Café, Noel's, Carl Guild and Associates, Stop and Shop, Fresca, McDonald's, Maria's Pizza, Family Pizza, Oz 'n Bones, Colchester Pizza.

**Sincerely,
Bacon Academy Wrestling Team**

Historical Inspiration

To the Editor:

February marks Black History Month, an annual celebration recognizing the contributions of African Americans to our society. The 2024 theme "African Americans and the Arts" gives us an opportunity to explore the impact that artists have had on our culture.

We also celebrate the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass, who were both leaders in the movement for African American civil rights.

The members of the East Hampton Democratic Town Committee celebrate their achievements. They worked to create alliances across political lines to do what was right for our country. Their achievements inspired their generation and shared what positive things could be done in the future.

Bulletin Board

Remember the DO NOT CALL LIST? There's a stroke of genius that turned out to be about as useful as a square wheel.

I've gotten to the point where I don't even answer my phone if I don't recognize the number because I get so many calls from robots (and occasionally real people) trying to sell me everything from solar panels to car warranties or maybe just trick me into giving them my credit card information.

The latest plague on humanity is some outfit hawking Medicare supplemental insurance. As I said, I don't normally respond to numbers I don't recognize, but I've been expecting calls this past month from some out-of-the-area folks, so I've been picking up the phone regardless. I am not exaggerating when I say that I've had at least 100 robo calls from Robo Ashley, Robo Sarah, Robo Jean or Robo Hazel (seriously, Robo Hazel?) informing me that Medicare is always changing and I'm almost certainly missing out on a life of ease at government expense if I don't act right away.

Now I'm not going to raise hell over a couple of phone calls, but when I keep hanging up and they keep calling multiple times, day after day after day using these fake numbers from various locations, I get a little irritated. So the other day when I picked up the phone and it was Robo Ashley again, I decided it was my turn to screw with them a little bit. It went sort of like this.

Robo Ashley: "Hell-o. My name is Ashley. How are you to-day?"
 Me: "Terrible. I think I've picked up a case of flesh-eating bacteria from a public toilet."
 Robo Ashley: "That's good."
 Me: "Speak for yourself. It's not your face."
 Robo Ashley: "So, are you currently on Medicare Part A and B with a supplemental plan? You may be missing out on benefits you deserve. Medicare plans are changing all the time. If you meet certain income requirements, Social Security might just make you a millionaire and give you a lifetime supply of free lobster rolls and blah, blah, blah." (I'm paraphrasing a bit here, but you get the idea.) "Does that sound great to you?"
 Me: "No. Haven't lobsters suffered enough?"
 Robo Ashley: "Awesome. From my records, it appears that you qualify. Let me connect you with a representative."
 Me: To myself: I'll give you awesome. Just send him over. A few seconds later, some guy from Bangladesh or Newark, N.J., or some other Third World wasteland clicks on. I can hear a lot of unintelligible chatter in the background, like maybe a roomful of people are arguing about how to split up some widow's life's savings.
 Live Guy: "How are you today?"
 Me: "Freaking terrible. Have you ever had a boil on your backside?"
 Live Guy: "Uh..."
 Me: "I also seem to be suffering from some serious anger management issues."
 Live Guy: "Do you have Medicare Part A and B with supplemental insurance?"
 Me: "Well, I used to have a Teddy Bear, but the dog chewed its head off."
 Live Guy: "Med-i-care."
 Me: "Right. Ted-i-bear. My wife told me to throw the bear out, but I wanted to keep it. I mean, you never know when you might need a decapitated bear, right? But she said I had to make a choice. It was either the bear or her."
 Live Guy: "You're probably missing out on a ton of free stuff..."
 Me: "I kind of miss her sometimes. Mostly around dinner time."
 Live Guy: "Are you on Medicare?"
 Me: "I don't know."
 Live Guy: "How old are you?"
 Me: "A hundred and six. But my girlfriend's only 70."
 Live Guy: Indecipherable response. Then silence.
 Me: "Hello? Hello? We seem to have been disconnected. Hello?"

I'm telling you, friends, if this is the way these people treat potential clients, they're going to go bankrupt pretty damn quick. I'm going to ask to speak with a manager the next time Robo Ashley calls, which will probably be within the next 20 minutes if past history is any indication. I'm going to complain that I was rudely cut off by one of their representatives before I even got a chance to ask the guy if he worked in a flammable building within driving distance of Connecticut.

Jim Hallas

Riverast Hours of Operation

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No Election Necessary

To the Editor:
My recently published treatise "Comments on Trump," concerning the emerging Trump dictatorship, was intended to be a clear warning to the good and decent people of America. As it stands now, Citizen Trump has taken control of the government via the puppet enabler Mike Johnson, the "Speaker of the House." He has usurped President Biden's ability to govern, thus condemning Ukraine to Putin, stopping resolution of the border crises, and threatening our national security.

No need for transfer of power, no need for election; your dictator has arrived, is in charge, and is shutting down the American federal government, destroying our democracy. I did not vote for this. The will of the people be damned. The greatest threat to America is the MAGA Republican Party. If you align yourself with this cult, you are the true enemy of the people.

Spencer Killian – East Hampton

Ammo Tax in Committee

To the Editor:
For the fourth time, state Rep. Jillian Gilchrest (D-18) has proposed yet another egregious tax on ammunition sales in Connecticut. This is another assault on law-abiding gun-owning citizens. Guns and ammo are already subject to an additional 11% tax on top of the Connecticut sales tax. For now, this bill sits in committee. We need to see that it does not make it out! We ask that all law-abiding Connecticut citizens contact their representative and those sitting on the finance committee to ask they do no support this proposed legislation.

Frank Blume – Colchester

Partisan Politics

To the Editor:
Rose Aletta again has questioned the need to replace a firetruck hosed at Company 3 which no longer is fit for service. This time however her campaign of innuendo is sorely missing some facts. There was a public hearing followed by a town meeting regarding the approval of the purchase of the new truck. She had every opportunity to attend these meetings, ask any questions she had and vote on the purchase. There were many people in attendance many members of the fire department along with many members of the public. We were signed in with the town clerk and given our paper ballot for the vote. For some reason despite her opposition to the purchase she chose not to attend. As Mr. Curley explained a town meeting requires those who vote to be present at the meeting therefore those meetings are not on Zoom. The townspeople not the Board of Selectmen approved this purchase.

Her recent letter called into question the actions of selectman Manning regarding this purchase as he is a volunteer member of the Portland Fire Department. He is a First Lieutenant in Company 3, a firefighter and EMT providing many hours of service to our community as do all the dedicated men and women members of the fire department. He advocated for this purchase to provide adequate protection for the citizens. He has first hand knowledge of the critical needs to provide this protection.

She states that Mr. Manning then requested the out of service truck be returned to the Fire Department for another use. Again not true, At the last BOS meeting Selectman Hernandez asked if the truck minus the failed tank could be turned over to the Public Works Department. They felt the truck could be repurposed for spare use. There is no personal benefit to Mr. Manning if another department is able to use this truck.

Her accusations sound like partisan politics at their worst. I'm so disappointed that she would use our dedicated volunteer fire department and a critical piece of equipment to cast doubt on the work of our BOS is indefensible.

Kimberly Hanna – Portland

Witnesses

To the Editor:
David Weiss, Special Counsel, announced the indictment of Alexander Smirnov for allegedly making false statements and manufacturing false records in the Biden impeachment inquiry. The FBI document says Smirnov described a 2016 meeting where Mykola Zlochevsky, the CEO of Ukrainian energy company Burisma, claimed that he had made two \$5 million payments to "the Bidens," though he didn't specify who received the alleged bribes. Weiss indicted Smirnov on one count of making a false statement and one count of creating a false and fictitious record related to statements he made to the FBI on a document known as an FBI Form 1023. Zlochevsky denied Smirnov's claim and stated that "no one from Burisma had any contacts with VP Biden or people working for him" while Hunter Biden was on the board. Zlochevsky also said Joe Biden and his staff had no involvement in the business dealings of his company.

Recall that another witness in the impeachment trial, Gal Luft, turned out to be a Chinese spy charged with arms trafficking, Iranian sanctions violations and lying to the feds. Take this recent testimony, reported by *The Washington Post*, from Eric Schwerin, a former business associate of Hunter Biden: "I am not aware of any financial transactions or compensation that Vice President Biden received related to business conducted by any of his family members or their associates nor any involvement by him in their businesses. None." (Justice.gov, MSN, NBS, NPR, USA Today)

Annie Steinbrecher – Marlborough

KOCO Secures Grant

To the Editor:
We're thrilled to share that KOCO Child-care Center has secured a \$50,000 grant for our Farm-to-School program, thanks to the FY 24 CT Grown for CT Kids Grant. Eric Francis, CEO of Trifecta Ecosystems, Inc., has been pivotal in guiding us through the grant process, aligning with our vision for sustainable agriculture.

The anticipation among KOCO staff and Board of Directors is palpable as we prepare to launch this exciting project this spring. Our educators and caregivers are eager to create a dynamic outdoor learning environment with fruit and vegetable beds, enriching our students' educational journey and fostering community ties.

The children's excitement is contagious as they eagerly await the chance to delve into the world of gardening. For many, this will be their first hands-on experience, and we're thrilled to provide them with such a valuable learning opportunity.

Through this initiative, we aim to instill in our young learners a lifelong love for healthy eating and sustainable living. By nurturing their curiosity and connection to nature, we hope to empower them to make informed choices and lead healthier lives.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to Eric Francis and Trifecta Ecosystems, Inc., for their invaluable support. With the dedication of our staff, the enthusiasm of our Board of Directors, and the excitement of our students, we're confident that the KOCO Childcare Center Farm-to-School program will be a resounding success.

**Janet Santos and Laurie Caron
KOCO Childcare Center
East Hampton**

Heeding the Call!

To the Editor:
So many times we witness the firetrucks flying by on a way to a call but I had the pleasure of attending the Fire Commission meeting where I introduced myself as their new Town Council liaison. Not only did I meet our volunteers but I was privileged in watching them jump into action when the tone came in! An insider's view of how these volunteers literally drop everything and run to the trucks is something I wish all of you can witness.

Our town is so lucky to have such dedicated volunteers who put your needs above all when the call comes in. Remember our volunteers drop what they are doing and leave their families to come to the aid of our community.

The next time you see a firetruck whiz by you or a flashing blue light in a vehicle, pull over and be grateful for these volunteers who are willing and able to help you and your family! Be grateful East Hampton for the many volunteers who serve!

**Deb Cunningham, Member
East Hampton Town Council**

He's Not Innocent

To the Editor:
Despite Trump's own notorious statement that he "moved on [women] very heavily," including grabbing women by their private parts, or the 22 other women who alleged Trump sexually abused them, or the jury who heard testimony from over eleven witnesses before awarding E. Jean Carroll \$85 million in her sexual assault and defamation suit, Frank Blume still believes Trump is innocent.

The argument that a twice-impeached, four-time indicted, self-dealing criminal with over 90 felony charges is an innocent victim is absurd. This is a man who was held liable for cheating a charity and operating a fraudulent university scam.

The same guy who allegedly stole top-secret documents and refused to give them back.

A malignant narcissist who lost over 60 court cases, claiming the election was stolen, then incited an insurrection. The guy who, just last week was convicted of fraudulent business practices in a \$450 million judgement. This is the same guy who is threatening to cancel the constitution, execute American generals, disband NATO and govern as a dictator on day-one of his election. The Putin wing of the Republican party peddles the ridiculous notion the prosecutors, judges and juries are all in cahoots. That Trump didn't commit these crimes, and if he did it wasn't for personal gain. And if it was, he didn't know it. And if he knew it, it's not a crime. And if it is a crime, Trump shouldn't be held accountable.

The reality is Trump is a political arsonist who was caught making a bomb. MAGA misfits like Frank Blume believe that just because it didn't go off, then he's not guilty. Let's remember Trump isn't disputing that he's innocent; he's claiming he should have a lifetime get-out-of-jail card.

Joe Stevens – Hebron



Who Is Watching?

To the Editor:
Budget season calls for scrutiny so that budgets presented are not excessive. Excessive budgets lead to higher taxes, and higher taxes affect everyone, young and old alike.

The current BOE proposed budget shows a 2.72% increase over last year. With the reduction of an outplacement of \$130,000, two classroom teachers retiring at the top of the pay scale, and the retirement of the principal and vice principal, one would think the cost savings would be realized in the upcoming budget. They aren't. Splitting the 450 Pre-K to 6th grade building into two halves, each with a proposed full-time principal (Pre K-2, 3-6) seems excessive especially when the salaries associated with these positions are not being reduced for a student population of 450.

In the past 2.5 years a full-time building supervisor and a full-time SRO have been added. No support staff has been reduced and interestingly enough, they are the same as when the population hit its peak at 660 K-6 students. Without preschool our current population is 410 students.

Marlborough residents have always been supportive of education, and Marlborough has been a go-to place for families with young children. As the younger population is decreasing and the senior population increasing, educational costs account for approximately 76% of the overall town budget. Our local BOE, at their recent budget discussion, appeared to approve the presented budget with one exception – the adding of another 0.05 to the special education director position. No deep-dive into numbers, no questioning of background information or clarification.

As such, it is my sincerest hope that the Board of Finance is more diligent. I encourage them to scrutinize the numbers and see where cost savings can be realized. After all, they represent all taxpayers in Marlborough!

**Sincerely,
George O'Brien – Marlborough**

Where Is the Press?

To the Editor:
The best and largest (with five states) U.S. Department of Energy National Science Bowl High School regional competitions are tomorrow, Feb. 24, at UConn. The DOE supports 70 regional sites; UConn's being the most competitive, and one of only two sending multiple winning teams to the Washington, D.C. nationals. Some of these competitors are favorites to win those nationals.

One pressing question: will the press even bother to show up? If this were a sporting competition of equally accomplished high school athletes, such as the potentially two best American football teams squaring off, it would be packed with fans, reporters, talking heads and storylines. But these are only the brightest academic minds in the country competing; so why bother? American schools are only deemed press-worthy for athletics, and rarely academically.

See Letters, page 6

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★ Letters cont. from page 5

ics. Check any newspaper on any day.

Few noticed when America's most accomplished high school science student anchored Mansfield's E.O. Smith team, three times bringing them to nationals and third best in America. Did his name or picture ever appear in any Connecticut newspaper?

The media also didn't see any worthy story-lines of interest when five Newtown High students, who had lived through the Sandy Hook Elementary School massacre, had striven to become the top team at UConn, and obvious na-

tional favorite. But COVID-19 derailed them, ending their in-person nationals.

Another media no-show happened when the Lexington High National Championship team returned to UConn the next year with most of its same students, but were beaten by their B-team. The legend of this upset still reverberates at nationals. Word out of MIT is that this year's Lexington B team is studying furiously to again try and knock off their favored A-team. The Greenwich, East Lyme, Farmington, Edwin O. Smith and Glastonbury teams will be hard outs.

Edmund Smith - Andover

GOP Prioritizing Hate

To the Editor:

The General Assembly has quite a task ahead of it during a short session. Among other items, the Legislature has several educational battles to fight: compromising with the Governor over funding public colleges and universities, addressing shortfalls in the ECS formula that funds schools, and expanding efforts for equity among the state's various demographics.

With such a stacked agenda, it's frustrating and disheartening that a coalition of GOP lawmakers is prioritizing hateful legislation over

support for the communities that they serve.

The consortium of "Let Kids be Kids" is partnering with the ironically named Family Institute of Connecticut on two proposed laws targeting transgender students. One bill calls for parents to be informed when their children begin social gender transitions in school, such as through pronoun or name changes. The second bill takes aim at keeping student athletes divided according to their assigned gender at birth.

Both laws discriminate against transgender students, following a disturbing pattern that has become a platform issue for conservatives. People hate what they don't understand, and the GOP-aligned groups like Moms For Liberty prey upon ignorance by perpetrating stereotypes, bullying families, and pushing backward social agendas.

Schools should be safe spaces for all students, even if it means confiding in educators about things that are uncomfortable or unsafe to discuss at home. The proposed laws would potentially expose students who aren't ready to be outed, in the process further endangering their mental and physical well-being.

Hopefully these bills will be dead on arrival. Discrimination should never be tolerated, let alone legislated. Our leaders should know this, but they are choosing a red herring issue instead of meaningful legislation that would support schools and improve communities. Our kids deserve better.

Sincerely,

Matt Engelhardt - East Hampton

Note: Engelhardt is a member of the East Hampton Board of Education but said he is writing as an individual.

Trump is a Jerk, But...

To the Editor:

In response to the editorial listed on Feb. 9: "Trump is a Jerk." I agree wholeheartedly that Donald J. Trump lacks the scruples to sit in the oval office. However, I wholeheartedly disagree that DJT is what this country needs to move forward.

First, DJT has put America in the situation we are in now, with his rhetoric and big lies. He behaves like an uncontrollable middle school student, and Republicans continue to make excuses for his behavior, or worse do nothing.

Second, DJT is a façade, a chameleon of sorts. A salesman. He has been convicted of fraud, sexual assault, and held accountable by a jury of his peers. DJT has been indicted for stealing classified documents (To date I have not seen Jack Teixeira receiving the same laxity from a similar crime). DJT feels he is above the law, and he is not!

Third, you say he can control foreign dictators. Can he? Of course, he can. He has the same mind set as dictators who imprison/kill those who speak against them. Remember, "birds of a feather."

We are a country of democracy. People have given their lives to protect our freedom. Some say, "DJT is a fighter, and we need this as a country," but who is DJT fighting for? The country or himself? I believe it is the latter. DJT has already spent \$50,000,000.00 of hard-earned donor money on himself.

Finally, it is a shame that 80-year-old women had enough courage to stand up against a tyrannical narcissist, egotistical man-child. Our Constitution is more important than one man's feelings or his personal goal of avoiding consequences from the choices he personally made.

Kim Havelin-Gazdzicki - Colchester

Public Works Commitment

To the Editor:

I was encouraged by the comments of Chairman Peter Kasper of Hebron's Department of Public Works Action Committee in last week's *Rivereast*. As reported by Michael Sinkewicz, "Kasper stressed that the action committee is entirely focused on options at the current DPW site at Old Colchester Road. Ideas relating to Kinney Road are not something we're look-

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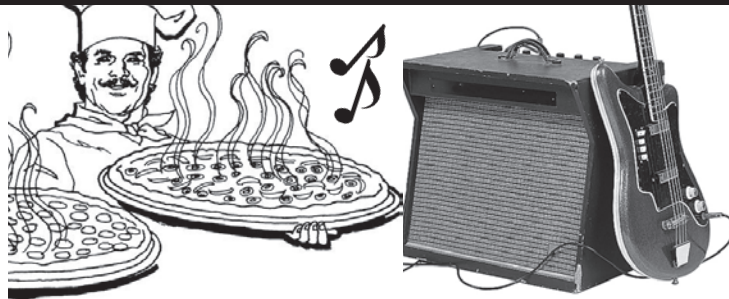
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Donald Roy 860-874-8396

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ing at all. ... The unambiguous shift towards revamping the town's current site – one that is listed at 'GB' site, or an area that has impaired ground water – came after a community survey revealed residents had little desire to relocate the project." In addition to following public opinion, it should be the main priority for all of Hebron's town leaders to contain current and future "impaired ground water" to Old Colchester Road, location of the old landfill and many decades of Public Works activity.

To fulfill the goal of keeping Public Works at its current site, I encourage the Action Committee to investigate all options. As noted by the Town in 2014, "added efficiencies" would be achieved by combining Public Works and Parks and Rec maintenance and storage. In 2022, the Public Building Committee reported that there are 1.67 acres "Available for Public Works" along side the Parks and Rec facility. With Public Works currently occupying 2.15 acres, an addition of 1.67 acres would be a sizable increase. An additional benefit is that construction of a new building at this location would be able to begin immediately and it would also be available as construction progresses at Old Colchester Road. Including a break room and bunk in a new building would add this important amenity in the near future and offer Public Works employees a place to rest during winter storms. Please visit Save Hebron Center on Facebook for more information.

Sincerely,
Kevin J. Tulumieri – Amston

This Is Your Country

To the Editor:

This your country:

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. We the people of the United States... do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

A new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. The only thing we have to fear is fear itself. Lafayette, we are here. Ask not what your country can do for you — ask what you can do for your country. Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall! Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, the wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me, I lift my lamp beside the golden door!

This is your country under Trump:

Covfefe. Inject you some bleach. Very fine people on both sides. This so-called judge. Grab them by the pu**y. When you're a star, they let you do it. Covfefe. The largest audience to ever witness an inauguration. Alternative facts. Journalists are the enemy of the people. Just remember what you're seeing and what you're reading is not what's happening. Fake news! Covfefe.

Mexico will pay for it. If Ivanka weren't my daughter, perhaps I'd be dating her. No, I would not protect certain NATO allies; I would encourage Russia to do whatever the hell they want. Covfefe! Crooked Hillary, Lyin' Ted, Low Energy Jeb, Jeff Flakey, Sleepy Joe, Crazy Bernie, Little Marco, Shifty Schiff, Wacky Jacky, Phony Fani, Pocahontas, Crazy Bernie. Americans who died in war are losers and suckers. McCain is not a war hero; I like people who weren't captured. Covfefe, Covfefe, Covfefe!

Any questions?

Sincerely,
Scott Sauyet – Andover

Note: Sauyet is co-chair of the Andover Democratic Town Committee and a member of the RHAM Board of Education, but said he is writing as an individual.

Thank You Notes

To the Editor:

In order to gain traction and have a chance to save the water, on the Raymond Brook Watershed, in Hebron, #save17 is proving their case. In terms of the environment, we have shown that Old Colchester Rd is a good location for Public Works, while the Horton property, a.k.a. 17 Kinney Rd., is a bad location. A bad location because the property is directly linked to residential well waters. Meanwhile, historic documents have surfaced, supporting historic preservation on 17 Kinney Rd. as well.

Today we'd like to thank William Warzecha, Lorraine Long and the *Rivereast*. Without these key players we might not be where we are today in terms of rebuilding Hebron's Public Works, on Old Colchester Road and giving our household drinking water a fighting chance. We knew our water was in jeopardy, and the bedrock fractures were important, but we needed more than our own interpretation of the environmental reports. Mr. Warzecha just happened to be the right person, in the right place, at the right time and voluntarily stepped in to help.

The same is true for our present PW location. #save17 knew groundwaters must be compromised, by the very nature of the land's use, but we needed more than a hunch. Lorraine Long, a member of Hebron's Water Pollution Control Authority in 1986, stepped in to help. Her correspondence, like Warzecha's, came out of the blue and gave us the push we needed to connect the Old Colchester Road location with accidental water pollution. Both their letters support protecting Kinney Road and reutilizing the Old Colchester Road location. These two individuals read the newspaper and made the connections. #save17 had the information, but so did Town Hall. These accurate testimonies helped bridge the gap between concerned residents and public officials. #save17

Jean Tulumieri – Amston

Liberals

To the Editor:

I'm done with Scott Sauyet...for now. But I anticipate his next "foot-in-mouth" moment. However, another liberal voice of reason, John Barnowski, deserves some attention.

Suppression, misogyny, xenophobia, homophobia, hate, hooliganism, vigilantism. John, tell us how you really feel about individuals who don't share your political views. The attributes you ascribe to Trump voters are taken right out of the "Liberalism for Dummies" handbook. Whether it's the acid reflux-inducing programming on CNN/MSNBC, or the mind numbing letters submitted by the Toilet Paper Mafia, the concepts of fantasy and projection are always on full display. It's uncanny. Liberals are so phony that they voted for a seasoned political grifter who is physically, mentally and politically compromised, and who is being used like a marionette by anti-American factions in Washington to "protect" democracy.

Liberals follow a political party financed by George Soros that has turned our legal system into western versions of Russia and China. They lament Jan. 6th while brushing off the country-wide violence and destruction of 2020. They deny the existence of Antifa. They encourage the disastrous Biden border crisis because it's not in their neighborhood. They don't grasp the concepts of basic math and inflation. They use terms like racist, homophobe, and xenophobe while Al Sharpton and Joy Reid are still employed. They buy into letting Ukrainians die in a war they'll never win. They indict, prosecute, bankrupt, and jail Republicans. And do they really think that Biden is not protected by the DOJ, FBI, and the media? I mean, they hid the

laptop, and still claim it's Russian disinformation. C'mon, man!

There is comic irony here, but it is sadly overshadowed by the pretentious morality on which liberals base their existence (and their arguments). Now, let's go do a few bumps and read classified documents in the garage.

Cheers,
Ed Kozlowski – Colchester

Traitors and Boogeymen

To the Editor:

The boogeyman is out there...lurking... waiting for an opportunity to steal your freedom and ruin your way of life. He comes in many forms. Sometimes he is a communist from Southeast Asia, other times a middle eastern despot or Arab terrorist, or a Russian oligarch. They have plans, plotting our downfall. Thankfully our government keeps us safe by monitoring our communications, colliding with big tech to censor our speech, and sanitizing the news we have access to.

Recently some wanna be, LARP-ing "journalist" thought he'd go and interview one of our adversaries to gain some perspective on the increasingly tense geopolitical situation our country faces. But we all know the truth. This man is no journalist...he's a traitor, pure and simple. Line him up with Trump, take his mug shot, throw away the key! We don't have time to waste learning, not when we have bombs to drop, money to print, and sustainability goals to meet!

Thankfully there is talk of the EU sanctioning this lunatic and banning his travel--rumors of Ukraine putting him on a kill list are a step in the right direction. Someone has to stand up for decency these days!

Ukraine knows which way the wind blows and has taken appropriate steps to protect itself by banning all opposing political parties, taking over the media, and banning the Russian Orthodox Church. With our billions in weapons/funding and their willingness to throw 60+ year old conscripts into the meat grinder, it's refreshing to see someone keeping the world safe for democracy.

So say a prayer for all our fearless leaders, who keep us safe and protect us from the boogeymen, seen and unseen. Trust their decisions and believe in a prosperous future where all our enemies are dead, and democracy is all that remains.

Colin McNamara – Marlborough

Editor's Desk continued from page 4

tection. For more information and to purchase discounted tickets, visit www.CTFishingOutdoorShow.com.

Also speaking of the outdoors, it seems I know more and more people who are raising their own backyard chickens. If you're interested in learning more about the hobby, you're in luck.

Bentley Memorial Library, located at 206

Guns

To the Editor:

What should I do here? That car just cut me off. I know; I'll get my gun, chase them down and shoot them. That'll teach them.

You've gotta be kidding me; we're out on a date and someone is hitting on my date right in front of me. I'm getting my gun; that'll take care of them.

I just got fired; my boss never liked me anyway. I'm going to make them pay; where's my gun?

Geez, I just got beat up; I know, I'll use my gun and shoot them. I'm pretty sure they won't beat me up again.

Recently someone told me, If you don't want to get shot don't go. Really???

Woo-hoo, my team won the championship. I'm going to go enjoy the parade. Look at all of these people here celebrating the team, tens maybe hundreds of thousands of people. Well it was an enjoyable experience until it wasn't; now I'm never going home. Now two children have lost their mother. Is Lisa Lopez-Galvan the first mother this has happened to? No. Will she be the last mother this has happened to? No.

I'm not a "man" unless I use a gun. A gun makes me "strong", a gun makes me a "real man." Yeah, no.

Taylor Swift donated \$100,000 to a fund for Lisa Lopez-Galvan's family because a juvenile felt it necessary to prove he was a "man" by using a gun to settle a situation.

That car, date, workplace and fight? It wasn't just one person in that spot that "got what they deserved" Did Lisa Lopez-Galvan "deserve" the bullet(s) that took her life? Why do other people have to suffer when a "male" has to prove he's a "real man" by using a gun?

Respectfully Submitted,
Eric Manning – Andover

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Town Manager Previews Budget

By Michael Sinkewicz

Marlborough Town Manager David Porter provided a preliminary look this week of the 2024-25 municipal budget proposal, with more concrete figures expected to come in the weeks ahead.

During a phone call, Porter said he's expecting the proposal to represent a 2-3% increase over current-year spending. While he didn't provide a layout of specific budget figures, he believed that the forthcoming spending plan would be perceived as fiscally responsible.

He noted that the town is cognizant of inflationary pressures, and that it is trying to avoid passing along any substantial tax burden onto residents.

Earlier this month, Porter presented revenue, capital projects and operations portions of the budget to the Board of Selectmen. He was expected to provide further information to the Board of Finance on Wednesday evening, after press time.

In a followup email Wednesday morning, Porter included a snapshot of key areas the town is prioritizing moving forward.

The plan included funds to acquire a permanent finance director, a second part-time account clerk and to keep the town's current consultant employed to help train the new members.

"Building a high-performing finance function will help Marlborough manage our reserves effectively, efficiently procure goods and services, inform capital planning and operational decision making, and issue bonds if/when we decide to do so," the town manager wrote.

The budget includes another public works employee and dollars for a small SUV to supplement the larger van currently used for the town's senior center shuttle.

For the fire department, the spending plan includes capital to purchase protective gear and breathing apparatuses.

"This equipment has a finite shelf life," Porter explained. "We are developing a routine equipment replacement program to ensure that our firefighters have the safety equipment they need while producing nearly level future budgets."

Funding is being allocated for new computers for both staff and public use at the library. There is also new funding to accommodate the upcoming presidential election and state requirements for early voting.

During the call, Porter said the town will be aiming to make infrastructure improvements, such as culvert replacements.

Lions Eyeglass and Hearing Aid Collection

The Marlborough Lions collect used eyeglasses and hearing aids, which are then provided to people in impoverished countries all around the world.

The Marlborough Lions drop boxes are located at Richmond Memorial Library, Town Hall, Liberty Bank, the Marlborough Senior Center and at the office of Dr. Steven Rafalowsky on Saner Road.

The Lions collect the eyeglasses and hearing

aids all year long, and on March 3, Lions clubs from all over Connecticut will be meeting to turn in the collected items. Eyeglass cases are also appreciated.

If you have any questions, or would like to learn more about the Marlborough Lions, call Lions Secretary Ken Hjulstrom at 860-490-9116 or Lions Club President Megan Lloyd at 413-687-5537.

President's List

Marlborough residents Joshua Dunagan, Colin Pace and Ashley Piacentini made the fall 2023 President's List at Goodwin University.

Jonathan Goldstein of Marlborough made the fall 2023 President's List at the University of Hartford.

Dean's List

Marlborough resident Ethan Demosthenous made the fall 2023 Dean's List at the University of Tampa in Tampa, Fla.

Demosthenous is a freshman at the school.

Commemorative Mugs Still Available

Marlborough Republicans still have a limited number of 220th anniversary mugs available. These 12-ounce ceramic cups feature Marlborough's town seal on one face.

Mugs are \$12 each. To purchase, call Jack Murray at 860-543-2050 or Louise Concedello at 860-463-7646.

Dean's List

Jonathan Goldstein of Marlborough made the fall 2023 Dean's List at the University of Hartford.

Members Sought for Arts Center

The Marlborough Arts Center is accepting renewals of membership as well as new membership registrations. Memberships are valid from Jan. 1 to Dec. 31 of each year.

Information and downloadable membership forms are available on the MAC website, www.marlborougharts.org. Payment can be made by check or by using the PayPal option.

Funds collected for membership are a part of keeping the Arts Center running.

The center's Student Art Show will occur in March, and will be followed by the annual Members' Art Show. Musical Fourth Fridays are on the calendar as well as historical presentations and art classes.

The Arts Center is a regional nonprofit organization and includes all the towns in the Marlborough area.

The Arts Center phone number is 860-467-6353.

Pre-Kindergarten Screening Information

All public school systems in Connecticut are responsible for the identification of children who may be eligible to receive special education services. The Early Childhood team at Marlborough Elementary School is accepting applications for current resident children interested in pre-kindergarten screening for the 2024-25 school year.

Eligible children must be 3 or 4 years old by Sept. 1. Parents/guardians interested in their child participating in this process must com-

plete and return a questionnaire no later than Friday, March 8. An in-person screening is planned for early April.

Please note that children identified as kindergarten-eligible (those turning 5 by Sept. 1) are not eligible for the pre-kindergarten program for the upcoming school year.

Contact Marcy Spellman at 860-295-6236 or mspellman@marlborough.k12.ct.us for more information or to receive a screening questionnaire.

Congregational Church News & Notes

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

Sunday, Feb. 25 is Bluegrass Sunday, with Joyful Blue leading familiar upbeat hymns with hand-clapping and singing along by the congregation. The service will be led by the Rev. Valerie Seaver. Her sermon title is "Professor of Transfiguration."

Faith Formation (Bible Study) is led by Seaver and meets Thursdays at 10:30 a.m., upstairs in the Thienes 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 worshippers to bring their donations. The Drive-Thru Café for Marlborough Food Bank patrons with vouchers will be held Feb. 25.

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

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

Second Blessings Thrift Shop, located on the lower level, is open for spring shopping and donating on Fridays from noon-3 p.m. and Saturdays from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. The shop sells year-round through eBay at bit.ly/MCCebay.

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

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.

Lenten Reconciliation: Mondays during Lent, from 5-6 p.m.

Lenten Stations of the Cross: Fridays beginning at 7 p.m. Most Fridays also include a simple soup supper prior to Stations, at 6 p.m.

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 5:30-7:30 p.m. All are welcome to join. More information is on the church website.

Community Outreach and Service: Food drives are held weekly 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, book club, OCIA, Knights of Columbus or other ministries, call the office, visit www.stjfcchurch.org, or look for the church on Facebook (Saint John Fisher Roman Catholic Church).

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4th Friday @ the Arts Café

Marlborough Arts Center, 231 N. Main St., will host the internationally known bluesman Ramblin' Dan Stevens and his guitars for the 4th Friday @ the Arts Café on Friday, Feb. 23, at 231 North Main St. Doors open at 7 p.m., with the concert beginning at 7:30 p.m.

Stevens plays a mix of traditional finger-style

blues, americana, and originals. See www.marlbrougharts.org for more details and to hear clips of his music.

Admission at the door is \$10. BYOW; light refreshments will be available. The Arts Center is handicapped-accessible, with on-site parking.

Oil Painting Classes at Arts Center

The Marlborough Arts Center will hold adult classes in oil painting starting in March.

Classes will run for eight weeks and are offered Mondays from 10 a.m.-noon and Wednesdays from 6-8 p.m. Classes start the week of March 11, and end the week of April 29.

Holly Lavigne, an experienced artist from Glastonbury, will teach. She said the class will be a fun and practical way for beginners to learn the fundamentals of oil painting. Students will explore various techniques, tools, and materials, with a mix of demonstrations, hands-on prac-

tice and constructive feedback.

Cost for the class is \$160. Registration forms can be downloaded from www.marlbrougharts.org, and a check mailed to The Marlborough Arts Center, 231 North Main St., Marlborough, CT 06447.

A materials list will be provided as soon as enough students are enrolled to form a class. For more information, contact Lavigne at hollylvaigneart@gmail.com or leave a voicemail message at 860-467-6353.

Forum on Housing Affordability

On Tuesday, Feb. 27, at 7 p.m., the Marlborough Planning Commission and the Marlborough Sustainable CT Team will host a community public forum to discuss housing affordability and what can Marlborough do to further it.

The evening will feature a presentation

and discussion with Erin Boggs, Esq. of Open Communities Alliance on Housing Affordability and Fair Housing. Boggs has extensive expertise both in Connecticut and nationally in housing affordability and equity issues.

The forum will be held at the Marlborough Senior Center. All are welcome.

Lions Brewery Tour

The Marlborough Lions Club will host a brewery tour Saturday, May 4. The bus will depart Marlborough at noon, with 50 seats available with two brewery stops.

Tickets are \$45 and include raffle prizes, transportation a private room at Five Churches Brewery in New Britain, food and one more brewery stop yet to be determined.

Beer can be purchased at each site. Five Churches Brewery offers beers which range

from \$5 to \$9, with \$3.00 tasters, wine for \$10, pre-made cocktails for \$8, or soda for \$2.00. There will also be stuffed breads provided by the tour; however, additional food can be purchased if desired.

For more information, visit the Lions' Facebook page at www.facebook.com/connecticut.marlbrough.lions or reach out to Lions Club member Jennifer Greloch at jenbruhns@gmail.com.

Parks and Rec Upcoming Programs

Marlborough Parks and Recreation has announced the following. For full program descriptions or to register, visit marlbroughct.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.

Adult Programs: Beginner & Intermediate Tai Chi: Thursdays, 1-2 p.m., at Marlborough Senior Center. Registration fee is \$40/resident, \$45/non-resident.

Zumba: Thursdays, 6:30-7:30 p.m., at Marlborough Elementary School. Fee is \$50/resident, \$55/non-resident. Drop-in fee is \$10.

Drop-In Volleyball: Thursdays, 8-10 p.m., at MES. Fee: \$5 per week. Session runs until June.

Drop-In Basketball: Sundays, 8-10 a.m.,

through March 31, at MES. Fee is \$5 per week. Session runs until April.

Trips: Boston Bruins vs. New York Islanders: Saturday, March 2, 7:30 p.m., at UBS arena. Trip includes charter bus, cookout before the game, and tickets to the game. Registration fee is \$195. Bus leaves from Putnam park and ride in Glastonbury at 1:30 p.m.

Boston Saint Patrick's Day Parade: Sunday, March 17. Trip includes charter bus, food before the parade, food after the parade, and games and prizes on the bus. Registration fee is \$85. Bus leave from Putnam park and ride at 7:30 a.m.

Driveway Reflective Number Signs: Cost of the sign is \$50. Vertical sign is double sided 8" x 24" with 4" numbers on blue highway reflective metal. Order forms are online and at Town Hall.

Kindergarten Registration

Elmer Thienes - Mary Hall Elementary School (MES) in Marlborough will accept registration packets for kindergarten students for the 2024-25 school year on two days next month.

Packets will be accepted Wednesday, March 20 (9-11 a.m., 1-2 p.m., and 5-6:30 p.m.) and Thursday, March 21 (9-11 a.m. and 1-2 p.m.). All completed kindergarten packets should be dropped off at the school's Main Office, located at 25 School Drive.

Under a new state law, starting with the 2024-25 school year, children will need to be five years of age by Sept. 1 in order to attend kindergarten. If your child does not meet the new entry cut-off, they may still be admitted

to kindergarten upon a written request from the parent or guardian that is sent to the MES administration and an assessment completed by the school that determines admitting the child to kindergarten would be developmentally appropriate. All interested families will have their child assessed in the spring along with all the children who meet the new state guidelines of Sept. 1.

If you have an eligible child or a child you would like assessed and you have not received a registration packet, call the school office at 860-295-6220. If you receive a registration packet and do not plan to enroll your child for the 2024-25 school year, please notify the school as soon as possible.

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. The center also serves as a warming center.

Transportation: 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.

In Case of Bad Weather: Tune in to WFSB-TV Channel 3 or NBC Connecticut Channel 30 for news on senior center closings or late openings.

Monday, Feb. 26: Free bread and bakery goods from Stop & Shop; Help & Support, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.; 8-Ball Pool, 10 a.m.-noon; Congregate Meal, noon. Menu: 100% juice fruit punch, stuffed cabbage with sauce, rice/vegetable blend, wheat dinner roll/margarine, chocolate pudding w/ topping; Bingo, 1-3 p.m.; Setback, 3-4 p.m.

Tuesday, Feb. 27: Free bread and bakery

goods donation from Big Y; Help & Support, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.; 8-ball pool, 10 a.m.-noon; Meals-on-Wheels, noon; Tai Chi, 1-2 p.m.

Wednesday, Feb. 28: Not Just Quilting, 9 a.m.-2 p.m.; Help & Support, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.; 8-ball pool, 10 a.m.-noon; Chatham Health District: Isolation & Social Connection, 10:30-11 a.m.; Meals-on-Wheels, noon; Congregate Meal, noon. Menu: kielbasa/mustard, caramelized onions, paprika-seasoned diced potatoes, wax beans, dinner roll/fresh fruit; Setback, 3-4 p.m.; Sophisticated Ladies tap dancing, 5-6:30 p.m.

Thursday, Feb. 29: Help & Support, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.; Meals-on-Wheels, noon; Tai Chi, 1 p.m.; PD Exercise w/ Anne, 3-4 p.m.

Friday, March 1: Not Just Quilting, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.; Meals-on-Wheels, noon; Congregate Meal, noon - call for menu; Setback, 1-4 p.m.

Monday, March 4: Red Cross Blood Drive, 1-6 p.m.

Community Sing

Carolyn Brodgerski of Seat of Our Pants invites the community to attend a no-cost Community Sing upstairs in the lounge at the Marlborough Congregational Church, 35 South Main St., on Friday, March 1, at 7 p.m.

Words and cords are provided for over 100 songs, and all singers and musicians are welcome to this monthly sing-along. Enter through the yellow front doors of the church.

Spring season Community Sings will be April 5, May 3 and June 7.

American Legion Setback Tournery

American Legion Post 197 will hold a round-robin setback tournament Saturday, Feb. 24, at the post, located at 128 East Hampton Rd. Registration begins at 5:30 p.m., and the games start promptly at 6.

There will be prizes, raffles, and ziti with garlic bread. Entry fee is \$10 per person.

Contact Tracy (860-878-9672) or Sharon (860-805-6917) with any questions.



Planning Commission & Sustainable Marlborough Team Public Forum & Discussion

Tuesday, February 27th 7:00PM
Marlborough Senior Center

Join us for a community discussion about the changing demographics in town & housing opportunities.

With guest speaker Erin Boggs, Esq. Executive Director, Open Communities Alliance

The town is seeking candidates to serve on the new Housing Opportunities Committee that will address housing options in town, including affordable housing options.

A sign-up sheet will be available at the forum & on the town website after the forum at:

www.marlbroughct.net

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Salamone Surpasses Scoring Mark

By Josh Howard

Liana Salamone now tops the basketball charts at East Hampton High School.

Salamone, a junior, became the all-time leader scorer in the history of the girls' basketball program on Feb. 17. The prolific scorer eclipsed the mark during the team's first round Shoreline Conference (SLC) win over Cromwell, finishing the night with 1,481 career points.

Salamone described reaching the mark as "surreal", explaining that she feels "extremely grateful."

"I couldn't do it without my amazing coaches who have guided me through each and every season, my teammates who have been there along the way, and my dad who has come to every game," she added.

Since she first stepped foot on the high school courts, Salamone has been a point producing prodigy, leading the team in scoring in each of the last three years as the Bellringers have also excelled in the win-loss column.

"This is an amazing career accomplishment for any player, and to have done it in three years is even more amazing," stated East Hampton head coach Shaun Russell. "Liana has improved her game each season and continues to work to become a better player, teammate and leader daily."

Salamone leapfrogged 2017 EHHS graduate Gyanna Russell, who netted 1,478 points during her illustrious career at the high school, which featured a pair of All-State seasons and a SLC Player of the Year honor.

After watching Salamone play as a freshman, Russell said she knew her record could soon fall.

"I couldn't be more proud of her. Records are meant to be broken and it is even more exciting having had the opportunity to watch her suc-

cess over the years," stated Russell, who went on to net over 1,000 career points in college at Southern New Hampshire University. "She is an unbelievable player with an unmatched ability to create her own shot and get to the basket. I cannot wait to see her evolve into an amazing collegiate athlete as she has a very bright future ahead of her."

During last season's SLC tourney, Salamone surpassed the 1,000-point mark on her way to being named the SLC Player of the Year as the Bellringers won another conference title.

Along with winning a fourth consecutive SLC title last season, East Hampton captured the program's first state championship since 1980, defeating Valley Regional 31-29 in the Class M title game behind Salamone's game-high 12 points and 10 rebounds.

Following the 2022-23 season, Salamone was named to the All-State team for the second straight season and is well on her way to a third selection in three seasons.

"I think it's definitely a testament to how much work I've put in and how much I love the game. I always pour my heart out on the court and try to give my team everything I've got," explained Salamone. "I definitely have a great support system that has helped me in my three years here so far. I know that I can lean on any of my teammates or coaches when I need help or just need to talk."

Salamone's individual accomplishments have correlated with the team's success as the Bellringers have won 57 of 60 regular season games during her three years on the courts.

"I am very proud of her accomplishments and those of the team and she is an integral part of those successes," added Shaun Russell. "More important than the statistical numbers, howev-



Junior Liana Salamone became East Hampton girls' basketball's all-time leading scorer last week.

er, is the way that she has gone about becoming a great player and the way that she represents her team, her family, her school, and her community."

Salamone's breaking the scoring mark is just the latest noteworthy moment for Bellringers team that won all 20 regular season games and are aiming to continue their conference

supremacy and repeat as state champions this winter.

Along with Salamone becoming the all-time leading scorer, Jackie Russell – Gyanna Russell's younger sister – also hit a scoring mark when she surpassed 1,000 career points during a win over Coghinchaug on Feb. 1.

Denim, Diamonds and Drafts

All are invited to an evening of dancing, dinner and drinks to support the Connecticut Draft Horse Rescue Friday, March 15, from 6:30-10:30 p.m., at Saint Clements Castle (1931 Portland-Cobalt Rd., Portland).

There will be music, food, dancing, raffles, live auctions, and silent auctions. Proceeds benefit the CDHR horses.

Tickets are limited and are \$85 per person. For tickets, go to tinyurl.com/mrhjw6d. Tickets must be purchased by March 6 – if

they don't sell out first. The event is snow or shine. Contact the organizer to request a refund.

The CDHR is a nonprofit organization (located in East Hampton) dedicated to saving the lives of neglected or abused draft horses as well as draft horses heading to slaughter. For more information visit www.ctdraftrescue.org, www.facebook.com/ctdraftrescue, or send an email to ctdraftrescue@aol.com.

Fabric, Yarn Donations Sought

Haddam Neck Congregational Church is accepting donations of fabric and yarn for the upcoming Bits & Pieces sale planned during the church's annual Quilt Show coming up in April. For information on drop-off or pick-up of items, contact Darci at 860-301-4994 or Melissa at 860-993-5311 or mapionzio@comcast.net

The church's annual Quilt Show and Bits & Pieces sale on Saturday, April 13, from 10 a.m.-5 p.m., and Sunday, April 14, from noon-5 p.m.

The event features dozens of handcrafted vintage and new quilts, a tea room where beverages, soups and pie can be purchased, and the Bits & Pieces sale of fabric, yarn and notions. Admission to the event is \$8.

To submit quilts for the show, contact Dianne McHutchison at dianemchutchison@icloud.com, Lisa Malloy at elizabethhartmalloy@gmail.com or Melissa Pionzio at mapionzio@comcast.net or 860-993-5311.

Technology Tutoring Session

Middle Haddam Public Library, located at 2 Knowles Rd., Middle Haddam, will offer a One-on-One Technology Tutoring Session with members of the East Hampton High School Interact Club on Tuesday, 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.

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.

Masked Ball at Epoch Arts

Epoch Arts will hold its annual Teen Masked Ball Dance Friday, Feb. 23, from 7-9 p.m., at Epoch, 27 Skinner St.

Teens in grades six and up are invited to dress in their best, funkiest or most original clothes and come for a night of dancing to a live DJ. There will be food, a photo booth, games and more. Admission is \$10.

For more information, visit www.epocharts.org.

Spring Athletics 2024

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

Deadline for online registrations is: Monday, March 4. For additional information, contact AD Michael Mercaldi at 860-463-6837.

What is Early Voting?

An informational session to explain what early voting is and how it will impact East Hampton voters will be held at East Hampton Town Hall Thursday, March 7, at 6:30 p.m., in the Town Council Chamber Room.

Contact the East Hampton registrar of voters for more information at registrar@easthamptonct.org.

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/szyf5fn 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.

EHACC Taking Grant Applications

The East Hampton Arts & Culture Commission (EHACC) welcomes grant applications from East Hampton organizations and individuals with programs and/or projects that enrich the lives of East Hampton residents through the arts.

One of two \$500 grants are available to be awarded to individuals or organizations residing in East Hampton. The commission reserves the right to award a grant to an individual or organization it determines will have the most potential impact of arts and/or culture on the town. Incomplete forms will be denied; applicants can resubmit.

Criteria for awarding grants: The artistic and organizational quality of the organization and/

or project and its likelihood of continuing viability or success. The organization's or project's accessibility and service to the East Hampton community. Grant recipients must credit the East Hampton Arts and Culture Commission on all press releases, posters, print advertising and programs.

Evaluation: An interview may be requested of the candidate prior to awarding the grant. An update of your progress will be required six months post-award date and a final report will be required one year post award date.

Deadline to apply is April 1, by emailing arts@easthamptonct.org. Applications can also be dropped off at Town Hall, in the town manager's office.

Retired State Historian to Discuss Book

On Saturday, March 16, author Walter W. Woodward will give a talk on his recent book, *Creating Connecticut: Critical Moments that Shaped a Great State*, at 11 a.m. at the East Hampton Library Community Room, located at 105 Main St.

The talk is part of the Cabin Fever History Series organized by the Chatham Historical Society and co-sponsored by the East Hampton Library.

Woodward, who served as Connecticut State Historian from 2004 until his retirement in 2022, is a scholar of early American and Atlantic world history, with an emphasis on Connecticut and New England. His research interests cover a variety of subjects, including witchcraft, alchemy and the history of science, the use of music in early America, and environmental history.

Woodward is the author of five books, the most recent of which is *Creating Connecticut*. His book *Prospero's America: John Winthrop, Jr., Alchemy and the Creation of New England Culture, 1606-1676* won the Homer Babbidge Prize from the Association for the Study of Connecticut History and was Choice Magazine Outstanding Academic Title.

Before becoming a historian, Woodward enjoyed successful careers in both the advertising and music industries. He composed two country music hits in the 1970s, and went on to win two Emmys for television documentary music, and 8 Clio Awards for advertising music.



Walter W. Woodward

You can register in person at East Hampton Public Library, by phone at 860-267-6621, or online at easthamptonpubliclibrary.org. For more information, contact Chatham Historical Society member Marty Podskoch at 860-267-2442 or podskoch@comcast.net.

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Early Voting – Another Way to Cast a Ballot

By London Brazal

Early voting options will be accessible for the forthcoming presidential preference primary, per state legislation passed last year.

And next month, East Hampton residents can attend an informational session to learn more about the process.

In June 2023, Governor Ned Lamont signed into law a measure introducing early voting for general elections, special elections and primaries in Connecticut. Under Public Act 23-5, there will be 14 days of early voting for general elections, seven days for most primaries and four days for special elections and presidential preference primaries, effective this year.

Every municipality in the state must establish at least one early voting location and has the option to create more. As of press time, in East Hampton early voting for the April presidential primary will occur at Town Hall Tuesday, March 26, through Thursday, March 28, and Saturday, March 30, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. each day. (The dates have been modified to reflect Good Friday and Easter Sunday.)

When voters arrive at the early voting location, they will check in with a valid ID and be verified as an eligible voter like normal. They

will then receive their ballot and an envelope. Voters will complete their ballots at designated privacy booths and seal them in the provided envelopes. Before leaving, voters must deposit the sealed envelopes in the secure receptacle as instructed by the election officials. The ballots will remain secured and unopened until Election Day on April 2. The ballots are processed by running through the tabulator on Election Day along with all the same-day voting and absentee ballots.

Election officials will record ballots once they are cast, preventing anyone from voting early at any other location, submitting an absentee ballot, or voting on Election Day.

Early voting is different from an absentee ballot because an absentee ballot requires a reason. Early voting is open to all eligible voters without any specific justification and can only be conducted in person, it is not permitted via mail or drop box.

The registrars of voters will present a Voter Information Session Thursday, March 7, at 6:30 p.m., at Town Hall, for residents to learn more about the process for casting an early vote.

Since the election in April is a closed primary,

residents have to be affiliated with the party they are voting for. The deadline to switch parties has passed. However, the deadline for unaffiliated voters who want to vote during the early voting period to enroll in a party is Monday, March 25, at noon. The deadline for unaffiliated voters to enroll in a party for in-person voting on April 2 is Monday, April 1 at noon.

Individuals who are not yet registered but wish to participate in early voting for the presidential preference primary must submit their voter registration application (for a party holding a primary) to the registrars of voters by noon on the business day before the desired voting day.

Voting via absentee ballot is still available for those who require it. Voting on Primary Day itself, April 2, will proceed as normal, from 6 a.m.-8 p.m., at East Hampton High School.

Connecticut is one of the last states in the nation to adopt a system of early voting.

“Encouraging voters to cast a ballot in elections must be a priority for any functioning democracy, and expanding the hours that voters can cast a ballot will give more people an opportunity to get to their polling place and vote,” Lamont stated in a press release last June.

“In today’s economy, it is not realistic to expect every eligible voter to travel in person to one specific location during a limited set of hours on a Tuesday to cast their ballot,” he added. “Nearly every other state in our country has early voting, and I am glad that Connecticut is finally joining them.”

The dates for early voting for the Primary Election in August and the General Election in November are also established according to the Connecticut Secretary of State.

Visit easthamptonct.gov/registrar-voters to access resources regarding the closed primary and party status.

Christ Episcopal Church News

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

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

Sunday School: Sunday School classes are in session. The Rev. Joanne Neel-Richard and Emily Vick lead the group, which meets at 9:55. New

students welcome. Contact neelrichard16@gmail.com for information/dates, as classes are sometimes rescheduled.

Lenten Series: End of Life Planning as Spiritual Practice: This series is hosted on Zoom each Saturday during Lent from 9:30-10:45 a.m. Christ Church Middle Haddam and St. Stephen’s East Haddam will combine for this activity. Those interested should contact Rogers at revdianarogers@gmail.com to register.

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

Local Schools Offer Preschool Programs

The East Hampton Public Schools system is seeking 3- and 4-year-old residents interested in preschool programs for the 2024-25 school year. There will be two preschool programs offered – the Integrated preschool half-day program and full-day Smart Start program.

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

Memorial Elementary School’s Smart Start Program will be held five full days per week (8:50 a.m.-2:50 p.m.), following the East Hamp-

ton Public Schools calendar. Priority will be given to 4-year-old children that meet income guidelines or have other factors for consideration. Other applicants, regardless of economic or risk factors will then be selected. Children must turn 4 prior to Sept. 1 to be eligible for Smart Start.

Parents interested in proceeding through the selection process must pick up an application/information packet at either Memorial Elementary School or East Hampton Public Library. The completed parent interview form, immunization form and a proof of residency must be returned to Jodi Blyler at Memorial School office no later than March 15. Once all three forms are returned, parents will be contacted, no later than March 22, to schedule a time to bring their child for the screening and lottery/selection process.

Forms received after the March 15 date will not be accepted.

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Joint Worship for Congregational Churches

Second Congregational Church of Middle Haddam and Haddam Neck Congregational Church will hold joint worship services during February at 10:30 a.m. Sundays at Haddam Neck Congregational Church., 408 Quarry Hill Rd.

On Feb. 25, guest preacher will be seminarian Jeff Birch. Birch is a student at Lexington Theological Seminary in Kentucky, where he

is in his fifth and final year in the Master of Divinity program there. He is a member of The First Congregational Church in Essex, and the student minister at Niantic Community Church. He lives in Flanders with his partner, Mike, and their two cats.

All are welcome. Visit www.haddamneck-congregationalchurch.org for more information.

Tango2 Foundation Fundraiser

Po’s Rice and Spice in East Hampton will host a fundraiser to support the Tango2 Disease Foundation on Thursday, Feb. 29, from 11 a.m.-9 p.m. Po’s will donate 20% of the day’s sales, including meals, take-out, delivery and gift cards, to the foundation.

Tango2 is a rare genetic disease that affects children and young adults. The foundation was

created in 2018 to raise money to fund scientific research grants for treatments and a possible cure, and to support families who have children with the disease.

Rare Disease Day is marked every year on the last day in February. Rare diseases affect 300 million people around the globe, the Tango2 Foundation said.

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New Opportunity for Residents to Participate in Budget Process

By London Brazal

The Town Council along with members of the Board of Education and Board of Finance are hosting listening sessions for community members to voice their comments about the upcoming budget.

Republican councilor member Deb Cunningham said she wanted to create new ways for residents to become engaged with the budget process sooner, rather than later. "Most times, people come to the 'party' too late," said Cunningham. After emailing the rest of the board, she teamed up with Democrat Jordan Werme to brainstorm more ways of involving community input.

After discussion, the two created listening sessions scheduled at different locations in town – with each session featuring various council and board members in attendance.

At each session, residents will have up to six minutes of speaking time – double the amount at town meetings. They'll be able to share ideas and express concerns regarding East Hampton politics, as long as they are respectful, Cunningham noted. She said the listening sessions are not debates or question-and-answer forums. The sessions will be recorded to eliminate summaries or the interpretation of someone else's notes. The recordings will be gathered as com-

munity feedback.

Werme explained how, since campaign season last year, the Town Council was on the same page regarding the need to get more community input on the budget before it has to be voted on.

"It was a platform both parties ran on last year," said Werme. He added that meeting people in the community helps eliminate obstacles. "We are willing to meet people where they are at locations they're used to gathering at such as the library or senior center."

Furthering that point, Werme said Town Hall can be intimidating to people. Both Werme and Cunningham emphasized the point that every resident has an opportunity to be a part of the budget process. Cunningham, who was previously on the Board of Finance, added that members of the boards knew the budget wasn't going to pass last year.

"People thought they weren't being heard," she said. A new option for participation is "not foolproof, but it won't be at a lack of trying."

One frustrating aspect is people will complain informally such as turning to Facebook but not attend meetings to speak during public comment. Werme and Cunningham agreed that Facebook is a disconnect and it is important to bring back face-to-face communication.

"We want to explore every possible avenue for people to participate," said Cunningham. At every town meeting, residents have three minutes to speak during public comments. People can also call town hall and leave a message, send an email or mail in a letter. "There are a lot of different methods if people don't feel comfortable coming in-person to meetings."

Cunningham described the new initiative as "another leg on the stool" – it is an additional channel to help keep the budget process calm and transparent. Many board members want to create easier forms of accessibility to involve citizens and for them to understand the reasons behind why elected officials are making their decisions.

Another aspect of the new initiative is that both parties are working together to listen to the needs of people from various demographics – as well as political parties.

"We were elected to represent everybody, not just the people of our party," stated Werme.

Cunningham agreed that their goal is to rep-

resent the community and listen to the residents' needs. They said that the council has established a good working relationship and it is easy to float ideas to the chairperson and then act on them.

In the next few weeks, residents are encouraged to attend a listening session and various town meetings. Both Cunningham and Werme are enthusiastic about the pilot and have residents meet elected officials in person. "We want to bring back the old New England way of participatory government," said Werme.

The schedule for the listening sessions is: Tuesday, Feb. 27, from 4-6 p.m., at Town Hall; Wednesday, Feb. 28, from 2-3 p.m., at the Senior Center; Tuesday, March 5, from 6-8 p.m., at the Library Community Room; and Saturday, March 16, from 9-10 a.m., at the Air Line Trail. There will actually be two separate sessions on the Air Line Trail: the parking lot at 87 Main St. and the Cranberry Bog. Both of those sessions are weather permitting.

Kindergarten Registration

Memorial Elementary School in East Hampton is accepting applications for all children eligible to enter kindergarten in September.

Per new legislation, any child who is five years old on or before Sept. 1, 2024, is eligible to register for Memorial's kindergarten program. If your child will not be 5 by this date but will be 5 by Jan. 1, 2025, and you would like them to attend kindergarten in the 2024-25 school year, you must submit a request for early entry.

Registration packets are available in the Memorial School lobby, at East Hampton Public Library, and at www.easthamptonps.org. Completed registration forms are due to the Memorial School office by Thursday, March 28, along with a full-size copy of the child's birth certificate and proof of residency in East Hampton.

In addition, a current health assessment form must be on file with the school nurse's office by

Friday, Aug. 9. Students may not begin kindergarten until vaccination records have been submitted.

Once all completed registration paperwork is returned to Memorial, you will be contacted to schedule a screening appointment for your child.

Screening appointments will be held Monday, May 13; Wednesday, May 15; and Friday, May 17. Appointments will be scheduled for half-hour time blocks between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. If you have requested early entry to kindergarten for your 4-year-old, you will be also scheduled for an additional assessment on Monday, May 20, or Friday, May 24.

Contact the Memorial School office at 860-365-4020 if you have questions regarding the registration process.

Library Planning for the Future

East Hampton Public Library is planning for the future by developing a new Strategic Plan and is looking for input from the community to help guide services in the coming years.

The library will host three different Community Conversations next month in order to gain a better understanding of people's aspirations for East Hampton and what role the library can play in achieving those goals.

Community Conversations will be held

Saturday, March 2, from 10:30 a.m.-noon; Friday, March 15, from 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m.; and Tuesday, March 26, from 6:30-8 p.m. No registration is required and all are welcome to attend. Light refreshments will be served.

The library said it also hopes to conduct a community-wide survey during March to gather ideas and information, which would be available digitally on the library's website (www.EastHamptonPublicLibrary.org) or as a paper version at the library.

Watercolorist to Present Program

The next meeting of the East Hampton Art Association will be held on Wednesday, Feb. 28, at 7 p.m., at the East Hampton Community Center, 105 Main St. The artist of the evening will be Mary Horrigan. She will present a watercolor demonstration.

Horrigan is a member of the Connecticut Watercolor Society and the Connecticut Academy of Fine Artists. She holds associate memberships in the New England and American Watercolor Societies. Locally, she is a member of the Marlborough Arts Center, Essex Art Asso-

ciation, the Lyme Art Association, and the East Hampton Art Association. She has had numerous exhibits in Connecticut and Massachusetts and has taught watercolor classes throughout the area.

Horrigan will share her expertise in executing the beauty of watercolor painting.

The public is invited to attend all East Hampton Art Association meetings. There is a suggested donation of \$4 for nonmembers. Students can attend at no charge.

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.; **Setback:** Mondays and Thursdays, 1-3 p.m.; **Bible Study:** Tuesdays, 1 p.m.; **Mexican Train Dominoes:** Tuesdays, 1 p.m.; **Bingo:** Tuesdays, 1-3 p.m., in person and via Zoom; **Cross-Stitch & Embroidery with Shannon:** Tuesdays, 2 p.m. -- Bring projects to share and work on together; **Yoga with Kitch:** Wednesdays at 1 p.m. -- next session runs March 6-May 15, and cost is \$20; **Tai Chi:** Thursdays, 10:30-11 a.m. -- next session runs March 7-May 9; **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; registration required.

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.

AARP Free Tax Aid Program: Appointments

are held Mondays at the senior center through the end of March. Call or stop by the center to make an appointment. At that time you will be given an intake form to complete and bring with you on the day of your appointment.

Art with Karen: Sunday, Feb. 25, 2 p.m. All levels of creativity welcome. Cost is \$5.

Chatham Health Chat: Tuesday, Feb. 27, 10:30 a.m. Isolation & Social Connection will be the topic.

Meditation and Reflection Session: Wednesday, Feb. 28, 10:45 a.m. Learn the practice of meditation during this new program.

Listening Session with Town Council & Board of Finance: Wednesday, Feb. 28, 2 p.m. Budget season is coming; all are invited to share their concerns, needs and ideas with town leaders.

Calling All Volunteers: Save the date for a Special Volunteer Appreciation Celebration on Wednesday, April 10, from 1-3 p.m. All volunteers from the community are welcome to attend.

Trip: 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.

Drive Yourself to Lunch for Seniors at Cheney Technical High School, Manchester: Wednesday, March 7. Leave at 10:30 a.m. for an 11:30 a.m. lunch prepared by the school's culinary students. Drive yourself to the school; cost is \$11.

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.

Online Farmers Market

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

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

EHNS Trivia Night

East Hampton Nursery School will hold a Trivia Night Friday, March 8, at 6:30 p.m., at Rule of 3 Brewing, 201 W. High St., Unit B1.

In addition to trivia by WhatTrivia, there will be a 50/50 raffle, raffle baskets, and the Feelin' Saucy food truck.

Tickets are \$20 per person. Register teams of two to four people, and find out more information, at www.eventcreate.com/ehnsstrivianight. Questions can be emailed to ehnsfundraisers@gmail.com.

Local Potter in Exhibit

East Hampton potter and resident John Macomber is participating in the 78th annual Connecticut Artists Juried Exhibition at the Slater Memorial Museum, located at 108 Crescent St. in Norwich.

This exhibit features the best of Connecticut's artists in all forms of media, styles and expressions, both 2-D and 3-D. Macomber's 4 1/2 foot tall, 3-D ceramic sculpture has won the Mary-Ann Hall Prize at the show and will be on exhibit through Feb. 29.

Dean's List

Sarina Michaud of East Hampton made the fall 2023 Dean's List at Curry College in Milton, Mass.

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.

KoC Scholarship and Grant

The Knights of Columbus Council 6190 has three \$1,000 scholarships available to students continuing their education at an accredited college/university.

Applicants must be members of St. John Paul II Parish, East Hampton and Moodus.

The council will also award two \$500 Helping Hands grants to members of St. John Paul II Parish attending Mercy or Xavier high schools.

Applications are available at guidance offices and the parish center office, or by emailing stpatrick47@sbcglobal.net. Applications are due by April 29.

Congregational Church News & Notes

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

Church school classes meet every Sunday.

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

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

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

Knights of Columbus State Raffle

The St. John Paul II Council 6190, Knights of Columbus is again offering Connecticut State Council raffle tickets.

There are 10 prizes to be awarded. First prize is \$5,000; second is \$3,500; third is \$2,000; fourth is \$1,500; fifth is \$1,000; sixth is \$600; seventh is \$500; eighth is \$400; ninth is \$300 and tenth is \$200.

The drawing will be held Saturday, April 20, at 9 p.m., at the Hartford Marriott Downtown, 200 Columbus Blvd., Hartford. Ticket holders need not be present to win.

Tickets are \$10 each and may be purchased through any of the Knights of Columbus members or by calling Bob DeMarchi at 860-267-5978.

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Bellringers Cheer Conquers Conference

By Josh Howard

After finishing as the runner-up a season ago, the East Hampton cheerleading team got over the hump this winter by capturing a Shoreline Conference (SLC) championship.

Head coach Alexa Paddock said it was a “very emotional” scene following the resounding win at Westbrook High School on Feb. 10.

“Everyone was crying because we have been runner up a couple of times and it was just really nice to take that title after wanting it for so many years,” added Paddock, who is in her third season heading the program.

Paddock’s Bellringers saved their best performance for the conference finals, scoring a season-high 78.9 points, finishing ahead of runner-up Hale Ray (57.8) and five other programs to earn the program’s first conference banner in four years.

A handful of all-conference athletes, who are all slated to return next season, led the team in competition.

Sophomores Sydney Vicino and Mikah Levenduski made the All-SLC first-team, while junior Samantha Yorker, sophomore Madelyn Daniles, and freshman Marlee Alston were named to the second team.

Along with taking home the title, East Hampton was the only team in the conference to have

five cheerleaders selected All-SLC.

Yorker was also a team captain, joining forces with the seniors Izabella Buccheri and Hailey Ledas to supply skills on the mat and leadership off of it.

Paddock noted that her captains “practice what they preach”, adding, “They are constantly uplifting and motivating younger girls by showing them the ropes and setting expectations.”

The third-year coach noted that Ledas displayed the characteristics of a true captain after suffering a broken orbital bone this winter, which sidelined her for several weeks.

“Off the mat she continued cheering on the squad and remained super positive,” Paddock said of Ledas, who hopes to return for the state competition.

Making the conference championship even more rewarding for Paddock is that she has a long history with most of the girls on the roster.

Paddock originally started coaching cheer with the East Hampton Hawks – the town’s youth program – and eventually became the Cheer Director for the Hawks.

She then started coaching at the middle school and shadowed at the high school before taking over as the head coach at EHHS following the team’s last SLC title in 2020.

Despite having a young squad featuring only



East Hampton cheerleading won a Shoreline Conference championship on Feb. 10. The team was led by head coach Alexa Paddock and assistant Coach Kelly Cates and featured cheerleaders Izabella Buccheri, Hailey Ledas, Addison Fraser, Faith Machnik, Mikah Levenduski, Sydney Vicino, Madelyn Daniels, Jaelynn Ray, Marley Zinkerman, Samantha Traino, Hannah Malinka-Morgan, Braelyn Paddock, Marlee Alston, Abbie DiPace, Kaylan Sullivan, Paige Ottone, Empress Valencia, Adelle Sylvester, Samantha Yorker (not pictured) and Kiersten Rolland (also not pictured). Every one of the cheerleaders compete in both the fall and winters seasons.

two seniors, Paddock knew this season could be special and said the stars were aligned for bringing the SLC title back to East Hampton

“The girls were ultra-determined and motivated this year,” noted Paddock. “We took the notes from the judges, and we applied them to our routine and made changes to help elevate our scores for preparation for Shorelines, and we did exactly that.”

After helping grow the feeder program and having a hand at all levels of cheerleading locally, Paddock stated that it’s rewarding to see the numbers of cheerleading increasing across the board.

Paddock, who was a field hockey and softball player while growing up in Brookfield, first became interested in cheerleading when her daughter Braelyn began to cheer at the age of four.

Nearly a decade later, the mother-daughter duo has climbed the ranks together and Braelyn

is now a freshman cheerleader on the Bellringers squad that are now queens of the conference.

For Paddock, who coaches the team with assistant coach Kelly Cates, the championship is what she called a “milestone” for the program after a series of close calls.

“That’s the most exciting part about it,” added Paddock. “We have a lot of supporting parents and people rooting for us, and it was really awesome.”

Paddock’s team will now head to the CIAC State Championships at Trumbull High School on Saturday, March 2. The Bellringers will compete in the Class S division for a chance at a state title, along with potential trips to the New England and Team of the Year competitions.

The top three teams from each division qualify for the New England and the top six teams from each division will qualify for Team of the Year.

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.

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 wor-

ship 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.

Cabin Fever History Talk

On Saturday, Feb. 24, editor and publisher Richard “Dick” Shriver, a resident of Old Lyme, will give a talk on his quarterly magazine *Estuary: Life of the Connecticut River* at 11 a.m. at the East Hampton Library Community Room, 105 Main St.

The talk is part of the Cabin Fever History Series organized by the Chatham Historical Society and co-sponsored by the East Hampton Library.

Shriver will use PowerPoint slides to illustrate his presentation on the last 12,000 years of the Connecticut River to the present, with special attention paid to abuse of the river dur-

ing and following the industrial revolution. He will acknowledge those in government who established the present-day regulatory apparatus that has helped clean up the water in the river. He will also summarize the works currently underway for the long-term benefit of the environmental and ecological features of the river.

Register in person at the library, by calling 860-267-6621, or 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

Isabella Bafumi of East Hampton made the fall 2023 Dean’s List at Penn State University in State College, Pa.

A member of the Class of 2027, Bafumi is majoring in forensic science, with a concentration in molecular biology.

EHNS Open House

East Hampton Nursery School will hold an open house for prospective families on Saturday, March 9, from 9 a.m.-noon, for the 2024-25 school year. EHNS is located at 111 Main St.

All are invited to see the school, talk to current families, teachers and board members, and learn about the programs offered. The 3’s programs meet Tuesdays and Thursdays from either 9-11:30 a.m. or 9 a.m.-1 p.m. The 4’s programs meet either three days a week – Monday, Wednesday and Friday – from 9 a.m.-1 p.m., or five days a week from 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

Visit www.easthamptonnurseryschool.com for more information or email e.h.n.s.enrollment@gmail.com.



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Finance Board Reviews Capital Improvement Plan

By London Brazal

The Board of Finance met Tuesday to review the capital improvement plan for the next fiscal year – a proposal that calls for a 16% increase over current capital spending.

The Capital Improvement Committee met on Feb. 1 to submit a recommended list for the town's upcoming capital expenditures. The plan calls for approximately \$2.8 million in expenditures, an increase of about \$400,000 or about 16%. However, because of limited external funding sources, the plan necessitates around \$1.9 million in direct taxes, reflecting an increase of over \$1 million from the 2024 fiscal year.

The committee acknowledged the significant increase, which was extensively deliberated during their meeting. The committee and town staff expressed concern over the accumulation of capital projects and purchases, along with the escalating costs over time and in recent years. Unfortunately, the amount of funding the town has put toward capital expenses has not kept up well with the need and the cost.

The most significant cost increase is in road maintenance, which stands out as the most expensive item on the list. Following extensive discussions on how to manage the work and finance the activity, the capital committee proposed a plan to allocate \$1 million specifically for road maintenance.

During a discussion about potential bonding, staff suggested a five-year program where \$1

million of work each year could improve many roads and increase the average road condition rating. After the five-year investment, the town's spending could return to more maintenance-focused activities. Over five years, the annual cost could range between \$600,000 and \$800,000.

In the past few months, many roads have faced extensive damage including a collapsing culvert and large potholes from excessive amounts of precipitation. Public Works crews have been actively improving the condition of gravel roads but the continuous wet weather made it challenging to carry out grading and related tasks. BOF member Ted Turner said that town roads were rated at 68% and it is necessary to allocate appropriate funds to increase that.

At the Board of Finance meeting on Tuesday, member Richard Brown emphasized the point that their job was to flatten spikes in the budget. He was concerned if Public Works would be able to handle \$1 million in a single year considering staffing, materials and other factors. Chairperson Bridget McLennan replied that she has attended meetings and assured that Public Works Director Matt Walsh was confident about using the money efficiently.

BOF member Alannah Coshow, who is also on the Capital Improvement Committee, said she had concerns about bonding money for road maintenance. The committee decided to give Walsh the money upfront each year for five

years rather than bonding it.

Another item on the capital improvement list for fiscal year 2025 was the Air Line Trail improvement projects. The project aims to enhance the trail by incorporating new stone dust and repairing existing washout areas near Cranberry Bog, Forest St., and the Route 66 underpass. With that, the town is responsible for a grant match for the funding of the Air Line Trail Gap Project linking the East Hampton portion of the trail to Portland. The project has been underway for several years, overcoming many obstacles.

Other items included building HVAC controls for the library and senior center, adding boiler controls at Center School and replacing the main potable water mixing valve and related piping at the High School. The Fire Department requested a new firefighting gear extractor and turnout gear. On a different note, the town has

sent a letter of intent to the owner of 11 Skinner St. for the potential new location for Fire Company #1. If that is signed, there will be a few more steps before it is voted on by residents.

An item that was discussed during the Tuesday meeting was the Sears Park tennis court reconstruction. Currently, \$285,000 is allocated to this project in the fiscal year 2024 budget. However, \$200,000 in additional funds, not funded for FY25, are needed to complete the project. A new pickleball court was mentioned in a previous Parks and Recreation Advisory Board meeting. Coshow said the project would line the current tennis courts instead of building a new court. Other conversations included where a different location for a pickleball court would be suitable.

The next Board of Finance meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 18, at 7 p.m., at Town Hall.

Sierra Club Presentation on Energy Cost Savings

On Tuesday, March 5, the East Hampton Clean Energy Task Force is hosting a presentation and conversation by The Sierra Club about how the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) can save people money on energy costs. The event is free and open to all area residents.

The program will run from 6-7:30 p.m. at Town Hall, Police Training Room, 1 Community Drive. The program will also be accessible via Zoom; go to tinyurl.com/3rx3jbuc to access.

IRA rebates will also hasten a transition away from fossil fuels to more efficient, zero-emission alternatives that will result in a reduction of air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. Our presenter is Steve Lewis, an avid proponent of green energy solutions. Lewis is chair of the

Greater Hartford Sierra Club and a member of the Connecticut Chapter of the Sierra Club's Legislative Committee. He serves on the South Windsor Energy Committee, and has completed multiple clean energy projects in his home.

The presentation will walk people through the benefits of efficient zero-emission technologies and his personal experiences with energy efficiency, solar panels, heat pumps, electric vehicles and more. People will learn about the rebates available through the Inflation Reduction Act. They will also learn about proposed legislation for the 2024 Connecticut General Assembly session that will increase adoption of solar energy, heat pumps and energy efficiency solutions in Connecticut.

Fish Frydays Are Back

The Knights of Columbus, St John Paul II Council 6190 is again offering its multi-decade tradition of serving a variety of fish dinners on Fridays during Lent. The first dinner is tonight, Feb. 16, and the next one will be Friday, Feb. 23.

This year's offerings include breaded cod, clams and shrimp, which will be served with French fries and coleslaw. Chowder will also be available. Coffee, tea, water and soda are also offered. Prices of the fish may vary from

week to week.

Entertainment Feb. 23 will be provided by Bill Naughton Jr., and entertainment March 1 will be the East Hampton High School Jazz Band, conducted by Andrew Groves.

Meals are served from 4:30-7:15 p.m. in the St. Patrick Church Parish Center, 47 West High St. Take-out service also will be available; advance orders must be received by noon on Fridays, by calling 860-267-6644. Please do not leave orders on the answering machine.

Police News

2/7: Joel Callaway, 49, of New Haven, was issued a summons for failure to obey a red light and operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license, East Hampton Police said.

2/7: Matthew MacNeil, 53, of Higganum, was issued a summons for speeding and operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license, police said.

2/8: Santo Ficara, 41, of South Windsor, was issued a summons for operating a motor vehicle with a suspended registration and operating an unregistered motor vehicle, police said.

2/12: Darrell Malachowski, 42, of Feeding Hills, Mass., was taken into custody pursuant to a warrant for his arrest stemming from a two-

car motor vehicle accident that occurred on June 28, 2022 in the area of Route 66 (West High Street) and Spice Hill, police said. Malachowski was charged with traveling unreasonably fast, following too closely, reckless driving, engaging police in pursuit and evading responsibility-injury/property damage, police said.

2/18: Michael Anthony, 48, of 35 White Birch Rd., was arrested and charged with second-degree violation of conditions of release, police said.

Also, from Feb. 12-18, officers responded to 12 medical calls, six motor vehicle crashes and two alarms, and made 32 traffic stops, police said.

Antique Appraisal Day March 9

The Chatham Historical Society (CHS) will host its 28th annual Antique Appraisal Day Saturday, March 9, from 9 a.m.-1 p.m., at the Town Hall conference room, located at 1 Community Drive just off Route 66. There will be three antique appraisers at the event.

Lawrence (Larry) Shapiro from Glastonbury has been a full-time antiques dealer and appraiser for fifty-three years. He has exhibited at antique shows nationally, and is still actively buying and selling art, antiques, and personal property. Shapiro did live appraisals on the WDRC Mary Jones radio show as well as appearing on television and in court as an expert witness. He is an estate appraiser who has worked for several law firms in Connecticut handling liquidation of estates and private homes. Estate planning, liquidation, downsizing, and family division are his specialties.

William (Bill) Barrows, a second-generation auctioneer at Thomas Barrows and Sons from Portland, has been in the antiques and auction business for over 50 years. Barrows and his family have bought and sold everything from large estates, fine jewelry, important antiques, and everyday house lots. Barrows has helped many organizations throughout Connecticut by running auctions to raise funds as well as buying and selling thousands of items over the years.

Michael B. Westman is an appraiser from Rhode Island, with 45 years' experience in personal property evaluations. He has done about 1,200 written appraisals and has testified in court. He has also worked at around 30 appraisal days for nonprofit public organizations, such as historical societies and libraries, throughout New England, New York and New Jersey. He was born in 1950 and currently resides in Peace-



Larry Shapiro

dale, R.I. He has appeared on TV and in many newspaper articles. His specialties are silver, oriental rugs, fine art and Asian art.

All are invited to come and have their items appraised. There is a suggested donation of \$6 per item, and no appointment is needed. This is a fundraiser for the continual maintenance of the society's two museum buildings and 1840 one-room schoolhouse.

Call Maggy Morales 860-539-0988 for more information or if there is any doubt of a storm related cancellation.

Middle Haddam Public Library News

Middle Haddam Public Library, 2 Knowles Rd., Middle Haddam, has announced the following. To register or for more information on any program, email middlehaddamlibrary@gmail.com, visit middlehaddamlibrary.com or call 860-267-9093. Mailing address: P.O. Box 123, Middle Haddam, CT 06456.

February Art Exhibit: The exhibit features the paintings of local artists Tom McLean, Mary Killilea and Bill McDonald. All are invited to stop by and see their work.

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

Book & DVD Giveaway: All are invited to stop by and fill a bag for free throughout February.

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

Yoga: With Erin Day of Ten Summit Yoga. Mondays at 9 a.m., Tuesdays at 7 p.m., Satur-

days at 9 a.m. Cost is a \$15 drop-in fee. Register at tensummitst@gmail.com.

Jam Session Canceled: The session planned for tonight, Friday, Feb. 23, has been canceled. Watch for a new date.

Yoga for Kids: Continues on Fridays at 10 a.m. Cost is \$12 per child/caretaker team. To register email kmarshall0227@yahoo.com or call 860-638-9097.

Pilates: A second session of Thursday Night Pilates begins Feb. 29 at 6 p.m. Sign up for six classes at \$10 per class and get a seventh class free, or pay \$12 to drop in. To register, call 203-592-4448 or email abstite@sbcglobal.net.

CommuniTea: Saturday, March 9, 10 a.m. All are invited for tea, coffee and conversation.

Fly Fishing with Rowan Lytle – Fly-Tying Discussion and Presentation: Thursday, March 14, at 7 p.m. Lytle will offer a fly-tying discussion and presentation. Bring your own materials.

East Hampton Library News & Notes

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

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

All-Ages Program: Community Conversation: Saturday, March 2, 10:30 a.m.-noon. All are invited to share their hopes for East Hampton and what role the library can play in achieving those goals as part of the process to develop a new strategic plan. No registration required; all are welcome to attend. Light refreshments will be served.

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 – Create Your Own Puzzle!: Saturday, Feb. 24, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Children and families are invited to create a different toy, game or treat together. These activities are available while supplies last. No registration required.

Ready to Read Book Club: Wednesday, Feb. 28, 4:30 p.m., for grades K-2. Registered participants will receive a book to take home. This month's book is *Arlo and Pips: King of the Birds* by Elise Gravel.

Nintendo Switch Game Play: Saturday, March 2, 2-3 p.m. Grades 1-5 are invited to come play on the library's Nintendo Switch. All

skill levels welcome. This month, play *Mario Party Superstars* (rated E).

Family Storytime: Saturday, March 9, 10:30 a.m., for ages 3-5; siblings welcome. There will be stories, songs and open-ended play. Participants will also have the chance to work on a craft to bring home. No registration required.

Teen Programs: Middle Grade Dungeons & Dragons One-Shot: Wednesday, March 13, 4:30-6 p.m., for grades 5-7. No previous playing experience or past participation required. The library will provide basic, fifth-edition characters; all supplies included.

Adult Programs: LibrarYoga with Amie Meacham: Monday, Feb. 26, 6:30 p.m., in the Community Room. All levels welcome; bring your own mat if you have one and wear comfy clothes.

Cookbook Club – Pi Day: Tuesday, March 5, 6:30 p.m. Celebrate Pi Day with sweet or savory pies. Bring a prepared dish and 12 copies of the recipe to share. The library will provide plates and utensils.

Tech Help with Sam & Nicole: Thursday, March 7, 2-4 p.m. Drop by with your technology questions. No registration required; just bring your device with you.

Dean's List

East Hampton residents Michelle Brahen and Brendan Schaller made the fall 2023 Dean's List at Goodwin University.

Student News

Ardyn Lezak of East Hampton made the fall 2023 President's List at Central Connecticut State University. Lezak was also elected treasurer of the CCSU Criminal Justice Club.

Lezak's parents are John Lezak and Barbara Ranno, both of East Hampton.

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Task Force Analyzes EV Charging Needs

By London Brazal

As electric vehicle (EV) ownership rises in Connecticut, discussions have emerged with Portland's Clean Energy Task Force about the necessity of additional EV charging infrastructure.

The Clean Energy Task Force works to help the town and its residents save money and lower emissions. The task force offers programs to improve energy efficiency and help people install clean energy systems in their homes or businesses. Recently, more conversations have been mentioned about the future of EVs in town.

In the latter half of 2023, the task force talked about EV charging stations and began initiating contact with energy representatives. In December, the committee recommended Stephan Hartmann of Earthlight Solar consult on the town facilities' EV charger readiness due to his contributions during the second "Solarize" campaign. Earthlight Technologies is a solar, EV charger and battery backup vendor and is on the state-approved vendor list.

At the task force's regular meeting last month,

St. Mary Church News

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

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

Weekday Mass: Monday and Tuesday at 8

Hartmann reviewed a potential partnership with the town. A partnership would include a Google map analysis and a presentation of findings with rough cost estimates. If the town moves forward with EV charger installation, a letter of intent will follow with a more detailed installation plan.

According to the interactive database, Alternative Fueling Station Locator, by the Department of Energy, there is one charging station in Portland but more than 20 in Middletown. Some prospective sites that were mentioned were the library, senior center, firehouse #1 and the municipal lot behind Melilli Caffe and Grill.

An EV charging station typically consists of a charger and a 20-foot cord to connect to an electric vehicle, with the option for indoor or outdoor installation. The charger can connect to the internet for payment and availability checks. There are three types of EV chargers: Level I, II and III, the second being the focus for the Portland facilities review. A level II charger requires a 220 Amp circuit and installation by

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 Group: The group meets every second Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m. in the Church Hall. All are welcome to attend. For more information, call Susan Bongiorno at 860-685-1966.

a licensed electrician, providing approximately 20-30 miles of range per hour of charging.

Level 2 chargers can either be connected to an existing service panel to share its usage meter, or they can be set up with a separate meter. According to Hartmann, most town facility meters operate on a standard rate of 30 but a newly installed dedicated meter for an EV charger may qualify for an EV rate. Initially, the EV rate is more cost-effective if the usage is low. However, it can later be switched to the standard rate, which becomes cheaper as usage increases.

The installation costs can significantly differ from one site to another. A rough average estimate suggests that a two-pole unit costs around \$12,000, while additional expenses for trenching, preparing parking spaces and connecting the charger to the meter can amount to approximately \$25,000.

However, there is a \$20,000 incentive from Eversource for each site to cover equipment and labor costs. The farther the distance between the meter and the charger, the more expensive the installation becomes. Installing the charger on a wall near the parking space is cheaper than having to dig trenches for wires 50 feet away. Avoiding disruption to sidewalks or pavement also lowers the installation cost. It was recommended for town crews to assist with some construction, which can also save money.

For instance, Portland could set up four charging stations between the senior center and the library. If all four stations connect to the senior center, the incentive is \$20,000. However, if two stations are powered from the library, the incentive becomes \$40,000 – or \$20,000 for each site. The incentive, meant for commercial/municipal chargers, is doubled for an EV charger in an Environment Justice Block Group area. In Portland, this area is located northwest of Main Street, from the Arrigoni Bridge to Strongs Avenue.

Operating costs include the charging rate and network service fees. Portland has the authority to mandate payment for using a charger installed by the town. Furthermore, a site administrator has the ability to adjust the 'cost to charge,' potentially setting it higher during peak hours to discourage usage during that period and recover a larger portion of the electricity cost.

An update on the EV charging station study was presented by Clean Energy Task Force member Andy Bauer at the Board of Selectmen meeting on Wednesday, Feb. 21. The meeting occurred after press time, but the presentation will be available on the town's YouTube @ TownofPortland.

Zion Lutheran Church News

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

On Wednesdays during Lent, Zion will once again participate in a Soup and Substance program together with Bethlehem Lutheran Church in East Hampton. Participants will meet together at 6 p.m. for a simple meal and discussion, alternating between the two churches. Remaining dates are: Feb. 28 at Zion; March 6 at Bethlehem; March 13 at Zion; March 20 at Bethlehem.

Also throughout Lent, Zion will collect items on Sundays for Portland Food Bank. Items to be collected include: Feb. 25, soap, bodywash; March 3, paper goods – toilet paper, paper towels, tissues, napkins; March 10, toothpaste, toothbrushes, mouthwash, dental floss; March 17, deodorant, feminine products; March 24, shaving cream, hand lotion, and body lotion. Any items are welcome at any time.

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.

From the First Selectman's Desk...

Dear Residents of Portland:

I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing today to provide you with an update on the progress of our efforts to address the aging infrastructure of the elementary school facilities in Portland. As many of you are aware, our elementary schools, including Valley View Elementary School, Gildersleeve Elementary School, and Brownstone Intermediate School, have not undergone significant capital improvements for nearly three decades. Over the past five years, the Portland Board of Education commissioned two separate facility studies by reputable firms, Sightlines LLC and Friar Architecture.

Over the past two years, a dedicated facilities committee, in collaboration with Friar Architecture, has diligently explored various options to tackle this issue. After careful consideration, three viable options emerged for consideration:

Option 1: Decommission Gildersleeve Elementary School, renovate and expand Valley View Elementary into a PreK through Grade 3 facility, and renovate Brownstone Intermediate School to accommodate grades 4 through 6.

Option 2: Decommission both Gildersleeve Elementary School and Brownstone Intermediate School, and renovate and expand Valley View Elementary School to accommodate PreK through Grade 5.

Option 3: Keep all schools open and undertake necessary capital improvements at each facility.

Following the recent survey conducted by Great Blue Research at the end of 2023, where 1,000 residents responded, the strongest preference was for the option of decommissioning both Gildersleeve Elementary School and Brownstone Intermediate School, and renovating and expanding Valley View Elementary School to create a PreK through Grade 5 facility. A strong majority, 56.9% of respondents, are strongly or moderately in favor of this option. The option to keep all schools open and complete only capital improvements came in second with support from 49.8% of respondents. The option to decommission Gildersleeve Elementary School only, came in third, with 41.9% support. The full presentation is available on the Town of Portland's YouTube page and the full survey results can be found at www.portlandct.org.

Taking into account the survey results and considering the economic feasibility and impact on taxpayers, both the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Education have extensively deliberated on the next steps. The consensus is that we must proceed with the Town's preferred option and that we must do so in the most financially responsible manner. Our goal over the upcoming months will be to present a viable path forward with the least amount of impact on our mill rate and taxpayers.

The proposed plan (e.g., creating a single, PreK through Grade 5 elementary school) presents several advantages: First, and most importantly, the plan will create an elementary school that maximizes school security, enhances indoor air quality, promotes a positive school climate, and creates an optimal environment that supports teaching and learning. Second, the plan maximizes the state reimbursement of 51% of the total project cost, significantly reducing the burden on the town, which would cover the remaining 49%. Third, decommissioning two schools will yield substantial overhead savings, estimated by our superintendent to be up to \$962,320 annually. Fourth, relocating Grade 6 to Portland Middle School, where there is existing capacity, and expanding Valley View up to Grade 5 aligns with our needs without unnecessary expenditure, saving the town an estimated \$7 million from the cost estimates included in the survey. Finally, the plan will not negatively affect students during the construction phase because swing space is available at Gildersleeve Elementary School and Brownstone Intermediate School during the renovation and expansion of Valley View Elementary School.

Moving forward, Friar Architecture is refining cost estimates based on the Superintendent's Education Specification Plan. We will receive the updated cost estimates early April. These revised costs will help to provide clarity on the financial implications. Furthermore, a committee has been established to explore potential alternative uses for Gildersleeve Elementary School and Brownstone Intermediate School. The inaugural meeting of this committee is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 27, in the Buck-Foreman Community Room, 265 Main St. All are welcome to attend.

Please keep in mind that in order to move forward, the plan must be approved by the voters of Portland at a referendum. The Board of Selectmen is working towards the goal of having the bonding question added to the ballot this November to coincide with the presidential election. Adding a referendum to the federal election will guarantee the highest possible voter turnout.

Should you have any questions or require further information, please do not hesitate to contact me via email at rcurley@portlandct.org or by phone at 860-342-6715.

Sincerely Yours,
Ryan J. Curley
Portland First Selectman

Portland Veterinary Hospital IS MOVING!

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We look forward to seeing you!

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In the 1960s, before redevelopment, Smith's Luncheonette was located under the Arrigoni Bridge, or in "The Bottom." All are invited to come to Brownstone Intermediate School tomorrow, Saturday, Feb. 24, at 1 p.m., for a panel discussion honoring and commemorating some of Portland's Black community.

Panel Celebrating Local Black History

On Saturday, Feb. 24, the Portland Historical Society, together with the Town Committee on Solidarity and Portland Public Library, will sponsor a program "Gallery of Portland," to commemorate and honor some of Portland's Black community members who have helped shape the town's history.

This panel discussion will begin at 1 p.m. in the auditorium of the Brownstone Intermediate School located at 314 Main St. The program is free and open to the public.

Created to celebrate Black History Month locally, the Black community of Portland, past and present, will be represented by panelists Patricia Hall Jemison, David Roane, Barbara E. Shaw and the Rev. Laurence Woods. Robert McDou-

gall, trustee and museum director for the Portland Historical Society, will serve as moderator. The panelists will share their memories and stories of growing up and living in Portland, as well as their experiences during the redevelopment of properties under the Arrigoni Bridge. Included in this program will be a collection of photographs from the town archives as well as the Portland Historical Society's collection. As part of the program, Portland's poet laureate, Naji Chester-Payne, will perform a poem.

Registration is not required but is encouraged, by going to the Events Calendar at portlandlibraryct.org. By registering, you will receive updates in case of inclement weather or change of venue.

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, the church is open for prayer and meditation, and for Anglican Prayer beading, from 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. All are welcome; no prior beading experience is required.

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

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

First Congregational Church News

The First Congregational Church of Portland, located at 554 Main St., holds Sunday worship at 10 a.m. each week. Communion is offered the first Sunday of the month. All are invited; coffee hour follows the service. The Church School program takes place during the worship time.

This Sunday, Feb. 25, the service will be led by Intentional Interim Minister the Rev. Barry McCarthy. The Church School program takes place during the worship time.

During this Lenten season, the church will host Lenten Soup Supper and Speaker evenings Wednesdays, Feb. 28, March 13 and March 20. The soup supper begins at 6 p.m., with the

speaker portion to follow immediately after. The evening will end around 8 p.m. Those volunteering to speak are church members who will talk briefly on the role that faith has played in their lives. Their presentation will be followed by a brief discussion. All are welcome to attend and participate.

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 from September to June. Contact Amy Jahnke at 860-342-1111 or 1stchurchnurseryschool@gmail.com for more information.

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 unless noted.

Kids' Blast: Morning (7-8:15 a.m.) and afternoon (3-6 p.m.) child care is available, for students enrolled in grades K-6 in the Portland Public School system. Call Parks and Rec. for prices and more information.

Second-Hand Prose Bookshop at Library

The Second-Hand Prose Bookshop at Portland Library is open during normal library hours.

There are fiction, romance, teen, and children's used books as well as DVDs available during regular library hours. Books are 50 cents for paperbacks and children's books, \$1 for trade paperbacks and \$2 for hardcover. DVDs

are 50 cents each disc unless marked otherwise.

There are also large print mystery and general fiction books that have been removed from the library collection for 50 cents, as well as TV series on DVD for 50 cents each disc.

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

Spring Travel Soccer Registration

Portland Soccer Club (PSC) has announced registration for the spring travel soccer season is open. Deadline is Sunday, March 3. To register, visit: clubs.bluesombrero.com/portlandsoccerclub.

Player fee is \$170. Late registrations are not guaranteed, and will be charged additional \$30 if accepted. Refunds will be given if players are not placed on a team.

To be eligible, players must have been born between 2009 and 2015. The season runs mid-April through mid-June. There are two practices

per week, and one to two games per weekend. There will be no player evaluations for spring.

PSC said it expects to field single-birth year and multiple-birth year teams this spring. Roster and coach assignments from the fall season will also be reassessed and are subject to change based on final registration totals.

Contact PSC President Chad Wilson at nosliw.dahc@gmail.com or Registrar Anne Whalen at awhalen34@yahoo.com with questions or assistance when registering.

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: 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); Watercolor class, 9:30 a.m.-noon - to register, email bivenne@yahoo.com; Coupons for Troops, 1-4 p.m.; Set-back, 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; AARP Tax Service: Every Wednesday until April 10, from 9 a.m.-noon - appointments necessary by calling Sarah or Holly at 860-342-6761; **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.

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 www.portlandlibraryct.org or call 860-342-6770. The library is also on Facebook and Instagram.

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

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 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 win a small prize.

Spring Storytimes: Registration for spring storytimes opens on Monday, Feb. 26, at 10 a.m. Schedule: Preschool Storytime: Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m., March 12-April 30 (no program April 9); Storytime for Toddlers and Tots: Mother Goose on the Loose: Wednesdays, 10:15 a.m. or 11:15 a.m., March 13-May 1 (no program April 10).

Youth Programs: LGBTQ+ Social and Support Groups: Teens are invited to social meet-ups 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.

Pizza and Puzzles - Jigsaw Puzzle Competition: Saturday, Feb. 24, 10:30 a.m. Teams may consist of 2-4 people who will compete to finish the same 500-piece puzzle in the least amount of time. Space is limited to seven teams so register early.

Teen Events: Portland Pizza: Who's the GOAT?: Tuesday, Feb. 27, 3:30 p.m. Sample slices from local pizza places and choices and decide who is the champion. Space is limited.

Chess with Michael Pelton: Mondays at 3 p.m., Feb. 26-March 25. All ages are invited to train to compete in the Portland Chess Battle Royale on March 26. Registration is not required, but is recommended.

Adult Programs: February Art Exhibit: The "Jennifer Hart: Snowpaintings" exhibit runs through Feb. 28.

Seeds Wanted: Do you have some leftover seeds? Donations are welcome! Portland Library's Seed Library is seeking seed donations for the spring and summer gardening seasons and is looking for your help to sort and repackage donations for distribution. Lead volunteer (and new board member) Melissa Kelley will run two volunteer work sessions next month: from 12:30-2:30 p.m. Saturdays, March 2 and 9. Registration is requested but not required.

KoC Family Dinner

The Portland Knights of Columbus Freestone Council 7 will hold its annual Family Dinner Saturday, March 2, for Brother Knights, their families, and guests. There is no charge for this event. The dinner will be held at 6 p.m. (doors open after 5 p.m. Mass) in the Saint Mary Church Hall.

RSVP to Ken Woodward at kw.ccsolutions@gmail.com.



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Spectacular farmhouse plan at Skyline Estates - "The Georgetown"! This charmer offers an amazing, large, open great room, family room and kitchen and it's own breakfast/dining room area - all glass, overlooking our gorgeous lots. For the way we live today! You will enjoy a wonderful mudroom and office on the first floor. The upstairs of this abode is stunning with a large walk in laundry room, oversized bedrooms, two huge walk in master closets and an oversized master bath.



Georgetown

Only 2 Home Sites Available



Expanded Colonial I \$536,400

This grand home offers a fantastic open 1st floor, 2-story entry, mudroom, office and large dining room. Second floor offers walk in laundry, 4 bedrooms including a large en suite primary with 2 walk in closets. Options include family room addition and/or finishing above the garage.



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The Charlestown \$614,900

The Charlestown - 1 story living at its best! The exterior of this charmer offers multiple gables and dramatic roof lines, setting the stage for what's to come inside. This amazing Ranch home offers a gracious entry, 9' 20' ceilings, spectacular 2-story great room with dramatic open staircase. Oversized kitchen & dining room open to great room. Large windows throughout, letting the outside in. 1st floor primary suite with oversized bath.



Charlestown

Sold in 2 Weeks



East Hampton \$185,000

Run - do not walk to see this cute as can be year-round home or part-time lake home. Just a few steps from Pocotopaug Lake offering all that the lake life has to offer, from swimming to kayaking to enjoying BBQ's at the town lake beach. Estate sale - Selling as is - know nothing about the house. Inspections welcomed. Fix as you go along or do a complete remodel. Year-round sunroom adds amazing space with double pane windows and heat. Sits on a fantastic quaint picturesque lot. We have been told that joining Lakewood Beach Association is optional and would give you beach rights at the end of the street. This one is a winner! Don't lose out!

Sold in 1 Week



Middletown \$154,900

Wow! 5th floor River's Edge unit with amazing views of the Portland Bridge and CT River! All new flooring, all new painting, fresh and clean. Bathrooms and kitchen are original - plumbing work needed, some fixtures need replacing but all taken into consideration with pricing. Put your personal remodel touches in and you're set to go! Just steps away from shopping, restaurants, a 12-plex movie theater and all that downtown Middletown has to offer with easy access to highways. Only 20 minutes from some of CT's most beautiful shoreline towns and beaches.

Sold in 3 Weeks



Middletown \$209,900

Run - do not walk to see this beautifully remodeled Cedar Ridge Townhome! Pristine location in the community backing to privacy and a picturesque view. It is noticeable that the homeowners have taken special care of this fantastic space. Lower level is beautifully finished with recessed lighting, plenty of storage and a laundry room. Just move right in. Just 20 minutes away from some of CT's most beautiful shoreline towns and beaches and only 10 minutes away from downtown Middletown boasting an array of restaurants from fine dining to pizza, quaint Main Street shopping and a picturesque CT River boardwalk.

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RE2-29-24

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Westchester Church News

Westchester Congregational Church, 98 Cemetery Rd., holds worship Sundays at 10 a.m. The services are also available on Zoom; visit westchestercongregation.org for login information.
 Sunday School 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 westcongregation@gmail.com or call 860-267-6711.

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.
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 - Bible Portion is 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.

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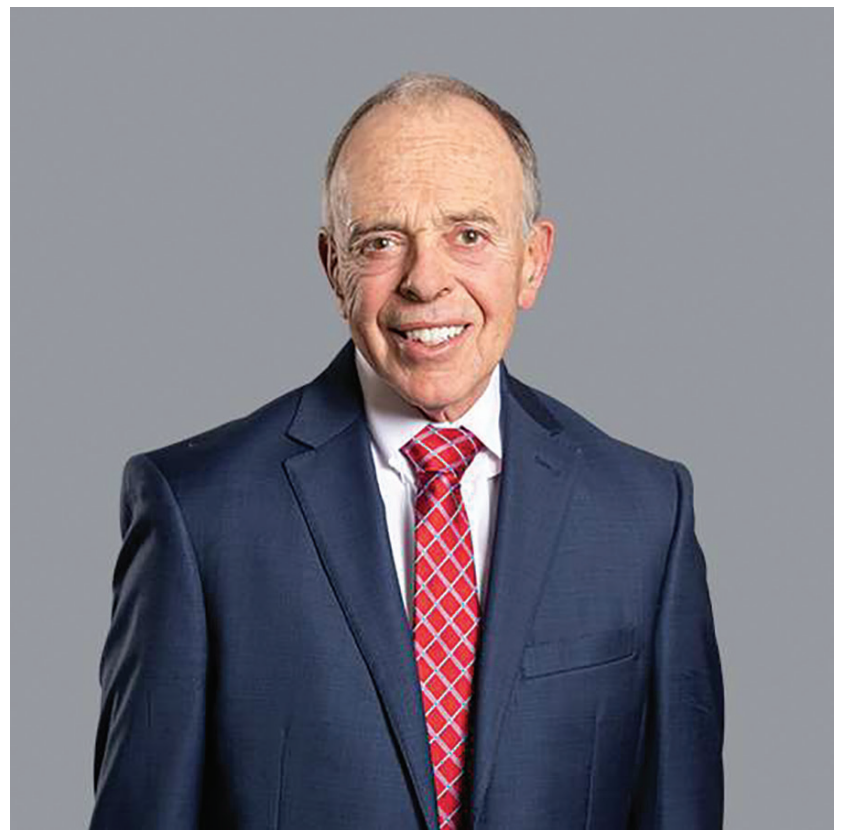
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Christian Life Chapel News

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

lifechapel.org.

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

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

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

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

Dean’s List

Atharv P. Thaker of Colchester made the fall 2023 Dean’s List at Clark University in Worcester, Mass. Thaker earned first honors.

Dean’s List

Colchester resident Katie Zimmer made the fall 2023 Dean’s List at Fairfield University in Fairfield.

Dean’s List

Fred Thornley of Colchester made the fall 2023 Dean’s List at Emerson College in Boston.

Thornley is majoring in theatre and performance, and is a member of the Class of 2027.

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.

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RE1-27-23

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Honoring Black History Month

Colchester's Openness to Respecting Equity (CORE) Commission and the Colchester Senior Center are hosting a Community Book Club all February in honor of Black History Month, and the public is welcome to participate. The book selected is called *The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone and How We Can Prosper Together*.

Copies are available at Cragin or can be purchased through Amazon. There will be three dates in February to discuss the book, including daily trivia questions about the 2024 Black History Month theme, African American and the Arts, and a calendar of events on the town website, www.colchesterct.gov.

Book and Bake Sale

The Friends of Cragin Memorial Library will hold its Spring Book and Bake Sale at the library, 8 Linwood Ave., from March 1-6. Hours are:

Friday, March 1, 4-7 p.m. -- Pre-Sale, with a \$5 admission; Saturday, March 2, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.; Sunday, March 3, 11 a.m.-3 p.m.; Monday-Wednesday, March 4-6, open during library hours. There will be a sale that day of \$5 for a box or bag.

Books, music, movies, games and puzzles will

all be available.

The Friends group meets the second Thursday of each month at 5:30 p.m., to discuss ways to further its mission in supporting the library. All interested individuals are welcome to attend. Folks are welcome to make a monetary donation or volunteer their time.

To join the Friends group, or for more information, contact Noreen Bibee, president, at noreenbibee@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.

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

Sunday School: Held during worship from

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

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

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

CYSS News & Notes

Colchester Youth and Social Services has announced the following programs. Unless noted, registration is required for all programs, at www.colchesterct.gov/yss. For more information, contact CYSS at 860-537-7255 or youthservices@colchesterct.gov.

Meeting Childhood Challenges: In this program, a continuation of "Supporting Your Anxious Child," parents of children ages 8-12 can come together for a discussion on supportive ways to respond as a parent and to learn methods to navigate childhood challenges. There will be time for questions as well. The program will meet Feb. 28, March 27, April 24 and May 22, from 6:30-7:30 p.m. each night (followed by Q&A until 8 p.m.) at Cragin Library - Norton Room A. Registration is required for each date.

Game On: Friday, March 8. Students in grades 4-10 are invited for a day of fun at Spare Time and Dave & Buster's. CYSS will depart Town Hall at 9 a.m. and return at 4 p.m. Cost of the trip is \$50 and includes bowling, laser tag, a buffet lunch and arcade games.

Colchester Boys Council: This new group for fifth grade boys will meet Mondays from 3:15-4:30 p.m., starting March 11. CYSS prevention coordinator Marquis Lawson will lead the group. Boys will connect with others in their age group and share their experiences, questions and concerns. Space is limited.

Makin' Moves: Thursdays, 3-4:30 p.m., from

April 18-June 13. Fifth-graders will get ready for their upcoming move to middle school. Their time together will include a private middle school tour, some talk about lockers, team building activities and leadership games. They will also receive their own middle school survival kit. There will be a few meetings in September to check in after the school year begins. This group is expected to fill quickly, CYSS said.

After 2: This afterschool program for middle school-aged students meets Tuesdays from 2-4:30 p.m. throughout the school year. This program provides time for kids to have homework help, or just some quiet time to complete their work, small social-emotional learning group time, as well as a safe place to hang out. Registration is required in advance.

Drop In @ the Youth Center: Mondays and Wednesdays, 2-4 p.m., for grades 6-8. In this program, kids can drop in to the youth center for a snack, play pool, air hockey, video games, basketball and more. There will also be crafts, spaces to relax, a reading/homework area, and, weather-permitting, organized activities on the Town Green. You do not need to pre-register to attend the Youth Center. However, students will receive instructions for online registration at their first visit, as they must be registered online to attend again. Call CYSS for more information.

Lions Club Accepting Grant Applications

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

Organizations should be prepared to demonstrate how the funds would be used to benefit the community. Applications can be found on the club's website, colchesterlions.org, or may be obtained in writing: Colchester Lions Club, P.O. Box 423, Colchester, CT, 06415. Completed applications must be submitted by March 15.

Local Crews Combat Fires

By Michael Sinkewicz

Emergency crews in Colchester and Hebron responded to two separate fires over the last week - though neither blaze resulting in injuries.

On Thursday, Feb. 15, at 11:59 a.m., the Hebron Fire Department was dispatched to a structure fire on Coleman Road. Then on Sunday, Feb. 18, at 9:31 a.m., Colchester Fire & EMS responded to a reported chimney fire on O'Connell Road.

Crews reacted to both incidents swiftly and evacuated all the occupants of the structures, resulting in no serious injuries.

Colchester's deputy chief arrived on scene just five minutes after the call was placed and requested a second alarm and tanker strike team. He reported heavy fire in the attic and crews provided water roughly 16 minutes following the initial dispatch.

"This was a slow-moving fire," Colchester Fire Chief Steve Hoffmann said during a phone call this week. "Overall, it was a quick stop."

The fire at O'Connell Road was knocked down 26 minutes after crews were first called.

In Hebron, a prompt response time was also credited with limiting the overall damage.

Hebron Assistant Fire Chief Bill Schappert stated that units arrived on scene just four minutes after the initial call was fielded.

"It was super quick," he said. "That makes a huge difference. Fire grows exponentially; it just builds and builds."

A fire was subsequently encountered in the rear of the building and the owner of the home was safely evacuated. Schappert said an occupant was evaluated at the site, but nobody was transferred to the hospital.

Both incidents required the assistance of mutual aid companies, who provided personnel and resources.

In Colchester, Hoffmann said the response allowed the town's new fire apparatus to be "broken in." The department posted pictures on its Facebook page of its fire engines and an aerial (ladder truck), on sight and in action; the trucks went into service earlier this year.

While this particular fire appeared to spread relatively slowly, Hoffmann explained that many fires appear to be burning and growing at a faster rate. Homes feature more types of plastic materials, which he said are contributing to rapidly intensifying fires. As a result, the chief explained, residents now have roughly three minutes to leave their homes after a fire starts, in order to increase the likelihood of getting out safely.

The cause of both fires remain under investigation with the local fire marshals.

Senior Center News & Notes

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

Monday, Feb. 26: 9 a.m., Making Memories, Exercise w/Anne; 10 a.m., Sittercize, Stitch & Fix; 10:30 a.m., Painted Chinese Hand Fans; 11 a.m., Learn to Sign; 12:30 p.m., Mah Jongg, Bridge; 12:45 p.m., Setback.

Tuesday, Feb. 27: 9 a.m., Making Memories; 9:45 a.m., Tai Chi; Wills & Trusts Seminar; 12:30 p.m., In the Know, Pinochle; 1:30 p.m., Bingo; 7 p.m., SCBC meeting via Zoom.

Wednesday, Feb. 28: 9 a.m., Making Memories Program, Walking Group meet-up at the Air Line Trail in Amston; 10 a.m., Adult Coloring, Sit & Be Fit; 11:30 a.m., Ballpark Movie Event; 1:30 p.m., Cardiac Drumming; 2 p.m., Sewing Circle.

Thursday, Feb. 29: 9 a.m., Exercise w/Anne; 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, Town Black History Month Book Discussion.

Friday, March 1: 8:30 a.m.-2 p.m., AARP Tax Aide, by appointment; 10 a.m., Sit & Be Fit; 10:15 a.m., Across the Ages at William J. Johnston Middle School; 10:30 a.m., Choral Group; 11 a.m., Yoga; 1:30 p.m., Bingo.

Town-Wide Book Discussion for Black History Month: Thursday, Feb. 29, 1 p.m. The senior center will collaborate with the town's CORE Commission for a community book read in honor of Black History Month. The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone and How We Can Prosper Together, by Heather McGhee, will be discussed. Two books are available at the senior center to borrow, and others are available at Cragin Library.

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Boy Scout Pasta Dinner
 Boy Scout Troop 13 will hold its second annual Pasta Dinner Saturday, March 2, from 4-7 p.m., at the St. Andrew Parish Center, located at 128 Norwich Ave. In case of inclement weather, the date will be moved to Sunday, March 3.
 Both dine-in and take-out meals will be available. Preorder your meal at troop13pastadinner.square.site for a discounted rate. Meal prices at the door are \$15 for adults and \$12 for seniors; children under 5 are free. The meal will include a salad, bread, and dessert. Drinks are available for dine-in patrons only.
 Proceeds help support the various troop activities throughout the year.

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Incoming Kindergarten Story Time

Colchester Elementary School will host the Incoming Kindergarten Story Time program Thursdays, March 14 and April 18, for 4- and 5-year-old Colchester children who will be entering kindergarten during the 2024-25 school year.

During each session, children will listen to books read by kindergarten teachers, while parents learn about the registration process, the kindergarten curriculum, readiness ex-

pectations, the school day, school policies and transportation. A question-and-answer period will be available at each session.

The program will be held each month from 11-11:30 a.m., in the CES media center. Parents and children are invited to attend multiple story times. Topics for parent information change each month. No pre-registration is required.

Bacon to Host 'Tree-Plenish'

Bacon Academy environmental science students are hosting a native tree sale and planting event. Tree-Plenish is a nonprofit organization run exclusively by college students to promote the planting of native tree species.

Residents may choose to have volunteers deliver and plant saplings in their yards, or they can pick them up at Bacon. This year's event will take place Saturday, April 20. Sapling sales will be available online only, from now through March 20. Saplings are \$5 each.

There are three tree species from which to choose: American Sycamore, Red maple, and

Eastern Redbud. Sycamores prefer loamy soil that has a good supply of groundwater. Eastern redbuds are flowering trees that grow more compactly and provide spring flowers. Red maples support many species of birds and butterflies as well as being tapped for maple syrup. All saplings are bare root (not potted) and will range in size based on the species ordered.

The link to this year's event is tpevents.org/school/4019. Information regarding how to purchase saplings, volunteer, or sponsor this event can be found at the website.

Parks & Rec News & Notes

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

Puzzlepalooza: Fridays, Feb. 23 and March 22, 6-8 p.m., at Town Hall. Cost is \$25/team. Children can be on a team, but there must be at least two adults on each team.

Colchester Choir and Orchestra: Visit www.colchesterchoirorchestra.org for more information. Rehearsals are: Thursdays, 6-7:30 p.m. for choir and 7:30-9 p.m. for orchestra, at Bacon Academy. Fee: \$35 for ages 18 and up; \$15 for students and youth under 18. There will be a **spring concert**, free for all to attend, on Sunday, March 10, also at Bacon.

Hunger Games in the Hinderwald: Colchester Youth Theatre will present its first production, *Hunger Games in the Hinderwald: The Adventures Of Hanna and Gretel on Friday, March 15, at 6:30 p.m., at the William J. Johnston Middle School Black Box Theatre. This all-ages play* is a retelling of a well-known fairytale, with new twists and turns. Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$5 for children. Tickets are available in advance at colchester-actors-theatre.ticketleap.com/youth-theatre-hanna-gretel.

Young Yogis: Tuesdays, March 12-April 2, from 3:30-4:30 p.m.; or Wednesdays, March 13-April 3, from 3:30-4:30 p.m. For Colchester Elementary School students in grades K-2. Cost per four-week class is \$60/person.

Gentle Yoga: Mondays, 4:45-5:45 p.m., from March 18-April 8, for ages 45 and up. All levels welcome. Fee: \$35/residents, \$40/non-residents. Classes held via Facebook Live.

Zumba: Mondays, March 18-May 13, 6:30-7:30 p.m., at Jack Jacter Intermediate School. Fee: \$80/resident, \$85/non-resident.

Let's Sew! Tuesdays, April 2-23, 6-8 p.m., at Town Hall, for ages 18 and up. You will need to bring your own sewing machine, manual, power cord and supplies (thread, scissors, thread & pins). Cost: \$50/resident, \$55/non-resident. Class minimum is 2, and maximum is 5.

Spring Dog Training Classes: Saturdays, April 6-May 18 (rain date of May 25 if needed), from 9-10 a.m., at Ruby Cohen Woodlands. No class April 13; also, no dogs allowed at the April 6 class. For ages 18 and older. Class minimum is

4, and maximum is 8. Fee: \$150/resident, \$155/non-resident.

Paint Night: Thursday, March 14, 2024, 6-8 p.m., at Colchester Senior Center. No previous painting experience required. Cost \$40/resident, \$45/non-resident.

Procreate App Class: Thursday, March 21, 6-7:30 p.m., at Colchester Senior Center. Fee: \$35/resident, \$40/non-resident.

Summer Day Camp Registration: Returning camper early bird registration is underway, and new camper registration starts March 4. The summer day camp, for kids entering grades K-7 in the fall, will run June 24-Aug. 16, Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m.-3 p.m. each day. The weekly themes and field trips will be announced in mid-February. Cost per week is \$170/child. Aftercare is available from 3- p.m., for an additional \$45 each week. Cost includes all activities and field trips but does not include food. All snacks and lunches must be sent with your camper.

CT Safe Boating Class: May 14 and 16, 5-9 p.m., at Town Hall. While there is no minimum age requirement to take the class, students must be able to attend all eight hours and take a 60-question multiple choice test. Fee for class: \$25.

Pre-Teen Leadership Camp: For youth entering grades 6-7 in the fall. There will be one-week sessions, with new groups each week, from June 24-Aug. 16 (no camp July 4 or 5). Hours are Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-3 p.m. Fee is \$170/week, with aftercare available each day until 5 p.m., for an additional fee.

Counselor-in-Training (C.I.T.) Leadership Program: For ages 14 and up. Session 1: June 24-July 12 (no camp July 4 or 5); Session 2: July 15-Aug. 2. Hours are: Monday-Friday, from 8 a.m.-3 p.m. each day. Fee: \$125. Upon successful completion of the program you can volunteer as a **Junior Counselor** at day camp from July 15-Aug. 16. You'll attend camp for free.

Colchester Youth Theatre Camp: For kids entering grades 2-7 in the fall. The two-week session runs Aug. 12-23, Monday through Friday, from 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m. This two-week camp is designed to immerse kids in the world of theatre, culminating with performance of a play on Friday, Aug. 23. No acting experience necessary. Fee: \$300/camper. A minimum of 20 campers is required, with a maximum of 40 campers.

'Spring in Bloom' Market Coming

Colchester Federated Church's annual Spring in Bloom market is coming in May – and vendors are welcome.

If you would like a table at the fair to sell your goods, reach out to Renee Misbach at rouillette01@snet.net for more information. The market will be Sunday, May 4, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Rotary Scholarships

Upcoming 2024 Colchester graduates who will be pursuing either a traditional college program or a trade school can apply for a chance to be awarded one of two \$1,000 scholarships from Honor Rotary! A Foundation for Colchester, Inc.

For more information, contact the Bacon Academy counseling office.

Abundant Life Church News & Notes

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

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

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

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

Land Trust Hike

The Colchester Land Trust (CLT) is offering two trail hikes in one on St. Patrick's Day, Sunday, March 17, at 9 a.m.

The hike is free for CLT members and kids under 18, and \$5 for non-members. Leashed dogs are welcome; must bring waste bags.

CLT board member Scott Sivek will lead a three-mile hike through Bulkeley Hill Preserve, then one mile up the paved road and into the two-mile Hayward Reserve of East Haddam and back to the Bulkeley Hill Preserve parking lot. Total miles are roughly 6-7. This is a moderate difficulty, moderate elevation hike, featuring non-groomed dirt trails with rocks and roots. Please dress for weather and wear appropriate

boots or sneakers. Bring bottled water and sunscreen. Tick and bug protection strongly suggested.

From Route 2, take left on Route16W to Bulkeley Hill Road on the left; follow for 1.5 miles to the preserve's graveled parking lot on the right, directly across from the mailbox at 243 Bulkeley Hill Rd. The entry has a wooden hanging sign. For more information, email scottsivek@gmail.com.

Visit www.colchesterlandtrust.org to register/pay in advance. CLT is an all-volunteer nonprofit organization that works to permanently protect open space in Colchester. Visit the aforementioned website to join or donate.

AARP to Meet

The next meeting of AARP Colchester area chapter 4019 will be held Tuesday, March 5, at 1:30 p.m., in the activity room at Colchester Senior Center, 95 Norwich Ave. Members of the board will meet at 1 p.m., before the main meeting.

Senior Benefits Counselor Ellen Fougere will explain some state beneficial programs for income qualified seniors. Programs covered will include SNAP (Senior Nutrition Assistance Program – formerly Food Stamps), Renters Rebate, Energy Assistance Program, Medicare Savings Program and Benefits Check Up. All are invited.

Dean's List

Samantha Gauthier of Colchester made the fall 2023 Dean's List at Hartwick College in Oneonta, N.Y.

Gauthier is pursuing a major in psychology and public health with a minor in philosophy.

Kindergarten Registration

Colchester Elementary School has announced kindergarten registration is now open for the 2024-25 school year.

To register, go to colchesterct.org and follow the link to Registration then Pre-Register. Be sure to select the 2024-25 school year. For more information, call 860-537-7628.

Fish Fry Fridays

The Colchester Fish and Game Club is holding its annual Fish Fry dinners every Friday during Lent, continuing through and including Good Friday, March 29.

Meal choices include traditional fish and chips, baked fish with baked potato, the club's breaded clam strip dinner, as well as chicken nuggets for the kids. All meals include coleslaw, coffee and dessert. Cost is \$16 for adults and \$9 for kids.

Meals will be served from 6-8 p.m. Takeout is available by calling the club at 860-537-2593 after 5:30 p.m. on Fridays.

DTC to Celebrate Two

On the evening of Friday, March 15, the Colchester DTC will honor two people who have dedicated their lives to service in Colchester: Goldie Liverant and Mary Tomasi.

The celebration will take place at the Polish Club at 6:30 p.m. Light refreshments will be served and there will be a cash bar.

All are invited. While tickets will be available at the door, for the purposes of planning, an RSVP is requested. Tickets are \$25 and can be purchased online at secure.anedot.com/colchesterdemocrats/donate, or by sending a check to Colchester DTC, 89 Shadbush Drive, Colchester, CT 06415.

Contact Monica Swyden at 860-465-7909 or monicacswyden@gmail.com for more information.

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Please make checks payable to: *The Glastonbury Citizen*.

Butter Braid Fundraiser

The St. Andrew Ladies Guild is sponsoring a Butter Braid and Cake Roll fundraiser until March 4. Order forms are located at St. Andrew Church in Colchester and St. Francis of Assisi Church in Lebanon. You may also order online at tinyurl.com/54ny93t5.

For more information, call Kathleen at 860-917-7616

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.

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.



Rivereast Goes to New Orleans... Paul and Linda Levasseur of Colchester went on a eight-day Musical Bus Tour that included Nashville, Memphis, Vicksburg and ended in New Orleans, as is pictured here.



Going Grand... Ed & Tina Hetrick of Portland recently went to the Grand Canyon – and brought along the *Rivereast*!



New Year's in Maine... East Hampton residents Diane Koch and Bill Young recently brought the *Rivereast* to Maine. This picture was taken at the West Quoddy Head Light Station in Lubec, Maine which is the easternmost point of the continental United States. Koch and Young were there on New Year's Day to be among the first to see the sunrise in the U.S.



From Colchester to Cambodia... Steve and Amy Miller of Colchester recently took a trip to Cambodia and Bangkok. They're shown here in front of the Angkor Wat Temple in Seam Reap, Cambodia.

Where in the World?

**Going on a trip?
Bring along the *Bulletin*!**

Submit your travel photo holding the *Rivereast News Bulletin*, and you will win a \$25 Gift Card to Campagna Restaurant if your photo is one the four entries selected!

To enter, email your photo and address to: bulletin@glcitizen.com

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Happy Birthday!... Andover Seniors Young At Heart celebrated February birthdays with cake and ice cream at the meeting Feb. 7. Pictured are Ellie Skoog and Mary Duval. Photo by Sue Schmidt.

Learn CPR

All are invited to learn CPR Monday, March 18, from 7-9 p.m., at the Andover Volunteer Fire Department.

Classes include use of training materials, CPR/AED/Choking for adults/child/infant, and a two-year certification from the American Heart Association.

Cost is \$20 and registration is required; to do so, call Deputy Chief Mindy Hegener at 860-706-3074.

Vendors Sought for Tag Sale

Vendors are needed for the senior tag and vendor sale, to be held Saturday, April 27, from 9 a.m.-2 p.m., at Andover Elementary School, 35 School Rd.

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

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.

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.

Cemetery Spring Clean-Up

With spring coming, the Townsend Cemetery Committee welcomes everyone to visit their loved ones at the cemetery and tidy up the graves of all decorations by March 1.

Vacancy on Finance Board

Any Andover elector who is interested in serving on the Board of Finance should send a letter of interest to: Town of Andover, c/o Board of Finance vacancy, 17 School Rd., Andover, CT 06232, or email a letter to townclerk@andoverct.org.

Veterans Meeting March 16

The Andover Veterans will next meet Saturday, March 16, from 1-3 p.m., in the Town Hall Community Room.

Susan Camoroda and John Botti said they are looking forward to your stories from the Recognition ceremony that they both missed. They will also discuss dates and times for future meetings, as well as some ideas for upcoming events. Suggestions are welcome.

All veterans and currently serving military members are invited. For more information, call Camoroda at 703-472-3209 or Botti at 860-839-3481, or email veterans@andoverct.org.

Collecting for Senior Tag Sale

The Andover Senior Lunch Fundraising Committee is in the process of collecting donations for its annual Tag Sale, which will be held Saturday, April 27.

The tag sale is a big fundraiser for the senior lunch program; all are asked to help raise funds needed to support this program.

The committee is looking for items to sell. If you have items to donate, they can be brought to the Town Office Building. Call Carol Lee at 860-742-0188 ext. 4218 for more information.

Congregational Church News

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

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

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

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

St. Patrick's Pot Luck Dinner

All are invited to a St. Patrick's Day Pot Luck Dinner on Friday, March 15, at 6 p.m., at Andover Congregational Church, 359 Route 6. Bring a favorite dish to share.

Leave a message at 860-742-7696 with any questions.

Collecting for Auction

The Andover Friends of the Library Auction Committee is collecting donations for its 22nd annual Goods and Services Auction that will be held Friday, May 17.

The committee is looking for new items to create gift baskets. The following are examples of popular items: gift certificates, handmade items like jewelry, scarves, quilts, afghans, sports items, paintings and music/video games.

This auction is the Friends' big fundraiser; proceeds help support library programs. Donations are tax-deductible.

Preschool Openings

The Andover Elementary School Early Learning Center is accepting applications for preschool students for the 2024-25 school year. Andover's preschool program is full-day. Before- and after-school care is available.

Children who will be age 3 on or before Dec. 31, 2024, are eligible to attend.

The Andover Elementary School Early Learning Center receives funding for reduced tuition rates from two state grants: The School Readiness grant and the Smart Start grant.

Contact Taylor Parker for more information or contact the school office at 860-742-7339 to obtain a registration packet, or download one at www.andoverelementaryct.org.

School Board Adopts 2024-25 Budget

By Michael Sinkewicz

The Andover Board of Education (BOE) approved its school budget for the 2024-25 fiscal year, requesting \$4.35 million to run the district — a \$113,262, or 2.67% increase from the current-year.

During its meeting last week on Feb. 14, the board voted 6-0 to pass the spending plan; one member, Caitlin Greenhouse, was absent.

The final proposal was identical to the original schematics submitted by Andover Superintendent of Schools Valerie Bruneau. The BOE advanced the budget forward with little debate or controversy, wrapping up a process that included numerous seminars over the past month.

Celeste Willard, chairman of the BOE, thanked everyone who participated in those workshops, which allowed the board members and superintendent to review each facet of the budget and respond to any community questions.

"We're here, we have the budget," she said, adding that there was "still a long way to go" as far as getting the proposal approved at referendum later this year.

During the board's Feb. 7 seminar, its most recent in-depth examination, the members addressed any lingering concerns previously brought up, including whether heating oil costs should be modified.

Andover's per-gallon rate for heating oil was locked-in at a lower price than the current fiscal year, Bruneau said. However, the district was currently budgeting an identical cost — \$107,800 — for that expense in 2024-25.

The amount remained flat in the proposal because the last two winters have been relatively mild, she explained, and if the next winter is extreme, the district will use more oil than has been, she added. So while the per-gallon cost is down, the usage may go up.

According to Bruneau, the district is budgeted for 36,296 gallons; last year the district used almost 36,000; the year before that was over 36,500; then there were years hovering over 35,000 and one that surpassed 38,000 gallons.

After hearing the explanation, the board agreed to keep the budgeted item as-is.

Bruneau previously described the bottom-line figure as a "very responsible number." The increase comes as overall district enrollment has expanded by around 10% over the past four years, she said.

Longtime resident Dianne Grenier, who was in attendance for the Feb. 7 seminar, gave credit to the BOE for its hard work, expressing that there was nothing in the budget that would give her "heartburn."

Some areas of the budget, such as union salaries, are contractually increasing. Teacher salaries, for example, are inflating by 3%, costing \$39,540 more in the upcoming fiscal year.

One of the most substantial increases is due to the Region 8 health and medical insurance consortium increasing health insurance premiums by 16.5%, impacting Hebron, Marlborough and Andover, along with RHAM. Accordingly, Andover's allotment will rise to \$695,654 — a leap of \$80,000 this year.

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. Transportation is available for all events. 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.

Note: 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. Medicals will no longer be available for Tuesdays.

Open Call to Apply for Grant Funds

Andover's Greater Together Community Fund at the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving has released its open call for 2023 project proposals. Up to \$10,000 will be awarded in grant funds to one or more proposals. To date, \$22,261 has been awarded.

All projects must benefit the residents of Andover. For further details on project guidelines and how to apply, please visit hfpfg.org/Andovercf. Project applications or grant proposals will be accepted until March 15.

In 2019, the Hartford Foundation established a \$100,000 Greater Together Community Fund for each of the 29 towns in the Foundation's region, which includes the town of Andover. The purpose of the Greater Together Community Funds is to support residents in taking ownership around the needs in their towns, encourage broad and inclusive civic engagement and anchor the Hartford Foundation in each town. In January 2022, the Hartford Foundation gave

They are available for Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays.

Shopping Dates: Willimantic — Tuesday, 2/27.

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.

Transportation Available: Calling Palazzi for rides to the following: Food Pantry, on Mondays at 5 p.m.; shopping on Tuesdays to either Manchester or Willimantic; on Wednesdays to Foodshare or food pantry; to Young at Heart meetings the first and third Wednesdays of the month, and to movies once a month; and to senior lunches Fridays.

an additional \$50,000 to each Community Fund with half of the funding being maintained in the Funds' endowments and the remaining half to support current grant-making efforts.

In 2020, the original Andover Greater Together Community Fund Advisory Committee was selected. The current committee members are Marianella Chalfant (Co-Chair), Kirsten Erlandsen, Jody Gross, Suzanne Heise (Co-Chair), Lori LaCroix, Amy March, Bill Penn, and Chip Ware.

The Greater Together Community Funds also create an opportunity for organizations and individuals to make tax-deductible contributions to any of the 29 Greater Together Community Funds to support their towns. There have been several contributions to Greater Together Community Funds and all donations are welcome.

For more information about the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, visit hfpfg.org or call 860-548-1888.

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Obituaries

East Hampton

Helene Irene Scherp

Helene Irene (Tibbals) Scherp, 84, of Sterling, formerly of East Hampton, widow of Arthur Scherp Sr., passed away peacefully surrounded by her family Friday, Feb. 16. Born Aug. 14, 1939, in Middletown, she was the daughter of the late Ernest and Mildred Tibbals.



Helene had worked as a secretary. She is survived by her sons, Arthur Scherp Jr. of Marlborough, Jeffery Scherp of Sterling, Thomas Scherp of Sterling, eight grandchildren and many great-grandchildren whom she adored.

Besides her husband and parents she was predeceased by her son, Michael Scherp; her daughter, Susan Scherp; and her sister, Karen Martinson.

A graveside service will be held Saturday, March 2, at 10:30 a.m., in Union Hill Cemetery in Middle Haddam. A memorial gathering will be held Saturday, March 2, from noon-4 p.m., at the American Legion Post in Marlborough on Route 66.

To leave online condolences, please visit www.spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

East Hampton



Nancy S. (Varney) Hasselman and Gerald J. Hasselman

Nancy S. (Varney) Hasselman

A branch has fallen from our family tree. Nancy Hasselman, 69, of North Carolina and formerly East Hampton, passed away at home Tuesday, Jan. 16. Born Sept. 19, 1954, she was the daughter of the late Robert and Yvonne (Corbeille) Varney.

Nancy graduated from Newington High class of 1973 and went on to work at The Travelers and then as the revenue collector for the town of East Hampton.

Nancy married her husband and soulmate Jerry in 1977. They were best friends and shared a deep love for one another until his passing in January 2021. Nancy enjoyed bowling, local fairs, car shows, card games, and any kind of shenanigans with her family and friends, all of whom will miss her dearly.

Nancy is survived by her sisters, Linda Bendas (Allen), Gail Varney, Brenda McManus (Michael); her sisters-in-law, Diane Higgins and Paula Hasselman; and a host of aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, and cousins.

Nancy was predeceased by her husband, Jerry; parents, Bob and Yvonne; brother, Richard; nephew, Randy; stepson, Brian; mother- and father-in-law, Art and Marie, and in-laws, Annette and Roger.

Friends may call at the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, on Friday Feb. 23, from 5-7 p.m. Funeral services will be held at the funeral home on Saturday, Feb. 24, at 11 a.m. Nancy and Jerry will be laid to rest together, reunited forever, in Lake View Cemetery.

To leave online condolences, please visit www.spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Advertisement for National Multiple Sclerosis Society featuring Steve Bettis and the slogan 'OFF MY WAVE.' Includes text: 'Ocean Beach netter and local surf legend Steve Bettis was diagnosed with MS in 2006. Although surfing is still central to his life, he hasn't been able to get out on the water in 30 years. For a man whose daily routine always included a few waves, more than a decade out of the surf is just too long. This is why the National MS Society teamed up with his buddy Robert "Wingnut" Weaver and used virtual reality to get Steve back on his wave. See their experience and find out how you can share yours at WeAreStrongerThanMS.org. Together We Are Stronger. MS National Multiple Sclerosis Society'

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★ Time for Turf cont. from page 1

of hours the facility would be accessible to the community would exponentially grow, she said, and it would expand opportunities for youth sports leagues to utilize the fields as well.

From a student morale perspective — a topic that was brought up by some of the school sports coaches at the Feb. 13 meeting — upgraded fields might boost the confidence of student athletes, who are currently playing with a “competitive disadvantage,” according to the coaches.

“We always want the community to see Bacon Academy as the flagship of Colchester Public Schools,” Begué said.

Without any formal plans distributed publicly or residential feedback, it's difficult to predict what idea might be embraced. For now, Begué said the focus is on “trying to make sure the community is informed.” The “impact and implications” of action or no action must be conveyed, she added.

Ronald Goldstein served as chairman of the BOE from 2009-17, and before that he was a member of the Board of Finance for over 15 years, where he also served as liaison to the BOE. He recalled meetings that took place over a decade ago where the idea of a turf field was raised.

“We have been thinking about this for many years,” he said. “It's been a recognized need for a long time.”

During his tenure on the BOE, the members “never actually put together a plan” and nothing ever materialized or reached the point where residents were asked to vote on any specific proposal. Goldstein recalled that financing that type of project would've been a delicate subject following the recession in the late 2000s.

Over the last 30 years, the usage of Bacon Academy's facilities has continued to evolve and expand. In 1993, when the school was built, there were 18 sports teams with just over 400 students enrolled overall. Currently, there are 600 students and even more teams; football was added in 1999 and girls and boys lacrosse was

implemented in 2008. However, the schematics of the complex have remained the same during that period.

More than 500 total athletes at the high school participate annually in sports programs, spanning three different seasons. Goldstein recalled how many prior board meetings pertaining to field upgrades took place before sports such as lacrosse were even offered at the school. The overall sports program, he said, has only grown and become very successful.

The varsity girls soccer team, for example, recently won a state championship, but they also had to play their senior night game at Lyman Memorial High School in Lebanon.

Moving forward, Goldstein said conversations regarding new fields should emphasize “community and student benefit.”

“It deserves a discussion,” he added. In 2021, East Hampton began renovating and replacing the baseball field, track and tennis courts at its high school complex, which district superintendent Paul Smith said was funded with leftover money from the town-approved high school renovation project, which came in under budget by over a million dollars.

Notably, Smith expressed that there was little desire or justification in his district for a turf field, which does not offer high school football or lacrosse at home.

Its renovations centered on maintenance, including a new sprinkler system for the baseball field and upgraded drainage for the main fields.

Smith said the school's fields have “always been in good shape,” adding that they haven't had any “bad luck.”

He made it clear, however, that the usage of East Hampton's fields was much different than a town such as Colchester.

“A turf field is ideal when you have multiple sports,” he said, adding that if youth athletics and other organizations want access, it might be worth the investment. “You can see why communities would go with turf; it services the whole town.”

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★ Commission Chair cont. from page 1

misconduct. Bisbikos had asserted that Coyle refused to make certain items available to public that fell under the Freedom of Information Act, including the proposed sewer and water budgets, and the proposed fee increases that were forwarded to a public hearing. Bisbikos then claimed Coyle told another town employee not to make the rates available to either the office of the first selectman or general public until the date of the hearing itself — decisions he said had kept citizens “in the dark.”

During that prior BOS meeting, Bisbikos called those actions “deplorable.”

Further allegations contended that Coyle overstepped his authority in certain personnel matters, including allowing one town employee to take time off and work from home.

Immediately following his removal in June, Coyle told the *Riverast* that he was “astounded” by the assertions being made, which he said were “concocted” to embarrass both he and wife, who was running for public office later that year.

During that previous phone call, he also provided a blanket rebuttal of all the claims, calling them “fabricated.”

At the time, Coyle could've attended that

BOS meeting when his removal was discussed, or even requested a separate hearing to examine the accusations — something he had “no interest” in considering.

Following her husband's removal, Rosemary Coyle expressed that the decision had only taken away valuable knowledge from the commission.

“He cares about Colchester,” she said back in June. “He's not a politician but unfortunately, he's married to Rosemary Coyle.”

By filling the vacancies last week, the town is also complying with its target of having at least 50% of the commission being residents of the Sewer and Water District — the area of town serviced by the public water and sewer system — or property owners in the district.

Previously, only one of the four active members on the commission fit that criteria. Hall and Coyle are rate payers in the district, and the board determined that Ozmun — who owns Oz' N Bones BBQ on Hayward Avenue, which is in the district — is considered a property owner.

Now, four of the seven regular commission members are either rate payers or district property owners.

Following last week's appointments, there is still one open alternate member spot on the commission.

Advertisement for 'NO ONE GETS A DIPLOMA ALONE.' featuring a graduation cap and text: '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.' Includes logos for ad council, DOLLAR GENERAL LITERACY FOUNDATION, and AMERICAN SPEECH-LANGUAGE-HEARING ASSOCIATION.

Advertisement for DOMINICK & SONS MONUMENT WORKS, INC. featuring a monument image and text: 'Monuments & Marker Sales & Service Since 1982. Cleaning · Repairing · Cemetery Lettering · Custom Sandblast · Pet Markers · Garden Stones. 215 Lebanon Ave., Colchester located w/ Colchester Florist. 860-537-3289 For immediate service, call 860-917-7871. A monument should cost no more than a family can afford.'

Advertisement for IDENTIFY THE SIGNS featuring a sign image and text: 'The early stages of communication disorders are easier to spot when you know the signs. IDENTIFY THE SIGNS. AMERICAN SPEECH-LANGUAGE-HEARING ASSOCIATION. For info: IdentifyTheSigns.org'

Rivereast Standout Athletes of the Week

By Josh Howard

Here are the Rivereast Standouts of the Week for the week of Feb. 11-17:

Gavin Plourde - RHAM High School (Wrestling): Plourde had a Class M state tournament to remember last weekend. Plourde, a senior, scored his 100th win after defeating Antonios Aspras of Foran in the semifinal round and then went on to win an individual state championship, taking down Danny Carozza of Brookfield/Shepaug in the 138-lbs. title bout. Plourde's efforts also helped the Raptors capture their first state championship as a team since 2002.

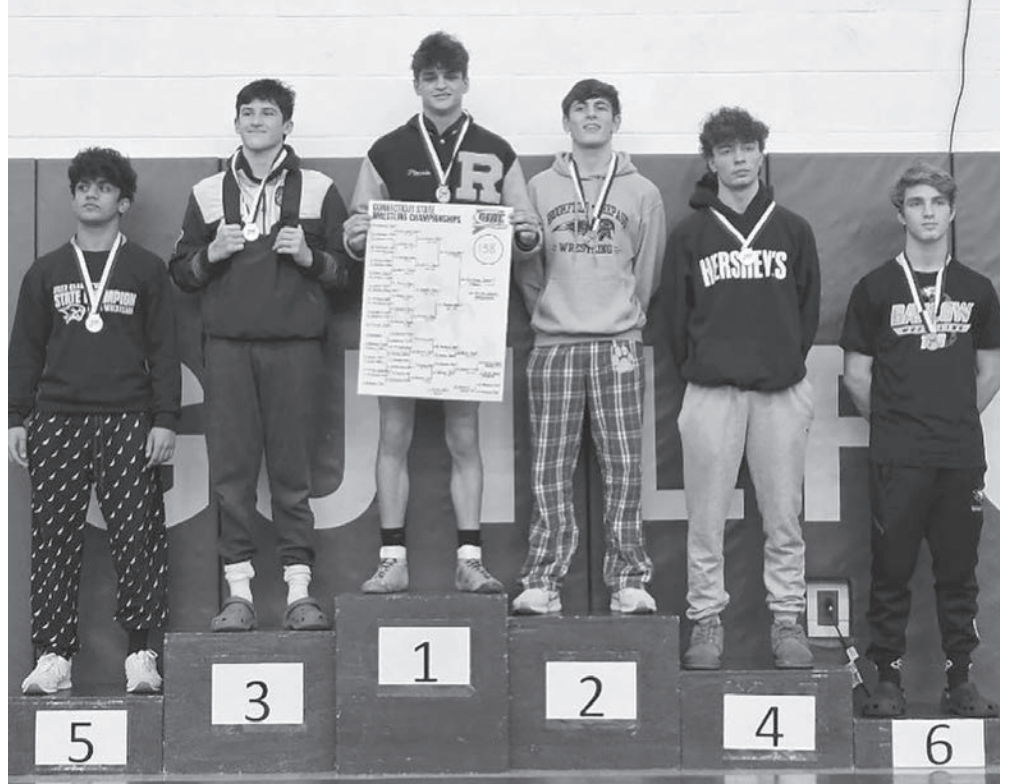
Brylee Montanari - East Hampton High School (Track & Field): Montanari, a 2022 graduate of EHHS, has excelled during her sophomore season at the University of North Carolina Wilmington. Montanari recently finished third in the 60-meter hurdles, clocking in a time of 8.98 in the event finals, at the Dick Taylor Challenge on the campus of the University of North Carolina. During her four years at the local high school, Montanari was a six-time All-Shoreline Conference and two-time All-State honoree.

Kevin Kasperowski - Portland/Xavier High School (Wrestling): Kasperowski, a senior, won

a Class L wrestling championship for a second straight season, defeating Tyler Roussel of New Milford by a major decision (11-1) in the 132-lbs. title bout on Feb. 17. Kasperowski, who attends Xavier High School, is now a back-to-back state champ and has helped power a Middletown-based Falcons program that has now won four straight Class L state championships as a team.

Cara Shea - Bacon Academy (Basketball): Shea scored a game-high 19 points as the Bobcats defeated Killingly 53-37 in the opening round of the Eastern Connecticut Conference (ECC) Division I tournament on Feb. 15. Shea, a senior, connected on four 3-pointers, including a dagger early in the third quarter, capping a 15-0 scoring run that ballooned a 14-12 lead into a 29-12 advantage. Junior Liz Glover added a game-high 14 rebounds in the win, which advanced the Bobcats into the second round where they would fall to Ledyard. Next up is the Class MM state tournament, which starts March 1. The Bobcats enter the tourney with the division's fourth-best record at 15-5.

To nominate an athlete as a Standout of the Week or with sports-related feedback, email jshoward@sports@gmail.com.



RHAM senior Gavin Plourde won an individual state championship, winning his weight bracket, as the Raptors won the Class M title as a team. Ploude also earned his 100th win during the state tourney.

CCSU Dean's List

The following area students made the fall 2023 Dean's List at Central Connecticut State University:

Amston: Alyssa Carusone, Rebecca Carusone, Cameron Lettieri, Caitlyn Montanez, Jadyn Nembhard, Michael Sliter.

Andover: Aria Adee.

Colchester: Jack Ciaglo, Amber Duperry, Rebecca Magyarik, Ewelina Malek, Joseph Ringuette,

Adam Rochette, Victoria Violette, Zeek Zurita.

East Hampton: Lauren Anelli, Lizzy Barber, Luke Brooks, Lily Cordeiro, Alex DiStefano, Thomas Engel, Kaylee Gravel, Jordan Hall, Ja-

cob Ireland, Mitchell LeBlanc, Ardyn Lezak, Sophia Martin, Daniela Morales, Matthew Penn, Konrad Piech, Mikaela Rich, Michael Slade, Jaelyn Taylor, Emily Vick, Nicholas White, Kelly Wilson, Jaylencia Young.

Hebron: Ben Bretthauer, Kaylin Hadley, Andrew Wilkinson.

Marlborough: Rachel Bartolucci, Jason Belanger, Addison Brown, Maxwell Czarnecki, Rosie Henderschedt, Isabelle Mondo, Jake Pantelone.

Portland: Clara Guilmette, Matthew Hernandez, Joshua Hurley, Clara Kopacz, Kyle MacGillis, Maria Pena, Samantha Powers, Victoria Steele.

Carl Guild Scholarships Available

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

There are six \$1000 scholarships given, one each in East Hampton, Portland, Colchester,

East Haddam, Glastonbury and the RHAM district. There are no restrictions or qualifications; all local seniors can apply.

Deadline to apply is April 1. Visit www.carl-guild.com/scholarship or ask your school's guidance counselor for an application.

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LEGALS

LIQUOR PERMIT
 Notice of Application
 This is to give notice that I, Matthew Carroll, 6 Ridgeview Rd, Portland, CT 06480-4015 Have filed an application placarded 02/22/2024 with the Department of Consumer Protection for a RESTAURANT LIQUOR PERMIT for the sale of alcoholic liquor on the premises at JESSICAS DESIGNED LANDSCAPES LLC 87 Main Street East Hampton, CT 06424 The business will be owned by: Jessicas Designed Landscaping llc Entertainment will consist of: No Live Entertainment Objections must be filed by: 04-04-2024 Visit: <https://portal.ct.gov/remonstrance> for more information JESSICAS DESIGNED LANDSCAPES LLC 2TB 2/23, 3/1

LIQUOR PERMIT
 Notice of Application
 This is to give notice that I, Alexander Levere, 9 Sanfords Bridge Road, East Haddam, CT 06423 Have filed an application placarded 02/14/2024 with the Department of Consumer Protection for a CAFE LIQUOR PERMIT for the sale of alcoholic liquor on the premises at 4BOYZ LLC 16 Main Street Colchester, CT 06415 The business will be owned by: 4 BOYZ LLC Entertainment will consist of: No Live Entertainment Objections must be filed by: 03-27-2024 Visit: <https://portal.ct.gov/remonstrance> for more information 4BOYZ LLC 2TB 2/16, 2/23

Town of Colchester LEGAL NOTICE
 In accordance with the requirements of The State of Connecticut, Section 10-153d of the General Statutes, a copy of the Agreement between the Colchester Board of Education and the Colchester Association of School Administrators, for July 1, 2024 thru June 30, 2028 is on file in my office at 127 Norwich Avenue, Colchester, CT. Respectfully Submitted, Gayle Furman Town Clerk 1TB 2/23

LEGAL NOTICE MARLBOROUGH ZONING COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING
 The Marlborough Zoning Commission will hold the following Public Hearing Thursday, March 7, 2024, at 7:00 PM at the Town Hall, 26 North Main Street. APPLICATION #Z-01-24 – 138 Flood Rd (Applicant) Matthew Chojnicki (Property Owner) Construction of accessory building greater than 50% of living area APPLICATION #Z-02-24 – 25 South Main St (Applicant) 96 apartments on South Main St and Johnson Rd Written testimony will be received at the public hearing and written testimony can be sent to the Building/Land Use Department at the Town Hall ahead of the public hearing. ERIC COLANTONIO, ZONING COMMISSION CHAIR 2TB 2/23, 3/1

MARLBOROUGH CONSERVATION COMMISSION NOTICE OF ACTION
 The Marlborough Conservation Commission at its regular meeting on February 5, 2024, took the following actions: MOTION CONTINUED: APPLICATION #11-23 – Town of Marlborough (Applicant) Hodge Road Culvert Replacement APPLICATION #12-23 – Town of Marlborough (Applicant) South Main Street Reconstruction Phase 3 – 154 South Main Street to Exit 15 on Ramp YVONNE BOLTON, ZONING COMMISSION CHAIR

TOWN OF COLCHESTER ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS LEGAL NOTICE OF DECISION
 At its Regular Meeting of February 20, 2024 the Colchester Zoning Board of Appeals made the following decision: ZBA 2023-004 of Niantic Bay Group, LLC - Appeal of Notice of Zoning Violation and Order to Cease and Desist dated September 28, 2023 and issued to Niantic Bay Group, LLC of 1967 N. Rose Hue Path, Hernando, FL 34442 for failure to provide required affordable housing within the Jordan Lane Affordable Housing Development (P&ZC Application 2021-015) that was permitted pursuant to Section 8-30g of the CT General Statutes a/k/a the Affordable Housing Land Use Appeals Act. Niantic Bay Group, LLC has submitted a "claim of error, requirement or appeal of decision made by Zoning Enforcement Officer" related to said Notice of Zoning Violation and Order to Cease and Desist. Property Locations: 34 Jordan Lane (ID#03-00/001-514); 24 Jordan Lane (ID#3-00/001-517); 22 Jordan Lane (ID#3-00/001-518); 20 Jordan Lane (ID#3-00/001-519); 16 Jordan Lane (ID#3-00/001-520); 12 Jordan Lane (ID#3-00/001-521); and 10 Jordan Lane (ID#3-00/001-522). Zoning District: Suburban Use (SU). **APPEAL DENIED AND NOTICE OF ZONING VIOLATION AND ORDER TO CEASE AND DESIST UPHELD.** Zoning Board of Appeals Laurie Robinson, Chair 1TB 2/23

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TOWN OF EAST HAMPTON LEGAL NOTICE Notice of Hearing
 The East Hampton Planning and Zoning Commission will hold a regular meeting on March 6, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. at the Town Hall and via ZOOM Virtual Meeting to consider the following: PZC-23-015: Text Amendment regarding Accessory Uses to Agriculture per Sec. 8.4.C. PZC-24-003 Theodore Hintz Jr., 46 Keighley Pond Rd., Special Permit for Lighting for horse rink in R2 Zone. Map 01C/ Block 10/ Lot 11. Kevin Kuhr, Chairman Note* any question re: Applications and Maps are on file in the Land Use Office 860 267-7450. 2TB 2/23, 3/1

INVITATION TO BID
 The St. Joseph's Polish Society located at 395 South Main Street in Colchester, CT., a C-7 non-profit corporation, is seeking bids for the removal and replacement of the vinyl siding on the entire building. Also included in the scope of work is a small closet addition, the enclosure of the hall entry, a new window and door and the installation of an ADA compliant handicap ramp. Plans and specifications can be obtained at the St. Joseph's Polish Club located at 395 South Main St., Colchester from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday or you can contact the Polish Club via email at: stjoespolishclub@aol.com. A pre-bid conference will be held on Wednesday, March 6, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. at the site. Bids are due by 2:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 21, 2024. 2TB 2/23, 3/1

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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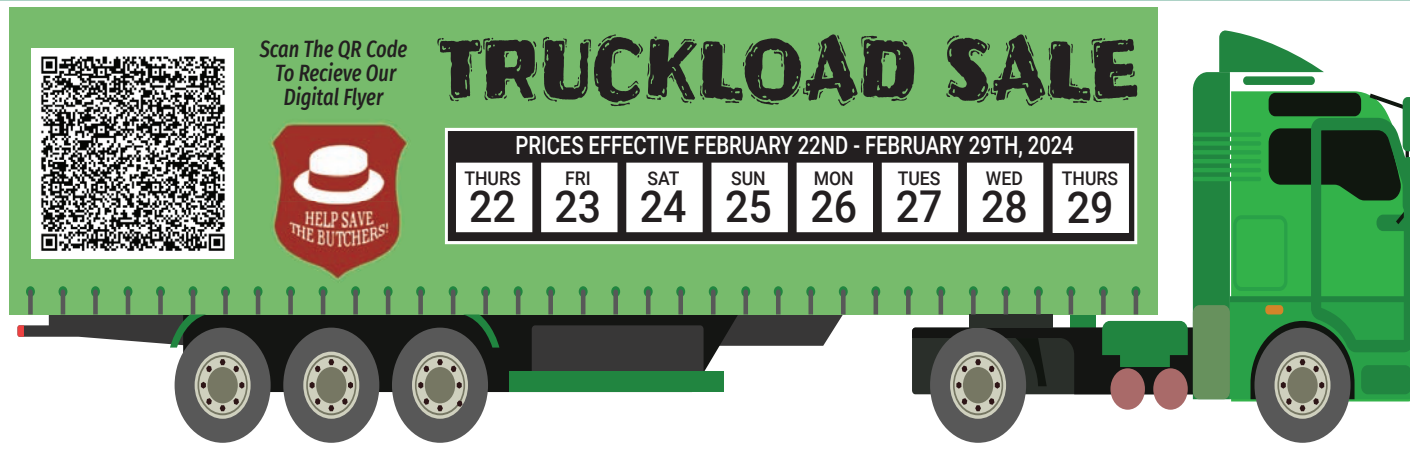
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