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News Bulletin

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March 1, 2024



Boy Scout Sunday... Boy Scout Sunday was recently celebrated at the Marlborough Congregational Church. The church has sponsored Boy Scout Troop 39 for more than 50 years and thanked the troop for their assistance in church yard cleanups and other projects. Former troop member Zachery Steinbrecher built the outdoor deck several years ago as a part of his Eagle Project. Pictured from left are Aidan McDonald, Jeremy Billiel, Kenji Langlois, Caleb Billiel, Ray Langlois and Zach Griswold.

Making a Push for Affordable Homes

By Michael Sinkewicz

Marlborough is experiencing a shortage of affordable housing and is looking to address what has become a widespread problem in the community and across the state.

On Tuesday evening, the town's Planning Commission held a public forum at the local senior center to canvass ideas that advance local development and diversity.

Members of the Open Communities Alliance (OCA), a Connecticut-based organization formed in 2013 that promotes housing choice, presented information outlining the need for more affordable housing options before leading a community discussion.

Moving forward, the town is establishing a new Housing Opportunity Committee in the upcoming weeks that will examine diverse housing options and where those developments, such as multi-family choices, are appropriate in Marlborough.

The forum represented a valuable opportunity for residents to express their support and concerns with future development. For close to two hours, community members listened and asked questions, which were fielded by OCA's executive director, Erin Boggs, and policy director, Hugh Bailey.

"It's not without controversy, but the conversation is happening and people are engaging and I think that's really positive," Boggs told the *Rivereast* following the forum, adding that affordable housing is "a big concept for people to digest and really take in."

Ultimately, she continued, the next steps are to explore the town's planning and zoning options to see what changes would accommodate the opportunities it envisions.

"That step of identifying in a very concrete way what the town wants, and then finding the developers to do that, is very important," said Baggs.

Generally, affordable housing is meant for families paying more than a third of their income towards housing costs.

Peter Hughes, Marlborough's planning and development director, also participated in the forum, often interjecting with additional context and information to help frame the audience's dialog.

"To me, this was a great success," he said afterwards, citing a range of age groups and perspectives sprinkled throughout the audience. While he conveyed that nothing overly controversial was brought up, the subject does spark a "fear of change," which he said was evident during the discussion. One resident, for example, questioned whether new developments might generate more local crime.

An Established Need

Hughes explained that in June 2022, the Planning Commission adopted an affordable housing plan that was then endorsed by the Board of Selectmen — an initiative all towns across the state were required to submit.

According to Section 8-30g of the Connecticut General Statutes, towns cannot deny any affordable housing proposal unless there is a significant health or safety concern. But if a declined developer sues a municipality, the burden of proof lies with the town. However, if the state Department of Health determines that at least 10% of a town's housing is "affordable," it is exempt from that requirement. Essentially, there are two types of "affordable" units based on income. Boggs said that for a family of four in the Hartford area, which includes Marlborough, the median income is \$118,000. The units would be deed-restricted for households earning 80% or 60% of that thresh-

See *Affordable Homes*, page 30

Colchester Athletic Complex Would Cost \$7.5M

By Michael Sinkewicz

The Colchester Board of Education (BOE) last week reviewed a detailed presentation outlining the schematics and costs of substantially upgrading the athletic complex at Bacon Academy, the district's high school.

The project — which would include the installation of multiple turf surfaces, new LED lights, resurfacing the tennis courts, upgrading the softball field and new ADA-compliant pathways — would carry a price tag of roughly \$7.5 million.

During its meeting on Feb. 22, the BOE received an update from FieldTurf, a division of Tarkett — an international company — who had previously examined the facility. Over the last

25 years, FieldTurf has installed 25,000 artificial grass systems around the world — including 6,500 in the U.S. — boasting an array of high-profile clients like the New England Patriots.

The current athletic facility at Bacon "really is due for these types of improvements," Chris Hulk, director of design and construction at FieldTurf, told the *Rivereast*.

He said the company had initially visited the complex about a year ago and toured it both individually and with district staff. They've assessed the fields during different seasons to review their condition.

"In each case, it just shows that the grass field that's there really just gets beat to hell and you

really can't do a lot more to maintain it other than not play on it," Hulk said.

The bottom-line price tag is "very close to an actual quote," Hulk said, and it includes a small contingency amount. The overall design is flexible, though, and certain features could be removed, lowering the total cost. For example, new light systems could be scrapped from one of the sites.

"You'd only be working down from there," Hulk said, referring to the \$7.5 million amount.

During the company's presentation in front of the school board, he conveyed that the price would hold through the calendar year, but

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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.

Maundy Thursday Service: Thursday, March 28, 7 p.m.

Senior Citizen News & Notes

The following items have been updated for Andover seniors, veterans, and disabled. If you want to attend any events, call senior coordinator Cathy Palazzi 860-916-6122 to register. 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. Medi-

calls will no longer be available for Tuesdays. They are available for Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays.

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.

PZC Alternate Sought

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

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.

A History of Huskies Hoops

All are invited to "A History of Huskies Hoops" with author Marty Gitlin on Tuesday, March 12, at 6:30 p.m., at Andover Public Library, 355 Route 6.

This presentation will celebrate the history of the UConn basketball teams. Gitlin will talk about great Huskies players over the years, and will include trivia questions and a Q&A at the end of the program. This is a rescheduled date for a program that was originally to be held in January.

RSVP is requested for planning purposes, by calling 860-742-7428.

Scholarship Opportunity Announced

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

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

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

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.

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.

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, visit hfpfg.org/Andovercf. Project applications or grant proposals will be accepted until March 15.

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.

Town-Wide Tag Sale Coming

The Andover annual Town-Wide Tag Sale will be held Saturday, May 18, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Rain date is Sunday, May 19. Proceeds benefit the Andover Senior Luncheon Program.

Residents who would like to be included and have their address listed on the tag sale

map should send a check for \$10 payable to Town of Andover and mail it or bring it to: Town Clerk, 17 School Rd., Andover, CT 06232. Include a list of items that you will have for sale so it can be included on the map.

Send information and payment so that it is received by May 3.

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 Learn-

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

Call 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.

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 regis-

tration 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.

Adult Show & Tell

On Tuesday, March 19, at 6:30 p.m., Andover Public Library will present an evening of Show & Tell for Adults.

For this program, the library invites adults to bring to the library something they treasure. It could be a collection of vintage thimbles, travel posters, comic books, pottery, Steiff teddy bears, tea cups, baseball cards...whatever you want to

show off. Be prepared to tell us a little bit about your collection. Don't have a collection of stuff to share, but want to tell us about your experiences meeting Elvis or the Beatles? Stories are also welcome!

The library is located at 355 Route 6. For more information, call 860-742-7428.

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.

Commission, Committee Members Needed

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

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

Honor Roll

Andover residents Madison Nicole Bassett, Xavier Luciano Franklin and Carah Michell Hunter made the honor roll at Howell Cheney Technical High School in Manchester, for the second quarter of the 2023-24 school year.

Bassett, grade 10, made Honors; Franklin, grade 12, made Honors; and Hunter, grade 12, made High Honors.

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.

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.

Bingo & Baskets

Andover Congregational Church, located at 359 Route 6 in Andover, will hold a Bingo & Baskets night Friday, March 22, starting with dinner at 5:30 p.m. The game starts at 6:30 p.m.

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

Leave a message at the church at 860-742-7696 with questions.

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From the Editor's Desk

Observations & Ruminations

By Mike Thompson

Happy Leap Day!

Well, okay, yesterday was Leap Day, but still. Hope you all had an enjoyable Feb. 29, and perhaps, as Dr. Frasier Crane suggested in a memorable Frasier episode that aired the week of Leap Day in 1996, you were inspired to take a leap – do something that you normally wouldn't, break free of your routine, shake things up a bit.

If you didn't? Well, there's always 2028.

As many of you probably know, our sister paper, The Glastonbury Citizen, comes out on Thursdays – so this year, the Citizen really did come out on Leap Day. Now, since we're men of great thought over here in the News Nook (our casual name for the portion of the office where the editors sit), we spent an inordinate amount of time Tuesday afternoon determining just when was the last time Leap Day occurred on a Thursday. And it was 1996.

We did a quick Google search and confirmed that our determination was indeed correct – and then wondered why we didn't just Google it in the first place.

As for the *Rivereast*, the last time it was published on a Leap Day, and that was Friday, Feb. 29, 2008. Alas, that was back before I'd started writing a weekly column in the *Rivereast*, so we'll never know if I'd have gone on so exhaustively about Leap Day as I am now. I'd like to think I would've. Either that or I'd have written about the previous week's episode of *The Office*.

The next time the *Rivereast* will publish on Leap Day? That'll be Friday, Feb. 29, 2036. So yeah, it'll be a while.

Speaking of Leap Day, I came across a fairly interesting story discussing how the stock market has performed whenever Feb. 29

occurs on a business day (which, by the way, would not have been 2020's Leap Day, as that was a Saturday). And though it's a rather small sample size, the answer is, not that great.

According to marketwatch.com, data shows that the S&P 500 has seen a median fall of 0.3% on the 13 Leap Days going back to 1952. That compares with a median rise of 0.05% for the index on all other days since 1950.

On just four of those 13 Leap Days, the S&P 500 has turned in a positive performance. That translates to a rate of just 31%, compared to a 52% positive rate on all other days.

Things are similar over on the Dow. It's posted a median decline of 0.13% on Leap Day versus a median 0.05% gain on all other days. Likewise, the Dow is up just 38% of the time on Leap Day, versus 53% for all other days.

What will today, Leap Day 2024, bring? Well, who knows. However, bear in mind the Dow and S&P 500 have each had more than a dozen record finishes so far in 2024. As of this past Tuesday's close of business, the Dow had gained 2.2% in February and 3.4% to date in 2024. The S&P 500, meanwhile, is up 4.8% in February and 6.5% since the start of the year.

March is here, which means that, in nearby Manchester, it's time for the 61st annual Manchester Antique and Collectibles Show.

The show will take place at Second Congregational Church, 385 N. Main St., Manchester on Friday, March 15, from 11 a.m.-6 p.m., and Saturday, March 16, from 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Offerings will include: home décor, lawn & garden items, jewelry, primitives, advertising, toys, books & prints, linens & textiles, brass, copper, glass & china, silver, paintings, signs, furniture, collectibles, and more.

Editor's Desk continued on page 6

Bulletin Board

My wife came in with a bag of groceries from wherever it is food comes from the other day. Before I could ask if she'd remembered to buy popcorn, she said, "Do you think we're really compatible?"

"Huh?" I replied, rooting through the grocery bag.

"I was listening to the radio on the way home and they were talking about dating services and computer dating," she said.

"Well," I said, "we've been married for...uh...er...a bunch of years." No harm in sticking to the obvious, even if you're unable to recall the specifics.

"I know, but now they have all these dating services that do compatibility studies. They go into detail about your specific personality and then they can find your ideal match from anywhere in the world. Don't you ever wonder who might have come into your life if they had that kind of technology when we were single?"

This was an easy one. "No," I said firmly. Those damn divorce lawyers weren't going to engineer my return to some kind of late-in-life lonely bachelorhood where I had to do my own grocery shopping and laundry and keep track of medical appointments and checkbook entries. No thank you. I'm perfectly content to lie right here on the couch pretending to listen.

"Don't get me wrong," she continued, "but when we were young, relationships just kind of happened by chance. Now it's more scientific. When we were younger, relationships like ours started kind of like ships colliding in the night."

Actually, I seem to recall following her around the college quad for a whole semester like some kind of lost puppy hoping to be noticed, but I wasn't about to admit it now. "And a fortuitous collision it was, too," I said quickly.

I thought this might be laying it on a little thick, but she didn't seem to notice.

"Anyway," I added, "what kind of stupid questions could dating services ask? What's your favorite color?"

"Well," she said, "according to the guy on the radio, it's more sophisticated than that. For instance, finish this statement: 'Love means...'"

"Always being prepared to say you're sorry even when you're not."

"That's terribly cynical."

"I'm sorry."

"What about qualities like loyalty, comradeship, faithfulness and the determination to stand together no matter what?"

"Sounds more like a hitch in the Marine Corps."

I don't want those divorce lawyers to get what little money I have left after taxes, but I'm not prepared to sell my soul, either.

She gave one of those resigned little sighs that every married man recognizes as a warning that it's time to change lanes. This persuaded me to choke back my follow-up, which was to observe that a more appropriate compatibility question might be "What's your favorite brand of beer?"

"Hey," I said brightly, "of course we're right for each other. I see how you quiver with adoration whenever I shuffle out of the TV room to see what's in the refrigerator."

"It's more of a shudder," she replied. "I really must make an effort to get you some larger t-shirts."

"You see?" I said. "That's love. Continuing to cater to my needs despite my expanding waistline."

"Believe me," she replied, "providing you with larger t-shirts is more for my benefit than yours. And for God's sake, stop lying around on the couch with your pants unbuttoned."

"You should probably make an effort to get out and buy me some more compatible pants," I conceded.

Jim Hallas

Rivereast Hours of Operation

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



Dinner and a Show... Epoch Arts is gearing up for its annual **Dinnershow**. **Dinnershow** is a fundraiser for an original **Mainstage Theater Production** that goes up in **May**. The cast of the **Mainstage Theater Production** will serve a full course pasta dinner and then you will sit back and relax while they perform in a variety of skits, musical numbers and the famous **Wackadoodles**. Skits will randomly be called out and the cast will scramble to put their costumes on and perform on the spot. **Dinnershow** is **Saturday March 16, at 6 p.m., at Epoch, 27 Skinner St. Cost is \$12. To reserve seats, or if you would like to sponsor a skit for \$25 or a wackadoodle for \$10, email elizabeth@epocharts.org. For more information, visit www.epocharts.org. Pictured here is the cast from last year's show.**

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

In Vitro Fertilization (IVF)

To the Editor:

"Recently, a Supreme Court in Alabama ruled that frozen embryos should have the same rights as living children. We'll call this embryonic personhood. This set off shockwaves among all – pretty much everyone, including Republican Nancy Mace, who tweeted, 'I will stop any and all efforts to ban IVF.' Well, I have some news Nancy Mace, you voted for the Life at Conception Act, which really did create embryonic personhood in the first place. Here's the thing, Republicans had an opportunity to create cutouts for IVF. In fact, Democrats in the Senate begged them to and they refused. They didn't care enough to legislate to protect IVF. And now we are seeing the end result of it. You may not be able to get IVF in Alabama soon. I'm not sure how they fix this, but I think it's worth realizing that Republicans did this because they just didn't care about women's health." – Molly Jong-Fast, Fast Politics podcast.

"The bill is co-sponsored by 125 Republicans in the House, including Speaker Mike Johnson (R-La.). The proposal calls for equal protection under the 14th Amendment for 'each born and preborn human person,' and it defines a human being as 'each member of the species homo sa-

piens at all stages of life, including the moment of fertilization or cloning, or other moment at which an individual member of the human species comes into being.'" – The Hill

Annie Steinbrecher – Marlborough

Public Works Facility

To the Editor:

The Town of Hebron currently owns two parcels of land on Old Colchester Road. The first is a 20-acre piece located directly opposite to the existing transfer station. It was acquired by the town on 12/1/2011. A description of the property can be found in Book 480/Pages 353-354 of the Hebron Land Records. The second is a 26.73-acre piece located on the east side of Old Colchester Road, approximately two-tenths of a mile south of the transfer station. It was acquired on 5/6/2004. A description of this piece can be found in Book 404/Pages 209-210 of the Hebron Land Records.

Would someone please explain why the town is looking at purchasing additional property for expansion of the public works facility when these two pieces are available for such a purpose at no cost to the town?

Gardner Tarbell – Hebron

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Letter Writers: Letters must be 300 words or less, and must be submitted by Tuesdays at noon. Email is preferred; send to bulletin@glcitizen.com. All letters must be signed, and include the writer's town of residence and daytime contact phone number. Writers are limited to one letter per week. Anonymous letters will not be published. All letters are subject to editing for grammar, spelling and clarity, and are also subject to fact-checking. No form of harassment or personal attack (such as bullying or name-calling) will be tolerated. There is no guarantee that all letters will be published.

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Hoover, Truman, Eisenhower

To the Editor:
Back during the Great Depression, Herbert Hoover ordered the deportation of all illegal aliens in order to make jobs available to American citizens that desperately needed work. Harry Truman deported over two million illegal aliens after WWII to create jobs for returning veterans. In 1954, Dwight Eisenhower deported 13 million Mexicans. The program was called "Operation Wetback." It was done so WWII and Korean War veterans would have a better chance at jobs. It took two years, but they deported them!

Now, if they could deport the illegal aliens back then, they could surely do it today. If you have doubts about the source of this information, enter "Operation Wetback" into your favorite search engine and confirm it for yourself. Why, you might ask, can't they do this today? Actually, the answer is quite simple. Hoover, Truman, and Eisenhower were men of honor, not untrustworthy politicians looking for votes!

This is something that should be of great interest for you to pass around. Reminder: Don't forget to pay your taxes! Twelve to 20 million illegal aliens are depending on it. This November remember to Flush the Toilet!

Frank Blume – Colchester

Pot vs. Kettle

To the Editor:
A couple of weeks ago, Marlborough Board of Selectmen members Deb Bourbeau and Betty O'Brien criticized the proposed Marlborough Elementary School budget, claiming that the school's Administration is top heavy. Last week, Betty's husband, George, piled on with further criticism of the MES budget.

Is this a case of the "pot calling the kettle black?" Perhaps Deb and Betty should keep their focus closer to home by addressing excesses in their own town operations budget. This is the same Board of Selectmen who budgeted \$350,000 for a Town Hall HVAC system!

In addition, the Board of Selectmen, over the course of the last decade, has ended each year with hundreds of thousands of dollars in year-end surpluses. The last I checked, we are still waiting for the audit results for the 2021-22 fiscal year and we don't know if we will have the FY 2022-23 audit results in time for our next budget vote in May.

I am hoping that our new town manager will perform a bottom up assessment of town needs when putting together this year's town operations budget. Based on the consistently large year end surpluses from prior years, it would appear that it is the Board of Selectmen who should be focusing on their own budget to trim excess.

We have a great elementary school, which is beneficial to all property owners, not just parents, by maintaining property values. I would ask the Board of Selectmen to stay in their lane by paying attention to their operations and capital budgets, and let the Board of Education take care of things on their end. In the end, it will be up to the taxpayers to decide on the merits of the budgets when presented to voters in May.

Ken Hjulstrom – Marlborough

State Must Increase Funding

To the Editor:
Local taxpayers have done an admirable job at funding public education. Costs for quality services, such as special education, have snowballed over the years, requiring families in towns like East Hampton to open their wallets a little wider with each passing budget.

If only the same could be said for the state. Small towns routinely get the short shrift from programs like the Educational Cost Sharing (ECS) grant, which the state utilizes to distribute billions of dollars to fund education. The formula is heavily weighted to support impoverished or underserved communities, and rightly so. As a result, cities like Hartford and Bridgeport fund their schools mostly through

state aid. Small towns, on the other hand, are largely left to their own devices.

Year by year, as costs rise and unfunded mandates increase, towns like East Hampton answer the call. Yet with all the added expense, the state has done nothing to increase aid to Belltown.

During Paul Smith's first year as superintendent, the ECS formula provided the public school system with more than \$7.5 million, accounting for 26% of the budget. This year, aid has fallen to \$7.1 million, or about 18% of the Board of Ed's proposed spending plan.

If the state won't increase funding, at least slow down on mandates that are only going to cost small towns more. That has not been the case, and it's become a bipartisan call for members of the Boards of Education, Finance, and Town Council alike.

It's too late to do anything about the formula for this year's budget. But moving forward, we need our state legislators to work with the Governor to fight for more smalltown funding. We've shown education is a top priority. Now it's time for the state to honor and match our commitment.

Sincerely,

Matt Engelhardt – East Hampton

Note: Engelhardt is a member of the East Hampton Board of Education, but is expressing his own independent opinion.

Blurred Vision

To the Editor:
In a letter to the editor, Spending vs. Ethics, the letter addressed the appearance of ethics violations by two members of the Portland Board of Selectmen. Selectman Manning has advocated and voted for \$1.5 M in budget allocations that benefited the fire department, as first Lt in Company 3 firehouse. Selectman Pelton advocated and voted on budget and supplemental allocations that directly benefited him while employed as the school's track coach. Recently, the Portland Park & Rec dept posted winter activities on their town FB page. The FB page link directed the viewer to Pelton's business with a link to pay for his services through the town website. This gives the appearance of a "gift" to a seated BOS member for votes before the BOS. Remember Mayor Gamin and his wine and suits?

In the letter of rebuttal to Spending vs. Ethics, the writer misses the overall point of the letter and does not defend the questionable ethics violations. However, the rebuttal acknowledges Manning's conflict of interest regarding monetary allocations directly benefiting the fire department. Ethics rules are clear that if there is a conflict or appearance of a conflict of interest, the voting members must recuse themselves.

A review of these issues should be submitted to the full ethics commission for clarification of the obligation of board members to comply with the ethics rules, along with consultation from the town attorney. The BOS Chair should have recognized and addressed these conflicts of interest well in advance of any vote before the board.

As ethics rules are ignored, Portland will continue to have empty storefronts and school roofs that go unreparable.

The vision for Portland's future is blurred by the nonenforcement of state and local ethics laws.

**One of many with questions,
Rose Aletta – Portland**

Mental Acuity

To the Editor:
First of all, I'd like to thank our liberal-minded editor Mike Thompson for sending Colin and I to the back of the class – page 30 of the Feb. 9 issue. I've rarely if ever seen Sauyet, Smith or Stevens get that honor. Just saying!!

Speaking of Scott Sauyet he's at it again. He is suffering from the same mental acuity as his president, Joe Biden. He claims that the masses are saying that the economy is bad but that their personal finances are fine and that inflation is lower than under President Trump. Not so; fake news. While inflation has gone down recently, three years of Bidenomics has given us a 17.9% overall increase in everything we buy and have to buy: Groceries – horrible – building materials, motor vehicles – ridiculous – insurance, health care, and the list goes on and on. Joe Biden's mental state is once again on the forefront – more gaffes failing to know the current president of France or the chancellor of Germany. Do we know for sure he's going to be the nominee? VP Harris says she is ready to take over. Oh my!!

Now in his efforts to pander more Democratic votes, Joe has ignored the Supreme Court and has continued his "taxpayer giveaways" under the guise of student forgiveness loans, to the tune of \$1.4 billion. Maybe math wizard Sauyet can tell us how much each working taxpayer is on the hook for? And nothing for the blue collar workers.

Back to the border: tens of thousands of Chinese nationals are entering our country illegally – unvetted. Chinese citizens as you may know cannot leave China without government permission. What does that tell you? Our enemy is infiltrating our country and Joe – Chinese agent – is comfortable with that. Our commander in chief looking out for us.

Don Denley – Andover

Burning for Peace

To the Editor:
This past week, an Air Force airman by the name of Aaron Bushnell walked up to the Israeli Embassy in Washington D.C., doused himself in gasoline, and set himself on fire in what he called an "extreme form of protest." He said he could "no longer be complicit in genocide" and said his fate would be similar to the many thousands of women and children that the US has helped to murder through its military and financial support of the Israeli state. After pouring a liter of gasoline over his head and lighting himself on fire, Bushnell screamed "Free Palestine" repeatedly while the flames engulfed him, eventually collapsing into a pile of burning flesh and clothing.

Police, who appeared on the scene within moments, screamed for help in dousing the flames. In a visual that can only be considered disturbing, one cop draws down on a flaming and collapsed Bushnell while another screams, "I need fire extinguishers, not guns!" Surprisingly, this is the second time that an act of self-immolation has occurred in support of Palestine, the first happening in Atlanta when a woman wrapped



in a Palentinian flag set herself on fire. With no end to the conflict in sight, it's sad to see people go to such extreme lengths to get their point across, but when the entrenched power structure seems intent on continuing to support a slaughter of civilians, mostly women and children, people are left feeling desperate.

To add to the senselessness, last week at the United Nations, the US was the sole veto vote at the UN Security Council, blocking a measure that would of called for an immediate ceasefire in the conflict. This is the third time the U.S. has vetoed a Israeli-Hamas ceasefire proposal at the UN. What exactly are we doing?

Colin McNamara – Marlborough

Electric Vehicles

To the Editor:
It was a good plan. Ending sales of new gasoline powered vehicles in Connecticut was a good idea. It still is, because the elephant remains in the room – air quality; only California's is worse. Still, as His Majesty George III found out, we are a people averse to governments telling us what to do.

Governments can play a supporting role, but I think buyers will gravitate to Battery Electric Vehicles (BEV) on their own. I bought my BEV because I was sick of pumping gas. I bought my second BEV because I liked my first. Others will buy theirs for a host of good reasons. I don't have to list them here, but air quality should be the overarching reason for purchasing a BEV.

The gradual replacement of gasoline-powered vehicles with BEVs is the least expensive and least disruptive solution to our air quality problem. Financial incentives won't hurt. The only other options include fuel rationing, odd-even driving bans, greatly higher fuel taxes and lowered highway speed limits. Choose your discomfort; one way or another we're going to clean up our dirty air. BEVs appear to be the painless remedy.

John A. Murray – Marlborough

Frustrated & Dismayed

To the Editor:
This is an open letter to the Marlborough Board of Education. I did attend the Jan. 25 meeting at which the FY25 budget was proposed. I continue to be frustrated and dismayed by what I saw and heard then, and since. My background includes public education teaching as well as administration. As such I believe I have the knowledge to comment. My concern is non-partisan and is focused on the whole board. You each were willing to put your time and energy into running for election, and into serving on an important board, one that is responsible for an \$8,000,000(!) dollar budget. You are responsible to serve the children, the teachers, and the community of Marlborough. You are not responsible to the superintendent of schools or to the Board of Selectmen. Many of us of differing political and personal preferences worked hard to get you elected so you could appropriately serve the role you've taken.

Being a board members brings crucial re-
See Letters, page 6

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★ *Letters cont. from page 5*

sponsibilities. Your attendance on an education board is expected, as is your homework enabling you to ask meaningful, insightful questions, learn what you don't know, and serve all the taxpayers of Marlborough. As a board, you had been invited to email questions and concerns to the superintendent so that you would be prepared. It did not appear that you performed your due diligence before of after that meeting. You performed no scrutiny, asked no meaningful questions, sought no facts, to support an increased budget. You spent just about 45 minutes discussing whether to seek a .45 or a .50 special ed director (which one of you noted was the equivalent of roughly \$2,500). Significant and some would say inappropriate changes were suggested to the structure of the school, new positions that some might feel were unnecessary or excessive were proposed...yet the proposed budget was accepted with blind acceptance and in fact as the chair commented to the board, "well I respect Holly, so..." and the vote was taken.

I voted for you, not to do what I might prefer, but certainly to do your job, which is a thorough, studied, and well-thought-out decision making process dependent on the work of questioning and learning what you need to know in order to fully understand and act on any proposals or issues brought to your attention. It is truly disappointing that as a board you did not appear to have taken sufficient responsibility to question what you hear and to offer independent and balanced responses to such an important fiscal proposal. It is incumbent on you to understand what are the foundations for the numbers you are hearing. My request of you as you move forward is simple: board members, do your homework.

Ann Terezakis – Marlborough

Fund Colchester Properly

Dear Colchester FS, BOS, BOF, and BOE:

As we begin the budget process, remember that the people spoke loudly and clearly about the budget during last year's budget process and at the ballot box in November. We want our schools and our town to be well-funded. It has become clear that the last administration rammed through budgets with draconian cuts that had little basis in reality – you cannot just pull a number out of the sky and hope that it all works out.

I am very concerned about the state of our schools. Years of devastating funding cuts in real dollars have led us to this position – we spend \$1,641.37 less per pupil, and our school budget is \$4.6 million less, than in 2014 in inflation-adjusted dollars.

First, we must address building maintenance and our athletic fields. We can no longer kick this can down the road.

Second, we need to work to decrease barriers to participation in the broad activities that our schools offer. We should abolish pay to play for both sports and clubs. It is critical to remove the transportation barrier. We need afternoon buses to support sports and clubs.

Third, we need to reinstate our gifted and talented program. Gifted and talented students are students with special needs. They are the only students with special needs who are not protected under Federal law; hence, this program is often cut.

Finally, I want to ensure that we can recruit and retain the best talent to teach and guide our children and serve our town. We need to do more to make our salary and compensation competitive compared to local districts and villages. Our teachers, staff and town employees need a raise to ensure our public servants receive a competitive wage.

We voted you in as a group to address these needs.

Jeremy M. McKenzie – Colchester

Media a No-Show

To the Editor:

UConn's two National Science Bowl high school regionals concluded this past Saturday February 24th. Once again, the press was a no show. Lexington, Mass., won the Northeast Division and East Lyme won the Connecticut Division. The U.S. Department of Energy will now fly both teams to Washington D.C. to compete amongst 70-regional winners.

Futilely, I invited multiple CT broadcast and print media. They didn't see any worthy storylines to whet their appetites. Being the nation's premiere academic team competition was moot. That Lexington won the national championship four times in the past 12 years didn't matter. The press was indifferent to publicizing the friendly 'Civil War' capping UConn's regionals – where each winner faces off against the other. East

Lyme defeated Lexington 158 to 106, sending a message throughout the country that these two teams could be the top and 2nd best high school teams in America. Edwin O. Smith High was right behind at 2nd best in Connecticut, only losing to East Lyme by 10 points. Glastonbury High was 3rd.

Yankee slugger Aaron Judge's problematic big toe got bigger press. But that's the way America rolls. Sports is king. Intellectual excellence the pauper. Fortunately, I had the pleasure of reading the questions for 11 of the matches, including one with East Lyme and Edwin O. Smith. It's an awesome and eye-opening experience, witnessing America's top students showcasing their brilliance. Whiplash awaits next *Rivereast* when I get to read the opinions of Sam Prentice and Ed Kozlowski. Fortunately, the Washington, D.C., National Science Bowl finals await. Afterwards, I again get to go begging Connecticut business owners to help fund our third middle school science bowl in a row, 2/8/25, at Smith Middle School in Glastonbury. UConn dropped us in 2022, but we (Sandra Nichols, Richard Kao, Maria Buono) will prevail.

Edmund Smith – Andover

The White Elephant

To the Editor:

Saturday's mail brought a thank you card. I liked the card and recognized the artist straightaway. The note was like all the others, grateful and sincere. Over the past month, several of us have discussed unusual subjects, including the U.S. public being given time to speak, but, in most cases, being ignored. The contracts had been signed years before and clearly, there was no intention of changing course. In the last year, Hebron appears to be trying to listen to public input, but only once, in nearly three years, have we heard the root of residents' concerns. We hear blither blather and committees are formed and the survey went out and more meetings are held and more letters are written. BTW, the artwork on the thank you card was by Matisse, and appropriately named, The White Elephant.

Wouldn't it be interesting if we had meetings that addressed residential concerns about the White Elephant in Hebron? Where reports like The Hebron Village Green, the Environmental Review Team report circa 2000, and fractured bedrock aquifers are discussed at length. Where the Board of Selectmen and the Public Building Committee, Inland Wetlands, The Water Pollution Control Authority, Open Space, The Green Committee, Historic Properties and The Board of Finance openly read and discuss the negative impact of ripping up the Raymond Brook Watershed, even the Board of Education could join in, because they too have a stake in preservation.

This one tract of land, 17 Kinney Rd., affects all boards, committees and residents of this town, not just financially but spiritually as well. What direction do we really want to go in? How much are people willing to sacrifice to deface the Raymond Brook Watershed, state, federal or Warren Buffett monies aside? Who's feeding the white elephant? #save17

Jean Tulimieri – Amston

Civility Now the Norm

To the Editor:

East Hampton has experienced a positive turnabout in the working relationships between boards of education, finance and Town Council members. Civility has become the norm as those serving have demonstrated and followed through with election promises to operate differently from what our citizens experienced during the contentious budget hearings last spring. Two of our newly elected Council members, Jordan Werme (D) and Deb Cummingham (R) reached across party lines proposing a new opportunity for citizens to express their views on what our priorities should be.

In an effort to make the budgeting process more transparent, members from those three bodies are holding "Listening Sessions" during the next two weeks, where you can express your priorities as elected officials listen. The comments will be recorded, transcribed and made available to all. With fiscal constraints, not all priorities can be implemented, but could prove invaluable as we plan our future. Remember, our elected officials have a responsibility to operate our government as cost efficiently as possible.

East Hampton has been an innovator among Connecticut towns, bringing the primary elected boards together in a Tri-Board meeting. We know we face a financial challenge in the upcoming budget, but rather than point fingers, we listened as Town Manager David Cox and Superintendent of Schools Paul Smith explained the difficulties we are experiencing with

unfunded special education mandates, reduced ECS grants and washed out roads. All members agreed to jointly sign a letter requesting Governor Lamont and legislative leaders to fund mandates as the state is once again experiencing a multimillion-dollar surplus and a fully-funded rainy day fund.

We intend to hold Tri-Board Workshops several times a year fostering further cooperation. This doesn't mean we don't have differences. What it does mean is that we are setting a tone for civility and mutual respect.

**Dean Markham, Chairman
East Hampton Town Council**

Future Depends on Education

To the Editor:

The future of Marlborough and the USA depends heavily on education for us to compete globally. Three pressures make Marlborough Elementary School less competitive than 20 years ago. One has been the numerous cuts in the MES budgets. Another constriction is the greater demands on schools from parents due to economic forces on families today versus the year 2000. The third is inflationary pressures on the schools' salaries, insurance, services, and you know the rest.

This results in today's students facing greater learning needs, nationally and in Marlborough. MES has fewer resources today due to these factors plus increased mandates and special education paperwork.

East Hampton's schools, which are tightly run from a fiscal perspective, have moved nearly 20 certified and non-certified staff over the last 14 years from overall classroom duties to special education. More staff addressing special ed needs as less staff teach the rest of the population. This reshuffling of resources is a statewide and national phenomenon.

The big picture of our global competitiveness is painfully visible. Google PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) to see how poorly the USA performs. We are below the OECD (Organization for Economic Development) countries' mathematics average, sitting at 34th out of 80 countries.

The world is different now than it was 20 years ago.

The MES superintendent reduced expenses in several areas for one of the lowest proposed school budgets in CT, 2.72%. Reducing this budget further will impact the students learning.

I hope our Board of Finance looks at the big picture changes and supports quality education for MES to get back on track educationally.

It hurts the value of our homes if our town's greatest asset is diminished. Less people will move here due to our school's slipping reputation. Everyone will lose then.

Dave Porteous – Marlborough

Public Works Communication

To the Editor:

I was encouraged by the Department of Public Works Action Committee meeting on Feb. 20 and Hebron's efforts to enhance communications. This features a Communications Sub-Committee who have created a communications plan with "multiple modes and key deliverables," a calendar of updates and the creation of a Committee specific email address. Perhaps the most interesting part of the Sub-Committee's work is the plan to create a FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) page on the Town website. This would be an active document, allowing residents easy access important information as well as an avenue to voice their concerns. Here are a few questions to start:

On Feb. 5, a resident asked the Action Committee if there has been a facilities audit / op-

erational needs assessment? This detailed study examines both operations and equipment to determine areas of efficiencies and areas that could be improved. This important question clearly needs to be addressed before any additional design planning moves forward. What are the plans to review Public Works and acquire up to date information?

Plans for a reorganized Public Works facility on Old Colchester Road were created in 2016 and can be seen on page 32 of the September 2022 Public Building Committee presentation posted on the town website. However, many aspects of economics, demographics and technology have changed since 2016. How will the Action Committee address the new reality of a decreasing population and continually rising taxes? How will they create a modern Public Works that will be fiscally responsible and environmentally sustainable?

I look forward to the implementation of the Action Committee's communication plan and the additional clarity it could provide. For more information please visit Save Hebron Center on Facebook.

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

The Megaschool Plan

To the Editor:

Last week First Selectman Ryan Curley sent an email update about closing both Gildersleeve School and Brownstone Intermediate School to create one Megaschool at Valley View Elementary School. In this email he stated there was a consensus of the Board of Selectmen and Board of Education to go with this Megaschool plan.

Fact: There was discussion, but never a vote on either board. Don't you think the taxpayers and voters should have a clear record of what our elected officials voted for? Knowing our elected officials' stance on such a major decision for our town should be on record so we know who supported what before our next election.

First Selectman Curley also stated "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%."

Fact: We have not even applied for the grant. The grant could provide up to 51% but there is no guarantee, it could be 25%, or nothing.

Another important fact taxpayers should know is the Megaschool plan going to referendum does not include any repairs to the middle/high school complex. In 2020, the estimate was \$8.5 million dollars in repairs were needed for that building.

The approximate date for the new Megaschool to open is September 2027. By then millions more in repairs could be needed at the middle/high school that the town will need to find a way to finance. So, we will have a brand new Megaschool for half our students and teachers and the other half will still be at the middle/high school building without repairs.

How are we going to vote to fix a school for only half of our students? Don't all of our students deserve a building in good repair?

**Thank you,
April Graves – Portland**

Editor's Desk continued from page 4

Lunch will be served in the church's tea room.

The Hebron Maple Fest of course is the weekend of March 16 and 17 – so you can get some antiquing done Friday, and then get your maple on Saturday and Sunday.

Sounds like a pretty good weekend.

See you next week.

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Two New Principals for Elementary School

By Michael Sinkewicz

With the current principal and vice principal due to retire at the end of the school year, Marlborough Elementary School (MES) this week announced the appointment of two new administrators to lead the district following an “intensive” search process.

In a press release, the school district said Paula Graef and Kristen Trahan will take over starting July 1, succeeding Principal Dan White and Vice Principal Kim Kelley.

However, in a change that school superintendent Holly Hageman said more accurately reflects the positions’ responsibilities, Graef and Trahan will each have the title of “co-principal.”

The district previously formed the MES Principal Search Committee, a 13-member board consisting of members of the school-community, including two Board of Education (BOE) members. According to its release, the district received 40 applications and the committee whittled the pool down through screening interviews and multiple rounds of in-depth conversations.

Ultimately, Hageman and the committee recommended two finalists, who were discussed last week on Feb. 22 during a BOE executive session — a private meeting not open to the public — and endorsed.

This week, Hageman told the *Rivereast* that while the candidates didn’t require official BOE consent — and no vote or motion was recorded — they both received “consensus approval” from the board members.

Graef and Trahan will act as co-principals and will be paid the same salary, which is remaining the same as the current administrators, according to Hageman.

The decision to make the two positions “equal” moving forward was reached because it was essentially already taking place, she continued. While White and Kelley had unique titles, their responsibilities were similar and the roles

will now reflect that reality.

Accordingly, Hageman said the district was looking a duo, and the finalists formed “an excellent team.”

“They both had the depth of experience we were desiring,” she said, adding that their mindset was entirely “student-first.”

Hageman described the new leaders as “caring, kind and thoughtful.”

Both actively work as elementary school principals. The press release states that Graef is currently overseeing Brooklyn Elementary, while Trahan leads Shepard Hill Elementary in Plainfield.

“They were principals before, during, and after the pandemic and maintained the vision and fortitude to enhance programs and outcomes at their schools,” the release states. “They both have deep expertise in elementary curriculum and instruction and a strong desire to foster continuous learning and growth.”

Graef received bachelor’s and master’s degrees in education from the University of Wisconsin and an additional master’s degree in educational administration from the University of Connecticut. The release also notes that she earned certifications as an administrator, elementary and math teacher and has a National Board Teacher Certification.

Her teaching career includes grades 2-6, along with being a math and science specialist while in Wisconsin. Notably, she taught locally in Hebron as a fifth- and sixth-grade teacher and as a curriculum and technology specialist. The release highlights that Graef is “thrilled to return to our region to what she considers her dream job.”

Trahan, meanwhile, earned a Bachelor of Science from the University of Maine in English, a master’s degree in elementary education and a certificate in administration from Sacred Heart University, and a second master’s degree in lit-

eracy from Southern Connecticut State University. She is also a University of Connecticut PreK-3 Leadership Program Fellow, according to the press release.

Before her administrative role in Plainfield, she was an assistant principal at a kindergarten magnet school. Trahan has certifications as an elementary teacher, remedial reading teacher and reading consultant, and was a K-8 district literacy consultant. Her resume includes a stint as an adjunct professor in the Graduate Literacy Program at Sacred Heart.

The positions were posted at the beginning of January, Hageman said, and the search process was “very intensive,” and involved reference checks and multiple rounds of interviews.

Hageman expressed that while initially scary, “change brings opportunity.” Losing two experienced administrators at the same time undoubtedly casts a degree of uncertainty as the district undergoes a substantial transition. The school chief assured the community that their outgoing administrators are leaving the confines of 25 School Drive in good shape.

“Dan and Kim have been remarkable public servants,” she said. “They’ve gone above and beyond.”

During the COVID-19 pandemic, when administrators were unexpectedly thrust into a largely unprecedented set of circumstances, Marlborough depended on its leaders to confidently navigate the students through those challenges.

Hageman asserted that both White and Kelley were instrumental in those efforts.

“They have incredible work ethic, dedication and pride,” she said. “We lose Dan and Kim, and all those incredible attributes.”

She added, though, that the district is gaining two capable leaders.

As the district, which has experienced a sizable drop in enrollment over the past 10 years, prepared to part ways with both its school leaders at once, some residents questioned whether continuing with two principals was necessary.

At a prior BOE meeting, two local selectmen, Deb Bourbeau and Betty O’Brien, suggested that the ongoing expense of employing both administrators was not “fiscally responsible.”

Hageman said shifting to just one principal was “never considered” as a viable option.

“It’s simply not a one-principal job,” she said.

In her explanation, Hageman conveyed that the district oversees students ranging from 3 to 12 years old, which requires a significant amount of “developmental and content experience for one person to have.”

The justification for two principals, she continued, is not simply based on the number of students. Because the district doesn’t employ certain roles, such as a human resources director, the superintendent and principals are effectively “wearing multiple hats.”

“When you’re stretched too thin, you can’t cover all the bases,” she said.

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, March 3 is a Communion Sunday. Holy Communion is open to all, regardless of church affiliation, including children with parental guidance. The bread used is gluten-free. The service will be led by the Rev. Valerie Server. Her sermon title is “To Whom Does This House Belong?” Bible Sunday will also be celebrated where third grade Sunday School students will receive a Bible. Seaver will have a brief children’s message entitled “Are Rules Cruel or Cool?”

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-perishable food items year-round for Marlborough Food Bank, with a basket located in the narthex for Sunday worshippers to bring their donations. The Drive-Thru Café for Marlborough Food Bank patrons with vouchers is usually held on the last Sunday of each month from September to June.

AA: The church sponsors three weekly 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.

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.

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.

Community Sing
Carolyn Brodinski 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.

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School Board Approves \$38.08M Budget

By London Brazal

The East Hampton Board of Education this week adopted a proposed 2024-25 budget of \$38.08 million, an increase of 6.21% from current year spending. The spending plan now heads to the Board of Finance.

At Monday's meeting, the Board of Education (BOE) reviewed Superintendent of Schools Paul Smith's proposed budget. A comparison chart revealed a decrease in state funding support for East Hampton's education costs, dropping from approximately \$7.5 million to \$7 million over nine years. The BOE approved the \$38.08 million budget by an 8-1 tally. Board member Josh Piteo, a Republican, was the lone 'no' vote, saying after the meeting he felt the spending package was too high and "too much, too soon."

An analysis of the operating budget says the current 2023-24 budget has been significantly impacted by student support needs resulting in increased outside tuition with related services and transportation. "Risks are inherent to every school budget, as we operate without additional school contingency funding and our student's needs are not static or 'straight-line' predictable," wrote Smith.

An important fluctuating cost is outplacements. In 2024, the tuition cost per student for the outpaced program varies from \$113,999 to \$275,072. Following reimbursement from the CT Excess Cost Grant, the net cost per student ranges from \$95,760 to \$140,655. In the last 10 years, the number of special education students in East Hampton has increased. In the 2013-

2014 school year, there were 181 students compared to 352 now. The number of outplacements has varied over time but in the last five years, the number has continued to increase from 7 to 14.

With the increase in special education students, an increased paraprofessional or intervention support is needed. One interventionist with benefits (single insurance) is \$53,000 and one paraprofessional is \$48,000. All options are fully vetted including building transfers. Local services are financially efficient compared to out-of-district options.

To help as alternatives to outplacements, the district has strengthened local programs such as STARS (Supportive Teaching for At-Risk Students), STEPS, The Learning Center and the Transition Academy. With that, another significant additional uncertainty and financial risk to consider is added school vehicles. These expenditures qualify for reimbursement in excess cost grant applications for high-cost students. Homeless transportation is coordinated with the district where the student(s) are temporarily located. The district prioritizes the shared use of special education vehicles, aiming to transport 2 or more students on the same vehicle or with neighboring communities whenever possible.

While looking at the different sections of the 2024-25 budget, salaries, wages and benefits makeup 83.8% or about \$31.90 million of the total operating expenses. In 2025, the full cost of family health care is expected to be around \$38,847. The district has made changes so that

more than 90 current full-time employees, which is almost 85% of all new full-time hires in 2023, have to pay a larger share of the cost and need to choose more extensive coverage.

Under the state partnership plan, the medical premium cost would have been \$6,277,169 for the 2023-24 year due to a 7.2% increase. However, by making a change in July 2023, the premium was reduced to \$6,036,867. The increase for the 2024-25 year is expected to be higher, but the district is looking into other plan options to save money in the future.

Though slight increases exist in multiple areas, there are decreases in areas such as technology software, electricity and curriculum investments. Technology software has decreased because there are savings generated through major transitions. These changes included switching to the state's IEP system, new time-keeping, attendance, and substitute-finding software, which was cheaper than the old program and has a more modern interface. The decrease in electricity is because of a solar field credit program, a virtual net metering system

with Eversource, that began in the spring of 2021. There is also an anticipated savings from the energy project at the middle school which replaced fixtures with LED lighting.

After calculating the total spending, the budget was slated to have a 7.18% increase. However, a state grant helped lower the increase to 6.21%. The state reimburses a portion of expenses beyond a certain level (4.5 times the district's net current expenditures). These expenses cover services tailored to individual students' needs as determined by the special education "IEP" process. Regarding the financial system, the grant is budgeted and recorded as a "negative" offset to tuition. In 2023, the state reimbursed 76% of the amount exceeding the set level. The final amount wasn't known until the last payment in May because it varies depending on the state funding cap and the total fund requests from all school districts.

To look at the budget in its entirety, visit easthamptonps.org/o/district/page/budget-process. Any questions can be emailed to psmith@easthamptonct.org.

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 Shapiro of Glastonbury; William (Bill) Barrows, a second-generation auctioneer at Thomas Barrows and Sons from Portland; and Michael B. Westman, an appraiser

from Rhode Island.

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.

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.

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.

DIY Days: Floam: Saturday, March 16, 11 a.m.-4 p.m., for grades K-8. Activities are available while supplies last. 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.

Nintendo Switch Game Play: Saturday, March 16, 2-3:30 p.m., for grades 6-12. Pull up a beanbag chair in the library community room for a big-screen Nintendo Switch hang-out. All skill levels welcome.

Adult Programs: 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.

Paranormal Hotspots with Ronny LeBlanc: Tuesday, March 12, 6:30 p.m. Find out why some places exhibit more paranormal activity than others with Discovery+ and Travel Channel star Ronny LeBlanc. Learn about paranormal hotspots right here in New England.

Belltown Book Brunch: Friday, March 15, 11 a.m. Drop in for coffee or tea, a breakfast treat, and bookish banter. Register or drop in.

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 next one will be tonight, March 1.

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 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.

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.





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Donors Give More Than \$15K for Seniors

By Kathleen Megan

East Hampton Community Cares said it would like to thank donors who have contributed \$15,200, ensuring that 150 people – senior citizens and volunteers – can participate in the program.

Dr. Eric Rosenberg, chairman of the East Hampton Commission on Aging, said he knows that East Hampton is “a very generous community,” but that he was overjoyed that the group was able to raise such a significant sum from several of the area’s prominent businesses.

Businesses giving leadership grants of \$3,000 included St. Clements Castle and a combined gift from Belltown Motors and Belltown Recycling Center. Lakeside Bar and Grill also donated \$2,000 in addition to in-kind services. East Hampton Rotary also provided a leadership donation of \$3,000 in July to get the program started.

East Hampton Community Cares, or EHCC, also thanked Bevin Bells, the law practice of Brown Paindiris and Scott, Center Package Store, and Kevin Reich, for their gifts.

Po’s Rice and Spice has also agreed to sponsor a fundraiser for EHCC in the near future.

The program, which started in September, matches adults aged 70 or over and disabled people of any age with volunteers who provide needed help at no charge, whether with transportation, household tasks, technology or companionship.

For each volunteer and recipient, EHCC must pay a one-time \$100 fee to cover background checks to ensure everyone’s safety, as well computer and insurance costs.

So far, at least 23 people have volunteered and 23 others are receiving services. Rosenberg said that he expects those numbers to continue to increase as the word gets out about the ser-

vice that are provided and the opportunity to volunteer.

He said many of the requests are for a ride to a medical appointment or to do an errand, yardwork, inside chores, and simply companionship.

“Companionship is a big deal,” said Rosenberg. “Several people have received multiple companionship visits to fight loneliness and increase connections.”

For Peter Callan, the president and owner of St. Clements Castle, the desire to donate to a program that connects volunteers to senior citizens who could use some help or just a bit of companionship was a natural.

Callan, who immigrated as a child with his family from Ireland, grew up in East Haddam where his mother ran a rest home for senior citizens, making them three meals a day and helping them live independently. Callan and his siblings all had assigned jobs to help out.

“We always had seniors around so I was very comfortable around them,” Callan said of the residents in the home. “We always called them guests.”

Because of his own experience, Callan said he is especially interested in the fact that young people are able to sign up to help out older people through East Hampton Community Cares. Volunteers as young as 16 are welcome to take part as long as there is adult supervision and parental permission.

“I think it’s a very important effort to connect the generations,” said Callan. “You know, kids are disconnected today. They’re with their devices. And they could learn a lot from spending time with the older generation. There’s a lot of people who are lonely, who could just use a little company or a little help and I think a lot of

people don’t ask for it.”

Donating to the program is “really a simple gesture,” Callan said, “and something we could definitely do.”

Hope Flannery, who along with her husband, Tony, and son, Anthony, is the owner of Belltown Recycling Center, said they all grew up in town. Tony Flannery also owns Belltown Motors. “We always try to help when we can,” she said.

She recalled that her own children volunteered through the church when they were growing up. When it was time to do it, she said, they’d moan, “Oh no we have to go,” but then “They’d come back and they’d be happy. It made them feel better that that they did it. They were helping somebody.”

Flannery said she thinks East Hampton Community Cares is “a really nice idea. I’m sure the seniors really like it.”

“There’s always somebody who could use a little extra help,” she said.

Iso Dedushaj, the owner of Lakeside Bar and Grill in town and also of the Gelston House in East Haddam, said he is very happy to help out

the effort. “To be honest with you, helping older people – that’s the best thing to do,” said Dedushaj. “People don’t have family, they don’t have enough money, today everything is expensive.”

“They don’t have anyone to mow the grass or help with chores.”

Desushaj said he is very aware how much older people like to remain in their own homes, rather than moving to a place where they can get the help they need. His own mother is 87 and living at home with round-the-clock care in their home country of Montenegro.

He said he hopes the assistance through East Hampton Community Cares allows older people to stay in their own homes for a longer time.

Callan said, “It’s good to shine a light on giving like this because I think it sets a standard for businesses. They can give back locally and be more of a neighbor.”

Note: Kathleen Megan is a former reporter for The Hartford Courant and Connecticut Mirror, and is currently a teacher and freelancer. She is also an alternate member of the East Hampton Commission on Aging.

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.

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.

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.

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 worship

service. The theme is “Friends with God.” A toddler nursery is also available. All are welcome.

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

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

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

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. Tick-

ets 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.

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.

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.

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

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

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

Yoga for Kids: Tuesdays, starting March 5, at 10 a.m. For children who are crawling, up to age 5. Cost is \$12 for each child/parent/caregiver pair. To register call or text the instructor Kathleen at 860-638-9097 or email kmarshall0227@yahoo.com

Pilates: A second session of Thursday Night

Pilates began 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.

Save the Date: An illustrated talk on “Ships for the Trade & the Rise of the Customs Port” will be held at the library Saturday, March 23, at 2 p.m., featuring a discussion on shipbuilding and trade on the Connecticut River – including Middle Haddam. The talk is presented by Brenda Milkofsky, former founding director and senior curator at the Connecticut River Museum in Essex and former executive director at the Wethersfield Historical Society. The program is free and open to the public.

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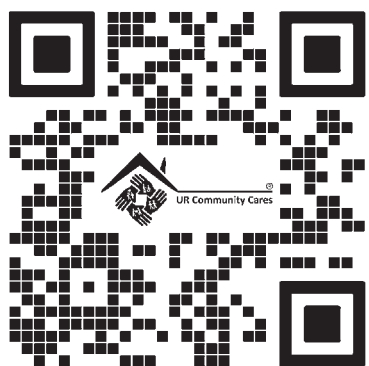
Joseph Cassidy, Esq.

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– Marcelene Cox

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Boards Set Goals for Budget

By London Brazal

The Town Council, Board of Finance and Board of Education met last week to discuss the goals and expectations of the 2025 fiscal year budget.

On Thursday, Feb. 22, the three boards met for their second tri-board meeting since the elections last November. As one of the first budget workshops, most comments were directed at setting the groundwork for what must be done in the coming weeks.

Town Manager David Cox explained that two main areas – public safety and capital improvements – act as drivers for the change in cost regarding the general town budget. For several years, Police Chief Dennis Woessner has talked about adding a new police officer to the department. Last year, the additional officer was drafted into the budget but ultimately cut. This year, the request appears again. The fire department is looking to change the volunteer stipend and increase the number of volunteers. The ambulance is also showing an increase related to the volunteer stipend and support for their operations.

The other main drive was the transfer to the capital improvement fund of nearly one million dollars. The largest item slated has to deal with road maintenance. The goal of the public works department is to fix deteriorating roads which are rated at 68%. The desired goal is to get them

to a standard where they are more manageable in the future. Other increases regard upgrades and the rising costs of technology, vehicles and equipment.

Overall, there is an estimated increase of \$1.55 million for the town budget.

Following Cox's presentation, Superintendent of Schools Paul Smith called attention to the state and how they have made it "extremely difficult" for towns to fund their schools. Smith referenced his first education budget nine years ago and he stated that state funding covered about \$7.5 million. The Education Cost Share (ECS) grant from the state represented 26% of the East Hampton budget.

Since his first budget for the 2017 fiscal year, the ECS grant has been lowered each year. The grant is only slated to cover 18% of the budget for 2025 with about \$7 million. Besides the decrease in support, the state has increased mandates such as new indoor air quality and HVAC requirements for public schools.

If the state were to continue to fund ECS at a consistent rate without any increases at 26%, the town of East Hampton would receive an additional \$2.2 million, covering the increase requested for the upcoming fiscal year.

A paper titled, The Impact of State Funding Reductions on the East Hampton Budget, available at the meeting, noted the change in certi-

fied staffing from 2016 to the anticipated 2025. During the nine years, regular education teachers have been reduced and special education teachers have been increased by necessity. One of the uncertain parts of the budget surrounds special education. If the district has to outpace students, the needed budget increases.

The initial budget request from the superintendent is about \$38 million, a 6.21% increase from current year spending.

After the two presentations, members of the three boards discussed the importance of going directly to the state for help because they did not want to put a bigger burden on the taxpayers. Town Council member Rich Knotek thought it would be beneficial to bring state representatives to a future meeting and show them the problems in the budget. Councilor Deb Cunningham agreed that the state reps need to engage with local boards because small towns like East Hampton will not be able to afford mandates going forward if the state does not help.

Board of Finance chairperson Bridget McLennan suggests teaming up with surrounding areas such as Colchester and Marlborough to draft a letter to the state. "We can't win this battle on our own," McLennan stated. Town Council Chair Dean Markham expressed that the boards should send a letter to the governor,

state board of education and legislative leaders. "We are Democrats, we're Republicans but we're standing together for the best interest of the town of East Hampton and especially the taxpayers," said Markham.

Councilor Karen Wanat said that the Board of Education is, essentially, not making large increases. "There's been some small increases here and there," explained Wanat. "We are stuck in a place where we're funding what we already give them; we're not giving them more."

Echoing that point, Board of Education vice chair Augie Arndt said the board is not doing more for the kids, only maintaining what is provided now. "It's two years in a row that the Board of Education budget is last year's budget, this year's prices," stated Arndt.

By the end of the meeting, different members emphasized the need for residents to get involved with the budget process. The next listening session will be held in the library community room from 6-8 p.m. Tuesday, March 5. Weather pending, another session will start at 9 a.m. on Saturday, March 16 on the Air Line Trail near Cranberry Bog and 87 Main St. The Board of Finance public hearing and budget presentations will be at Town Hall on Monday, March 18, starting at 6:30 p.m.

Helping Hands Reopens Saturday

Helping Hands is reopening on the first and third Saturdays of each month, beginning March 2. Helping Hands is a ministry of Cornerstone Bible Church and offers free clothing, household items, toys, books, etc., to anyone in need.

Donations to this ministry are accepted

on the Saturday Helping Hands is open from 9-11 a.m., and on the Thursdays before Helping Hands is open, from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Helping Hands is located at 27 Skinner St.

For more information, contact Judy Holmquist at 860-918-0784 or judyhlm49@yahoo.com.

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.

Lions Offer Scholarships

The East Hampton Lions Club is offering students graduating in their senior year an opportunity to apply for its four annual scholarships. The scholarships are the Governor William O'Neill Memorial, the Joseph Becker, the Lions Club, and the Nelson Gustine Service Award.

Those who apply need to be East Hampton residents who attend East Hampton High School or area charter, tech, vo-ag or Catholic schools, or are home-schooled. Applications are available at the East Hampton High School guidance office.

The due date for return of applications is April 30.

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 more information, contact AD Michael Mercaldi at 860-463-6837.

Spring Soccer Registration

Registration for the East Hampton Soccer Club's spring season, for both the Recreational and Travel leagues, ends Sunday, March 3. Visit tinyurl.com/sxzyf5fn to register.

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.

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 easthamptonct.gov.

Dean's List

Evan Selger of East Hampton made the fall 2023 Dean's List at Rochester Institute of Technology in Rochester, N.Y.

Selger is in the electrical engineering technology program.

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/e/ehns-trivianight. Questions can be emailed to ehnsfundraisers@gmail.com.

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.

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.



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Police News

2/24: Amanda Burns, 32, of 82 Tartia Rd., was arrested and charged with driving under the influence, failure to carry an operator's license, interfering with an officer/resisting arrest and assault on a public safety official, East Hampton Police said.

2/26: Heather Gdovin, 53, of 40 Daniel St., was taken into custody pursuant to an active warrant for her arrest and charged with second-degree failure to appear, police said.

Also, from Feb. 19-25, officers responded to 19 medical calls, one motor vehicle crash and five alarms, and made 27 traffic stops, police said.

Dean's List

Kayli Levenduski of East Hampton made the fall 2023 Dean's List at Southern Connecticut State University.

Levenduski is a 2023 graduate of East Hampton High School, and is currently enrolled in the nursing program at SCSU.

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Young Talent Comes to Stage Next Weekend

By London Brazal

Students at East Hampton Middle School gear up to enchant audiences with a captivating production next weekend.

Starting rehearsals in January, the Award-winning animated film and stage play *Beauty and the Beast Jr.*, comes to life in a romantic and beloved take on the classic fairy tale.

Inspired by the original Broadway production, which ran for 13 years and earned nine Tony Award nominations – and was in turn based on the hit 1991 film – Disney's *Beauty and the Beast Jr.* presents a marvelous adaptation of the tale of transformation and tolerance. The timeless tale follows Belle, a young woman in a provincial town, and the Beast, a young prince trapped by an enchantress's spell.

The Beast holds the key to breaking the curse—if he can discover the true meaning of love and find it in return, the enchantment will be lifted, and he will regain his former self. However, time is of the essence, as a looming deadline threatens eternal doom for the Beast and his household if he fails to learn the crucial lesson in time.

For a couple of years, East Hampton's middle school and high school drama clubs combined for the spring musical including *High School Musical* in 2019 and *Grease* in 2022. Last year, though, the middle school was looking to bring back the solo program, and Principal Christina Amaral asked what staff would be interested in running it.

Kate Werme, a paraprofessional at the school, volunteered to take on the director role. Growing up, she was always in chorus and has done musical theater, so it was not a difficult decision to help out. Her husband was the president of the local theater group Podium Players, and she felt more than comfortable with a list of connections to aid with costumes and set building.

Raelynn Rahusen, one of the music teachers at the middle school, also offered to run the play. Only joining the district last fall, Rahusen was eager to be on board as she helped with musicals at her previous job. As the musical director, she enjoys working with the students and having them act out the song they are performing. However, one challenge is that the students' voices will change from auditions to showtime.

"It's challenging, especially for the leads who sing solos. Their voices may fluctuate between different octaves in a short matter of time," explained Rahusen. She is proud of the students for learning the extravagant choreography and bigger musical numbers. "Disney is its own type of thing; it's more theatrical. It's a great story."

Werme is happy with the opportunity for the students to showcase their talents. For some students, this is their first production. "It's a learning process to be in lead positions. But, when they get to the high school, they have a little more experience under their belts," explained Werme. She went on to say that many students are learning more about themselves during middle school, and the play is an opportunity for them to put on a different hat by performing an unfamiliar role.

Werme is also happy with the student's commitment to the show and seeing where they start versus what they accomplish. With many difficult casting choices, the directors decided to double-cast the female main character, Belle – played by eighth-graders Leah Murphy and Taylor Dudek.

Murphy was most excited about the detailed costumes and props. "They all fit the characters well," said Murphy, "Belle's dresses are so pretty." Murphy's first show was *Grease* in 2022, but she always had a love for singing.

One of her favorite aspects of the show is the community feel and working together with fel-



The East Hampton Middle School invites community members to a timeless and magical production of *Beauty and the Beast Jr.* With a cast and crew of almost 55 students, the show has guaranteed laughs and will have the audience humming along.

low students. "It makes the movie come together and helps with our confidence," she said.

Grady Johnson, who is also in eighth grade, plays the pompous and dim-witted Gaston, who will do whatever it takes to win Belle's hand. He described the show as "fun, inclusive and hard work." One of the challenges for Johnson is to act cocky and arrogant, something he is not used to in real life. He said audiences will like the movement and action of the show, even if the story may be familiar to many.

Dash Palmer, a seventh-grader, is playing the

Beast. He also described some acting challenges saying it's easier for him to act assertive rather than softer and gentle in some portions of the play. Palmer said he has an interesting look dressed up as the beast but is ultimately excited to put the show all together.

Performances will be at the East Hampton Middle School and tickets are available at the door for \$10, cash or check. The shows are on Friday, March 8, at 7 p.m.; Saturday, March 9, at 2 and 7 p.m.; and Sunday, March 10, at 2 p.m.

Retirement Party for Ewing

An open house retirement party for East Hampton Senior Center Director JoAnn Ewing will be held Saturday, March 9, from noon-4 p.m. at the East Hampton High School cafeteria, 15 North Maple St.

All are invited to come share memories and celebrate the service of Ewing, who has served as the East Hampton as the senior center di-

rector for 24 years. There will be entertainment and food and beverages donated by local businesses and restaurants. Testimonials and entertainment for Ewing will begin at 1 p.m.

Transportation for East Hampton senior citizens is available by calling Ria at 203-517-7940.

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 Inflation Reduction Act's effect 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/3rx3jbc to access.

The presenter is Steve Lewis, a proponent of green energy solutions, as well as chair of the Greater Hartford Sierra Club and a member of

the Connecticut Chapter of the Sierra Club's Legislative Committee.

The presentation will walk people through 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.

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.

Meditation and Reflection Session: Wednes-

day, March 6, 10:45 a.m. Practice meditation techniques and then reflect upon the technique.

Pictionary: Friday, March 8, 10 a.m. Test your skills at communicating through drawing.

Lunch and Conversation with the East Hampton High School Interact Club: Friday, March 8, 11:30 a.m. Bring your own lunch and enjoy some time with East Hampton students, discussing various topics.

Movie Day: Friday, March 8, 1 p.m. *Barbie* (rated PG-13), starring Margot Robbie and Ryan Gosling, will be shown.

Aging Gracefully at Home: Tuesday, March 12, 10 a.m. All are invited for a discussion on health and wellness topics pertinent to seniors. Call the senior center for more information.

Line Dancing by Video: Tuesday, March 5, 10 a.m. Get moving with this interactive class.

Calling All Senior Center 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: 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.

Shopping at Trader Joe's Glastonbury: Monday, March 4, 11 a.m. There will be lunch on your own at the Hartford Baking Company. Cost is a \$4 donation for transportation.

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.

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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.

Kindergarten Registration

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

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.

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.

Easter Bake Sale: All are asked to participate by donating baked good, jams, and jellies for the March 30 Bake Sale in the Parish Hall.

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.

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 diannemchutchison@icloud.com, Lisa Malloy at elizabethhartmalloy@gmail.com or Melissa Pionzio at mapionzio@comcast.net or 860-993-5311.

Bar Association to Award Scholarships

Attorney Richard F. Paladino, Chair of the Middlesex County Bar Association Scholarship Committee, has announced that the Middlesex County Bar Association will, once again, award a total of \$3,000 in funding for two scholarships of \$1,500 each.

The association's president, attorney AnnMarie Rocco, has continued this scholarship program and the expansion of eligibility this year to include both seniors attending Middlesex County high schools and all high school seniors

residing within Middlesex County but attending schools elsewhere.

Middlesex County includes the *Riverest towns of Portland and East Hampton*.

The award recipients will be honored at the association's Law Day luncheon on May 3.

Applications can be obtained from Paladino and any questions can be answered by contacting him at rffgwpsherwood@aol.com. The deadline to receive applications is April 5.

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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Scholarship Applications Available

The executive board of the Middlesex Hospital Vocal Chords is accepting applications for its annual scholarships to be awarded to students from Middlesex County graduating seniors pursuing a career in nursing or music. Applicants must have been accepted at an accredited college or university.

The Review Committee will consider academic records, extracurricular and community

service activities, the student's ability to articulate his/her career goals and the recommendations of references.

The \$1,500 scholarships will be paid directly to the recipients at the spring concert at Portland High School, Saturday, May 4, at 7 p.m. Applications are available at vocalchords20.org, or at your school guidance office. Applications must be submitted by March 15.

Residents Names Ryken Scholars

Xavier High School has announced that Portland residents Finn O'Shea, from The Independent Day School, and Miles Matterifs, from Portland Middle School, have been named Ryken Scholars.

Finn and Miles are part of a group of students who scored in the 95-99th percentile on The Xavier High School entrance exam, taken in November. The Ryken program is named in honor of the founder of the Xaverian Brothers,

Theodore James Ryken.

In addition, Ryken Scholars have been granted admission to the Brother James Kelly Honors Program at Xavier High School. These students will take Honors classes in Physics, Civics, English, Math, and a language of their choice (French, Spanish, or Latin).

All students in the Honors Program are invited to attend a dinner honoring their accomplishments.

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

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.

Lions Club Scholarship Applications

The Portland Lions Club is now accepting scholarship applications for Portland resident students enrolling in post high school certificate or degree program that serves the public in some manner.

Applications will be accepted from students of all academic levels as well as learning challenges. Portland students can obtain an application form from the Portland High

School guidance office or by emailing PortlandLionsScholarship@gmail.com.

All applications must be received by April 15 for consideration.

The Portland Lions Club meets the second Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m., at the Waverly Senior Center, 7 Waverly Ave. This month's meeting will be March 13. Visitors are welcome.

Portland Exchange Offering Scholarship

Again this year, the Portland Exchange Club will offer the \$1,000 John W. Goodrich Scholarship to any Portland resident senior going on to a higher education institution after graduation.

For the scholarship, the club is looking for the student to provide the committee with a short essay describing their community service and its impact on how the community benefited.

Other secondary factors considered are good academic achievement and participation in extracurricular activities.

The application for the scholarship is available at the Portland High School Counseling Center and online at www.portlandexchange.org/john-w-goodrich-scholarship. Deadline for applications is April 15.

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.

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

Kindergarten Registration

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

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

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

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.

Belltown Senior Golf League

Belltown Senior Golf League will begin its Tuesday morning Senior Mixed Golf League Tuesday mornings on April 23, at Portland Golf Course West, 105 Gospel Lane, Portland.

The nine-hole league is for ages 55 and up.

Cost is \$28 with cart. For more information, contact Jack Anderson at jackande52@aol.com or 860-882-3752.

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Celebrating Locals for Black History Month

By London Brazal

To celebrate Black History Month, the Committee on Solidarity, Portland Historical Society and Portland Public Library co-sponsored the "Gallery of Portland" program, honoring local Black community members who have shaped the town's history.

On Saturday, Feb. 24, Robert McDougall, trustee and museum director for the Portland Historical Society, served as the panel's moderator with over 60 people in attendance. The four panelists included Barbara Shaw, David Roane, Patricia Hall Jemison and the Rev. Laurence Woods.

The panelists shared 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. Naji Chester-Payne, Portland's poet laureate, performed a poem as well.

Shaw, a native of Portland, graduated from Portland High School in the class of 1969. She fondly recalls her upbringing and cited her mother, Eugenie, who instilled in her the value of helping and caring for those in need. "Portland will always be home to me," she reflected.

Roane enlisted in the United States Marine Corps in 1960 after graduating from Vinal Regional Technical School, serving until 1964. During his first month in the Corps, he discovered that his birth name was David Roane. After a brief discussion with his mother, Eugenie, they mutually agreed that he would keep his birth name.

Both Shaw and Roane talked about their mother, Eugenie Shaw who lived to be 100 years old and received numerous awards and citations in her lifetime including the John Freeland

Community Leadership Award and an award from CAGM (Community Action for Greater Middletown) staff, for dedicated service to the war on poverty.

Woods is the Senior Pastor of the Church of God's Grace in Middletown. He spent most of his childhood in Portland before relocating to Middletown. He graduated from Woodrow Wilson High School in 1969, where he excelled as a running back in football, earning numerous awards for his outstanding performances. He talked about life in "the Bottom," as it was called by residents who lived under the bridge.

"When Black families came to Portland, there were I think, one or two locations that we could only live in. We were directed to the worst part of town, under the bridge," Woods described. He said he wondered why his family was relegated to this area – but he was happy. "I didn't know I was poor. I was happy."

Woods was happy about the community and how they could come together to take care of each other. He described their love for one another and how they would protect each other. "That gave us our foundation."

Jemison held various positions in Portland, working at Standard Knapp in personnel & payroll, coaching cheerleading for the Portland Dukes and at Tommy's Pizza during her college breaks. She contributed significantly to the community, establishing Tykia Modern Dance for Portland High School and serving as Community Liaison for Chatham Court.

True Vine Holiness Church was in the center of the Under the Bridge community. Jemison reflected on how all the kids in the neighborhood would attend. "I don't remember anything except for showing up, being loved and know-



A panel gathered at Brownstone Intermediate School to talk about what it was like to grow up in Portland. Pictured from the left are Barbara Shaw, David Roane, the Rev. Laurence Woods, Patricia Hall Jemison and facilitator Robert McDougall.

ing how to give it back when it was my turn," she said.

"We took over our community," Jemison explained. "Black history started from the day I was born in my household."

"I'm grateful for Portland; I love Portland," he said. "It made me who I am today."

Liz Habino, chairperson for the Committee on Solidarity, said the panel was "really a wonderful event." Others described the event as "very moving" and "compelling, emotional and educational."

Created by the Board of Selectmen by resolution on June 3, 2020, the Portland Committee on Solidarity was charged with establishing a program that would be committed to learning

and expanding the understanding of racial equity in the community. The Portland Historical Society Inc. of Portland Connecticut strives to collect, preserve and share material and information related to the history of the area.

Hibino said the organizations are planning to have a follow-up panel to address and questions that weren't answered due to time constraints. The Committee on Solidarity, Portland Library and the Historical Society are making plans to create an oral history podcast series so that they can continue to interview residents of Portland's historic Black community and share those interviews with the community.

To watch the full panel, videos are available on YouTube @PortlandHistSoc.



Engagement Announced... Ray and Rita Phillips of Portland have announced the engagement of their daughter, Alyssa Marie, to Joseph Decker, son of Ray Decker of Torrington and Jane McCarthy of Southington. The bride-to-be is a graduate of Eastern Connecticut State University and is employed as a retirement advisor at Voya Financial. The future groom is a graduate of the University of Connecticut and is employed as a quality associate manager at Sikorsky Aircraft. The wedding will take place in August at Saint Clements Castle and Marina in Portland.

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Bar Association to Award Scholarships

Attorney Richard F. Paladino, Chair of the Middlesex County Bar Association Scholarship Committee, has announced that the Middlesex County Bar Association will, once again, award a total of \$3,000 in funding for two scholarships of \$1,500 each. The association's president, attorney AnnMarie Rocco, has continued this scholarship program and the expansion of eligibility this year to include both seniors attending Middlesex County high schools and all high

school seniors residing within Middlesex County but attending schools elsewhere. Middlesex County includes the *Riverest towns of Portland and East Hampton*. The award recipients will be honored at the association's Law Day luncheon on May 3. Applications can be obtained from Paladino and any questions can be answered by contacting him at rfpgwps@aol.com. The deadline to receive applications is April 5.

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 zionlutheran-portland.org. Sunday School for children ages 3 to 16 meets the first and third Sunday of each month at 10:15 a.m. Adult Bible Study is continuing its discussion of *The Chosen* video series and meets the second and fourth Sunday of each month at 10:15 a.m. 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 discus-

sion, alternating between the two churches. Remaining dates are: 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: 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.

First Congregational Church News

The First Congregational Church of Portland, located at 554 Main St., is an open and affirming congregation of the United Church of Christ. All are welcome to participate in the worship services and activities of the church. The church is handicapped accessible and also offers YouTube services for those unable to attend in person. The church office is open three mornings a week, and may be reached at 860-342-3244. **Worship Services:** Held each Sunday at 10:00 a.m. The March 3 worship service will be led by the Intentional Interim Minister the Rev. Dr. Barry McCarthy. Communion will be offered and all are welcome to partake. **Children's Activities:** Church School and Infant/Toddler Care are available each Sunday. School aged children begin in the worship service in the sanctuary with their families and will be brought downstairs for church school after the Children's Message. Infants/toddlers may be dropped off in Fellowship Hall before the service or at any point during the service. The Faith Formation program is under the direction of Mary Clark. **Youth Program:** Teens in grades 7-11 are invited to attend the Youth Group Sunday, March 3, from 4:30-6 p.m., in the "Teen Hang Out Room" in the upstairs classroom of First Church. All teens are welcome, whether from First Church, any church, or no church. **Adult Choir:** All are welcome to join the choir, which sings at Sunday worship services. Choir practice is held Thursdays at 6:30 p.m.

Prayer Shawl Ministry: The Women's Fellowship of the church sponsors a Prayer Shawl Ministry. All knitters are invited to be part of the knitting group that makes the shawls on Tuesdays at 1 p.m. **Twelve Step Groups:** Alanon meets at the church on Sundays at 7 p.m. Living Clean meets at the church on Wednesdays at 7 p.m. **Community Outreach and Service:** The church collects non-perishable food for Portland Food Bank and Amazing Grace Food Pantry at each Sunday's worship service. The church sponsors meals for Streetfire Ministries and St. Vincent De Paul in Middletown. The next opportunity to assist with this ministry is on March 14, when the Mission Board will sponsor a beef stew meal for Streetfire Ministries in Middletown. **Lenten Soup Supper and Speaker Evenings:** Wednesdays, March 13 and 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. **Paint Night: Kusama Yayoi Still Life:** Wednesday, March 20, 6:30-8:30 p.m., at the Buck-Foreman Community Center. Class fee is \$25, which includes all supplies. **Ladies Spring Golf Clinic:** Mondays, April 22-May 20, 6-7 p.m., at Portland West Golf Course. **Junior Golf Workshop (Grades K-8):** Saturdays, April 20-May 11, at Portland West Golf Course. The K-2 class is from 12:30-1:30 p.m.; the grades 3-5 class is from 1:45-2:45 p.m.; and the grades 6-8 class is from 3-4 p.m. **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. **Self-Defense for Women:** Sunday, March 31, 6-8 p.m., at The Inner Circle. **Skyhawks – Multi-Sport (Age 2-5):** Saturday mornings, April 13-May 11, at Riverfront Park. This soccer, baseball and basketball class uses age-appropriate games and activities. Parent participation required for ages 2-3.5 years.

Connecticut Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation (CPWO): Monday, April 1, and Wednesday, April 3, from 5-9 p.m., at Portland Library. The successful completion of this eight-hour beginner boating class will give you the knowledge and a Completion Certificate needed to obtain a boater's license/certification in Connecticut. There will also be a session Tuesday, May 21, and Wednesday, May 22, at the same times. **Summer Quest Camps:** Monday-Friday, from June 24-Aug. 9., at the Portland high and middle school. Kiddie Camp runs 8:45 a.m.-1 p.m., and Base Camp and Teen Camp each run 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Extended AM and PM care available for Base Camp. **Drop-In Basketball:** Mondays (for women) and Tuesdays (for men), 7:30-9 p.m., through May, at Portland Middle School. Free for Portland residents. **Drop-In Volleyball:** Wednesdays, 6:30-8 p.m., through May, at Gildersleeve School. free for Portland residents. **Tai Chi for Long Life:** Wednesdays, 9:30-10:15 a.m., or Saturdays, 10:30-11:15 a.m., at the Buck-Foreman Community Center, 265 Main St.

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. **Read & Recycle:** Saturday, March 23, 10 a.m.-noon. The Friends of Portland Library group is collecting gently-used books, CDs, DVDs and puzzles for its ongoing sale. **Spring Storytimes:** Registration is underway. 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. **Chess with Michael Pelton:** Mondays at 3 p.m. through 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. **Solar System Expedition:** Thursdays at 3:30 p.m., March 7, 14 and 21. Kids in grades 3-5 are invited to learn about the sun, moon and other planets in the Milky Way galaxy, through games,

experiments and more. Attendees will also learn more about the solar eclipse that will take place on April 8. Space is limited. **Shamrock Scavenger Hunt:** Friday, March 8. Drop in to the library throughout the day for a shamrock scavenger hunt and a leprechaun-inspired craft. No registration required. **Family Craft Night: Shamrock Wall Art:** Wednesday, March 13, 6:30 p.m. Create your own customized shamrock wall art. This activity has steps that are appropriate for all ages, but a parent or guardian must be with children to help with supervision. Space is limited. **Teen Program: Nintendo Switch Hangout:** Tuesday, March 19, 3:30-5 p.m. Youth in grades 6-12 are invited to play Nintendo Switch games. No registration required. **Adult Programs: Seeds Wanted:** Portland Library's Seed Library is seeking seed donations for the spring and summer gardening seasons and is also looking for help to sort and repack-age donations for distribution. There will be volunteer work sessions from 12:30-2:30 p.m. Saturdays, March 2 and 9. Registration is requested but not required. **March Art Exhibit Reception: Portland Secondary Schools Youth Art Month:** Thursday, March 7, 4 p.m. The visual arts instructors for the Portland Public Schools will present an exhibit of student drawings, paintings, prints and ceramics created by students from grade 7-12 in celebration of Youth Art Month. All are invited to this opening reception, hosted by the Friends of the Library. The exhibit runs March 7-April 3. **Book Discussions: Talk About Books:** Tuesday March 5, 1 p.m. *Foster & Small Things Like These* by Claire Keegan will be discussed. **1st Thursday Night Book Club:** Thursday, March 7, 6:30 p.m. *The Female Persuasion* by Meg Wolitzer will be discussed. **Mystery Lovers' Book Club:** Tuesday, March 19, 1 p.m. *City Under One Roof* by Iris Yamashita will be discussed. **Hummingbirds, CT Audubon:** Wednesday March 13, 6 p.m. Joe Attwater returns to talk about the hummingbird. Registration requested. **Movie:** Wednesday, March 13, 1 p.m. *Priscilla* (rated R) will be shown. **Monthly Writers' Cafe:** Saturday, March 16, 12:30-2 p.m., in the Van Beynum Room. The first hour will be quiet, communal, writing time, with the final 30 minutes set aside to chat about your project with fellow writers. **Composting:** Monday March 18, 6 p.m., via Zoom. A panel of experts will discuss different composting methods to enrich your spring and summer garden. **Medicare Basics:** Tuesday, March 26, 6 p.m. Learn all about this necessary benefit and which program is right for you. Registration requested.

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Spring Rec Soccer Registration

Portland Soccer Club (PSC) has opened registration for the Spring 2024 Recreational Soccer Season. Deadline is Sunday, April 7. To register, visit clubs.bluesombbrero.com/portlandsoccerclub.

Player fees are \$75 for all Rec divisions. Late registrations are not guaranteed and will be charged a late fee of \$30 if accepted. Refunds will be given for anyone not placed on a team. Uniforms/jerseys are provided to all divisions, and a ball will also be provided to pre-k players. The spring season will run eight weeks, beginning in late April and ending early June. All Rec activities take place at the Portland Recreational Complex.

Practice/game session start/end times are TBD, with all Saturday activities ending by 12:30 p.m. or earlier. PSC said it expects to operate Six Rec Divisions for the season as follows:

(1) Pre-K - U4 (born 2020); (2) Dribbler - U5 (born 2019) and U6 (born 2018); and (3) Kicker Divisions - U7 (born 2017), U8 (born 2016), and U9 (born 2015). Pre-K and Dribblers will be Saturday-only. Kickers will hold one-hour practice sessions on Wednesdays and have game sessions on Saturdays.

PSC is a nonprofit, volunteer-driven organization. Volunteer coaches are a must, and prior coaching experience is not a requirement; PSC said it will help all coaches who volunteer.

If you have any questions about coaching, contact any of the following club officials: Chad Wilson, President, nosliw.dahc@gmail.com or 205-999-8842; Chris Donahue, Vice President and Recreational Director, donahuecj@sbc-global.net or 860-638-7400; Anne Whalen, Registrar, awhalen34@yahoo.com or 860-690-3414.

Senior Center News & Notes

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

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

Next Week's Programs: Monday: Light Aerobics, 9:30-10:30 a.m.; Syncosize II Dance and Fitness, 10:30-11:30 a.m.; Blood Pressure Clinic, 10:30-11:30 a.m. Tuesday: Bears on a Journey, 9:30-11 a.m., making fleece teddy bears for cancer patients - donations are sought of light fleece, one yard or more, for making bears (to donate, call 860-342-0809); Coupons for Troops, 1-4 p.m.; Setback, 1 p.m. Wednesday: Light Aerobics, 9:30-10:30 a.m.; SyncoCize Exercise, 10:30-11:30 a.m.; Social Duplicate Bridge, 12:30-4 p.m. on the second and fourth Wednesday, multipurpose room; 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.

St. Patrick's Day Celebration: Tuesday, March 12, 1 p.m.

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

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

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

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

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



34 Years of Song... On Feb. 13, the Portland-based Middlesex Hospital Vocal Chords (MHVC) celebrated its 34th anniversary of relieving stress, lifting spirits and healing souls with music. Members are recognized for their continued time and dedication to the group in five-year increments. From left are, first row; Kate Porch (30 years), Alan Dougherty (five), Louise Fortier (15), Becky Kresser (10); second row, Mary DeCoursey (10), Carmen Wilson (5), Peter Aarrestad (10), Marty Blake (15). For more information on MHVC, visit www.vocalchords20.org. The 90-member chorus will have its annual spring show on Saturday, May 4, at 7 p.m., at Portland High School.

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.bluesombbrero.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.



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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.

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. 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.

Giving Garden Meets March 14

The Colchester Giving Garden will have an information evening Thursday, March 14, at 5:30 p.m., in Norton Room B at Cragin Memorial Library, 8 Linwood Ave.

This will be an informational night to let folks know about the garden. All are welcome to attend. There is no gardening experience necessary to participate and all ages can join in.

This spring and summer will be the garden's 12th year of operation. The garden is a fully volunteer-run vegetable garden; all of the pro-

duce grown is donated to the town food bank and area soup kitchens to help feed the food insecure in the community. The Giving Garden has yielded over 14,500 lbs. of food since starting in 2013.

Also at the meeting, garden organizers will welcome new ideas on how to improve the garden.

For more information, email colchester-givinggarden@gmail.com.



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RE1-27-23

CBA Monthly Dinner Meeting

The Colchester Business Association March dinner meeting will be held at Priam Vineyards on Tuesday, March 5, starting at 6 p.m. Dinner will be catered by Papa Z's and the featured speaker is Colchester First Selectman Bernie Dennler III. Colchester Dental is the dinner sponsor.

Pre-registration is encouraged as there is limited seating. Register online at www.colchestercba.com. Cost of dinner is \$20.

Westchester Church News

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

Sunday School for children meets during the worship service.

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

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

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RE5-26-23

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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.

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, March 4: 9 a.m., Making Memories, Exercise w/Anne; 10 a.m., Sittercize; 11 a.m., Learn to Sign; 12:30 p.m., Mah Jongg, Bridge; 12:45 p.m., Setback.

Tuesday, March 5: 9 a.m., Making Memories; 9:45 a.m., Tai Chi; 10:45 a.m., Healthy Brain Series: Session 1; 12:30 p.m., Pinochle; 1:30 p.m., Bingo, AARP Chapter 4019 meeting.

Wednesday, March 6: 9 a.m., Making Memories Program, Walking Group meet-up at the

Air Line Trail in Amston; 10 a.m., Adult Coloring, Sit & Be Fit; 10:30 a.m., Life Review Writing; 1 p.m., Backus Hospital Stroke Survivors Support Group; 1:30 p.m., Line Dancing.

Thursday, March 7: 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, March Madness Cookie Challenge; 1 p.m., Knit & Crochet.

Friday, March 8: 8:30 a.m.-2 p.m., AARP Tax Aide; 10 a.m., Sit & Be Fit; 10:30 a.m., Choral Group; 10:45 a.m., Blood Pressure Clinic; 11 a.m., Yoga; 11:15 a.m., Chatham Health Education Series: Prevention and Management of Diabetes; 1:30 p.m., Bingo.

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.

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.



MathCounts... Five members of the William J. Johnston Middle School MathCounts Team competed at the University of Connecticut on Saturday, Feb. 17, for the Chapter competition. Colchester came in fourth out of 17 middle schools in the team round. Coached by eighth grade math teacher Andrew Bakoledis, students practice each week after school. MathCounts is a national program in all 50 US states for students in grades 6-8. The students are, from left, Yunyang Gu, Delaney Scholl, Emma Verruso, Alex Courtemanche and Brandon Verruso.

Trip to Sight & Sound Theater

The St. Andrew Ladies Guild in Colchester, is sponsoring a trip to Amish country in Pennsylvania May 29-31, to see *Daniel* at the Sight & Sound Theater.

The trip will include a dinner with an Amish family, a bus tour of the Amish community visiting local shops, and a stop in Phil-

adelphia to visit a museum and the Liberty Bell. The trip is \$645 per person, double. \$779 for a single. The bus will leave from the St. Andrew Church parking lot in Colchester.

For more information, contact Barbara Gozzo at barbogzzo@gmail.com or 860-208-4121.

Ukrainian Catholic 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.

Coffee & Conversation

All are invited to Coffee & Conversation with state Rep. Mark DeCaprio (R-48) on Thursday, March 7, from 8-9 a.m., at McDonald's, 375 S. Main St.

DeCaprio will discuss the 2024 legislative session, as well as other state issues of concern to residents. The 48th House District covers Colchester, Bozrah, Franklin and Lebanon.

Any questions can be emailed to DeCaprio at Mark.DeCaprio@housegov.ct.gov.

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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.

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 Route 16W 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 non-profit organization that works to permanently protect open space in Colchester. Visit the aforementioned website to join or donate.

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 youth-services@colchesterct.gov.

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.

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 March 27, April 24 and May 22, from 6:30-8 p.m. each night, at Cragin Library - Norton Room A. Registration is required for each date.

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. 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 and play some games. 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.

Corned Beef and Cabbage Dinner

The St. Joseph's Polish Society, located at 395 South Main St., is hosting its annual corned beef and cabbage dinner Sunday, March 10, from 1-3 p.m.

Dinner is available for takeout or dine-in and includes corned beef, cabbage, potatoes, carrots, rye bread and butter. Tickets are \$15 per person.

There is a limited number of tickets this year, and the society recommends purchasing them in advance during regular business hours: Monday through Friday, 4-10 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday, noon-10 p.m. For more information, call 860-537-2550.

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 Across America; 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.

Pancake Breakfast and Door Prizes

Scouts BSA Troop and Pack 109 will hold a Pancake Breakfast fundraiser Saturday, March 9, from 8-11 a.m., at Westchester Congregational Church, located at 98 Cemetery Rd. in Colchester.

The menu will offer pancakes, eggs, bacon, sausage, fruit, and breakfast beverages. Door prizes will also be available. Fee is \$8 for adults and \$5 for children 12 and younger and seniors 65 and older.

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From the First Selectman's Desk...

One hundred days ago, I was sworn in as the new first selectman of Colchester. I want to update you on some of what we have accomplished together since November.

Restoring stability to Colchester's Finance department which had struggled since the retirement of longtime CFO Maggie Cosgrove has been my biggest priority. I want to thank Ms. Cosgrove for the additional assistance she has provided the town since November. With her help, we have completed the long-delayed 2022 audit and the 2023 audit is underway.

In January, we launched a reorganization of the finance department, which is currently under the leadership of Michelle Marceau, another longtime employee of the Colchester Finance Department who is now acting as finance director. With assistance from Ms. Cosgrove, they have made substantial progress toward resolving the accounting issues that led me to implement a budget freeze in January. That budget freeze will remain in effect based on the projections we have seen due to expenses that were either unexpected or budget items that were underfunded.

As we develop the town's budget request to be presented in April, I am focusing on restoring funding to these areas to ensure the future stability and sustainability of services. This includes funding restoration to Cragin Library, Youth and Social Services, and Public Works. I recognize that we must balance our needs and wants with affordability for residents and businesses. The request I put forward to the Board of Finance will take all of these factors into account.

Despite the challenges in finance, we have made progress on many other fronts since November.

During my first weeks in office, we passed a referendum to resolve the financial challenges that had plagued the Colchester Senior Center project for almost a year. With an affordable solution in place, you can see the dramatic progress being made as the building finally takes shape on Lebanon Avenue.

I have also been working with our town engineer and partners at the Southeastern CT Council of Governments to support a fully-funded expansion of the Lebanon Ave streetscapes to build new sidewalks that will connect our downtown to developments at Highland Farms, Four Seasons, and the 55+ community of Northwoods.

Over the last several weeks, four of the five new fire apparatus that were approved at referendum in 2021 have entered service. When I served on the Board of Finance as vice chair, bringing that referendum forward was my number one priority. As First Selectman, it is exciting to see these much-needed vehicles finally entering service.

In December, I learned that the vendor expected to provide the fifth vehicle – a tanker – was canceling the town's contract. Fire Chief Steve Hoffmann and Deputy Chief Brad Bernier worked quickly to help us identify a suitable replacement. The Board of Selectmen approved that purchase in January, ensuring that Colchester will receive a new tanker in late spring without going over budget.

We are also prioritizing investments in public facilities and recreation opportunities. This winter, Public Works began clearing brush at the site of the future Norton Park. A contract for engineering work was signed this month as well, and the town is seeking additional grant funds to complete this project. When finished, Norton Park will be a great addition to the Westchester area.

I am also working with town staff on new grant opportunities for outdoor recreational trails throughout Colchester. Additionally, this month, the Board of Selectmen expects to appoint two new ad-hoc committees to help plan for the future of spaces like the current Senior Center and Youth Center and to evaluate recreation needs.

Last month, Youth and Social Services launched a new online application to help connect residents in-need with funds the Board of Selectmen has designated under ARPA to provide financial assistance to residents. For more information or to apply for assistance, visit ColchesterCT.Gov/ARPAHelp.

Although Colchester faces some challenges, I am confident that we can meet them and continue to make progress. The accomplishments we've made in the first 100 days are the result of collaboration and bipartisanship.

I trust that by working together, we can continue to meet the moment in our community.

Sincerely,
Bernie Dennler, Colchester First Selectman

President's List

Colchester residents Amanda Boulay, Kayleigh Lapointe, Anne Pederzani and Ashley Varjenski made the fall 2023 President's List at Goodwin University.

Dean's List

Colchester residents Cayden Bertrand, Jason Consiglio and Dante Ricci made the fall 2023 Dean's List at Bryant University in Smithfield, R.I.

Parks & Rec News & Notes

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

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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

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.

Puzzlepalooza: Friday, 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.

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.

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.



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Budget Season Back: ‘Here We Go Again’

By Michael Sinkewicz

The Colchester Board of Finance (BOF) kicked off its budget season last week, with some officials already expressing cynicism with the process.

“Here we go again,” remarked John Thomas, a Republican on the board, during the Feb. 21 meeting.

The budget forum represented an opportunity for residents and officials to spotlight their concerns and goals for the 2024-25 fiscal year budget process before the board formally takes custody of both the town and school spending plans in April.

A second forum was expected to be held this week on Wednesday, after press time.

Passing budgets has proven to be a challenge in recent years in Colchester, with meetings often getting contentious as proposals struggled to gain community-wide support. Two years ago, it took four referendums for the 2022-23 budget to pass – extending the process into November, or more than four months into the fiscal year it funded. The temporary stalemate resulted in a budget freeze.

Last year’s budget process, which focused on the current 2023-24 fiscal year, required two referendums overall, with the school budget receiving most of the scrutiny during meetings.

Some residents who spoke during the last week’s forum called for certain education programs to be reinstated and for the BOF to adopt moderate yearly budget increases to avoid future fiscal cliffs. Another resident, John Malsbenden, warned the board not to use “nonrecurring” income to pay for “recurring” expenses.

Cliff O’Donal, a Republican on the Board of Selectmen (BOS), commented that the town’s wages are going up in the next fiscal year to address staff turnover and that the finance board should examine other areas where money could be shifted to minimize the tax burden on the community.

“You all have your work cut out for you,” O’Donal said, adding that he hopes the Board of

Education (BOE) will also “keep a sharp pencil.”

BOF Discussion

Without any official 2024-25 proposals to review, the forum served as a preliminary discussion regarding the overall budget process.

Towards the top of the BOF’s priorities entering the season is the condition of the town’s finance department. In January, First Selectman Bernie Dennler III announced he was implementing a soft budget freeze due to “concerning” spending trends and accounting issues in that department. Accordingly, all town purchases must be approved by the first selectman and nonessential spending is limited.

The freeze was enacted because MUNIS reports relied upon by local officials to track monthly town expenditures appeared inaccurate, and expenses were either were “double-booked” or needed to be reclassified into the correct accounts.

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

Last month, Dennler stated that Michelle Marceau, the acting director of finance, was primarily focusing on W-2s and 1099s, which were due on Jan. 31. Some expenses had begun to be reclassified, though, to the correct accounts, he added.

While town department heads have provided updates to the BOF regarding their individual spending, MUNIS reports contain detailed breakdowns that indicate whether certain areas are expected to exceed their blueprints. Their absence, or hollowness, underscores the challenge facing the board as it attempts to formulate a budget in the months ahead.

Dennler previously said on social media that “it is difficult to say at this point where the town’s spending year-to-date truly lies and even harder to project where things will land when the fiscal year ends.”

When asked by Tim Vaillancourt, a Republican on the board, about the status of the finance department, Dennler conveyed that there’s been “quite a bit of movement” in the reports and that they’re now “more representative of where we actually are” in the current fiscal year.

Vaillancourt requested a report or further explanation from somebody other than the first selectman in order to confirm the department’s progress. Dennler said that Marceau would attend the board’s next meeting to review the updated reports and describe the modifications that were made.

Coupled with the expenditure reports are fears that the current fiscal year will ultimately go over-budget. During a joint meeting in January between the BOF and BOS, some department heads reported small overages through their own tracking, while others such as public works experienced a few unexpected costs, including renovations to the local Youth Center.

Mike Egan, the Democratic vice chair of the BOF, said at last week’s forum that with certain departments expected to exceed their budgets this year, it was important to identify priorities for this upcoming fiscal year.

“You have to have an idea of where people stand,” he said, adding that “it’s going to be a challenging year.”

Thomas, the board’s former vice chair, then expressed that he was “a little frustrated” with what he heard during the night.

He explained that people were making similar remarks as the previous cycle; some want the budget cut; some want it to increase; others want it to stay the same.

Thomas asserted that he didn’t want to be in a “fist fight” all spring, and that he was experiencing déjà vu.

“The only way this is going to work is if we pull together,” he said.

Accusations that aim to discredit the work of the prior BOF were not helpful, Thomas said, and the current municipal spending plan is not necessarily going over-budget.

“That has not been proven yet.” Democrat Scott Chapman, the chairman of the finance board, agreed that consensus would be essential moving forward.

“People were feeling they weren’t being listened to,” he said, adding that the board was just beginning its task and that it “had a lot of work ahead of us.”

This is Chapman’s first budget cycle on board, which is now under Democratic control following the election in November. Democrats won both open seats, giving them a 4-2 majority.

Budget Format Questions

Karen Belding, a Democrat who captured one of those seats, expressed that once the budgets are presented later this year, each board member needs to be satisfied with the format of the information, regardless of what that looks like. The board, she explained, should articulate to the town and Board of Education (BOE) what should be included in the documents handed over to the BOF so it feels prepared to fulfill its charge.

Last year, the BOE decided to present its budget to the BOF in the form of Excel, rather than MUNIS documents.

At one point, Andrea Migliaccio — the former Republican chairman of the BOF — sent several emails to the school board chairman, Alexander Oliphant, requesting additional documentation, or else a budget workshop would be canceled.

The BOE then held an emergency meeting where it contended that Superintendent of Schools Daniel Sullivan III had emailed the BOF with a copy of a 14-page Munis report and an Excel document with budget details. The board unanimously approved a motion to move forward with what they had provided, which “meets the legal obligation to the Board of Finance” and to “present those same reports going forward.” Migliaccio then canceled the scheduled workshop.

She explained during one meeting that the Excel documents contained “substantially less information” than prior budget cycles.

During last week’s forum, Egan reiterated that the school board “makes that determination,” referring to the format of its budget presentation. The BOF, he continued, cannot direct the chief of schools or the BOE on this topic.

On the town side, Dennler indicated that he’ll be providing a full “budget book” — a tool he said wasn’t pieced together last year. Belding requested that the BOF take time to review a sample of a previous budget book so she could understand the advantages of that format moving forward.

Last year’s process featured significant combativeness between the BOF and BOE.

In one email, Migliaccio told the BOE and superintendent, “Your inflammatory narrative and scare tactics is a low for our community.” Sullivan had produced a letter responding to a community member’s question asking what his budget would look like if it was reduced to a certain threshold. He then listed some potential cuts, which included reductions to to band and full-day kindergarten.

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

CCO to Hold Winter Concert

The Colchester Choir and Orchestra (CCO) will hold its Winter Concert Sunday, March 10, at 3 p.m., at Bacon Academy, 611 Norwich Ave.

The orchestra will feature classical music and the choir will feature modern classic favorites. A reception will follow the concert.

The concert is free, but donations are welcomed to support CCO. Check CCO’s website (www.colchesterchoirorchestra.org) or Facebook page for more details about the group, or for information about joining the choir or orchestra.

CCO is a program under the Town of Colchester, Parks and Recreation Department.

DTC to Celebrate Two

On the evening of Friday, March 15, the Colchester DTC will honor two people for their service to 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.

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.

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 applications, contact the Bacon Academy counseling office.

Also, Colchester Rotary asks that people consider donating to its scholarship fund when visiting any of the following businesses: Westchester Market, Noel’s IGA, Toyo Hibachi & Asian Fusion, and Broadway Wine & Spirits.

People can also donate by mailing a check to: Honor Rotary! P.O. Box 775, Colchester, CT 06415.

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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.

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.

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Cruisin' with the News... Ron and Stacy Silberman of Colchester went on a cruise and checked out the Bahamas.

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.



Awesome Antigua... Jeremy Collings of East Hampton recently visited Antigua, where he surprised his nephew David. David and three others had just completed a 28-day Atlantic crossing in a 33-foot sailboat. From left are first mate Lucy, skipper Ross, Jeremy, crew David, crew Matt. David was very surprised to see his uncle show up. The crew of the Manxwind treated Jeremy to two days of sailing in Antigua.



Rivereast Goes to Germany... Mary and Jon DeCoursey of East Hampton took a Rhine River Christmas Market Cruise in December. They're shown here at Reichsburg Castle in Cochem, Germany.



That's a Big Lego! Kathryn Stein of Marlborough visited the Lego headquarters in Billund, Denmark, for work - and took the *Rivereast* along! This photo was taken outside the front entrance next to a giant Lego minifigure.

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Preschool Lottery Applications

Hebron Early Childhood Center at Gilead Hill School is taking applications for eligible preschool students for the 2024-25 school year.

Parents/guardians of children who will be 3 or 4 by Sept. 1 and are planning to have their children entered into Hebron's preschool lottery, are asked to call the Gilead Hill School office at 860-228-9458 to have an application mailed to them. The application may also be downloaded from the Hebron School district website, www.hebron.k12.ct.us. Go to "Quick Links" and click "PK Application."

Hebron Early Childhood center receives funding for reduced tuition rates from the School Readiness Grant. Eligibility is based upon household income.

Lottery applications must be completed and returned to the Gilead Hill Office by Friday, Feb. 23, by 3 p.m. Please enclose two forms of residency when you return the lottery application. The lottery drawing will be held on Tuesday, March 12, at 11 a.m., at Gilead Hill School. Applicants will be notified of their acceptance or waitlist status by phone.

Church of The Holy Family News

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

Lenten Bible Study: "No Greater Love: A Biblical Walk Through Christ's Passion," a video and discussion series filmed in the Holy Land, takes place Friday mornings from 9:15-10:45 a.m., at St. Columba Church. Edward Sri, who is joined by other lecturers, will guide participants through the last hours of Christ's life. To register, contact Janet or Jed Larson at 860-742-6344 or email jjlarson278@gmail.com. Good Shepherd pastor the Rev. Michael Phillipino will join the group as time permits.

Church Collecting for Homeless Shelter:

The Worship Center News & Notes

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

Worship: Services are Sundays at 10 a.m. and are also broadcast on Facebook at www.facebook.com/TheWorshipCenterConnecticut and on YouTube at www.youtube.com/@theworshipcenter9733.

Life Group: Meets the second Wednesday of every month from 7-8:30 p.m. at the Swensons' home in Columbia, for worship, prayer, Bible study and fellowship.

Journey Group: For grades 6-12. The mission of the group is to support the youth of Hebron and surrounding towns in their spiritual development. Meets every other Sunday directly after the service; lunch is provided. Next meeting: March 1.

Youth Group: First Friday Fellowship! Typically held the first Friday of each month from 6-9 p.m. at the church.

Virtual Prayer Night: Tuesdays, 7-8 p.m., via Zoom. Contact the church office or website for a link and meeting ID.

Spring Events: Easter Egg Hunt: 3/24 at 12:30 p.m., open to all ages; Good Friday service, 3/29 at 7 p.m.; Outdoor Easter Sunrise Ser-

vice: 3/31 at 6:30 a.m., followed by Free Easter Breakfast at 7:30 a.m. and Easter Worship Service at 10 a.m.

One-to-One Confidential Christian Care: Provided by Stephen Ministry to people in difficult life situations. If in need of help, call the church office. The church is currently running an in-depth training for people who feel called to serve others in this way. Contact the church office for more information.

HIHS: Hebron food pantry is in critical need, and the church is helping to collect monetary, food, toiletries, and paper goods donations. Drop off at the church on Sunday mornings, or donate directly to 26 Pendleton Dr., Hebron, Tuesday/Thursday, 8 a.m.-6 p.m., and Friday, noon-5 p.m. Contact HIHSC.org to give, or hsfoodpantry@gmail.com for more information.

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



Vendors are sought for this year's Maple Fest Craft Fair at Gilead Congregational Church. Pictured at last year's Maple Fest are Sandy Hooker (left) and Jean Dormer. Vendors Wanted for Maple Fest Craft Fair

Gilead Congregational Church (672 Gilead St.) will host a Craft Fair Saturday, March 16, from 10 a.m.-4 p.m., during Hebron's Maple Festival.

If you are a photographer or you are an artist, you're invited to participate.

If you make things at home (hats, scarves, jewelry, home decorations, greeting cards, trinkets, wood carvings, food items, soap, skin

products, glassware, etc.) or you are a photographer or you are an artist, you're invited to participate.

To secure spot space in the Gilead Fellowship Hall, contact the Church Office at 860-228-3077 or GCC@GileadChurch.net.

Historical Society Clothing/Textile Drive

The Hebron Historical Society will hold its annual clothing/textile drive in April. Collections will be held Friday, April 5, from 4-6 p.m., and Saturday, April 6, from 8-10 a.m., at Old Town Hall, 26 Main St., adjacent to Douglas Library. Acceptable items are linens, clothing, shoes, boots, purses, towels or any textile item. Items can be in any condition except moldy, and

must be delivered to OTH in a closed/tied trash bag. No electronics or toys, please.

Funds raised support the society's building maintenance and public programming. To learn more about the Hebron Historical Society, visit hebronthistoricalociety.org. For more information, or to volunteer for this event, email mergonci65@comcast.net.

St. Peter's News & Notes

St. Peter's Episcopal Church, located at 30 Church St., holds two services of Holy Communion each Sunday: Rite 1 (no music), 8 a.m.; Rite 2 (with hymns and choir), 10 a.m. Priest is the Rev. Ron Kolanowski.

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

Meetings and Events: Balance Class, Mondays, 10-11 a.m., \$5; Book Discussion: "10 Gospel Promises for Later Life," 11 a.m., Mondays in Lent (through and including March 18); Cub Scouts, Mondays, 5:30 p.m.; Buildings and Grounds Committee, first Tuesdays, 7 p.m.;

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

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

Dean's List

Lauren Opocensky of Amston made the fall 2023 Dean's List at Goodwin University.

Dean's List

Hebron residents Lucille Hardee and Emily Messier made the fall 2023 Dean's List at the University of Saint Joseph in West Hartford.

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Obituaries

East Hampton

Lennus Augustus Hinds

Lennus Augustus "Edmund" Hinds, resident of East Hampton, passed away Wednesday, Feb. 21, after a heroic battle with cancer.

He is survived by the loves of his life: his wife, Judy Konow-Hinds; three children, Liana Hinds, Aria Hinds and Jacoby Hinds; and siblings, Michael Flanders, Annette Tia Okwee, Judy Hinds, Eric Hinds, Errol Hinds, Joanne Hinds, and Wendy Quintall Wellington; as well as several nieces, nephews, cousins, close friends, and bountiful loved ones.

Lennus was predeceased by his parents, Augustus Hinds and Lucy Butler Hinds. His wisdom, kindness and influence live on in the legacy that he has bestowed upon all whom he has loved and cherished in this lifetime.

Lennus was truly a jack of all trades who possessed an expansive breadth of knowledge including soccer, politics, cooking, music, martial arts, science, gardening, beekeeping, and everything in between. It is virtually impossible to effectively encapsulate the profound impact that Lennus has had in this world. He grew up in Trinidad and Tobago; he loved to travel to other countries and learn various cultures. Lennus's roots had a significant influence on his life, as evidenced in his hobby to grow a variety of Trinidadian vegetables and herbs, cooking a multitude of cultural dishes, and playing the steel drums.

Lennus had an immense love and talent for soccer. Even while saving lives as a firefighter, Lennus continued to play soccer in Trinidad and Tobago. Later, as a coach to countless children including his own three, he effortlessly showcased nothing but calm encouragement and educational advice. Lennus motivated players to accomplish goals for decades beyond the soccer fields.

Lennus had an unquenchable thirst for knowledge throughout his entire life. His pursuit of continued education brought him to the U.S.A. to earn an associate's degree in computer science; later, he obtained a Bachelor's of Science degree in nursing. As a registered nurse, Lennus touched countless lives with the immense kindness and impeccable care that he would provide to every patient.

Despite these many accomplishments, there was no greater pride and love than Lennus's children. Lennus worked tirelessly to grant his children guidance and love, supporting their every ambition. He was a loving husband who was determined to make every day of his life count



after receiving a heart transplant on Valentine's Day in 2012.

Lennus was a warrior, battling many medical challenges with calm courage and tenacity. He was a father, husband, brother, son, friend, uncle, cousin, and mentor who metamorphosed everyone who had the honor of speaking to him. His rich quest for knowledge and commitment to goals are radiated by his three beloved children as they continue to make the world a brighter place.

A funeral service will be held Saturday, March 2, at 10 a.m., at St. John Fisher Church, 30 Jones Hollow Rd., Marlborough. This Mass will be followed by a Celebration of Life at Chateau le Gari, 303 South Main St., Marlborough.

In lieu of flowers, please consider donating to Lennus's children's college fund: www.gofundme.com/f/lennus-edmund-hindsa-legacy-of-love-and-learning.

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

East Hampton

Judith Frances Skinner

Judith Frances (Salonia) Skinner, 78, of East Hampton, beloved wife of the late Wayne Skinner, passed away Friday, Feb. 16, at Midstate Medical Center in Meriden. Born Oct. 30, 1945, in Middletown, she was the beloved daughter of the late Sebastian and Lucy (Gallitto) Salonia.

Judie grew up in Middletown but lived most of her life in East Hampton. She had worked as a bookkeeper for Cobalt Lodge until her retirement.

She is survived by her sons, Mark Skinner and his wife Nina of Glastonbury, and Todd Skinner of Cromwell. She is also survived by her beloved sister, Mary Lou Drewry and husband Robert of East Hampton; sisters-in-law, Doreen Benoit and Donna Mitchell; and her two grandchildren, Sarah and Ryan Skinner. She also leaves her very special nieces, great nieces and great nephew.

She was predeceased by her husband, Wayne, and her son, Michael.

A funeral liturgy was celebrated Thursday, Feb. 29, in St. Sebastian Church in Middletown, followed by burial in Connecticut State Veterans Cemetery in Middletown.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the Alzheimer's Association at www.alz.org.

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



Middletown

Nicholas L. Cannata Sr.

Nicholas L. Cannata Sr., 95, of Middletown, husband of the late Violet (Narsis) Cannata, died Sunday, Feb. 25, at his home. He was born in Middletown, son of the late Sebastian and Anna (Massella) Cannata.

A veteran of the Korean War, Nick served with the U.S. Army. Prior to his retirement, he was Assistant Vice President at Liberty Bank.

Nicholas is survived by his sons, Nicholas L. Cannata, Jr., and his wife Denise (Petrucci) of Middletown, Steven M. Cannata and his wife Erin (Buckley) of Marlborough; three grandchildren, Heather D'Aloisio and her husband Anson of Riverside, Calif., Julie Uvino and her husband Dominic of Meriden, and Nicholas R. Cannata of Marlborough; four great-grandchildren, Allie and Theo D'Aloisio, Owen and Cody



Uvino; sister-in-law, Nancy Narsis of Bristol; as well as several nieces and nephews.

He was predeceased by a brother, Louis Cannata; and his sisters, Angelina Rascati and Marie Caskey.

Nick enjoyed being with family, watching UConn basketball and the Yankees. He especially loved going to his grandchildren's sports events, whether it was volleyball, diving or baseball.

Funeral services will be held Monday, March 4, at 1 p.m., at Biega Funeral Home, 3 Silver St., Middletown. Burial with military honors will be held at the State Veterans Cemetery following the funeral. Family and friends may gather prior to the service on Monday, March 4, from noon-1 p.m., at the funeral home.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to the Middlesex Hospice Care program. Please go to <https://middlesexhealth.org/donate/hospice-donation-form>.

Biega Funeral Home has care of the arrangements. To share memories or express condolences online, please visit www.biegafuneralhome.com.

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Standout Athletes of the Week

By Josh Howard

Here are the *Riverast* Standouts of the Week for the week of Feb. 12 - 18:

Morganne Pineda - Portland High School (Basketball): Pineda was selected All-Shoreline Conference (SLC) Honorable Mention after averaging 10 points per game to lead the Highlanders in scoring this season. Pineda, a junior, also posted 37 rebounds and 22 blocks this winter as her playmaking on both ends of the court during the second half of the season helped Portland win a pair of games down the stretch.

Dani Poudrier - RHAM High School (Cheerleading): Poudrier was named to the Class M All-State Team, becoming only the second cheerleader in the history of the program to achieve the accomplishment. Along with her individual accolades, Poudrier helped the Raptors win a third straight Central Connecticut Conference (CCC) East championship on Feb. 17 and a first-place finish in the NECA Varsity Advanced Division on Feb. 24.

Dante Colella - Bacon Academy (Wrestling): Colella, a senior who wrestles at 175-lbs.,

placed fourth at the State Open on Feb. 23 and 24 at the Floyd Athletic Center in New Haven. Colella's State Open success came on the heels of a third place showing at the Class S championship a week earlier where he won a decision (10-8) over Jordan Delmonico of Montville to secure a spot on the podium.

Liana Salamone and Jackie Russell - East Hampton High School (Basketball): Salamone and Russell combined to score nearly 70% of East Hampton's points as the Bellringers won a fifth straight Shoreline Conference (SLC) championship, defeating Morgan 62-44 on Feb. 16. Salamone, a junior, netted 26 points and Russell, a junior, added 17 as East Hampton remained perfect on the season, winning every regular season game and three more in the SLC tourney to improve to 23-0 overall entering the state tournament.

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

Weir Announces Reelection Bid

State Rep. Steve Weir (R-55) recently announced that he will seek reelection to a second term in the state legislature.

The 55th House District includes Andover, Bolton, Glastonbury, Hebron and Marlborough. "It is a tremendous honor to represent the hardworking people of the 55th district," said Weir, a Hebron resident. "In my short time serving in the legislature, I've demonstrated an ability to listen to different perspectives, and work in a bipartisan fashion when possible."

If reelected, Weir said he will "continue to work for the best interests of the people of the district. Our business and economic climates lag behind much of the rest of the country. Our residents are burdened with high costs across the board, including energy, where our electrical rates are the highest in the lower 48 states. Our government spending and bad policies are the primary contributor to this burden placed on our residents. I will continue to bring these items to light as I work to make Connecticut a better place to live, work, raise a family, and retire."

Weir added, "I'm thankful to have the trust of the voters of the 55th district, and I look forward to keeping that trust in 2024."

In the legislature, Weir serves on the Higher

Education & Housing committees, and is the Republican ranking member on the Labor and Public Employees committee. Weir is a small business owner and former police officer. Weir has been a staunch supporter of small business initiatives.

Weir and his wife have lived in Hebron for 24 years, where they have raised their three girls and now their exchange student. Weir and his family operate the Gilead Hill Farm, a home to foster dogs and dozens of chickens, and are active members of the community.

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

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

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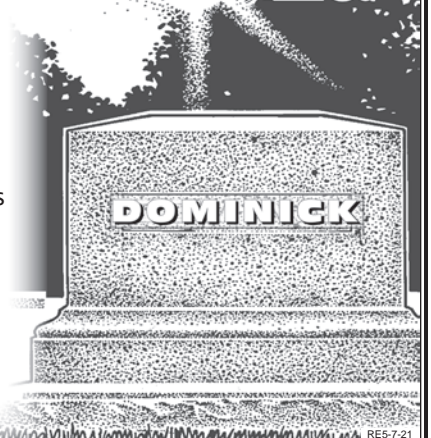
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RE5-7-21

LEGALS

LEGAL NOTICE TOWN OF HEBRON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT 8 Health and Medical Insurance Consortium

Notice is hereby given that a copy of the Regional School District 8 Health and Medical Insurance Consortium Annual Financial Report for the year ending June 30, 2023, is on file in the Town Clerk's Office, 15 Gilead Street, Hebron, Connecticut. Dated at Hebron, CT this 22nd day of February 2024
Francesca Villani
Hebron Town Clerk 1TB 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

TOWN OF COLCHESTER PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION LEGAL NOTICE OF DECISION

At its Regular Meeting of February 21, 2024 the Colchester Planning & Zoning Commission made the following decision:
PZC 2024-001 of Lake Hayward Properties, LLC (Applicant) – Proposed Amendments to Sections 4.3.3 and 4.5 of the Town of Colchester Land Development (Zoning) Regulations relating to multi-family residential use in the Suburban Use (SU) District. **APPROVED WITH AN EFFECTIVE DATE OF 3/18/24.**
Planning & Zoning Commission
Joseph Mathieu, Chairman 1TB 3/1

LEGAL NOTICE MARLBOROUGH CONSERVATION COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING

The Marlborough Conservation Commission will hold the following Public Hearing on Monday, March 4, 2024, at 7:00 PM at the Senior Center, 17 School Drive.
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
APPLICATION - #02-24 – Greylock Property Group, LLC (Applicant) 48 Unit Multi-Family Development
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.
YVONNE BOLTON, CONSERVATION COMMISSION CHAIR 1TB 3/1

NOTICE OF ACTION TOWN OF ANDOVER ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

ACTION TAKEN – The Andover Zoning Board of Appeals took the following action at their regular meeting held February 21, 2024:
Approved – The Application of Tower Generators, Property of Donald & Lisa Roser, 241 Lake Road. Relief granted so as to reduce the side yard setback from 15' to 9' so as to allow for the placement of an electrical generator, concrete pad and associated mechanical work.
Please direct any questions to 860.742.7305, ext. 4220.
William Desrosiers, Chairman
Zoning Board of Appeals 1TB 3/1

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice of Fees for Services Public Hearing
Colchester Sewer and Water Commission
7:00 p.m. – 19 March 2024
Meeting Room 1
127 Norwich Avenue – Colchester, CT.
The Colchester Sewer and Water Commission will hold a Public Hearing to present and gather public comment on the proposed fees for services rate schedule to take effect for the second half of Fiscal Year 23-24. Copies of the draft rate schedule will be available in the Town Clerk and the Public Works offices of the Colchester Town Hall as of February 5th, 2024.
Joseph Leone 1TB 3/1

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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DOG OBEDIENCE CLASSES: starting soon. Offering Puppy Kindergarten, Basic Manners/What Rescue Dogs Need and Want; CGC/Therapy; Scent Work. Over 25 years experience. Michelle Larson, Paws-N-Heel DTC, 860-267-6040. paws-n-heeltraining.com.

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To apply for the position, please send resume, certification(s), letter of intent, and three letters of recommendations:
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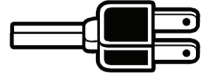
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