

RIVEREAST News Bulletin

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

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October 3, 2025



Toys for Tots... The calendar may have just turned to October, but Christmas is coming! The Town of Portland Garage is assisting the U.S. Marines in its annual Toys for Tots campaign, which started Oct. 1 and runs through Dec. 15. This year's kickoff featured these beloved figures: Mr. Peanut, Gunnery Sergeant Xavier A. Pacheco, Santa Claus, and retired Marine Jim "Red" Soder. All are asked to donate new, unwrapped toys to children in need. Donation location: Portland Town Garage, 505 Glastonbury Tpke.

Gildersleeve Elementary A Blue Ribbon School!

By Anne Lilburn

The staff at Gildersleeve Elementary School in Portland are celebrating a big win this fall.

The school was recently named a Connecticut Blue Ribbon school, a statewide honor recognizing schools "that are excelling in academic success." Only four schools in the entire state received this honor.

The state-level award, from the Connecticut Department of Education (CDOE), is somewhat bittersweet, as Gildersleeve had earlier been nominated for the United States Department of Education's (USDE) prestigious National Blue Ribbon Schools Program. That program had been in existence for over 40 years until it was abruptly discontinued by the USDE at the end of August.

In a letter notifying state education chiefs of the decision, USDE spokesperson Madi Biederman said the decision was made "in the spirit of Returning Education to the States" and noted that states were free to launch their own state-level programs.

Accordingly, Connecticut's program, which was established in September and is based in part on standardized test scores, seeks to award schools that would have been honored by the national program. And while the Portland education community is celebrating the award, they are also lamenting what might have been.

"Ending the National Blue Ribbon Schools Program denies communities like ours the opportunity to celebrate the excellence of their schools on a national stage," said Portland Superintendent of Schools Charles Britton. "While we are deeply disappointed in this decision, we are grateful that the Connecticut State Department of Education has stepped forward to honor the extraordinary work happening in schools like Gildersleeve."

Gildersleeve received the honor in the categories of "Exemplary High Performing" and "Achievement Gap Closing," and was recognized for its success in improving attendance, as well as its performance among so-called "high needs" students, which includes students with disabilities, multilingual learners, and those from low-income families.

At Gildersleeve, those students make up 43 percent of the population, and as recently as the 2018-2019 academic year, the school's math scores led to it being identified as a Focus school, meaning its high-needs learners were lagging behind the general population.

The other schools honored as Blue Ribbon Schools were House of Arts, Letters, and Science (HALS) Academy in New Britain; Green Acres Elementary School in North Haven; and Weston Intermediate School in Weston.

In a press release naming the award recipients, the Governor's Office noted that "academic growth in mathematics and English language arts for all students and students with high needs has increased significantly" at Gildersleeve.

See Gildersleeve Elementary, page 23

RHAM Community Rallies After Tragic Death

By Toriana Williams

The RHAM High School community has come together in an outpouring of love and support following the tragic death of freshman 14-year-old Erik Brooker, who died in a dirt bike crash in Hebron last month.

In the weeks since, local businesses, friends and neighbors have organized fundraisers and memorial efforts in his honor, highlighting the close-knit nature of the town and the impact Erik had on those around him.

While no words or gestures can soften the tragedy of a life cut short, the unity shown in the wake of Erik's passing stands as a testament to the strength of community. It is not a cure for the pain, but a reminder that even in heartbreak, people can come together to lift one another up.

A GoFundMe page created in Erik's memory, to help cover funeral expenses and support his family, quickly surpassed expectations. At press time, it had raised \$18,330, more than triple its original goal of \$5,000. The donations, messages and gestures from residents show the depth of compassion in Hebron and the surrounding area.

One of the most visible efforts was organized through Brain Freezers, a Hebron ice cream shop co-owned by Gina Kelsey. She explained that while she did not know Erik personally, the connection came through one of her employees at Gina Marie's, another business Kelsey owns.

"I didn't know him personally, but one of his friends works here at Gina Marie's," Kelsey said, "Her name's Allison, and she was one of his good friends, so we decided to do a fundraiser for him."

When Kelsey and her husband reached out to Erik's mother, she shared that other restaurants had already done fundraisers.

"My husband suggested doing a scholarship fund instead, Kelsey said." [The mother] agreed and she said, 'You know, people in this community have already been so generous' and that a scholarship would be great."

Kelsey added that the aforementioned employee, Allison Lemke, a senior at RHAM High School, took the lead on organizing the event. "She made the flyers, and she went to RHAM and put it on the morning announcements, got

worker volunteers to help her at Brain Freezers," Kelsey said. "So it was really good. We got good support from the community."

The fundraiser brought in approximately \$1,500 for the scholarship fund in Erik's name.

Lemke said the idea came from wanting to honor someone who had been important in her life.

"What inspired me is that he was really important to me. He was one of my friends for a long time, and I thought it would be nice to do something like this in his honor," she shared. "I thought it was great that we could all come together as a community to support him."

For Lemke, the day of the fundraiser was a moving experience.

"It was pretty busy," she recalled. "I know at one point the line was out the door. We had the whole RHAM soccer team there, and they showed up in their uniforms and got ice cream."

Though it was a difficult time, Lemke said the event was meaningful for her and those who attended. "It was fun," she said. "I really enjoyed

See Community Rallies, page 31

Inside...

- Hebron**
Dogs Get Their Park! pg 9
- East Hampton**
Local Man Charged in Assault pg 11
- Marlborough**
Home Destroyed in Fire..... pg 16
- Portland**
Fair Returns This Weekend..... pg 25
- Portland**
Pastor Brings Fresh Perspective..... pg 26
- Regional**
Athletes of the Week pg 32

Crossword Puzzle...Pg 26
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your own bags. The **Foodshare Van** comes to the church every other Wednesday from 8:30-10 a.m.; **Senior Pantry** is on the opposite Wednesdays.

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

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

Bingo and Baskets: Friday, Oct. 17, 5:30 p.m. dinner, followed by game at 6:30 p.m. Cost is \$10 per person.



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Community & Senior Center Happenings

The Andover Community and Senior Center (ACSC) is open daily from 9 a.m.-2 p.m. The lounge is open for cards, games and puzzles anytime, and coffee is always on. All are welcome. For all senior-related events, call the director at 860-798-6862. The center's monthly newsletter is available on the Town of Andover website, www.andoverconnecticut.org. Copies are also available at the center, Town Hall, and Andover Public Library. Call 860-798-6862 and ask for Haley in order to be put on the monthly newsletter email list.

Volunteer Opportunities Available: The center is looking for Cards & Games helpers, kitchen servers, appointment confirmation phone calls, art teachers, cooking/baking instructors and other volunteers with special talents willing to share with the community. Evening hours are available. Please call or stop by the center if interested.

Transportation: Please provide one week's notice for all requests. Registration is required. Paperwork can be emailed, mailed or picked up at the center. All passengers are required to fill out proper paperwork before utilizing transportation. Transportation is available to town events and meetings, voting, senior events, group shopping, and medical appointments. The driver's shift ends at 5 p.m.; please plan accordingly.

Transportation is curb to curb. Passengers must be able to navigate independently to the vehicle and during appointments. Driveways must be accessible. If assistance is required, passengers may bring an assistant (18 years or older). All seniors, veterans, and disabled are welcome. Call Linda at 860-498-2326 for all transportation-related questions.

Chair Yoga with Haley: Mondays, 10-11 a.m. Cost is \$7, payable at the time of class. For transportation, call Linda at 860-498-2326.

Shopping Trips: Tuesdays, 8:30 a.m. To Manchester on Sept. 30. Transportation is available; contact Linda at 860-498-2326.

Seams Like Fun – Open Sew & Stitch: Every Thursday, 12:30-4 p.m. Bring supplies and a snack. Transportation is available. Call Haley

Trivia Night Fundraiser

The Andover Republican Town Committee will hold a Trivia Night Fundraiser Friday, Oct. 3, at the Andover Pizza House, 114 Route 6. Sign-in starts at 6 p.m., and the game starts at 7. Seats are limited.

Tickets are \$20/person, with teams of up to six players. There will be a 50/50 raffle, pizza, appetizers and a cash bar. There will be a prize for the best team. Purchase tickets via Venmo@Jeffrey-Murray-1969 or with cash, or via check made payable to the Andover RTC. If paying by cash or check call Carol Barton at 860-230-5854 and let her know.

Halloween Fun Day

The Andover Recreation Commission will hold their annual Halloween Fun Day Sunday, Oct. 26, at 1 p.m., in and behind the Community & Senior Center, 25 School Rd.

The Recreation Commission will be there with candy and will host the "Best Decorated Table Contest" winner will receive \$50 and second place will receive \$25. To sign up for the table contest, text or call Annmarie at 860-983-7442.

The fire department will also be present, with treat bags, prizes and activities. The Community and Senior Center will host activities.

with any questions at 203-645-4933.

Chess and Checkers Club: Thursdays, 3-4:30 p.m. Enjoy a friendly game of chess or checkers with neighbors. All skill levels welcome.

Community Yoga: Thursdays, 5:45-6:45 p.m. Cost is \$10, payable at the time of class. For more information, contact Linda Derick at 860-655-4409. Drop-ins welcome.

Gentle Yoga: Fridays, 8:30-9:30 a.m. Cost is \$10, payable at time of class. For more information, contact Haley Proto at 203-645-4933. Drops-ins welcome.

Strong & Steady – Resistance Band Workout: All supplies are provided. Meets every Friday, 10-11 a.m. Cost is \$7, payable at the time of class. For transportation, call the center and ask for Linda.

Lunch Every Wednesday: Wednesdays at noon. Cost is \$5. Let Haley know you're coming, at 860-798-6862, and call Linda to reserve your ride at 860-498-2326. Schedule: Sept. 24, luncheon and entertainment with Georgina's Sausage Taormina, served with salad, garlic bread, and dessert.

Movie & Snacks: Fridays at 1 p.m. Free, with chips and seasonal fruit. Call the senior center for movie titles for the month or to make suggestions. For transportation, contact Linda at 860-498-2326.

Kids' Cuts with Rebecca: Check back for October schedule.

Coffee & Crafts: Thursday, Oct. 16. If attending, call 860-798-6862.

Pal Program: Will resume in October. This is an intergenerational partnership with Andover Elementary School. Contact Tess Grous to participate. For more information, call 860-798-6862.

Travel in Time Club: Friday, Oct. 17, noon. Based on *Travel in Time in Connecticut*, by local author and teacher Dan Blanchard. This is an introduction to another intergenerational partnership with Andover Elementary School. This program follows the school year calendar. Call Tess Grous to participate or for more information, at 860-798-6862. Light fare provided.

Voter Registration Session

Registrars will be in their office at Town Hall, 17 School Rd., on Friday, Oct. 17, between 9 a.m. and 8 p.m., to register new voters in time for the Nov. 4 municipal election.

Hispanic Heritage Storytime

Hispanic Heritage Month runs through Oct. 15, and to help celebrate, Andover Public Library will host Doris Maldonado Mendez for a special storytime and bingo for all elementary school-aged kids on Saturday, Oct. 4, at 11 a.m.

There will be small prizes and snacks, too.

Final Basketball Registration

The final Andover Youth Basketball registration session will be Monday, Oct. 13, from 6-8 p.m., in the community room of the Town Office Building. Registration forms are available on the town website; andoverconnecticut.org.

Coaches Wanted: Also, coaches are wanted for the program. Send your name, email address, telephone number, age group/grade, boy or girl team and if you are signing up as head coach or assistant on or before Oct. 11; via text message at 860-989-6988; or via email at clee@andoverct.org. Once all information is received, the coaches' meeting will be scheduled.

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From the Editor’s Desk

Observations & Ruminations

By Mike Thompson

*Oh, somewhere in this favored land the sun is shining bright;
The band is playing somewhere, and somewhere hearts are light,
And somewhere men are laughing, and somewhere children shout;
But there is no joy in Mudville – mighty Casey has struck out.*

Those are, of course, the famous closing lines from the 1888 poem “Casey at the Bat,” but boy are they sure relevant today. For there’s no joy in Met-ville either; the mighty boys from Flushing have failed to make the postseason.

It wasn’t supposed to be this way. Holy cow, it wasn’t supposed to be this way. After signing outfielder Juan Soto to the richest contract in sports history in the offseason, my beloved New York Mets were considered a lock to not just make the playoffs, but go on a deep run. After all, they brought back much of the same squad that went all the way to Game 6 of the NLCS last year – and now they’d added Juan freakin’ Soto! Expectations were sky high (well, maybe not from me – but more on that in a bit).

All those preseason prognosticators were looking brilliant when the season started, By mid-June, the Mets were an amazing 21 games over .500. They had a 5 1/2-game lead in their division, and ESPN gave them a 96.2% chance of making the playoffs. Things were looking quite wonderful.

Alas, the baseball season doesn’t end June 12.

Starting June 13 – the day after ace pitcher Kodai Senga went on the injured list with a hamstring strain – the Mets went 38-55 for the remainder of the season. Only four teams in MLB were worse. The Mets saw their division lead vanish, followed by their wild card lead. By the end of September, they no longer controlled their own destiny; they entered Game 162 on Sunday needing not just to win,

but needing the Reds to lose. That last part happened – thank you, Milwaukee – but the Mets couldn’t score a single run against the Marlins, and.....that was that. The season was over.

It’s tempting to say everything that could go wrong did go wrong – but that’s simply not true. In reality, it was the pitching. And that was why I had doubts heading into the season to begin with. I simply wasn’t sure the Mets had put together a solid starting rotation. I was eating crow – and it tasted quite good, to be honest – the first part of the year. But the success simply wasn’t sustainable.

From June 13 on, the Mets’ rotation posted a 5.27 ERA – and, even worse, the starters were averaging fewer than five innings per outing. This severely taxed a bullpen that wasn’t even that great to begin with. A number of trade deadline acquisitions appeared to shore up the bullpen woes – but every single one of them seemed to blow up in their face.

The utter failure of the pitching staff just drove home the point that baseball really is a team sport. From an offensive standpoint, the Metsies did alright – better than alright. Their top four hitters – Soto, Francisco Lindor, Pete Alonso and Brandon Nimmo – all had great seasons, with Soto collecting 42 home runs, a career high, and very nearly swiping 40 bases.

But without strong enough pitching, those individual successes were meaningless.

There have been more spectacular collapses in Mets history; the 2007 squad ended its season infamously blowing a 7-game division lead in just 17 games. This was more like a slow-motion collapse. It was, to invoke Taylor Swift, death by a thousand cuts.

Where do the Mets go from here? Well, I hope the failure drove home to every single person in the front office that a real starting rotation is needed. You can’t sign an outfielder to a \$750 million contract and then put to-

Editor’s Desk continued on page 6

Bulletin Board

You may have noticed that there’s a new trend in spectacles. I refer not to the spectacles we see during TV coverage of White House news conferences, but the kind people wear so they can see better.

Apparently based on the theory that if big is good, bigger is better, the nearsighted fashionistas among us have taken to wearing glasses the size of the windshield on your average SUV. As someone who still struggles with the near universal abandonment of the necktie, it took me some time to adjust to this epidemic of outsized eyewear, my first impression being that I had stumbled across some exotic kind of bug or something. Thankfully, I’m over that now, though I still find myself kind of half-wondering where the windshield wipers are located on the things.

Having said that, I must admit that these new fashion statements look really good on some people. Especially women, for some reason. I don’t know why a fashion accessory that looks *tres chic* on a woman makes a guy look like a praying mantis with anxiety issues, but that seems to be the case here. It’s just one of those things, I guess.

One of the first times I noticed oversized glasses appearing as a fashion statement was when Rosa DeLauro, the 82-year-old congresswoman from Southern Connecticut, showed up wearing a pair on TV during one of her bilious press conferences asserting that anyone who thinks she’s too damn old to be in Congress deserves to die in a burning Tesla.

Okay, I made that up about the Tesla. But she is pretty old. And, combined with her purple hair, she was certainly a sight to behold, irately peering out at the world from behind those big old goggles—to the point that I can’t now remember what specific injustice she was ranting about this time.

But about the glasses.

Putting aside the possibility that maybe she intended to go SCUBA diving after her press conference, I thought at the time (somewhat disdainfully, I admit) that this glasses thing was just another case of Connecticut’s free-spirited Rosa being Rosa. But as the months passed, it became increasingly clear to me that my disdain was misplaced. Far from being an object of ridicule, Congresswoman DeLauro was actually on the cutting edge of an up and coming fashion trend.

While I’m not one of her fans (in case you haven’t already noticed), I suppose it is this sort of social and political acumen that allows her to reign year after year as a powerful congresswoman in Washington, D.C. while I remain a half-baked nut consigned to the back row of the peanut gallery.

Now, of course, all the anchor women on news shows and people on TV ads, would-be psychiatrists and folks looking over fresh fruit in the grocery store are wearing the latest thing in goggle glasses. I’m not saying Rosa started this fashion upheaval, but she was certainly an early participant, so let us give credit where credit is due.

Nevertheless, while I also need “corrective eyewear” to avoid driving into the side of buildings, the back of school buses and other inoffensive objects, I don’t plan to follow this latest stampede of nearsighted sheep toward oversized glasses. Frankly, it’s too late for me to be chic, stylish or fashionable. As those of you who know me can attest, I have mixed success just trying to remain presentable.

Anyway, fashions come and go. Remember granny glasses? Given a choice between looking like Ben Franklin or being mistaken for some kind of nearsighted bug – or for that matter, for a progressive congresswoman from New Haven – I think I’ll just wear my contact lens.

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.



The Scarecrows are Back!... Scarecrows are beginning to pop up on Main Street in Hebron for the annual Town Center Project’s Scarecrow Contest, part of its Harvest Festival that runs on Saturday, Oct. 18. The scarecrows will be on display for all of October. Over 25 businesses and families have registered to be part of the Scarecrows on Main. The winner will be announced from a People’s Choice vote that will take place at the festival on the 18th. Pictured are the St. Peter’s Peace Trio, singing “Let There Be Peace on Earth,” entered by a team of parishioners from St. Peter’s Episcopal Church.

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

Correction

A story about last week’s East Hampton Town Council meeting quoted councilman Jordan Werme. That was incorrect; it was actually councilman Rich Knotek who said the quote attributed to Werme. The *Rivereast* regrets the error.

I Love Children

To the Editor:

My name is Marcie Miner, and I’m running for the Board of Education. My husband and I have two children who attended Andover Elementary School. I was active in the PTA and organized the yearly Christmas shopping event as well as the Pancake Breakfast. Raising our kids in the town of Andover was the best of times, and I’d like to ensure that today’s children receive the same great education my kids did when there were over 300 kids from kindergarten through sixth grade.

I want to help the Board of Education run a smooth, transparent operation without requiring kids to attend town meetings, so that parents can still participate. If childcare isn’t covered in the budget, I will help pay for a sitter myself. I love children and simply want what’s best for them. Please remember to vote in November and thank you for your support.

Marcie Miner – Andover

The Education Selectwoman

To the Editor,

When you look at Hebron’s progress over the past few years, Tiffany Thiele’s leadership has been an important part of it. As a member of the Board of Selectmen, Tiffany has shown what it means to be a responsive, hardworking public servant. She listens to residents, brings people together, and always puts the needs of the community first.

Tiffany’s record speaks for itself. She collaborated on budgets that protect great schools while keeping services strong, fought for the Wall Street sidewalks to be completed, and worked with fellow board members to fairly distribute ARPA funds. She also served on RHAM’s Strategic Plan Committee, giving her a direct role in shaping the future of local education.

Known proudly as the “education selectwoman,” Tiffany has been a consistent voice for Hebron’s students and families. She understands that strong schools are the heart of a thriving town and has worked tirelessly to make sure they get the support they need.

With her experience on the Board of Selectmen, her background in community leadership, and her passion for education, Tiffany Thiele is exactly the kind of leader Hebron needs. Reelecting her means keeping Hebron on the right track.

David Rose
Member of the Hebron
Democratic Town Committee

RIVEREAST

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Letter Writers: Letters must be 400 words or less, and must be submitted by Tuesday at noon. Email is preferred; send to bulletin@glcitizen.com. All letters must include the writer’s town of residence and daytime contact phone number. Letters focused solely on national issues or national public figures will not be published. 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 bullying or name-calling will be tolerated. There is no guarantee that all letters will be published.

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Vote for David Sousa
To the Editor:
I have had the privilege and good fortune to serve with David on the Hebron Planning and Zoning Board for the past several months. He is a longtime resident of Hebron, raised his family here and is keenly aware of what makes Hebron Hebron.
David brings his 40+ years of experience in urban planning and community development to his role as vice chair of Planning and Zoning. His approach is thoughtful, professional and above all keeps Hebron's best interests foremost in his deliberations. And he is always willing to share his expertise with the other board members as his help certainly shortened my learning curve on this board.
Please join me in voting for David.
**Davis Howell, Alternate
Hebron Planning and Zoning Commission**

Early Voting
To the Editor:
Are you working on Election Day? Will you be out of town? Do you want to avoid crowds or a crowded parking lot? Or, are you just driving by the Town Hall and want to try something new? Early voting will work for you!
Early voting for the Nov. 4th Hebron municipal election will be held at Hebron Town Hall, 15 Gil-ead St., in the lower meeting room. Please feel free to take advantage of this option.
When you come in to vote, you will check in as you always do. You will receive a ballot and an envelope. You can fill out you ballot, place it in the envelope and deposit it before you leave. You can do this all on your schedule.
Town Hall will be open daily from Oct. 20th through Nov. 2nd. Daily early voting hours are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., including Saturday and Sunday. On Oct. 28th and 30th, voting hours will be extended. The early voting location will be open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. on those days.
Please exercise your right to vote!
**Elizabeth Fitzgerald
Hebron Democratic Registrar of Voters**

Keep Civility in Government
To the Editor:
It's election season again, and Republicans in East Hampton have continued their bi-annual tradition of spamming the online and on paper forums with misinformation and personal attacks on anyone who dares to run in the opposition party, and uses their voice in the process. While the "leaders" of the party call for keeping the conversations civil and on the issues, they know and relish in the fact that these "conversations" will turn personal and focus on the minority faith or other 1st amendment protected views they don't agree with. The Republican Town Committee even endorsed one of these Facebook pages that allows uncensored hate on their official feed.
What this all just goes to show is the chaos and pettiness they want to bring back to town government after two years of civility by virtually all on the town boards. Sure, there's been healthy debates on a number of issues including the budget and ultimately the town voters made their choice and that's how the town has moved forward. But meanwhile the party that claims to listen to the voters continues to complain that budgets are too high, even after one of the Republican-controlled Board of Finance budgets was approved. To me that doesn't sound like listening, but more like pushing their own agenda on the town, which had its own rejected townwide budget vote a couple of years ago.
Join me in keeping civility in the town government and vote row A on Nov. 4.
Paul Wisniewski – East Hampton

Big Shout-Out to WPCA
To the Editor:
I recently experienced major problems with the sewer ejection pump on my property. Anyone who's ever been through this knows how debilitating it can be as well as extremely expensive to repair. Throughout the ordeal employees at East Hampton WPCA were absolute godsend. They returned my call promptly and answered all my questions and concerns with honesty and integrity. They were informative, diligent and went above and beyond.
As this ordeal went on for over a week, the guys at WPCA helped so that my family and I could stay in our home without further inconvenience and until the repairs could be complete. They even came out for an emergency over the weekend. A tremendous thank you to Paul Ceretta and Anthony DeSimone and the crew that bailed me out of this tough situation. I am extremely grateful; you guys rock!
**Sincerely,
Lee Baier – East Hampton**

Preserve Marlborough Charm
To the Editor:
My name is Justin Bransfield, and I am a candidate for an Alternate position on Marlborough's Zoning Commission this municipal election on Nov. 4.
I am proud to be part of a Democratic slate of candidates spanning many different backgrounds and across multiple generations, alongside my partner Liz, who is running for the Zoning Board of Appeals.
I was born and raised here in Connecticut, just across the river in Middletown. Liz and I moved to Durham, N.C., for five years before returning to our roots in Connecticut and moving to Marlborough in 2020.
I am 36 years old, work as a software engineer with a B.A. in mathematics, and have a strong interest in history and literature. I am motivated to run for local office to learn more about my community, to meet more of my fellow residents and to be of service to our town.
As an Alternate, my primary commitments will be first and foremost to consistently attend all meetings, to become knowledgeable about our Zoning policies and concerns, and to offer my insights when they can be of use.

I believe that we must respect and preserve Marlborough's great character and charm, while also recognizing and meeting the challenges that currently face us, such as aging demographics and ever-rising housing costs.
My vision for Marlborough is for it to be a culturally vibrant, commercially thriving, diverse and affordable town, a goal toward which we have made great strides in recent years under our current leadership. I want to be part of achieving this vision.
Early voting for this year's election starts on Oct. 20, and Election Day is Nov. 4. Please make sure to come out and make your voice heard!
Justin Bransfield – Marlborough

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A Dedicated Voice
To the Editor:
I am writing in support of Toni Livernois for the Hebron Board of Education. Since moving to Hebron in 2018 with her husband, a U.S. Navy veteran, Toni has been an active and committed member of our community. As a New England native, choosing Hebron as home was meaningful for her family, and she has embraced every opportunity to give back.
Toni's professional background in elementary education, coaching, and healthcare management provides her with a well-rounded perspective and strong skills in organization, leadership, and communication. She understands the importance of collaboration and is deeply committed to supporting the success of our students and schools.
Beyond her professional experience, Toni has shown remarkable dedication through her volunteer work. She has taken part in numerous school and community initiatives, including fundraisers, grade-level events, clean-up efforts, and graduation ceremonies. Time and again, she has proven herself dependable, thoughtful, and willing to step up wherever she is needed.
The Hebron Board of Education would benefit greatly from Toni's energy, integrity, and proven commitment to our town. She is ready to listen, lead, and work tirelessly on behalf of students, families, and educators.
I encourage my fellow residents to support Toni Livernois for the Hebron Board of Education.
Angela Corentin – Amston

Building the Future
Dear Colchester Neighbors:
Imagine a young family buying their first home. The roof leaks so badly they put out buckets to catch the water. But instead of fixing the roof, they spend their money on a new playground. Most of us would call that irresponsible.
That's the situation at Bacon Academy today. The roof is leaking—a \$6 million repair identified by the Board of Education. Yet instead of addressing it, the focus has been on athletic fields. A leaking roof isn't just an inconvenience—it's a health risk for every student who walks through those doors.
The good news is, we can do better. The Board of Education, the Board of Selectmen, and the Board of Finance all have important roles, and when those boards work together, big projects get done the right way. That's how we've built schools, repaired roads, and improved our town before—and that's how we'll succeed again.
My name is Michael Dubreuil, and I am honored to be a candidate for Colchester's Board of Finance. If elected, I will make capital planning a

top priority. We'll pursue grants, carefully schedule projects, and manage budgets responsibly – so that we protect both our children and our town's affordability.
Colchester has always been a community that invests in its future. By working together, we can keep our schools safe, strengthen our town's finances, and make sure Colchester remains a place we're all proud to call home.
I ask for your support in this election, beginning with early voting on October 20th and continuing through Election Day on Nov. 4th.
**Sincerely,
Michael Dubreuil – Colchester
Candidate for Board of Finance**

Enjoying Colchester
To the Editor:
I was grateful to have several opportunities to just pause and enjoy myself in Colchester two weekends ago. InishMor served an exquisite fried fish and chip dinner, the kind that just brings that little glow of happiness you feel when you eat good food. Cragin Memorial Library and Folklore and Fable both impressed me with their friendly and supportive staff and selection of books and other activities; many return trips are needed. The Celebrate Colchester event was a delightful way to make new acquaintances – the many businesses, community organizations, and town departments were cheerful and welcoming, with a special mention to the booth providing very tasty lemonades.
Thank you to everyone who helped make it a great weekend.
Carolyn Schulz – Colchester

Transparency, Fiscal Responsibility
To the Editor:
It is more important than ever during the troubling times that we elect to office people that understand and care about transparency and fiscal responsibility. Democratic candidates Anthony Bratz and Susan McFarland bring these important elements of government to the table in a way other folks cannot.
From my experience these two are very easy to talk to about these issues. Anthony has discussed transparency multiple times both in private and on the public forum of Facebook. He wants to make it easier for residents to understand and see what their town is doing. With more transparency we residents will gain more autonomy and ability to voice our concerns and steer the town in a direction we are all satisfied with. Susan McFarland has extensive experience with management and following budgets. Electing her to our Board of Selectmen will guarantee that any financial decision
See Letters, page 6

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★ *Letters cont. from page 5*

made, from repairing the senior center to clearing brush, will be done responsibly and save us money. Transparency and fiscal responsibility go hand in hand. We cannot have one without the other. If we are to make sure that our money is being spent responsibly and with every intention to save money while properly carrying out the duties of the Board of Selectmen. If they were to serve on multiple boards, there would be a conflict of interest that could cause needless spending, less transparency, and more control in the hands of a few. We've seen what happens when an administration doesn't value transparency. When there are conflicts of interest and a lack of transparency, things get much worse and we all suffer for it, as is happening with the Trump administration. Join me in supporting these two candidates so that we can restore transparency and fiscal responsibility to our little town.

Finally, I have heard rumors that our town's current board has some issues with regards to transparency and accountability and I will be looking into and reporting back next week with my findings on the subject.

Rob Barstow – Marlborough

Schools & Education
in East Hampton

To the Editor:

East Hampton values and recognizes the importance of educating our children. The excellence of East Hampton schools is widely recognized. This requires continued investment in the people (teachers and others) and infrastructure of our schools. Each year our town votes on an education budget as well as a town budget. Together we determine how the schools will move forward. It is important for each of us to provide input during the budget planning process so that we get the correct budgets for our town.

<https://www.niche.com/k12/d/east-hampton-school-district-ct/>

**Jack Solomon – East Hampton
Candidate for Town Council**

Vote Row A

To the Editor:

This November, Portland has an outstanding team running for the Board of Selectmen and Board of Education. Jim, John, Andrea, Dave, Kim, Bethanne, Jody, and Erin. Each of them brings unique skills, fresh energy, and a proven commitment to fiscal responsibility. Each are involved in many community activities and are already giving back to Portland as volunteers.

Jim, John, Andrea, Dave, Kim, Bethanne, Jody, and Erin are the names to remember, and they're all on Row A of the ballot.

We want leaders who will put Portland first, so vote Row A. Remember, early voting starts Oct. 20. Watch for details.

**Sincerely,
Meg Scata – Portland**

***Note:** Scata is secretary of the Portland Board of Education, but said she is voting as an individual.*

Supports Leon

To the Editor:

It is my pleasure to write in support of my friend, Joelyn Leon, as she runs for East Hampton Town Council. I have known Joelyn for years, and what always impresses me is her integrity, compassion, and willingness to listen.

Joelyn is the person who shows up when you need her most. She is thoughtful, hardworking, and never afraid to roll up her sleeves to get things done. Whether in her professional life advocating for working families or here in East Hampton as a neighbor and friend, she has always put people first.

I trust Joelyn to make fair and balanced decisions for our community. She will listen to residents, bring people together, and lead with honesty and care. Those are exactly the qualities we need on the Town Council right now.

I am proud to support Joelyn Leon and encourage my neighbors to vote for her on Nov. 4th.

**Sincerely,
Tania Sones – East Hampton**

Normandy, France Visit

To the Editor:

My name is Peter Kupczak and I will be traveling to Normandy, France in late October with my wife Frances.

Our main focus is to visit the beaches, the graves and the memorials to the fallen soldiers to pay our utmost respects to these brave men and woman who paid the ultimate sacrifice.

We do not have any direct or indirect connection to anyone ourselves who was part of the D-Day invasion or know of any family that may have a loved one buried there. If you have a family member buried there or know of someone that does, we would like to pay our-your respects to them.

We thought that this may be the best way to get the word out to as many people as possible with the *Rivereast News Bulletin*. You can leave me a message at 860-537-1465.

**Kind regards,
Peter and Frances Kupczak – Colchester**

Supporting Jan Lawrence

To the Editor:

I am proud to support Jan Lawrence for the Hebron Board of Selectmen. Jan brings a unique combination of technical expertise, entrepreneurial drive, and a lifelong commitment to our community. With a professional background as an IT development supervisor for the Connecticut Department of Developmental Services, along with years of business experience, Jan has the skills to tackle today's challenges with both innovation and fiscal responsibility.

Jan's vision for Hebron is clear and forward-looking. He is committed to modernizing our schools and infrastructure, ensuring that Hebron remains a town where families want to live and thrive. He understands the importance of developing a vibrant town center that will not only bring us together as neighbors but also attract new businesses to grow our tax base. Jan also recognizes the need for expanding affordable housing options while working to reduce taxes for residents. Most importantly, he is a strong supporter of public education – a value that is close to my heart and the heart of many families in Hebron.

Beyond his professional qualifications, Jan has spent years as a youth sports coach in baseball, basketball, and soccer, demonstrating his dedication to the next generation and his belief in the power of teamwork and community spirit.

Hebron deserves leaders who will think strategically, act responsibly, and keep the community at the center of every decision. Jan Lawrence is that leader, and I urge my fellow residents to join me in voting for him for the Hebron Board of Selectmen.

Heather Petit – Amston

***Note:** Petit is chair of the Hebron Board of Education but said she is speaking as an individual.*

Supports Ockman

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to offer my enthusiastic support for Adam Ockman as a candidate for the Board of Finance. As a dedicated family man and active member of our community, Adam brings the kind of integrity, work ethic, and practical financial sensibility that would be a great asset to the board.

In both his personal and professional life, Adam has consistently demonstrated strong character, sound judgment, and a commitment to responsible financial decision-making. As someone raising a young son in our town, he has a personal stake in the long-term health and sustainability of our local finances. His perspective as a parent and homeowner brings a grounded, forward-thinking voice to the table – one that understands the importance of balancing present needs with future obligations.

Adam is thoughtful, level-headed, and collaborative. He listens carefully, asks insightful questions, and is not afraid to advocate for fiscally responsible solutions. His approach to problem-solving is data-informed, practical, and always guided by what is best for our entire community.

I am confident that Adam Ockman will bring a fresh perspective, a strong moral compass, and a sincere dedication to public service to the Board of Finance. I wholeheartedly support his candidacy and urge you to give him your full consideration.

**Sincerely,
Mary J. Rose – Hebron**

Experienced, Committed Leader

To the Editor:

I am proud to enthusiastically endorse my father, Joe Spada, for the Portland Board of Selectmen.

While he is the best dad I could ask for, I'm endorsing him today as a dedicated community member prepared to serve our town. The values he taught me – integrity, hard work, and the importance of respectful, constructive dialogue – are exactly what we need on the Board.

For years, Joe has been quietly dedicated to making Portland better, volunteering countless hours on various town committees. This extensive experience has given him a deep, practical understanding of our town's needs and challenges. He doesn't just have good ideas; he has the experience and insight to put them into action.

Joe Spada is ready to bring a fresh perspective and a hands-on commitment to the Board of Selectmen. He is uniquely positioned to help move our community forward, always prioritizing the well-being of our residents and families.

Please join me in supporting an experienced and committed community leader. Vote Joe Spada this November.

Tyler Spada – Portland

It's Like Clockwork

To the Editor:

Marcie Miner is running for Andover BOE. It's like clockwork: every May, she writes an inflammatory and misleading letter about our school budget. Let's look back.

May 2021: She claimed the per-pupil costs were mysterious, despite the budget being presented publicly in meetings and videos. (<http://link.sauyet.com/mm21>)

May 2022: She said the board was "hoarding cash" and "placing our children in the middle", as if education budgets aren't supposed to be about children. (<http://link.sauyet.com/mm22>)

May 2023: She accused the board of "picking your pocket", even though Andover's expenditures are below the state average. (<http://link.sauyet.com/mm23>)

May 2024: She called the budget "inflated," ignoring that costs (utilities, salaries, insurance) and enrollment were rising. (<http://link.sauyet.com/mm24>)

May 2025: She claimed that town officials knew better how to manage school capital expenses, even though no one there has such experience. (<http://link.sauyet.com/mm25>)

It makes one wonder when Marcie Miner last approved of a school budget. When her kids were there?

Her comments sound strikingly similar to the scurrilous, anonymous flyer about school finances from last spring – the one the *Rivereast* apologized for distributing, due to falsehoods and it being anonymous. At the time, I suspected she was involved. Rereading her letters, you'll find the parallels impossible to ignore. If you are interested in corrections to the flyer's lies, and to Ms. Miner's points, you can find them on <https://flyer.andoverct.info>.

OK, people are allowed to vent, even when they're wrong. But now she's running for the Board of Education. That puts a very different spin on things. Does she know that under Connecticut's Minimum Budget Requirement, towns can't recklessly cut school funding? Or that Andover's per-pupil spending is lower than nine of the ten districts closest in size to Andover?

Though elected by the town, BOE members are also legal agents of the state, responsible for the appropriate education of our children. We do not need a Board member whose primary focus would be on slashing budgets, even to the detriment of the children. There are four candidates running for the BOE. The other three are well qualified. If

Editor's Desk continued from page 4

gether a starting rotation full of dice-rolls and reclamation projects. Yes, that approach worked in 2024, when the Mets caught lightning in a bottle with a starting rotation that seemed to be greater than the sum of its parts. But that's the thing about lightning – it rarely strikes twice.

The bottom line is, they've got a lot of work to do. I'll still be in their corner, regardless; the fans are true to the orange and blue. As bleak as things seem right now, I've stood by

my Mets through worse seasons than this.

Back when real estate mogul-turned-Bernie Madoff victim Fred Wilpon owned the team, he once established a benchmark of wanting the Mets to play "meaningful games in September." There was no doubt they did that this year. But when you have a \$340 million payroll, you want meaningful games in October as well.

See you next week.

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you want to vote for a Republican, by all means, choose the cross-endorsed Sharon St. Rock on the Republican line. That will be my own first Republican vote in the Trump era.

Let's not add obstacles to the already difficult task of responsible budgeting. We need Board members who support our schools, not undermine them.

(References: <http://letters.sauyet.com/#!/2025-10-03/>.)

Sincerely,
Scott Sauyet – Andover

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

Heart, Experience, Dedication
Hello Colchester Neighbors:

As election season nears here in Colchester, I'm reminded of the incredible opportunity we all share to make our voices heard through the freedom of voting. This year, the Democratic ticket is proud to present a strong slate of dedicated community members who are ready to continue moving our town forward.

At the top of the ticket, our first selectman, Bernie Dennler, is seeking reelection. Bernie has provided Colchester with steady, forward-thinking leadership over the past two years, and his continued service will ensure stability and progress. Alongside him, Rosemary Coyle and Denise Turner bring years of trusted experience on the Board of Selectmen and remain committed to serving the best interests of our community.

I am honored to be running for town treasurer, stepping in to continue the important work as Sean Gillespie transitions to his well-deserved candidacy for the Board of Finance.

Rounding out our excellent slate, we have Krista Kardys and Jillian Vinci (incumbent) running for the Board of Finance, bringing fresh perspectives and financial expertise to guide our town's fiscal future. For the Board of Education, we have retired teachers Gussie Gilbertie and Nancy Nelson who are committed to ensuring our schools continue to provide exceptional educational opportunities for all Colchester students. Additionally, Andrew Cournoyer and Eric Jackson are running for the Board of Assessment Appeals, where their dedication to fairness and transparency will serve our community well.

Together, this team represents heart, experience, and dedication to Colchester's future.

We invite you to come out and vote! Early voting will take place at Town Hall from Oct. 20th through Nov. 2nd with Election Day happening on Nov. 4th. Let's keep Colchester moving forward.

Dave Koji – Colchester
Candidate for Town Treasurer

Harsh, Unfair Criticism
To the Editor:

Last month, I wrote in to this column expressing a vision of town government that was centered on civility, decency, respect and a desire to reach common ground as our community moves ahead together.

It probably comes as no surprise, then, that I was saddened by a letter from Ted Hintz Jr. in last week's forum which harshly and unfairly criticized the Town Council's efforts to continue its search for the best home for our fire department. Worse, he chose to tarnish the work of two fellow council members by twisting their observations and intentions in making this new home a reality. All this before a Task Force has even been named.

As you may recall, Ted is the newest member of the council, having been appointed at the beginning of the year to fill the vacancy left by Deb Cunningham. Ted has some big shoes to fill; Deb was a leader of her party who brought cooperation and common sense to her service to the town, the council and her politics, in that order. I know I can speak for everyone on the council when I say that we miss her very much.

I bring this up because Deb joined me and four other dedicated residents to constitute the East Hampton Ambulance Task Force, perhaps one of the most important and successful work groups in recent memory. When it was formed by Chairman Markham, Dean insisted that it would only be successful if it represented several political parties, so we ended up with two Republicans, two Democrats and two Unaffiliated members. Our 10-month work evaluated all options with no preconceived notions, and ultimately, preserved the outstanding emergency services we have with the East Hampton Ambulance Association.

You've heard it said, "Actions speak louder than words." The success of the Ambulance Task Force is proof positive that Chairman Markham and Town Council have the judgment and experience to form a balanced and knowledgeable Fire House Task Force, which will include some of the best appointed and professional fire personnel this town has to offer.

It is too bad that Ted was not on the council at the start of the Ambulance Task Force, because he would have clearly seen its wisdom, vision and hard work, and perhaps his recent criticisms might have been more measured, honest and uplifting.

Rich Knotek
East Hampton Town Council
Member and Candidate

Hintz a Strong Leader
To the Editor:

I am writing to support the candidacy of Ted Hintz Jr., Republican for Councilman on the East Hampton Town Council. I have the pleasure of knowing Ted for the past four and a half years now, and I can confidently say that he possesses the necessary qualities and skills to be a leader.

Ted has already proven himself to be a strong leader with very strong community ties and his commitment to the Town of East Hampton.

Ted believes in total transparency and fiscal responsibility and accountability and he is also committed to working hard for the residents of East Hampton to make our town an affordable place to live.

I strongly urge you to vote for Ted in November. I am confident that he will make a positive impact and work towards the betterment of our community. Please join me in supporting Ted Hintz Jr. by electing him as Councilman, East Hampton.

Sincerely,
Michael Pepin – Middle Haddam

Andrea Alfano for BOS
Dear Portland Neighbors:

I am proud to support Andrea Alfano for Portland's Board of Selectmen, along with the full Democratic team – Andrea Alfano, John Dillon, Dave Kuzminski, and Jim Tripp.

I've gotten to know Andrea over the past five years, and it's easy to see why she's the right choice for this role. She listens carefully, weighs decisions thoughtfully, and works hard to understand every side before taking a position. Andrea is fair, steady, and serious about the responsibility of public service. I know she will do her homework, ask the right questions, and always put the needs of our community first.

Andrea brings a lifetime of public service and leadership experience to the table. She spent more than 30 years serving the people of Connecticut through the Department of Social Services and UConn's School of Social Work. Here in Portland, she served nearly a decade on the Board of Education, and has continued to take on leadership roles in our community.

Andrea's deep roots in Portland, combined with her professional background and volunteer experience, make her uniquely qualified to help lead us forward. She is exactly the kind of thoughtful, dedicated voice we need on the Board of Selectmen.

I encourage my neighbors to learn more about Andrea Alfano – and the entire Democratic slate – at PortlandCTDTC.com/municipal-candidates and to join me in supporting this exceptional team this November.

Laurel Steinhauser – Portland

***Note:** Steinhauser is chair of the Portland Board of Education but said she is writing as an individual.*

Maruschock for Portland BOE
To the Editor:

Looking at the ballot for the Nov. 4th municipal election, the candidate that stands out above the rest is Kim Maruschock for BOE. Kim is the only educator presently on the BOE with over 20 years' experience as a special education teacher in Cromwell. In addition to Kim's master's in education she has earned a certificate in administration and currently oversees the coordination of students and staff for the preschool department in Cromwell public schools.

Kim's number one priority throughout her career has been providing a safe learning environment for each student to receive a quality education through supporting teachers, staff and communicating services for families.

As a member of the BOE, Kim addresses each issue from a position of knowledge and experience that no other candidate brings to Portland's BOE.

Learn more about Kim Maruschock by visiting the Portland Democratic Committee Facebook page or website for a bio or stop by the DTC tent at the fair between 7 p.m.-9 p.m. this Saturday.

Please join me to reelect Kim Maruschock to the Portland Board of Education.

Rose Aletta – Portland

Ready to Serve
To the Editor:

I am seeking election to serve the next two years on East Hampton Town Council. Since I am currently vice chairman on the Board of Finance and member of the capitol committee. I'll be ready to step up to the challenge of the council and use my broad town volunteer experience to serve the people of East Hampton. In addition to the Board of Finance, I have served on the Zoning Board of Appeals, Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency and as registrar of voters.

All of these experiences have given me a good foundation to be an effective part of the town council team. There are issues beyond the town hall that need addressing: roads, lake quality, the firehouse project, affordable education and the senior center to name just a few. I'd like to be your representative to help address these issues.

My guidepost for council discussions and decisions will be the same as always: to keep the interests of the taxpayer in mind while holding spending in check and identifying waste in an open and honest fashion. My reason for running for the Town Council is to represent you, the citizens of East Hampton. Your priorities are my priorities.

If elected, I will not squander the opportunity.

I would appreciate your vote on Nov. 4. Vote Row B.

God Bless,
Alannah Danaher Coshow – East Hampton
Vice Chairman, Board of Finance
Candidate, Town Council

Campaign Season Underway!
To the Editor:

Yard signs popping up overnight can only mean one thing – campaign season is in full swing. The Colchester Democrats have been out knocking doors and are excited to hear what is on voters' minds. If Bernie Dennler and the candidates haven't made it to your house yet and you have something to share, they'd love to see you at a Community Conversation at Oz'n Bones BBQ on Thursday evening, Oct. 9th, from 6 p.m.-8 p.m. All are welcome to ask questions and talk about how we can keep Colchester moving forward together.

Speaking of yard signs, if you'd like Bernie or slate signs for your yard, contact us and we'd be happy to deliver them. We are also actively seeking volunteers for a variety of voter contact initiatives. There's something for everyone, including several postcard writing parties planned. Postcards can also be written from home. Please see www.colchesterdemocrats.org for more information.

Our email address is colchesterdems@gmail.com and we can be reached at 860-465-7909. We look forward to hearing from you!

Sincerely,
Monica Swyden, Chair
Colchester Democratic Town Committee

Democrats' Favorite Slur
To the Editor,

A local writer recently apologized for calling Republicans "fascists" – well, sort of! He didn't mean to imply that all Republicans are fascists, just the ones like me who embrace the notion of restoring America to what she was meant to be. I would bet dollars to donuts this writer doesn't know what fascism is other than it being an insult or epithet to use against Republicans.

'Fascism' has been the favorite slur employed by Democrats to dehumanize Republicans and was used routinely by President Biden and Vice President Harris. Our elected Connecticut political leaders like Senator Murphy and Representative Larson continue to use this inflammatory rhetoric against Trump even following the brutal assassination of Charlie Kirk. Democrats are actively ramping up their calls for violence by encouraging resistance and force to be used against American ICE agents!

As terrible as Kirk's brutal murder was, seeing Democrats mock his death and celebrate it with ghoulish glee was horrific. An alarming proportion of the outrageous social media videos and postings were made by teachers. I hope this is not a prevalent attitude among educators in general and certainly not our local districts!

Just recently, the Chicago Teachers Union publicly announced their honoring of Assata Shakur, the Black Liberation Army member convicted of the 1973 murder of a New Jersey State Police officer.

See Letters, page 28

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Quilt Project to Benefit the Food Bank

The East Hampton Quilt Project is selling raffle tickets for a 62” x 62” quilt, created by local women. Proceeds benefit the benefit of the East Hampton Food Bank.

The quilt depicts 12 sites in East Hampton. The quilt depicts 12 sites in East Hampton. The raffle tickets sell for \$10 each or 3/\$25. Buyers can pay cash or use Venmo. Tickets are being sold until mid-November at Paul’s and Sandy’s

Lions Raffle for Scholarship Program

The East Hampton Lions Club is conducting a raffle to support their annual scholarship program. The Lions will offer four \$1,500 awards to graduating East Hampton students. Applications are available by contacting the East Hampton High School guidance office.

The raffle offers a \$2,025 grand prize. First place is \$225 with two winners, second place is \$125 with two winners, and third place is \$55 with two winners. Also, the first-, second- and

Too, East Hampton Public Library, Old Bank, and The Hairitage. The quilt will be displayed at various times at the library.

The drawing will be on Nov. 22 at 10 a.m. at the Food Bank.

For continuous updated information on when and where tickets will be sold, visit sites.google.com/view/easthamptonquiltproject/home.

Spaghetti and Meatball Dinner

The Knights of Columbus St John Paul II Council 6190 at St. Patrick Church will hold the first of its semi-annual spaghetti and meatball dinners Friday, Oct. 3, from 4:30-7:15 p.m., at the church parish center, located at 47 West High St. Takeout and dine-in meals will be offered.

Meal prices are \$15 for adults and \$14 for seniors. Children 5 and under eat for free. The meal will include a salad, bread, dessert, coffee or tea and a punch/iced tea drink. Canned soda

and bottled water will be available for \$1.

Proceeds will support local charitable programs. The Knights of Columbus will also collect non-perishable food items for the East Hampton Food Bank.

There will be musical entertainment at the dinner, by local singer-songwriter Bill Naughton, Jr.

Contact Jim Pedersen at 860-716-9629 for more information.

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. Visit www.easthamptonct.gov/east-hampton-senior-center for more information and a list of regular weekly and monthly activities, including games, quilting, Bible study and more.

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 10:30 a.m. the day before. Meals are free; a \$3 donation is requested. A Form 5 document must be completed before registering for lunch; stop by the senior center to complete and submit the form.

Monthly and Special Events: Wonderfully Wicked Women’s Group (WWW): First and third Mondays at 10 a.m. in the East Hampton Library Community Room. This is a low-key opportunity to meet others and share resources, with the theme of Sisterhood.

Mighty Magnificent Men’s Group: Meets every second and fourth Monday at 10:30 a.m. All men are invited for a social hour of facts, activities, and snacks.

Trailblazers Walking Group: Monday, Oct. 6, 9 a.m., at Air Line State Park, 69 Smith St., East Hampton. All abilities welcome; walk at

your own pace.

Linefit Dance/Exercise Class: Monthly on Mondays starting Oct. 6 at 2 p.m. This is a low-impact line dancing class. Fee \$3 per class.

Learn Mahjongg: Thursday, Oct. 9, 9:30 a.m., for beginners to enjoy a fun and social introduction to this classic tile game. No experience needed.

Mahjongg Tournament: Thursday, Oct. 9, 1 p.m. This session is a two-player team format. Cost is \$20 to register, due in advance. Please register in person.

Bike Rides for Seniors with Kim Clouser of AirLine Cycles: Friday, Oct. 10, Route 66 Williamantic – near Mackey’s. Bring your bike, helmet and water to the ride.

Trips: Shopping and Lunch Trip: Thursday, Oct. 9 . Depart at 11 a.m.; lunch is on your own at the Cromwell Diner followed by shopping at Walmart. Donation of \$4 for transportation is requested. Register in person.

Hayride at Paul & Sandy’s Too: Wednesday, Oct. 15, departing the senior center at 10 a.m. Enjoy a fall hayride and snacks on your own in the Seasonal Shop. Cost is \$17 and includes the ride and bus transportation.

Volunteer Opportunity: Music Director Needed: The senior center is seeking a volunteer music director to lead the center’s choral group. Contact Holly at the senior center for more information.

Local Man Charged with First-Degree Assault

By Anne Lilburn

East Hampton police arrested a man on Saturday, Sept. 27 following what police say was a violent assault at a home.

Manuel Negron, 47, of East Hampton, was charged with first-degree assault, second-degree threatening, risk of injury to a child and disorderly conduct following an incident that, according to police, involved Negron punching another person in the face and then beating them in the head with a baseball bat.

According to the police report, police responded to a 911 call from a victim who claimed they had been beaten during an argument. While officers were responding to that call, another 911 call came in, with the caller

saying that the victim was now being beaten with a baseball bat. Another witness also reported seeing a portion of the assault.

According to the report, when officers arrived, the victim was conscious and alert, but bleeding heavily from their head. Officers found Negron attempting to leave the scene. He claimed that he had been defending himself, police said.

Officers detained Negron and held him on a \$100,000 bond. According to *The Middletown Press*, his bail was later raised to \$150,000, which he was able to post with help of a bondsman. Negron is due in court again on Oct. 15.

St. Patrick Church News & Notes

St. Patrick Church, 47 West High St., is a member of St. John Paul II Parish, along with St. Bridget Church in Moodus.

Masses are celebrated Saturdays at 4 p.m. at St. Patrick and 5:30 p.m. at St. Bridget, and on Sundays at 7 and 11:30 a.m. at St. Bridget and 8:30 a.m., 10 a.m. and 7 p.m. at St. Patrick.

During the week, Masses are celebrated at 8 a.m. on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays at St. Patrick, and on Wednesdays and Fridays at St. Bridget.

Becoming Catholic: The St. John Paul II community invites you to learn more about the Catholic faith through the OCIA program, which focuses on the teachings of Jesus and the Church and prepares individuals to celebrate the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist during the Easter season. For more information contact Dani Annino at 860-267-6644 or sjp2dre@gmail.com, or Deacon Dan D’Amelio at deacondandamelio@gmail.com.

‘The Velocity of Autumn’

Readers Theater presents *The Velocity of Autumn* by Eric Coble, directed by Richard Kamins and performed by Anne Cassady and Nat Holmes of the Dramatists Play Service Inc., on Friday, Oct. 3, at 7 p.m., at Middle Haddam Public Library, 2 Knowles Rd., Middle Haddam.

This family drama swirls around Alexandra, an 80-year-old artist in a showdown with her family over where she’ll spend her remaining

years. She barricaded herself in her Brooklyn brownstone with enough Molotov cocktails to take out the block. The clash, illuminated by the author, reveals the may seemingly no-win debates across America over what’s best for an aging relative no longer at her sharpest.

A free will offering will be collected. Seating for the performance is limited so register in advance by calling 860-267-9093 or middle-haddamlibrary@gmail.com.

★ ★Thank You!★ ★

...thanks to all of you who attended the Annual Markham Meadows Car Cruise. Whether you drove a beautiful vehicle, ate a hot dog, bought a raffle ticket or contributed to our Wounded Warriors Jar we raised more than \$10,000 for our local Wounded Warriors, Flags Over East Hampton and our Police K-9 effort. Terrific job!

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Special Thanks...Marie Fletcher, Colleen Owens, Vivian Weyel, Jen Miller, Don Hodgkins, Kevin Reich, Clayton & Vickie Bergeron, Jen & Russell Beck , the Portland VFW, the Lemonade Girls plus my family & all the MMC volunteers who helped make the day a Success! You are the best! – *Melissa*

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Haddam Neck Covenant Church News

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

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

Children’s Ministry: Children’s Ministry, for children in kindergarten through fifth grade, is held in Fellowship Hall during worship. The theme is “Friends with God” and is taught through Bible stories where the characters are friends with God. A toddler nursery is also available. Confirmation Class is held on alternate Sundays during the worship service.

Vocal Choir: Rehearsals are held Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. New members are always welcome.

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

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

Christ Episcopal Church News

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

Music is provided each week by Ted Williams; the Choir is directed by Linda Napolitano. The Sunday School is directed by the Rev. Joanne Neel-Richard and meets at 9:55. New students are always welcome.

Donations: Food items for the East Hampton Food Bank may be placed in the black totes at the rear of the church.

Returnable Bottles and Cans: Are collected in cans by the shed.

Gardeners Needed: Volunteers are still needed to weed, water, and plant in the Pollinator

Parks and Rec News & Notes

East Hampton Parks and Recreation has announced the following items of interest. For full program descriptions or more information, or to register, call 860-267-7300 or www.easthamptonrec.com.

Recreational Basketball Program: Registration deadline is Oct. 12; practices start in November and games begin in December. Grades 1–2: Instructional League, cost is \$85; Grades 3–4, 5–6, and 7–8: Competitive play in the Lakes League (games and practices will take place at East Hampton middle and elementary schools. May require travel to nearby towns), cost is \$155. Coaches are needed for all age groups: Volunteer coaches receive one free registration (registration fee refunded after completing a background check and online training).

Introduction to Watercolor Painting: Wednesdays, Oct. 8-29, 12:30-2:30 p.m. Alison Walck will guide people into the world of watercolor artistry in this hands-on workshop for beginners. Fee for the four classes is \$50/resident, \$60/non-resident.

Scarecrows in the Park: At Sears Park Oct. 12-31; park open from sunrise to sunset. Enjoy a whimsical display of scarecrows created by local residents, businesses, and organizations. Vote for your favorites! There will be an

Police News

9/19: A 16-year-old juvenile from Norwich was issued a juvenile summons and charged with second-degree criminal trespass, East Hampton Police said.

9/25: John Pollard, 66, of East Hampton, was taken into custody and charged with driving under the influence and evading responsibility, police said.

9/27: Marvin Cote, 57, of Salem, was arrested and charged with second-degree threatening, disorderly conduct and interfering with an officer/resisting, police said.

From Sept. 22-28, officers responded to 11 medical calls, three motor vehicle crashes and five alarms, and made three traffic stops, police said.

DTC Meet the Candidates

The East Hampton Democratic Town Committee invites the community to Dexter’s Tunes, Tales, and Ales on Sunday, Oct. 5, from 1-4 p.m.

Candidates for the November election will be on hand to talk ideas, goals, and the stretch run of the race for East Hampton leadership.

Household Hazardous Waste Collection

The Lower CT River Valley Council of Governments (RiverCOG) is holding a collection for household hazardous waste on Saturday, Oct. 11, from 9 a.m.-1 p.m., at the Haddam Elementary School, 272 Saybrook Rd., Higganum.

This is the last collection for the 2025 season and is free to residents of the RiverCOG region, which includes East Hampton & Portland.

Visit www.rivercog.org/household-hazardous-waste for more information.

EHMS Basketball and Cheerleading

East Hampton Middle School student/athletes who are interested in trying-out for boys’ basketball, girls’ basketball or cheerleading teams can register online through Arbiter Sports Registration.

Athletes must have a physical within a 13-month period in order to try out. The deadline for registration is Sunday, Nov. 26.

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



Lobster Fest Thanks... Fowler-Dix-Park VFW Post & Auxiliary 5095 thanked all who attended and volunteered at the Lobster Fest Fundraiser. Pictured are some of the Veterans of Foreign Wars dignitaries who enjoyed the food: Post Commander Edward Turner, CT National Council Member Stanley Borusiewicz, Department Commander Charles Pickett, Department President Cheryl Costello-Pelkey, Auxiliary President Kelly Ezold, Department Senior Vice Commander John Kennedy, Department Adjutant/Quartermaster Domenic Guiliano, and Department Judge Advocate Karl Steiner.

PTO Meets Monthly

All are invited to attend the monthly East Hampton Elementary PTO meetings. Meetings are on Mondays at 5:30 p.m., and childcare is provided. The schedule for the 2025-26 school year is:

10/20, at Center School; 11/17, Memorial School; 12/15, Center School; 1/12/26, Memorial School; 2/9/26, Center School; 3/16/26, Memorial School; 4/20/26, Center School;

5/18/26, Memorial School.

More members are always needed, whether it’s helping with decorations for celebrations such as dances or stepping up ceremonies, organizing fundraisers, volunteering at events, supporting our teachers, staff and admin or sharing ideas and making change.

There is no need to sign up; just come when you can.

Middle Haddam Public Library News

The Middle Haddam Public Library, 2 Knowles Road, 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: Mondays and Thursdays, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.; Tuesdays and Fridays, 3–6 p.m.

October’s Featured Artist: Mindy Mills Maynard, a local author and artist.

Book Talk: Mindy Mills Maynard will give a talk on her book *When Magic Happens* Friday, Oct. 24, at 4 p.m.

Double Play: Featuring local favorites Cathy Kregger and Jon Swift. Sunday, Oct. 26, 2 p.m. Call the library if you are coming.

Mahjong: Mondays, 10:30 a.m. All levels of experience welcome.

Fiber Arts Group: Thursdays from 10 a.m.-

East Hampton Library News & Notes

East Hampton Public Library, 105 Main St, has announced the following. For full program descriptions or to register for a program, call 860-267-6621 or visit easthamptonpubliclibrary.org.

Hours: Monday-Wednesday, 10 a.m.-8 p.m.; Thursday-Saturday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

All-Ages Program: Cardboard Arcade: Community Open Play: Saturday, Oct. 11, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. The East Hampton Public Library Cardboard Arcade will open for business. The community is invited to play the games and marvel at the ingenuity and skills of the design teams. Winners of the superlative awards will be announced.

Adult Programs: Cookbook Club: Tuesday, Oct. 7, 6:30 p.m. This month’s theme is Pumpkins. Bring a prepared dish, 12 copies of the recipe to share, and come hungry. Food should arrive ready to eat; the library will provide the plates and forks. Register or drop in.

LibrarYoga: Tuesday, Oct. 14, 6:30 p.m. Yoga 200 Certified instructor Amie Meacham leads an hour of gentle yoga for adults in the Library Community Room. All levels welcome; bring your own mat if you have one and wear comfy clothes.

Author Event! Katie Tietjen: Wednesday, Oct. 15, 6:30 p.m. Meet Edgar Award nominated author Katie Tietjen for a Q&A about her popular Maple Bishop mystery series and her newest book, *Murder in Miniature*. Copies of the book will be available for sale and Tietjen will be available to sign your copy. Sponsored by Friends of the East Hampton Public Library.

Tech Help: Thursday, Oct. 16, 2-4 p.m. Basic technology help for phones, laptops, tablets, and e-readers. No registration required; just bring your device with you.

Teen Programs: Cardboard Arcade: Planning & Design: Tuesday, Oct. 7, 6 p.m. Design teams will gather in the Library Community

Room to choose a game, work on the design, create an inventory of supplies and plan for the building of the game.

Cardboard Arcade: Build Day: Friday, Oct. 10, 10 a.m. Design teams will work to build, test and finalize their games. Teams will have a chance to test the games of other participants.

Magic: The Gathering (Grades 7-12): Saturday, Oct. 11, 1-3 p.m. Whether you already know how to play the card game, or want to learn, come together and play with people of all skill levels. Bring your own decks or use one of ours.

HalloTween: Grades 4-8: Saturday, Oct. 18, 1-2:30 p.m. Play silly games, compete in a costume contest, eat yummy snacks and try some gross crafts. Sponsored by Teen Advisory Board.

Children’s Programs: Halloween Costume Swap Shop: Saturday, Oct. 4, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Come “shop” for this year’s Halloween costume. This event is open to everyone; you do not have to donate to take items from the swap. Items are first-come, first-served.

Lego at the Library – Halloween Edition!: **Grades 4-6:** Tuesday, Oct. 7, 4:30-5:30 p.m. Come build Halloween-themed Lego creations.

DIY Days: Saturday, Oct. 18, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Children and families in grades K-8 are invited to create a different toy, game, or treat together. No registration required; just drop in.

Epoch Arts Fall Classes

All are invited this fall for a variety of artistic classes and events at Epoch Arts. Experience classes like theater, art, photography, ceramics, improv and more.

This semester, there is a new 3- and 4-year-old class, and teens are reminded to sign up to act in Epoch’s original theater production and haunted house. Classes are held at 27 Skinner St.

For full class descriptions and registration, visit www.epocharts.org.

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TANGO2 Benefit Banquet Coming

The biennial TANGO2 Benefit Banquet and Auction is set to take place at 5 p.m. Nov. 1, at TPC River Highlands in Cromwell.

The banquet will be hosted by Kasha and Mike Morris, who founded the TANGO2 Research Foundation in late 2017 after their then 16-year-old son Ryan was diagnosed with a rare genetic disease called TANGO2 Deficiency Disease (TDD).

All proceeds from the banquet will be used

Scholarships Available

Fowler-Dix-Park VFW Post 5095 & Auxiliary are now accepting entries for their annual Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen youth scholarship competitions.

This year's theme gives both America's high school students and middle school students the opportunity to contemplate, "How Are You Showing Patriotism and Support for Our Country?"

The Voice of Democracy audio-essay competition is open to high school students in grades 9-12, with the national first place prize scholarship totaling \$35,000. The first place Department (state) winners receive an all-expenses-paid trip to attend a 'Founding Forward Spirit of America Youth Leadership' program at Valley

Art on Display

Local artist Valerie Stockburger will display her oil paintings at the East Hampton Town Hall during October and November.

Stockburger is a member of the East Hampton Art Association, the Glastonbury Art Association, and Gallery 53 in Meriden.

All are invited to stop by for a viewing of her art display during Town Hall hours.

Teen Halloween Party

Epoch Arts will hold its Teen Halloween Costume Dance Party, for grades six and up, on Friday, Oct. 10, from 7-9 p.m., at Epoch, 27 Skinner St.

Students are invited to dress up in a Halloween costume and share it at Epoch Arts. A live DJ will provide the sound and prizes will be given out throughout the night for costumes, dance moves and craziness.

Admission is \$10 and includes free food and drinks. For more information, visit www.epocharts.org.

Congregational Church News & Notes

East Hampton Congregational Church is located at 59 Main St. Sunday services are at 10 a.m. The Rev. Robin Blundon is the interim minister. Sunday School is provided for children and coffee hour is directly after service for fellowship.

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

Haunted House and Hayride

Epoch Arts will hold its annual Haunted House and Hayride Friday and Saturday, Oct. 17, 18, 24 --and 25, from 7-10 p.m. each night, at Epoch, 27 Skinner St.

This year's theme is a "Dystopian World." Walk through rooms filled with spiders, freaky mind game testing, a room where *Survivor* meets *Lord of the Flies* as the inhabitants try to survive and where Big Brother is always watching. The Haunted Hayride is themed Apocalypse, so be ready for more spooks and scares outside.

Tickets and reservations are for sale online, at www.epocharts.org, and are \$15 for both the Haunted House and the Hayride.

Class of '10 Reunion

The East Hampton High School Class of 2010 is planning its 15th reunion.

Share your availability at tinyurl.com/4yuex98x.



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to fund research and support programs related to TDD.

The event will include a cocktail hour, three-course meal, music, dancing, wine pull, bourbon blackjack as well as various raffle and auction items. There are still tickets available for purchase, at a cost of \$85 per person. For more information regarding the banquet or to donate, visit tango2banquet.raiselysite.com or email kasha.morris@tango2research.org.

Forge, Pa., where they compete for more than \$170,000 in national scholarship awards.

Open to middle school students in sixth through eighth grade, more than 60,600 students participate annually in the Patriot's Pen essay competition. The national first place winner receives a \$5,000 award.

Entry forms and additional information may be found at www.vfw.org/community/youth-and-education/youth-scholarships or the Post Home. Student entries may be submitted (along with a completed entry form) to VFW Post 5095, 20 North Maple St., East Hampton, CT 06424.

The deadline for both contests is Oct. 31.

Absentee Ballots for Municipal Election

East Hampton's municipal election will be held Tuesday, Nov. 4, at East Hampton High School, 15 North Maple St. Early voting will occur from Oct. 20-Nov. 2 at Town Hall.

Absentee ballots are available at the town clerk's office, located at 1 Community Drive. Office hours are Monday, Wednesday and Thursday, 8 a.m.-4 p.m.; Tuesday, 8 a.m.-6:30 p.m.; and Friday, 8 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

All registered voters are eligible to obtain an absentee ballot for this election. For more information, call 860 267-2519.

Special Voter Registration Session

Registrars will be in session Friday, Oct. 17, between 9 a.m. and 8 p.m., at the registrars of voters office at Town Hall, 1 Community Drive.

This date is the last regular voter registration session before the Nov. 4 election. All mail-in voter registrations must be received or postmarked by this date.

For information, call the registrars at 860-267-6720 on Tuesdays between the hours of 11 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.



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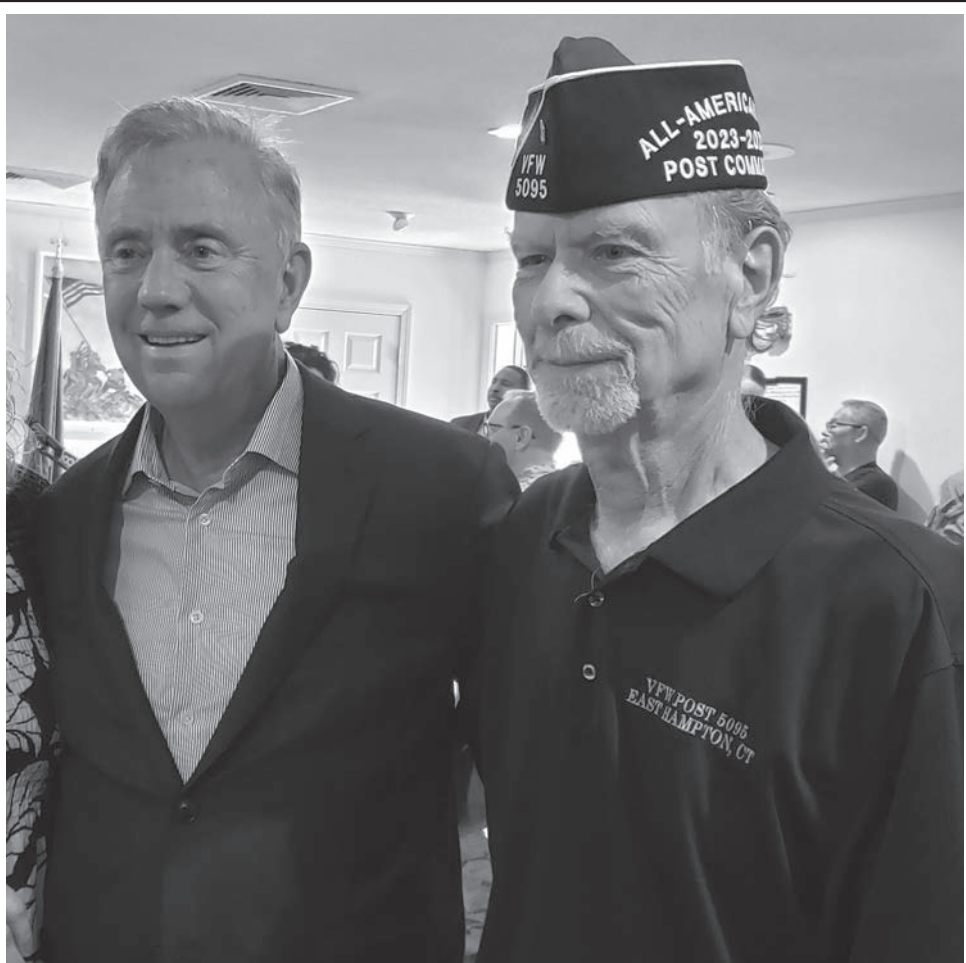
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Ted & Ned... Gov. Ned Lamont recently signed the Connecticut Hero Act into law at Fowler-Dix-Park VFW Post 5095. The Hero Act combines Public Act 25-15 and Public Act 25-95 to acknowledge the sacrifices made by those who have served in the military, and honors them. The act also assists military and military families with a broad range of provisions to adjust to frequent relocations and the combat wounded. Lamont is pictured at left with Post Commander Edward Turner.

Foreign Exchange Program Volunteers Needed

Rotary is seeking volunteers from across the community to participate in the Rotary Youth Exchange Program. The Rotary is looking for students ages 15-18 who want to study abroad, as well as families interested in hosting an exchange student here at home.

Applications are open now for both long-term academic year exchanges and short-term summer exchanges. Opportunities are available in 19 European countries, six Asian countries, seven South American countries, as well as Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and Mexico. The earlier you apply, the better your placement op-

tions. Learn more and apply at www.exchange-student.org

Also, Rotary is seeking host families for students arriving in East Hampton this year and in both Colchester and East Hampton in future years. Host families provide room and board for a defined period and, in return, build a lasting bond with a student from abroad. The host family application is always open at www.exchange-student.org.

For more information, email youthexchange7980@gmail.com.

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The Belltown Open Golf Tournament Committee and the Congregational Church of East Hampton would like to thank all of the sponsors and golfers that made the 2025 Belltown Open Golf Tournament a success.



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Leaves, Lenses and Lasting Memories

By Toriana Williams

For Jill Hetzel of Marlborough, the fall season is as much about tradition as it is about the crisp air and changing leaves. After 25 years living in town, she has built a collection of seasonal rituals that connect her with family, friends and the community around her.

“I have lived in Marlborough now for 25 years. I moved here with my late husband... Some friends of mine had a house for rent, and I’ve been here ever since. I love it here, and my late husband loved it here, too,” Hetzel said. “Actually, he got me a brick in the center of town [at the town green] ... and our names are on it. It’s real sweet.”

Since losing her husband Alex, her traditions have changed, but she has carried many of them forward in new ways. One of her most cherished fall activities is attending – or rather, quietly observing – the annual Glastonbury Apple Harvest and Music Festival.

“I lived in Glastonbury when I was a child, and [the festival] used to be at a different location than it is now. I used to walk there and go there with my friends,” she shared. “Now, I go there with my mom, and we actually don’t go when it’s open. We have this really fun tradition of my mom and I and her dog walking around the Apple Fest as they’re setting up.”

Hetzel laughed as she remembered how the tradition started.

“The very first time we started doing this, I was a little apprehensive,” she said. “I absolutely love to take pictures... and my mom and I, we would stand far back and take the pictures as they were setting up. [The set-up crew], they’re like, ‘Oh no, no, come on, get in here!’ So throughout the years, we just wander around as they’re setting up. We really don’t talk too much; we try to stay out of their way. We say hi and grin at them, and it’s awesome.”

For Hetzel, photography is more than a hob-

by – it’s the lens through which she experiences autumn.

“I love to take walks, and like I said, I like to take pictures,” she explained. “So I pretty much will walk anywhere to try to get really pretty fall pictures.”

One of her favorite techniques is called intentional camera movement, or ICM.

“I look at the fall leaves in a pretty place, and I kind of move my camera,” she said. “I like to make funny-looking portal pictures with them. It turns out really pretty.”

Even a car ride can become part of the process.

“Driving down Route 2, with me as the passenger, I have my camera out the window and that does intentional camera movement without me having to really move,” she said. “So that’s a weird tradition of mine as well.”

Other traditions have carried over from her life with her husband in the years after.

“One of the other things that I absolutely love doing with my mom is going to Paul’s and Sandy’s Too and going to Pumpkintown. I had done that tradition with my late husband,” Hetzel explained.

Hetzel said of Pumpkintown: “The way they have the displays and the pumpkins that they painted... looks so different.”

She added, “It’s a fun place, very family-friendly. You get apple cider. Oddly enough, my mom and I, when we went last time we got pickles. It was so funny.”

In addition to fairs and festivals, Hetzel said she treasures simpler rituals. “Most people, when they do their leaves... they use machinery. For me, I’m out in my yard. I literally rake and scoop up the leaves, and I compost them. Last year I did 80 bins! That’s one of the things I like to do. It’s a lot of exercise, it’s relaxing, smells nice and makes my yard look nice.”

Hetzel spoke on how she leaves some piles of



Among the photos Jill Hetzel of Marlborough have snapped over the years is this one of ‘Buster Bittersweet,’ a creative scarecrow from a previous year’s display at Paul’s and Sandy’s Too bring both charm and whimsy to the season.

leaves in certain areas in order to provide crucial winter habitats for wildlife and insects.

“I try to keep it for the critters – they have all the eggs and stuff in there,” Hetzel said. “So I do certain spots and certain spots I leave, but that’s one of my nice traditions.”

Hetzel also enjoys snapping photos of the beauty of local landmarks in autumn. “I like to go to [Lake Terramuggus]. I go to the boat launch area, and I like taking pictures of the lake in the fall. Especially if they still have the... colorful kayaks. I’ve gotten some really beautiful pictures.”

She shared that there’s a specific tree that turns a lovely shade of yellow, as well as some that turn vibrantly orange. “I love doing that here in Marlborough,” she said. “It’s just beautiful.”

Scarecrows are another highlight. “I absolutely love getting to see the really cute scarecrows,” she said. “The scary ones I’m not a huge fan of, but I like taking pictures of them.”

Hetzel added that she discovered the Colchester Green’s scarecrow contest last year, calling it “huge, and a lot of fun too.”

For Hetzel, autumn is about holding onto small joys and weaving them into a season of

warmth and creativity. And for those in Marlborough looking to add to their own fall traditions, there are still plenty of community events coming up. One upcoming event is on Sunday, Oct. 26, when the Marlborough Lions Club hosts its Masquerade 5K at Blish park starting at 10:30 a.m. Runners will circle Lake Terramuggus in costume, with prizes awarded for funniest, scariest, best individual and best group costumes. Registration is about \$35.

The Marlborough Bakery & Cafe is also ringing in October with a festive and tasty celebration – Halloween-themed donuts. The seasonal treats are designed to capture the spirit of fall while offering a sweet start to the month. The bakery encourages locals to stop in and grab one before they disappear.

From capturing whimsical scarecrows through her camera lens to strolling the hushed festival grounds alongside her mother, Hetzel’s traditions paint a picture of autumn as something deeply personal. They show that the season isn’t only about the fairs, contests and community gatherings – it’s also about the quiet, meaningful ways people shape those experiences into their own lasting rituals.

Paranormal Program

The Marlborough Preservation Society is hosting an event given by the Eastern Connecticut Paranormal Society on Wednesday, Oct. 29, at 6 p.m., at Marlborough Congregational Church, 35 South Main St.

This program delves into the realities of paranormal investigation, exploring the challenges of blending science with unexplained phenomena, faith, and public stigma. Through real-life

case studies and evidence, participants will gain a deeper understanding and have the opportunity to ask questions.

Registration is required and can be done via email (mhs@marlboroughhistory.org), call/text Romano Ghirlanda at (860) 916-4031, or through www.marlboroughhistory.org/events.

The event is free but donations will be appreciated.

Fire Department Chicken Barbecue

The Marlborough Fire Department will host its 69th annual Chicken Barbecue Sunday, Oct. 5, from noon-2 p.m., at Station No. 1 on Route 66 in Marlborough Center.

Tickets are \$18 per person and include a meal of half a chicken, freshly made coleslaw, a baked potato, a dinner roll, and a dessert. The fire station will be open for those who wish to dine in.

Additionally, the Women’s Auxiliary will host a bake sale.

This annual event has a history of selling out quickly. Due to high demand and a limited

number of tickets, residents are encouraged to secure theirs as soon as possible. Tickets are being sold door to door by Marlborough firefighters. If a firefighter has not visited your home, you can purchase tickets by calling the firehouse at 860-295-6219 or Captain Todd Cohen at 860-573-0428. Tickets will also be able to pick up at Marlborough Plastics, 350 North Main St.

Please leave a message with your name, address, and the number of tickets you need. Tickets are sold on a first-come, first-served basis.

Marlborough Lions’ Masquerade 5K

The Marlborough Lions will hold their annual Masquerade 5K Road Race Sunday, Oct. 26, starting promptly at 10 a.m.

This 5K will feature runners in costume and will follow the same course around Lake Terramuggus as the Lions’ Memorial Day weekend race. The race will utilize electronic timing with computerized race results and the course is now a certified 5K.

The entry fee is \$30 per runner for pre-registration and \$35 on the day of the race. Shirts will be provided to those who pre-register by Oct. 13, with additional shirts being available on race day subject to availability. There is also a \$60 package price (\$65 on the day of the race) for families of up to four (immediate family members only)

participating in the race. Same-day registrations are accepted. Runners will start near the entrance to Blish Park on Park Road and will proceed on a course which circles Lake Terramuggus.

The Lions Club supports programs which address various issues including blindness, drug abuse prevention and diabetes awareness in addition to supporting local organizations such as the Marlborough Food and Fuel Banks and providing vision screening for students at Marlborough Elementary School.

To register or for additional information, contact Lions Club President Jean Paul Bolduc at 860-798-2054 or jpabolduc@icloud.com. Registration forms are available online at runsignup.com/Race/CT/Marlborough/Masquerade.

Congregational Church News & Notes

Sunday Worship at Marlborough Congregational Church, located at 35 South Main St., is held at 10 a.m. The service is also broadcast live every Sunday at mcc.marlconchurch.org and recorded for later viewing. Church pastor is the Rev. Valerie Seaver. Childcare for infants and toddlers is provided downstairs in the nursery but children are always welcome at the worship service. Sunday school is open to all children in the community for children ages 3 through grade 8. Contact Elizabeth Kukich at ekukich@marlconchurch.org for more information.

Oct. 5 is World Communion Sunday. The service will be led by the Rev. Nina Schmid. At Marlborough Congregational Church, Holy Communion is open to all, regardless of church affiliation, including children with parental guidance. On this Sunday, a variety of breads and toppings will be served at Coffee Hour, including gluten free. Two church deacons will meet with the Sunday School children to teach them about Communion.

Bible Study is led by Seaver and meets Thursdays at 11 a.m. and 6 p.m. upstairs in the lounge. All are welcome.

Community Sing is Friday, Oct. 3, upstairs in the lounge, starting at 7 p.m. All who enjoy singing, including musicians, are invited to attend this free monthly sing-along, led by Seat of Our Pants member Carolyn Brodgerski. Music

is provided.

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 Tuesdays at 7 p.m. in the Youth Room.

Second Blessings Thrift Shop, located on the ground floor with easy access from the parking lot, is open for sales and donations Fridays from noon-3 p.m. and Saturdays from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. The eBay store is open year-round at bit.ly/MC-Cebay.

Outreach: The church collects non-perishable food items year-round for Marlborough Food Bank with a basket located in the narthex for donations. September mission-giving is for Community Partners in Action, Resettlement Program, which provides comprehensive services, from basic needs to medical care, for women who are re-entering society from York Correctional. The next monthly Florence Lord Housing luncheon for its residents will be Oct. 12. The church-sponsored Drive Thru Café, for Marlborough Food Bank clients and their families, will be Oct. 26. Free tickets are available at the food bank.

General Information: Marlborough Congregational Church is an Open and Affirming faith community and all are welcome. The church does not pass a collection plate, but free-will giving boxes are found by the doors in the sanctuary; people can also donate via a QR code in the pew racks or through the church website. For more information on the church or its programs, call Seaver’s direct line at 860-295-0432, email her at pastorval@marlconchurch.org, or contact the church office at office@marlconchurch.org.

Tag Sale This Saturday

The Town Wide Tag Sale will take place on Saturday, Oct. 4, from 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Tag Sale maps will be available at town hall, Richmond Memorial Library or the senior center. For more information, call 860-295-6203.

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Local Home Destroyed in Fire

By Toriana Williams

A Marlborough family lost their Isleib Road home after it caught fire on Sunday, most likely sparked by lithium batteries charging in the garage.

According to Fire Marshal and Board of Selectmen member Joe Asklar, the alarm came in at 4:35 p.m., and within five minutes, the first firefighter was on scene. The first responder was his son, Kevin Asklar, who is also the town's fire chief.

Asklar said the fire started in the garage, where the homeowner had placed lithium batteries to charge on a workbench.

Asklar said "it was either [a] defective battery," or something interrupted the charging process, causing the battery to blow outward, catching the workbench on fire. "It spread from there."

The homeowner reported hearing a pop in the garage about 15 minutes after putting the battery to charge.

Asklar urged residents to take extra precautions when charging lithium batteries.

"You would be mind-boggled by what happened from the charging of a lithium battery," he said, noting a sizable increase of housefires due to them. He added that homeowners should always charge them in non-combustible locations, such as on a metal surface, in a protective container or outside, but never on a carpet, shelf or other flammable surface.

During the investigation, Asklar worked alongside the insurance company's fire investigator, who told him he had already seen two other structure fires that week caused by lithium batteries.

"You just can't charge them," Asklar stressed. "You have to charge them where [if] they do start a fire, they won't catch anything else."

Kevin Asklar confirmed that crews from Marlborough battled the fire for about an hour with help from neighboring towns. Mutual aid came from Glastonbury, Hebron, East Hampton, Colchester, Bolton and Columbia, who provided equipment, personnel and station coverage.

The family displaced by the fire is currently



A fire Sunday left a home on Isleib Road heavily damaged. The residence has been deemed a total loss.

CT Watercolor Society Art Show

The Connecticut Watercolor Society is exhibiting its annual, juried show this year at Marlborough Arts Center, 231 N. Main St. The show can be viewed from 1-4 p.m. today, Oct. 3; tomorrow, Oct. 4, and Sunday, Oct. 5.

The exhibition features 61 pieces of current artwork by watercolor artists from around Connecticut. The show was juried by full-time artist and teacher, Laura J. Eden. Connecticut Watercolor Society awards were given to "Gloucester Rocks" by Andy Yelenak, "Fall Bounty" by Angie Falstrom, "Field Workers at Lockwood Farm" by Shaaron Rowley Morgio, and "Sacred Lotus" by Lori Rapuano. The Connecticut Watercolor Society Transparent Watercolor Award was given to "Aloft" by Barbara Maiser.

For more information about the Connecticut Watercolor Society, visit www.connecticutwatercolorssociety.com.

And for more information on Marlborough



The Connecticut Watercolor Society's annual juried show runs at Marlborough Arts Center through Sunday, Oct. 5. Pictured is the first-place winner, "Gloucester Rocks," by Andy Yelenak.

staying with relatives. Joe Asklar shared that the homeowner's wife was due to give birth this week to a baby girl – according to Facebook posts, she delivered a healthy baby earlier this week – and that community members have started to come together to provide funds and donations to help in the family's recovery.

There were no injuries; however, the house was deemed a total loss.

"This really shows how serious this is because of the lithium batteries," Joe Asklar said. "They do catch on fire and they do explode. They are very, very dangerous."

Safety Tips: Preventing Lithium Battery Fires

Joe Asklar stressed the importance of handling lithium batteries with care, especially as they age. Below are some precautions recommended for homeowners to follow:

Charge on a non-combustible surface – Use

metal, concrete or a fire-resistant container. Never leave the battery on carpet, wood or inside a closet.

Never leave batteries unattended – Stay nearby when they're in use, and avoid overnight charging.

Watch for warning signs – If a battery swells, leaks or makes popping sounds, stop using it immediately.

Use the proper charger – Only charge batteries with the charger for which they were designed. Using a third-party charger increases chances of risk of fire.

According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), lithium ion batteries should not be disposed of with household trash or in regular recycling bins. "Recycle your device or battery at a safe battery recycling location," the association states. "Visit call2recycle.org to find a recycling spot near you."

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Climb Every Mountain... Charlotte Minnick of East Hampton and her boyfriend, Brayden Kramer, recently traveled to White Mountain National Forest in New Hampshire and climbed Mt. Jackson. Here is a picture they took with the *Rivereast* from 4,000 feet up!



On the Cape – North Cape, That Is... Todd Garabedian and Carolyn Teschke recently took a cruise along the coast of Norway. During the trip, they visited Nordkapp, or North Cape, above the Arctic Circle. At 71°10'21" N, it is the northernmost point of the European continent, and approximately 1300 miles from the North Pole.



The Luck of the Irish!... Jim and Shari Holmes of Hebron recently returned to the heart-shaped lake in the Wicklow Mountains of Ireland hoping to get a view. This is the spot where Jim proposed to Shari last year, but they had no view of the lake. “The luck of the Irish was with us this time!” Jim says.



Iceland Adventures... Marcus, Adrienne and Mir Clements recently returned from a stay in Iceland, which they said was fabulous! They're shown here in front of Skogafoss waterfall in southern Iceland. Besides seeing multiple stunning waterfalls, they visited Snæfellsjökull and Thingvellir national parks, saw a geyser erupt, walked on volcanic black sand beaches, saw nesting puffins, visited where the North American and Eurasian tectonic plates meet, and swam in the geothermal pools.

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Medium at Polish Club
The St. Joseph's Polish Club at 395 South Main St. will host medium Rebecca Anne LoCicero on Saturday Oct. 4.
Doors open at 6 p.m.; be seated by 6:45 p.m. so the show can start on time. LoCicerowill be at the club from 7-9 p.m.
Tickets are limited, are \$30 per person and are on sale at the club.
For more information, call 860-537-2550.

CBA Haunted Hayride
The Colchester Business Association will host a Haunted Hayride Saturday, Oct. 4, from 5:30-9:30 p.m., at Schuster Park, 21 Mill Hill Rd.
The family-friendly event is made possible with the support of local sponsors and community members. Organizers expressed their gratitude to those helping bring the tradition to life and noted that volunteers are still being accepted. Those interested may contact hauntedhayride25@gmail.com for more information.
The Haunted Hayride is intended to provide a fun seasonal gathering for residents of all ages with a hayride, kids' activities, food trucks and more.

Colchester Group in 'Light the Night'
The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, now known as Blood Cancer United, is organizing its annual Light the Night Walk at Rentschler Field on Thursday evening, Oct. 9 – and once again, the Colchester Pavement Pounders are participating.
With over 100 types of blood cancers, Blood Cancer United supports lifesaving and innovative research, provides financial assistance for patients, and advocates for patients and their families. This is the third year for the Colchester Pavement Pounders team, and all residents are welcome to join. If the group raises more than \$5,000 by Oct. 9, Colchester has a chance to be featured in *USA Today*.
To donate, visit tinyurl.com/3v39vahw.

Vendors Sought for Fall Market
Colchester Federated Church's annual Fall Market is coming up on Nov. 1, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. This fair showcases local crafters, vendors, farmers and more.
If you would like a table at the fair to sell your goods, reach out to Renee Misbach at rouillette01@snet.net for more information. Spaces are filling up quickly.

Community Convo with Dennler
First Selectman Bernie Dennler, who is running for reelection in November, will host a community conversation at Oz N Bones BBQ, 43 Hayward Ave., on Thursday, Oct. 9, from 6-8 p.m.
This is an opportunity for all to meet Dennler, ask questions, and share ideas about how he can keep Colchester moving forward. Dennler will be joined by other Democratic candidates.
All are welcome to stop in.

AARP 'Meet the Candidates' Forum
The Colchester-area chapter 4019 of AARP will hold its annual "Meet the Candidates" forum Tuesday, Oct. 7, at 1:30 p.m., at the Colchester Senior Center, located at 15 Louis Lane.
Candidates from both parties running for first selectman, Board of Selectman, Board of Finance, and Board of Education in Colchester have been invited to attend.

Pumpkins & Pooches is Saturday!
Pumpkins & Pooches, hosted by the Colchester Dog Park, will be held Oct. 4, from 1-4:30 p.m., at Hop Culture Farms & Brew Co., 144 Cato Corner Rd. All are invited – including dogs!
There will be pet-related vendors, raffles, treat bag decorating, and other activities for the kids – all while supplies last. There will be dog costume contests at 3 p.m. Categories are: Cutest, Spookiest, Best Duo/Group, Most Original, and Most Creative.
Dogs must be vaccinated and on leashes. No retractable leashes please. Also, organizers are still accepting pet related vendors. Contact tag-nobark@gmail.com for info.

Board members will meet at 12:30 p.m., with the general membership gathering at 1 p.m. All AARP members are encouraged to bring food for the refreshments table to share. Socializing and coffee time will go from 1-1:30 p.m.
All Colchester-area seniors are encouraged to attend this free gathering and also learn more about the local AARP chapter.

It's Shoebox Season!
All are invited to pack a shoebox for Operation Christmas Child – and shoeboxes are now available in Colchester.
Operation Christmas Child is a project of Samaritan's Purse, an international relief organization. Its mission is to collect shoeboxes filled with small toys, hygiene items and school supplies and send them across the world to needy children affected by war, poverty, natural disaster, famine and disease.
Empty shoeboxes will be available for pickup at Abundant Life Church, 85 Skinner Rd. Pick-up and drop-off of Items will be Sundays, 1-3 p.m.
For more information, call the church at 860-537-3082.

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Abundant Life Church News & Notes

Abundant Life Church, a Christ-follower church that believes in salvation through Jesus Christ, is located at 85 Skinner Rd. Worship is in person at 10:30 a.m. Sunday.

Adult Sunday/Bible School: two classes, Sundays at 9:30 a.m.

Bible Study for Women: Every Wednesday at 10 a.m. at Sweet Aroma, Colchester.

Healing Bible Study: Every Wednesday at 6:30 p.m. prayer meetings – Thursdays, 10 a.m. and Fridays, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Men's and Women's Breakfast: Meets once per month on Saturday mornings.

The church also has many other things to offer. Unless otherwise noted, all groups/studies are held at the church. Call the church office for more info on the groups.

For more information, call the church office at 860-537-3082 or visit AbundantL.com.

Upcoming Programs at Library

Cragin Memorial Library, located at 8 Linwood Ave., has announced the following programs. For full descriptions, call 860-537-5752 (Adult Department), 860-537-7201 (Children's Department), or visit www.craginlibrary.org.

Registration is required for all programs unless noted. All programs are free and sponsored by Friends of Cragin Memorial Library.

Fall Storytime Session: Runs through Nov. 20. Mondays: Mother Goose Storytime, 10:30 a.m., Ages 2 – 5; Tuesdays: Play With Me, 10:30 a.m. (5 Sessions run 10/21-11/18, no program 11/11), Ages 12 – 36 months; Lego/Duplo Chal-

enges, 6 p.m., family program – no registration required; Wednesdays: Baby Storytime, 10:30 a.m., Ages up to 12 months; Thursdays: Toddler Storytime, 10:30 a.m., Ages 3 – 5; Story & a Craft, 5 p.m., for children and their caregivers -- no registration required; Fridays: Sensory Table (Runs year-round regardless of storytime sessions), 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Teen Subscription Book Boxes: First Monday of the month. Registration is required. For those going into grades 6-12. Stop by the Adult Circulation Desk or call 860-537-5752 to register.

Scouting Options Available

Scouts BSA is the new name for the traditional Boy Scouting program for boys and now girls aged 11-17 years old – and there are several local opportunities available.

There are three Scouts BSA units in Colchester: Troop 72, Troop 13 and Troop 109. The sponsor organization and the meeting nights are as follows:

Troop 72 meets at Colchester Federated Church, 60 Main St., on Mondays at 7 p.m.;

contact Al Letendre at letendrej@sbcglobal.net or 860-917-8391 for more information. Troop 13 meets at St. Andrew Church, 128 Norwich Ave., on Mondays at 7 p.m.; contact Brian Marburger brian.marburger@comcast.net or 860-917-5896 for more information. Troop 109 meets at Westchester Congregational Church, 95 Cemetery Rd., on Tuesdays at 7 p.m.; contact Jessica Cusano at jessicacusano@gmail.com for more information.

Colchester Fire & EMS Open House

All are invited to the Colchester Fire & EMS Open House Sunday, Oct. 5, from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Come on down and meet your local firefighters and EMS providers. Check out our equipment, fire prevention and safety information, and the headquarters station.

Among the many events and activities will be: Vehicle Extrication Demonstration; Fire Extinguisher Training & Demonstration; Firefighter Gear Try On; Antique Fire Truck Rides to the fire museum; Blood Pressure Screenings & Am-

balance Tour; Touch-a-Truck; Smokey Bear Visit; Gator UTV & Marine Units on Display; CPR/Lucas Device Demonstration; Department of Energy and Environmental Protection demonstrations.

Fire safety and prevention information will also be available.

Also, hot dogs will available for lunch (while supplies last), and the Fire Museum at 100 South Main St. will be open for tours.

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CBA Monthly Dinner Meeting

The Colchester Business Association will hold its monthly dinner meeting Tuesday, Oct. 7, from 6 to 8 p.m. at the St. Joseph's Polish Club.

Local candidates for office will be in attendance, and the meeting is open to the public. More information is available at colchester-cba.com or on the association's Facebook page.

Ahavath Achim Schedule

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

Services: Fridays at 6:30 p.m., live and on Zoom; Saturdays at 10 a.m., live and on Zoom.

Classes on Tuesdays: Folklore of the Talmud at 6 p.m., followed by Talmud at 6:30 p.m., and Kabbalah at 8 p.m.

For more information, or Zoom links, call 860-537-2809. Office hours are Wednesday, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Ham and Bean Dinner Oct. 4

Westchester Congregational Church in Colchester will host a takeout-only Ham and Bean Dinner on Saturday, Oct. 4, from 4 to 6 p.m., at 98 Cemetery Rd. in Colchester.

For \$17, you will receive a dinner of church-made baked ham and beans, coleslaw, and more. No advance orders or reservations needed.

For more information, email westcong-church@gmail.com.

Christian Life Chapel News

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

Bible Study Wrapping Up: A six-week Bible study on Tuesdays for men and women: "Changing the Way People Study God's Word" will conclude Oct. 7, from 10 a.m.-noon. Instructor is Kevin Baldwin, and the book of the Bible is 2 Timothy.





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

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

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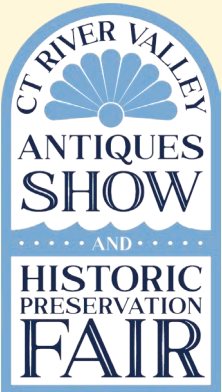
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Decades of Impact Gala

Tickets are now available for Historic Bacon Academy's Decades of Impact Gala.

Pull out your poodle skirts and bobby socks, bell-bottoms and tie-dye tops, acid wash jeans and shoulder pads, or even your parachute pants — and join the Trustees of Bacon Academy to celebrate the start of the preservation and restoration of the iconic landmark school building!

The Decades of Impact Gala will be held Saturday, Oct. 18, from 7-10 p.m., at St. Joseph's Polish Club in Colchester.

The evening will feature music from across the generations, hors d'oeuvres and desserts, silent auction baskets, and a reverse raffle. Guests are encouraged to come dressed in outfits that reflect their favorite decade.

All proceeds from ticket sales will go directly to restoration efforts of Historic Bacon Academy, thanks to such sponsors as Gano's Power Equipment, Inishmor, Carefree Small Buildings, and Liverant & Sons Antiques.

Tickets are \$50 per person or \$85 for two, and include two drink tickets, hors d'oeuvres, desert, and dancing. Purchase your tickets online by visiting www.baconacademytrustees.org or by emailing sandy.baconacademy@gmail.com or calling 860-964-3486. This event is expected to sell out, organizers said.



Fall Book and Bake Sale

The Friends of Cragin Memorial Library will hold its Fall Book and Bake Sale at Cragin Memorial Library, 8 Linwood Ave., from Oct. 3-8.

The sale begins Friday, Oct. 3, from 4-7 p.m., with a pre-sale admission of \$5 to pick the "cream of the crop." The sale continues with no admission charge on Saturday, Oct. 4, from 10 a.m.-4 p.m.; Sunday, Oct. 5, from 11 a.m.-3 p.m.; and Monday through Wednesday, Oct. 6-8, during regular library hours. Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday are also the \$5 special days – fill a box or bag for only \$5.

Pick up your winter reading selections and gifts for the family – including puzzles perfect for a snow day. All children's, teen, and young adult books are 25 cents each.

There will be a variety of books, even large print books and books on tape. There will also be music, movies, puzzles and games. Baked goods for sale will be individually wrapped for safety.

All proceeds benefit programs funded by the Friends. These programs include, but are not limited to, museum passes, adult programs, children's programs, summer reading programs, and other materials to benefit patrons of Cragin Memorial Library.

For more information, contact Noreen Bibee, president of FCML, at noreenbibee@gmail.com.

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REG-30-25

Ladies Guild Christmas Fair

The St. Andrew Ladies Guild will hold its annual Christmas Fair Saturday, Nov. 8, from 9 a.m.-3 p.m., at the church, 128 Norwich Ave.

All are invited to a festive day of holiday shopping and cheer. Included will be home-made baked goods, handcrafted items, Christmas treasures, a variety of raffle prizes, and various local vendors.

Lunch will be available for purchase from 11 a.m.-2 p.m.

REG-31-25

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Collecting for New Mothers in Need

Knights of Columbus Spellman Council 6107's initiative Aid and Support After Pregnancy (ASAP) runs from Oct. 11-28. The Knights will collect supplies for new mothers in need. New and gently-used items for babies from birth to age 1 will be collected. Some suggested items include: diapers, formula, clothing, wipes, and toys. Donation containers will be placed in the vestibule of the church and at the handicapped-ac-

cessible entrance. Monetary donations are also appreciated and those checks should be made to KofC Council 6107 and clearly marked for ASAP. The checks can be given to a member of the Council or mailed to KofC Council 6107, P.O. Box 46, Colchester, CT 06415. The Knights thanked all in advance for continuing Blessed Michael McGivney's legacy of being there for families in need.

Colchester History Museum Open Weekly

The Colchester History Museum is open Sundays from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. The museum, located at 24 Linwood Ave., will be open through Dec. 28. All are welcome. The museum is free and offers both permanent and special exhibits all highlighting the people and events in Colchester's history. The museum offers guided and self-guided tours. For more information, contact the Colchester Historical Society at mail@colchesterhistory.org or 860 537-3240.

Ukrainian Catholic Church News

All are invited to worship each week at St. Mary Ukrainian Catholic Church, 178 Linwood Ave. The church offers Eastern Rite Divine services. Church doors are open for Divine Liturgy on Saturdays at 4 p.m. and Sundays at 9 a.m.; the Sunday service is bilingual. For more information, call the church at 860-537-2069.

Air Line Trail Toastmasters

The Air Line Trail Toastmasters Club meets the second and fourth Thursday of each month, from 6:30-8 p.m., at Town Hall, 127 Norwich Ave., or via Zoom. Discover the art of communication and leadership with the Toastmasters program. The club thanked all for attending the Sept. 25 open house. For more information (including the Zoom link), email contact-6976@toastmastersclubs.org. The club can also be found at airlinetrail.toastmastersclubs.org.



Biking Scouts... Colchester Scouts BSA Troops 72 and 109 took a bike hike on the Air Line Trail on Sept. 16. Pictured are scouts preparing to ride.

Election Day is Coming

Voting in the Nov. 4 municipal election will begin soon, so there is some information the town clerk's office is passing along. **Registration:** All U.S. citizens who are registered can participate in voting. To register or to check your voter registration status, visit tinyurl.com/zs2k9vy8. ID requirements are at tinyurl.com/2y5zmcc8. Oct. 17 is the last day to register, both in person and by mail. The registrar of voters will be open from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. for in-person registration. All mail-in voter registration applications must be received or postmarked by this date in order to be accepted. The Online Voter Registration System will also close on this date at 11:59 p.m. Same-day registration (SDR) will also be available at the early voting location during the early voting period (Oct. 20-Nov. 2). Nov. 3 is the deadline for admitting those seeking to vote in the election whose qualification as to age, citizenship, or residence was attained on or after Oct. 17. The registrar of voters and town clerk's office will be open that day from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. On Nov. 4, SDR will be available at Town Hall from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. **Voting Locations:** Absentee voting will take place Oct. 3 to Nov. 3 at the town clerk's office at Town Hall, 127 Norwich Ave. For absentee ballot information, visit tinyurl.com/m597nnxs. Early voting will take place in Room 1 at Town Hall from Oct. 20-Nov. 2. Hours are 10 a.m.- 6:00 p.m. Monday, Oct. 20-Monday, Oct. 27 (including Saturday and Sunday); 8 a.m.-8 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 28, and Thursday, Oct. 30; and 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 29, Friday, Oct. 31, Saturday, Nov. 1, and Sunday, Nov. 2. On Election Day itself, Tuesday, Nov. 4, voting will take place from 6 a.m.-8 p.m. District 1 votes at Town Hall Room 1; District 2 votes at Abundant Life Church, 85 Skinner Rd.; and District 3 votes at Bacon Academy, 611 Norwich Ave. SDR and voting will be in the town clerk's office. For further information visit www.colchesterct.gov or call the registrar of voters at 860-537-7204 or the town clerk at 860-537-7215.

Cover Story • Cover Story • Cover Story • Cover Story • Cover Story • Cover

★ Gildersleeve Elementary, cont. from page 1 ersleeve, and also credited the school for its considerable gains in chronic absenteeism rates, which improved from 13.3% in 2021-2022 to 3% in 2023-2024. On a related note, the school was commend- ed for “tend[ing] to the social-emotional devel- opment of their students” with whole-school social-emotional learning (SEL) assemblies and classroom lessons focused on monthly SEL top- ics. Gildersleeve Principal Tracey Graf said she was proud of her entire school community, in- cluding both the staff and the students. “What makes Gildersleeve so special is that our entire staff embraces a ‘whatever it takes’ mindset to help every child succeed,” she said. “Being named a Blue Ribbon School affirms the commitment we have to ensuring all students thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.” Graf credited part of the success to a Con- necticut Department of Education grant that the school received during the 2021-22 through 2023-24 school years, which enabled them to pay for supplies, attend trainings, and perhaps most critically, hire additional staff, including a reading specialist and a reading and math inter- ventionist. Though that funding went away beginning with the last school year, Graf said the school has seen continued success since, and she’s hopeful that the gains will remain. She says that class- room teachers have really stepped up, educating themselves and learning from what worked. Graf also applauded her social emotional learning staff, including social worker Sam Starr, who Graf said was instrumental in lower- ing the school’s chronic absenteeism numbers. Starr himself said that the accomplishment was a team effort from a “Blue Ribbon Staff” that worked collaboratively with students and fami- lies to create a positive school climate.

“When school is a fun place to be,” he wrote in an email, “students don’t want to miss school.” Graf said she, like Britton, was disappointed when she heard the national program was end- ing. She added that while the state award pro- vided some consolation, parts of the national honor are irreplaceable, among them the tradi- tional event for honorees in Washington, D.C., where school leaders from around the country would have had a chance to meet, network, ex- change ideas and talk about what has worked for them in their communities. Instead, Graf, along with Britton and Ryan Walstrom, who was principal of Gildersleeve when the school applied for the grant that en- abled this success, will attend an awards recog- nition and celebration luncheon in North Ha- ven on Oct. 8. Graf said that, despite the smaller scale, she is looking forward to the school being formally recognized for all its hard work. Britton echoed those sentiments. “Gildersleeve’s success is a testament to what happens when dedicated educators and engaged families work together to support students,” said Britton. “This award belongs to the entire Port- land community.”

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Horchata, 4mths, was born on Cinco de Mayo, so she and her siblings were named accordingly. The whole litter has been an absolute joy for their foster home. They are equal parts fun and cuddly - one moment excitedly flinging themselves through the air after a wand toy and the next loudly purring in a cuddle puddle. Horchata is an adventurous soul. She and her sister Margarita were the first to want to explore the world outside of their foster room. She will play with any toy you toss or roll her way. She loves pets and soaks up attention like a sponge.



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RE10-3-25

Panthers Football Pounds Prep



Sophomore wide receiver Xavier Hodge runs in the open field after catching a pass during the Panthers 42-14 win over Capital Prep last Thursday.

The Panthers will return home tonight (Friday, Oct. 3) to welcome Morgan/Saybrook/Westbrook (MSW) to Pierson Park in Cromwell for a game at 6 p.m.

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Tony Rome

Halloween Concert for Police Union

Tony Rome with The Peacemakers will perform a Halloween Extravaganza at Concentric Brewing, 91 Main St., on Saturday, Oct. 25, at 2 p.m., to benefit the Portland Police Union.

All donations can be sent to the Portland Police Union, attention Captain Scott Cunningham. Costumes are optional but welcome!

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25th Annual Portland Fair Set for This Weekend

By Anne Lilburn

The Portland Agricultural Fair is celebrating 25 years in its current iteration this weekend, and visitors can expect a mix of old favorites and new surprises, including an adorable new highland cow mascot whose name will be announced at the opening ceremonies on Friday. The fair will run from Friday, Oct. 3 through Sunday, Oct. 5, and for the second year, it will be held at Chris Cote's Driving Range in Portland. Historically, the fair had been held at the nearby Exchange Club grounds, and Fair Treasurer Kim Hanna says the location change came about by chance. A couple of years ago, she and her husband were talking with the person who

coordinated parking for the fair each year and she happened to lament the soggy conditions at the old grounds. "I said, every time we go by the driving range I keep looking at it and going what a beautiful fairgrounds that would be," she said. "And he started to laugh and he said, well here, let me give you [driving range owner] Chris's number' cause he said the same thing." This marks the second year at the new location, which Hanna says offers a more pleasant environment with much more room to expand the fair and its offerings. "Even though it's only about an eighth of

a mile up the road," she said, "it goes from swampy to nice and hard and dry." This year, the fair will host a lot of familiar favorites, including carnival rides, a petting zoo, pony rides, livestock contests, vegetable and fruit competitions, as well as the ever-popular tractor and truck pulls and truck mud runs. Also new for kids this year is power wheel race cars. Hanna highlighted some other new events also taking place this year, including a "trashion show" featuring clothing made from upcycled or recycled materials on Friday night, and the last event in the statewide Triple Crown of Baking, where bakers had the opportunity to compete in contests at three different fairs (Guilford, Durham and Portland) in an attempt to earn the Triple Crown Prize. At Portland, the baking assignment is baked apple cider donuts. Hanna said she's been particularly impressed by this year's community tent, where the fair superintendent, Melissa Kelley, has added a lot of new activities and contests, including the trash-

ion show. "She's really kind of made a theme in that tent of reduce, reuse and recycle," Hanna said of Kelley. "Under the canned goods she's got a suggestion for apple scrap jelly, and she's doing an ugly food makeover where you take your ugliest garden [crops], so decorate something ugly and make it look good. "And then she's doing a trash sculpture in there so take some old stuff that normally would go in your recycling bin or in your garbage can and make something out of it," Hanna continued. "And in the youth department she's got an egg carton creation [contest] so she's really put a lot of good ideas in that tent." Of course, the entertainment tent will be hosting live music and entertainment from a variety of acts all weekend, and the fair has partnered with Eli Cannon's Tap Room and Concentric Brewing as well to provide refreshments. More information about the fair, including a detailed schedule and ticket purchasing, can be found on its website at www.portlandfair.com.

Harvest Festival Farm-to-Table Dinner

The Brownstone Quorum volunteer group is sponsoring the Harvest Festival Farm-to-Table Dinner fundraiser event Saturday, Oct. 25, from 5-8:30 p.m., at the Hemlock Grange Hall, 17 Sage Hollow Rd. The dinner will be an autumn-themed four course menu prepared by "Sarah's on Main" restaurant, using fresh ingredients from local farms and gardens. There will be live music and door prizes as well. Tickets are \$75 and can be ordered online at brownstonequorum.org or through a link on the Brownstone Quorum Facebook page. The event flyer with the menu can be viewed at both locations. The purpose of this fundraiser will be the creation of a stone monument in remembrance of the indigenous people known as the Wangunks, who originally inhabited the area along the Connecticut River where the Portland Riverfront Park is now located. The monument will be placed in the park open area overlooking the river.

Free Paper-Shredding Event

The Lower CT River Valley Council of Governments (RiverCOG) is holding its last free paper-shredding event of the year on Saturday, Oct. 4, from 9 a.m.-noon, at the Chester Fair Grounds, 11 Kirtland Terrace, Chester. This event is free to residents of the RiverCOG region, which includes Portland & East Hampton. Please note that this event is intended for shredding confidential papers, not for things that can be regularly recycled such as birthday cards, magazines, and envelopes. Visit www.rivercog.org/household-hazardous-waste for more information.

First Congregational Church News

The First Congregational Church of Portland, UCC, located at 554 Main St., holds worship Sundays at 10 a.m. All are welcome. The pastor is Judith Cooke. This Sunday, Oct. 5, Cooke will preach "Mustard Seed Faith," based on Luke 17:5-10. Also, at 10 a.m., elementary aged children will meet for Church School in the newly renovated classroom, and the middle school class will meet in the youth room. Infant through pre-K children experience care as they enjoy playtime and an age-appropriate lesson. For more information, go to firstchurchportlandct.org or call 860-342-3244.

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 and costs, or to register, visit portland.recdesk.com or call 860-342-6757. Advanced registration is required. **Basketball Training & Conditioning Program:** Mondays, Oct. 6-Nov. 17, 4:30-6:30 p.m., at Portland Middle School. Open to boys and girls ages 11-16. Contact Parks and Rec. for fee. **Tai Chi for Long Life:** At Riverfront Park Wednesdays, 9:30-10:15 a.m., and Saturdays, 10:30-11:15 a.m. **Kids' Blast:** This is an afterschool (3-6 p.m.) child care program available to students enrolled in grades K-6 in the Portland Public School system. Registration is now open. **Pre-Season Basketball Clinics (Grades 3-6):** Friday, Nov. 7, at Portland Middle School. This will be a 90-minute clinic led by Coach Dave Vasquezna and the Wins for Life staff.

Rec. Basketball Clinics (Grades K-2): Wednesdays, Dec. 3-Feb. 25, at Gildersleeve School. This volunteer led program will introduce participants to the game of basketball. **Skyhawks Basketball Clinics (K-2):** Saturdays, Jan. 3-Feb. 7, at Gildersleeve School. **Rec. Basketball Leagues (Girls & Boys, Grades 3-8):** Players in these leagues should expect to have one practice per weeknight starting in early December and one game per week starting in January. The majority of games will take place on Saturdays. Games will take place in Portland, Cromwell, East Haddam and Haddam-Killingworth. **Men's Drop-In Basketball:** Tuesdays through June, from 7:30-9 p.m., at Portland Middle School. This program is free to Portland residents and has a one-time fee of \$20 for non-residents. Registration is required for all participants. The program does not take place on days when the school is closed or has early dismissal.

PHS Class of '67 Reunion

The Portland High School Class of 1967 will hold its 58th reunion the weekend of Oct. 3-5. As it has in the past, the class is inviting other PHS graduates to come any time after 5 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 3, to Farrell's, for a Meet-and-Greet. This is a casual get-together where people can catch up and share memories of their time at PHS. For the 1967 classmates, there will be a social hour and dinner at Campagna on Saturday, Oct. 4, beginning at 5 p.m.; and on Sunday, Oct. 5, the class will meet for breakfast any time after 10 a.m. at Sarah's on Main. For more information or questions, contact Karen at kayo4321@hotmail.com or Bev at 949-697-1253.

Holiday Closing

The Portland town offices will be closed Monday, Oct. 13, in observation of Columbus Day.

Class of '80 Reunion

The Portland High School class of 1980 is organizing a 45th Class Reunion. It will be held Saturday, Oct. 4, at Farrell's Restaurant in Portland. There will be food, live music and a cash bar and tickets are \$50 per person. Contact Lynne Nursick at 860-338-4279 for more information, or join the class Facebook page for all the details.

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RE3-26-25

Pastor Brings Fresh Perspective to First Church

Movie: The screening scheduled for Wednesday, Oct. 8, has been cancelled.

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★ *Letters, cont. from page 7*

ficer. Fellow terrorists had broken her out of prison and helped her escape to Cuba where she lived out the remainder of her life. The teachers union saw fit to honor a convicted murderer while refusing to do the same for a man whose only crime was reaching out to those who disagreed with him.

People like our local writer need to be cognizant that fascism is associated with Adolph Hitler, and calling political opponents by that label dehumanizes them as the equivalent of Nazis and justifies the killing of them as righteously expedient. Democrats urgently need to understand that they increasingly resemble a new Confederacy precipitating an actual civil war!

Sam Prentice – Andover

Great Turnout!

To the Editor:

On Saturday, Sept. 20, the Town of Andover held a day-long babysitter training course at the Andover Community and Senior Center. The cost of attendance was supplemented by the Andover Recreation Commission. This was the center’s first time hosting a babysitting training and I am happy to report we had a great turnout!

Sixteen youth from Andover and surrounding towns successfully completed the program and earned their Red Cross certificate, valid for 10 years. Be on the lookout for these individuals for your future sitting needs! Thank you to the parents of these students for entrusting THEIR children to our care for the day.

An adult other than the Red Cross instructors was required to be present the entire time, so I personally want to also extend a special thank you to Haley Proto, interim staff at the center, for donating hours of her personal time on a beautiful Saturday to help coordinate the program. Andover is fortunate to have both Haley and the center!

**Meghan Lally
Andover Recreation Commission Member**

Thiele Has Done Great Things

Dear Hebron Residents:

If you want leaders that have common sense and determination that are also hard-working, pragmatic, and fiscally prudent then you should join me in reelecting Tiffany Thiele to the Hebron Board of Selectmen. As an incumbent, Tiffany has made a big difference by helping to shape smart, forward-thinking policies for Hebron.

Please vote for Tiffany Thiele for Hebron Selectman in November.

**Sincerely,
David Sousa – Hebron**

***Note:** David Sousa is vice chair of the Hebron Planning and Zoning Commission but is writing as an individual.*

Paper Shred

To the Editor:

The Hebron Green Committee is announcing that our annual Paper Shred event will be held on Saturday, Nov. 15, this year, from 9 a.m. to noon, in the south parking lot at RHAM High School in Hebron. This event will allow you to recycle your confidential papers safely and securely rather than throwing them in the trash.

It is open only to residents (no businesses) of the RHAM towns of Hebron, Andover and Marlborough, with a limit of five boxes or bags of papers per vehicle. We always see a huge turnout at these events, and want to make sure that everyone can participate who wants to. Also as in past years, we will be collecting non-perishable food items for donation to the local food bank, so please bring a donation along with your papers. To ensure safety and a smoother operation, please put all papers and donated food in the trunk of your vehicle and stay in the vehicle so Green Committee members can unload. If you have any questions, please call 860-670-6334.

We look forward to seeing you at our Paper Shred on Nov. 15!

**Mike Harder
Hebron Green Committee**

Cue the Paper Savings Plan!

To the Editor:

Every two years, it’s the same routine. At a town meeting, the Republican slate said they can cut \$1.5 million from the schools. I have been hearing promises like this at election time and in meetings for years, and it never changes.

What also never changes are the so-called ideas. Trim a little off supplies. Print fewer pages. Save a few hundred dollars on toner. That sounds nice until you remember we are still one million four hundred ninety-nine thousand eight hundred dollars short of their promise.

It gets old. If you are serious about a cut that big, then say what it is. Are you talking about cutting sports? Closing libraries? Ending foreign language? Because teacher salaries are where the real money is. People would have to go, and services would be cut.

If you want to run on fiscal responsibility, then be responsible enough to tell the truth. Otherwise, it just feels like the same tired script every election cycle.

John Farrell – Colchester

Supporting Pitruzzello

To the Editor:

We are endorsing Vin Pitruzzello for Board of Selectmen in Portland because of his strong financial background and career experiences, which have prepared him to handle the complex financial decisions our town will face. Portland is about to take out a loan for tens of millions of dollars to support our school consolidation initiative. Who we choose as our elected officials matters. We trust Vin’s ability to manage our tax dollars and know that his skills will ensure the best financial outcomes for Portland’s future.

Let’s get Vin elected this November!

Mark and Terri Zampini – Portland

Hebron BOE Candidate

To the Editor:

As a resident of Hebron who cares deeply about the future of our community schools, I am writing to express my strong support for Heather Pettit in the upcoming Hebron Board of Education election. With a proven track record of leadership and dedication to public education, Heather has proven she is exactly the kind of experienced, thoughtful advocate we need guiding the future of our school district.

Heather brings a wealth of knowledge to the table. She has served as chair of the Hebron Board of Education since 2018, after previously serving as vice chair (2017–2018) as well as chair of the Policy Committee. Her longstanding commitment to our schools and students is evident in every decision she makes.

Professionally, her background is unmatched: she is a former teacher, former children’s policy analyst at the Connecticut General Assembly, and has worked in investigations at the Department of Children and Families. She also served as an administrative manager at UConn Health’s School of Medicine in the Child and Family Studies Department. Currently, she works as a grants and contracts specialist at the Connecticut Department of Administrative Services, specifically for the School Building Construction program – directly supporting infrastructure improvements.

Her policy priorities are forward-thinking and grounded in community needs: maintaining the high-quality programming and services our students rely on, expanding world language and cultural studies, ensuring access to PreK for every family, and continuing to support fair contracts for teachers and staff. She has also advocated for additional school resource officers to enhance student safety and is committed to working collaboratively with town leaders to strengthen both our schools and our community – all while remaining fiscally responsible.

With her unmatched experience, deep understanding of policy, and clear vision for the future, I believe Heather is the right choice for Hebron’s Board of Education. I encourage my fellow Hebron residents to join me in voting for her.

**Sincerely,
Jessica Hall – Amston**

DPW Questions and Concerns

To the Editor:

This is an open letter sent to the Hebron Board of Selectmen.

I am unable to attend the Thursday night Board of Selectmen meetings and have some questions and concerns about a new DPW facility. I have always felt the John Horton Boulevard site was the correct site and still do; however, I am also aware of the politics involved. Now that you will be receiving concrete design plans and will be taking a close look at the associated costs for an upcoming referendum, options can be judged.

If the town develops the Old Colchester Road site, what are the totals costs, including all of the costs associated with temporally moving all of the functions being conducted at the present facility, versus the total cost of making some adjustments to the original plan on John Horton Boulevard.

The adjustments I am thinking about are only building DWP administrative offices and garage, possibly the dog pound but I have concerns over noise caused by the dogs at the John Horton site. Leave the salt pile at the old facility. This removes the concern over the salt pile contaminating the aquifer. This would also lower the footprint of the facility on John Horton. Build the facility on John Horton first then when completed the buildings on Old Colchester Road could be removed without the expense of up to two years of townwide trash removal or the expense of providing temporary facilities all over town or the need of having a temporary salt pile at a site without the proper pollution controls.

I understand that building on Old Colchester Road will also require 2 wells and 2 septic systems. John Horton Boulevard would need neither. The design work already done on a new administration facility and garage should be easily used on John Horton Boulevard.

I would like to see a comprehensive cost benefit analysis of the two options, comparing the total cost of each. I suspect the difference between the two will be in the multiple millions of dollars. If I am right, the savings to taxpayers would be significant and given the choice the taxpayers would vote for the cheaper option. We would still get a facility that would meet the needs of the town for the foreseeable future.

Louis Palshaw – Hebron

Accountability: A Promise

To the Editor:

Another pillar of our campaign is Accountability. To me, accountability means making sure our schools are serving students first — not bureaucracy. It means holding ourselves, as future Board of Education members, to the same high standards we expect of teachers, administrators, and students.

Parents should feel confident that their voices are heard and that their concerns matter. Taxpayers deserve to know their hard-earned dollars are being spent wisely, directly improving classrooms, teachers’ resources, and student opportunities — not wasted at the top. Accountability is about delivering on promises, following through, and being open to feedback.

This is the standard I hold myself to as a parent, a small business owner, and a community member. It’s the same standard I will bring to the Board of Education.

Together with my fellow candidates, we are running to build trust, strengthen our schools, and ensure that every decision is made with Colchester’s children in mind.

**Sincerely,
Olivia Duksa – Colchester
Republican Candidate for
Board of Education**

Community Hub for Healthy Aging

To the Editor:

At the Portland Waverly Senior Center, we believe aging is something to be celebrated, not hidden away. Every day we see how staying active, eating well, and connecting with others makes a real difference in the lives of older adults.

Healthy aging isn’t about one magic solution. It’s about supporting the whole person, body, mind, and spirit. That’s why our calendar includes everything from our Senior Walking Club on the Air Line Trail to “Cooking for One” classes with Chef Marilyn, where members learn practical, healthy meals tailored for their needs. We host “Sweet Treats & Conversations with Community Leaders” to keep members informed and connected with the wider community, because social engagement is just as important to health as nutrition and exercise.

We also know that transportation and isolation remain real barriers for many older adults. That’s why our shopping trips, community outings, and volunteer connections matter so much. Sometimes a ride to the grocery store or a shared lunch at the Senior Center makes the difference between loneliness and a feeling of belonging.

The Portland Waverly Senior Center isn’t just a place to gather; it’s a hub for healthy aging. By promoting wellness, supporting independence, and creating spaces to learn and laugh together, we help our community members live well and age well. Aging is not about decline; it’s about possibility, and we are proud to walk alongside older adults in Portland as they discover what healthy aging looks like for them.

**Be well and age well,
Sarah Elliott-Caratasios, LMSW
Director & Municipal Agent
Portland Waverly Center**

Marlborough ZBA

To the Editor:

My name is Bob Larson and I am the Democratic candidate for Marlborough Zoning Board of Appeals Alternate. I am qualified to be an alternate for the ZBA as I am an attorney who has dealt with real estate matters for my clients for over forty years. I am acquainted with the process of appeals and the evidence that needs to be presented to the ZBA for the ZBA to grant a variance.

The Zoning Board of Appeals among other duties reviews adverse decisions from the Zoning Enforcement Officer (CEO) regarding whether or not an applicant can institute an improvement on a piece of property. When an applicant disagrees with the ZEO decision in the interpretation of the zoning regulations, or feels the property the applicant is trying to improve has some feature that makes it uniquely unreasonable to apply the zoning regulations to the applicant’s property, the applicant has the ability to appeal the decision to the ZBA.

The ZBA then examines whether or not the ZEO correctly applied the zoning regulations, and whether or not the property has some unique characteristic that makes it unfair to strictly apply the zoning regulations to the property. If the ZBA agrees with the applicant the ZBA issues a variance to allow the applicant to improve the property as the applicant set forth in the applicant’s filings with the ZBA. If ZBA denies the appeal, the applicant’s recourse is to appeal to the Superior Court to overturn the ZBA’s decision.

I have also been on other boards and have led several social and charitable organizations over the years. I try to attend all the meetings of the said organizations, as I will for the ZBA. Liz Bransfield and Mat Wilson are running on the Democratic ticket for full members of the ZBA and I feel privileged to run with them. I hope that you will grant me the opportunity to serve the town of Marlborough by voting for me to be on the ZBA.

Bob Larson – Marlborough

Sincere Thanks

To the Editor:

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to everyone who joined us for the Democratic Town Committee fundraiser this past Saturday, as well as to all who helped make the event a success. It was a wonderful afternoon filled with community spirit, and we are grateful for the strong show of support.

For those who may have missed it, there will be another opportunity to meet with our Democratic candidates on Sunday, Oct. 5, from 1–4 p.m. at Dexter’s. We invite residents to stop by, share their thoughts, and hear directly from the candidates, and current elected officials, about the important issues facing East Hampton and our vision for the town’s future.

Karen Wanat – East Hampton

***Note:** Wanat is current vice chairperson of the East Hampton Town Council but said she is speaking as an individual.*

Supports Gilberti

To the Editor:

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for my dear friend, Gussie Gilberti, who is running for a seat on the Colchester Board of Education. Having known Gussie for many years, I have seen firsthand her dedication to students and her deep understanding of both special and general education.

Gussie brings a wealth of experience across multiple grade levels, giving her a unique perspective on the needs of all learners. She has consistently demonstrated a commitment to ensuring that every student—regardless of background or ability—receives the high-quality education they deserve.

I am confident that Gussie will be a tremendous asset to the Colchester Board of Education. Her knowledge, compassion, and unwavering focus on what is best for students make her the ideal candidate to help guide our district forward.

Please join me in supporting Gussie Gilberti for the Colchester Board of Education. Our community and our children will benefit greatly from her leadership and expertise.

**Sincerely,
Megan Roberts – Colchester
Citizen and Parent**

Marlborough Needs McFarland

Dear Marlborough Residents:

It is important to have experienced members on the Board of Selectmen. Susan McFarland brings that experience as she retires from a distinguished career in regulatory compliance, where she examined the impact of regulations and budgets with depth and vigor.

It is fortunate for Marlborough that she is ready to apply her 30 years of expertise to the decision making process in Marlborough. While many people retiring before 60 many choose to spend their time traveling, playing bridge or poker, hiking, marathon training, lounging, watching TV, attending concerts, caring for grandchildren, playing pickleball, Susan has chosen to include public service. Her commitment and knowledge will be a real asset to our community.

Susan McFarland has lived in Marlborough for 18 years, worked for Pratt & Whitney, Sikorsky Aircraft, Carrier Corporation and the Barnes Group. Susan McFarland is offering her 30 years of experience that includes leading teams of Compliance professionals, managing large programs and budgets, and advising senior operations leaders and boards of directors. Fortunately her work also included Health, Safety and Environmental Affairs with United Technologies.

Let’s vote for Susan McFarland and bring this fresh energy and broad expertise to the Board of Selectmen’s decision-making process.

Thank you Susan.

**Respectfully,
Dianne Dunn – Marlborough**

Getting The Job Done

To the Editor

East Hampton citizens know how difficult it was to locate a suitable site and plan for a new firehouse. Work having taken over a dozen years, the town reached agreement with the owner to purchase 11 Skinner St. The Town Council set a tentative referendum date for Sept. 23. That plan came to a screeching halt when the Republican-majority Board of Finance sought additional information and assurances concerning potential environmental contamination, ultimately taking no action.

Although disappointing, especially to our dedicated volunteer firefighters, the Town Council was ready to act quickly and establish a new Firehouse Site and Development Committee. As Town Council Chairman, that responsibility fell to me. Unfortunately, Councilman Hintz believed otherwise and took it upon himself to propose a resolution to establish a new Firehouse Committee. Hintz expected his draft to be taken up immediately by the Council. Once again, although an experienced councilman, he was unfamiliar with the Town of East Hampton Town Council By-Laws – in this instance the 2nd Reading Policy. The rest of the Council felt it prudent to table the question until our Sept. 23rd meeting to provide all Council members an opportunity to study his proposal.

See Letters, page 28

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

Although Hintz had provided many good points, there were deficiencies.

The Democratic Council Majority agreed that I would draft an alternate resolution. After initially agreeing that a quick start to this new committee was necessary because of the difficult task ahead (finding a location assuming 11 Skinner St. would not be viable), Hintz had second thoughts and felt the new committee should not be created until after the Nov. 4th general election. Obviously political, as he hoped his Republican colleagues became the council majority.

I announced my intention to appoint councilman Richard Knotek chairman of the Firehouse Committee. He had done a fine job as chairman of the Ambulance Task Force. His experience with emergency ambulance service shared many similar issues with the volunteer fire department. Knotek would provide a steady, balanced, guiding hand necessary to put the issue on track. Mr. Hintz was adamantly against this.

Another major difference extended the committee to report its recommendations in a year as opposed to six months. Considering the difficulties expected, it was clearly an inadequate expectation. We also want the committee to be balanced by political affiliation, members knowledgeable in fire and emergency response, and community members who will provide transparency, asking tough questions.

Dean Markham, Chair
East Hampton Town Council

I Ain’t Subtle

To the Editor:
Hello. I am Ken Hjulstrom and I am a candidate for Marlborough’s Board of Finance.

Previously, I served on the Board of Finance from 2011 to 2023, as well as previous years on the Board of Education and Board of Assessment Appeals. During those years I developed a reputation as being anything but subtle. I believe that anyone who serves on a town board or commission needs to ask questions and require information prior to making any decision that results in the spending of your hard-earned money.

I was often the sole NO vote when it came to approval of a budget or expenditure. In order to get my approval, I need to know why we are spending money and see justification for the amount being requested.

Far too often we see tax money being spent on items and projects that simply don’t make sense or for which the cost seems unreasonable. I promise that I will continue to be that questioning voice on our Board of Finance when the Board of Selectmen or Board of Education put forth budgets or ask for money for some special project. I don’t see that as “nitpicking”. I see it as being a responsible representative of the public and as my duty to the townspeople and business owners in our community.

I would urge you to take a close look at other candidates as well. A lot of them may throw out platitudes calling for “transparency” and other well-worn promises. But do those promises align with their past actions or those of their party?

Please evaluate the various candidates and make your votes count on Nov. 4th.

Ken Hjulstrom – Marlborough

The Truth Behind the Smile

To the Editor:
This is not a letter I ever imagined writing. But silence, in the face of dishonesty, is a kind of permission – and I will not give mine.

When I met John and his wife, I looked up to them. They were kind, welcoming, and warm. They invited me to church, into their home, and into what I thought was friendship. I trusted them deeply. I even voted for John, believing he was someone who would serve the town with integrity.

But what I learned over time is that appearances can be deceiving.

In 2023 when I decided to run for town clerk – not in competition with John, but alongside him – I noticed a shift. I didn’t support the first selectman candidate he endorsed, a man who had already shown what I felt was a pattern of mistreatment toward women and had legal troubles because of it. I spoke out. I stood by my values. And from that moment, John’s support vanished. He told others to “watch out for me.” The warmth I once received turned cold and I was no longer a “Superstar,” as John used to call me.

And that hurts. Because I believed in them. I had love and respect for them. I defended them. I shared meals, prayers, and moments with them. And in the end, they showed me what happens when someone sees you as inconvenient instead of valuable.

Leadership isn’t about smiling for cameras or making speeches. It’s about integrity when no one is looking. It’s about how you treat the people who can’t do anything for you anymore.

I wish John Thomas the best as a human being, but I cannot support him as a leader. I’ve seen too much of the truth behind the curtain. And I believe Colchester deserves better.

Sincerely,
Shannon Y. Nazario – Colchester

Rein In Spending

To the Editor:
I’m running as a Republican for a position on the East Hampton Board of Finance because I want to rein in spending to make East Hampton affordable. If elected, my voting record and priorities for the town approved 2025-26 budget, which I was part of as a current board member, will be mirrored in future budgets over the next four years. It’s our money and I will represent all taxpayers, not specific groups.

I believe in policies that will increase our tax base including zoning changes that will open land to bring small to midsize companies to our town. I believe the Board of Education needs to continue to trim staffing as student enrollment continues to decline. As teachers retire, there should be a hiring freeze until student enrollment levels stabilize.

I believe in creating budget line items for the Board of Education much like the town does by listing per department all spending in a concise and easy to understand method.

I’m a supporter of current programs to help keep Lake Pocotopaug clean. I’m also a proponent to fund our police department to the levels it needs and I’m a proponent for a new fire station, but not before a town task force reviews options for various locations.

Our seniors represent about 20% of the population in town. I believe this number will rise over the next few years. My plan is to get more involved in their day-to-day needs and to help facilitate beneficial changes.

Please vote for me in November.

Jim Radavich – East Hampton
Republican Board of Finance Candidate

Colchester’s Giving Garden

To the Editor:
As the growing season winds down and autumn takes hold, I want to call attention to one of Colchester’s many strong volunteer organizations. Tucked away behind the former Bacon Academy Arts & Science building resides The Colchester Giving Garden which is entirely run by several hobbyist gardeners. The giving garden works annually to supply produce to local soup kitchens and food banks to help people in need. Starting in early spring and ending in October, volunteers meet several times a week to tend to their crops.

From Norwich Avenue, the only visible signage is a growth chart that denotes the current year’s yield. A humble handmade sign and tall trellises greet you at the back of the parking lot. Once in the center of the garden, it is clear this is no amateur operation. Hours upon hours of hard work are clearly visible in the rows of carefully sown plants. The Giving Garden may look quaint, but annually it generates an astonishing amount of produce in its small sustainable footprint. As of Sept. 1, the Giving Garden has surpassed 1,000 pounds of food produced and donated. This is an astonishing amount of food given the challenging growing conditions this summer.

Before the growing season is over, the Giving Garden deserves our applause for making a small hidden corner of Colchester into a tremendous community support organization. These organizations make Colchester a truly wonderful community.

Sean Gillespie – Colchester
Candidate for Board of Finance

Your Vote is Needed

To the Editor:
Hello everyone. Believe it our not, it is October and in less than three weeks, early voting will be in full swing.

I had the honor of knocking on doors in Colchester with some of our Democratic candidates and speaking with folks and had some important takeaways:

- 1- People appreciate the very hard work being done by FS Bernie Dennler, BOF Chair Karen Belding, the elected officials and working folks at town hall to stabilize the budgets, move Colchester forward with responsible investments in our schools, improve our roads and fields, bring grant money for projects and anything else in their power to improve the lives of our citizens.
- 2- A working finance department is critical and saves the town millions of dollars a year over the alternative. People recognize competence when they see it.
- 3- Not everyone knows that the election is happening.
- 4- People don’t miss the chaos, drama and theatrical outrage of the previous Colchester GOP administration.
- 5- Majority party governance at the national level is not projecting stability and this makes competence at the local level even more critical.

In Colchester, we are so lucky to have such a strong group of motivated and experienced individuals running for office on the Democratic ticket.

That said, we need your vote. We need your family and friends to vote. Voting is what makes a democracy work.

Please make a plan to vote early or on Nov. 4.

Respectfully and with thanks,
Vincent Rose – Colchester

Amazing People

To the Editor:
As we enter the beautiful month of October, I reflect back on all the amazing people I have met so far in my campaign for Board of Finance. It has been a joy to connect with citizens of our town and get the pulse of how they view our towns progress over the past two years, concerns and hopes for the future.

The pulse of the town is strong! Citizens overwhelmingly have expressed a feeling of calm in our local government. A steady hand at the wheel with Bernie Dennler as First Selectman. Improved discourse on our town boards allowing for the important work to be accomplished.

I hear you Colchester! I am running for BOF to help maintain our progress and continue to move our town in a positive direction. I need you to vote Row A on Nov. 4th!

Krista Kardys – Colchester

Note: Kardys is a current member of the Colchester Board of Assessment Appeals and is running for the Colchester Board of Finance.

Vote for RHAM’s Future

To the Editor:
The education our children receive at RHAM is unparalleled, thanks to its dedicated teachers, administrators, and staff. It’s important that we elect the right team to lead its Board of Education – people who will work collaboratively while ensuring we meet our children’s diverse needs. That’s why I’m urging Hebron residents to support Rudy Dellafiore and Jessica Hall for the RHAM Board of Education.

Rudy and Jessica will bring their diverse experiences to the board – Rudy with decades of experience in information technology and Jessica as a current educator and Teacher of the Year in Columbia (2015). Both Rudy and Jessica have seen their children attend RHAM, which gives them a unique perspective as parents and professionals. The two of them are committed to a well-rounded educational experience for our students, with an emphasis on choice and college-readiness.

Today more than ever, our students need the educational and emotional supports to become engaged citizens in a global world. RHAM continues to set the standard for this experience, and Rudy and Jessica will do their part to ensure RHAM thrives in the years to come. On Nov. 4, please join me in voting for Rudy Dellafiore and Jessica Hall for the RHAM Board of Education.

Sincerely,
Tiffany V. Thiele – Hebron

Note: Thiele is a member of the Hebron Board of Selectmen but said she is writing this letter as an individual.

Running for BOS

To the Editor:

My name is Joe Spada, and I am honored to be an endorsed candidate for the Board of Selectmen in the town of Portland. I currently serve on three town committees. I have had the privilege of working and being involved in the conversations with the planning of Brainard Place on the P&Z Commission, the Water and Sewer Commission to explore the possibilities of being self-sufficient with an abundance of our own water, and The Conservation Commission.

I have always been passionate about Portland and its tight-knit community and the small-town feel, that’s what attracted both me and my wife to raise our child in this welcoming community and the amazing school system that helped set him up for a lifetime of success many years ago, and this truly surrounds everything that Portland offers.

Over the years, I have been actively involved in many committees and helped with many elections, volunteering full days at our Portland Fair listening to our community the concerns, hopes and dreams they all have with the future of Portland, everyone is so passionate, and their voices should be heard which has deepened my understanding and commitment to our community.

With over 30 years of experience in communications and building operations, I have developed a deep understanding of our difficult upcoming conversations of our town facilities including school buildings and the future of our beloved town as it grows to support past, present and future generations including the upcoming challenges that the future will be bringing and how to set us up so we can fully embrace fiscal responsibilities paired with keeping the small-town charm.

I am known for my integrity, dedication, team-building skills, and especially the most critical, listening to other viewpoints that bring constructive conversations to the resolution of any issue.

If elected, my primary goals are to enhance community engagement, improve financial stability, and constantly listen to our community. I believe that by focusing on the future and thinking outside the box, we can achieve significant progress and continue to grow as a community.

I’m particularly focused on putting Portland on the map and not just a drive through town.

Thank you for considering my candidacy. I look forward to the possibility of contributing my skills and passion to our shared success. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Joe Spada – Portland
Republican Candidate for
Board of Selectmen

They Bring Experience

Dear Portland Neighbors:
My name is Sarah Spear. I currently serve on Portland’s Board of Education and want to share the expertise four candidates bring that I would value having on our BoE.

Kim Nagy-Maruschock is a Board of Ed incumbent whom I’ve had the privilege of working alongside. As an educator, her perspective has been invaluable to board deliberations. For example, during recent conversations about Connecticut’s mandate of play-based learning, Kim’s firsthand experience informed how our elementary schools are approaching this new requirement.

Jody Grosso is a Mechanical Design Discipline Manager at Pratt & Whitney. He has already demonstrated his curiosity and insight, asking questions during the joint Board of Selectmen and Board of Education meeting to better understand the Strategic Capital Improvements Planning Committee’s recommendations.

Erin Livensparger has dedicated her life to supporting others, from mothers in need to students who feel unseen. Her advocacy has resulted in writing curricula aligned with Connecticut education standards and training on health, wellness, and equity-focused practices. She stands in the gap for students whose voices go unheard.

Bethanne is Connecticut’s “Learn the Signs. Act Early.” Ambassador through the CDC and the American Academy of Pediatrics. I’m grateful to have worked alongside Bethanne at UConn where her work has resulted in improved developmental screening and early intervention for children. Our students will benefit by having Bethanne on the board.

These candidates will be at the fair this weekend. Stop by the Democratic Town Committee tent to say hi and please join me November 4th in voting for Bethanne, Erin, Jody, and Kim for Portland’s Board of Education.

Sincerely,
Sarah Spear – Portland

Note: Spear is a member of the Portland Board of Education, but said she is speaking as an individual.

What We Need

To the Editor:
The Rolling Stones reminded us that we can’t always get what we want, but we get what we need. What we need, what Colchester needs, is steady leadership, realistic plans, and foresight. We would like to live in the past, but we need to prepare for the future. Like it or not, the future will cost more than the past or the present. Rising cost and prices are out of our local control. Unless of course we control by diminishing services, staff, and materials. Is that what we want? I don’t think so.

Board of Finance candidates Sean Gillespie, Krista Kardys, and Jillian Vinci are committed to maintaining fiscal stability and professionalism in our town government. They will help drive smart growth to create jobs, lower taxes, and enhance local services. Of course, these are goals, and to achieve such goals will take teamwork; Sean, Krista and Jillian will work with citizens, town employees, the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Education toward such achievement. Means and ends will be debated to ensure Colchester remains a premier town of Eastern Connecticut.

Lower taxes and budget cuts may be desirable, but realistic fiscal management for the future is what Colchester needs. Sean, Krista and Jillian can give us that.

John Barnowski – Colchester

McFarland for Marlborough BOS

To the Editor:
My name is Susan McFarland and I’m running for Marlborough Board of Selectmen (BOS). The BOS is responsible for ‘supporting the town manager in the administration and management of the town’s affairs.’ They are involved in many things such as policy making, the town’s operating budget, capital improvements and our town’s day-to-day operations. According to our Town Charter, the BOS also has oversight roles related to our Plan of Conservation & Development as well as the Town Emergency Plan.

I recently retired from a career in regulatory compliance management, spanning more than three decades. I have the qualifications and practical experience to fulfill these duties. Over the years, I led teams of compliance professionals, managed large programs and budgets, interpreted and implemented regulations, and held various roles in emergency planning and incident response. I collaborated with individuals from all departments and areas of expertise, and worked on multi-disciplinary teams to get results. My real-life experience and management skills can now be focused to the benefit of our town.

I previously served on the Marlborough Zoning Commission for 12 years. I listened to perspectives and input from my neighbors at public hearings and voted consistently for what was best for our town. I will bring the same sensibilities to our town operations through the Board of Selectmen. I am committed to representing Marlborough’s residents and doing what’s in their best interest. I am excited at the opportunity to help lead Marlborough, and ask for your vote this November.

Sincerely,
Susan McFarland – Marlborough
See Letters, page 30

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

★ *Letters, cont. from page 29*
Why I’m Voting for Dougherty
To the Editor:

I’ve had the pleasure of interacting with Roberta Dougherty on several occasions in her role as assistant assessor in the Andover Town Office Building. Each time, she has impressed me with her friendliness, professionalism, competence, and genuine eagerness to help.

I’m confident Roberta will bring these same qualities to the role of town clerk.

Having lived in Andover for nearly 20 years, worked in the Town Office Building for 13, and raised a son who attended Andover Elementary and RHAM middle and high schools, Roberta has a deep understanding of our town and its residents—an invaluable asset for the town clerk’s office.

Her background as a paralegal, with experience in land titles, detailed records, and legal documentation, provides a strong foundation for the responsibilities of town clerk. She’s also committed to completing the necessary certification courses to further prepare for the role.

Roberta has been actively campaigning for several months and maintains a Facebook page – Roberta Dougherty for Andover Town Clerk – where she shares weekly updates on local issues. Her passion for transparency and communication is evident.

Though she is a registered Independent, Roberta is honored to have earned the endorsement of the Andover Republican Town Committee.

I hope you’ll join me on Tuesday, Nov. 4, in voting for Roberta Dougherty as Andover’s next town clerk.

Dianne Grenier – Andover

A Voice for All Residents
To the Editor:

It is with great confidence that I write to endorse John Dillon for the position on the Board of Selectmen in our town.

I have had the privilege of knowing John and his family for 73 years. In that me, I have witnessed firsthand the values, integrity and dedica on that his family has contributed to our community – values which John continues to embody today.

John is a man of strong character, good judgment, and deep commitment to our town. Whether through his professional work, his volunteer efforts in the town or to his church or simply in everyday life, he consistently demonstrates though ulness, honesty and a genuine desire to improve the lives of those around him. All which we so desperately need today.

Our town deserves leaders who not only understand its history, but who also have the foresight and practical sense to guide us into the future. I firmly believe John Dillon is that kind of leader. He listens, he learns and he acts with the best interests of the en re community in mind.

I encourage all residents to support John Dillon for our Board of Selectmen. You will be electing someone who will work hard and put his experience and values to work for one and all!

Janet Capello – Portland

Wellness Nights in Colchester
Dear Colchester Residents 55 and Over:

We are very fortunate to have the new Senior Center building open and full of life. What a treasure and a blessing! Are you aware that the Senior Center is now open from 8 a.m. until 8 p.m. every Tuesday and Thursday?

In addition to the fitness center being available until 8 p.m. every Tuesday and Thursday, the game room is open not only for billiards, but also for card games, puzzles, or just choose a comfy, quiet chair to read or relax away from distractions. The new Senior Center is open for use. Consider carpooling with a friend if you are not comfortable driving after dark. Come and meet new friends! What are you waiting for?

For those 55 years of age or older that may still be working, having access to the Senior Center to utilize the fitness center, have a quiet place to focus and be creative, meet with friends, and unwind is important. For those of us that are retired, interacting with others now that we are out of the work force is also vital to our physical and mental well-being. Many have asked for evening hours...well the time is NOW...don't wait until it's too late...check out some of the programs planned specifically for the Wellness Nights between 4-8 p.m.

There are 2 pages of evening programs in the October newsletter with 15 new options in addition to the fitness center and game room. Evening options include Arts & Crafts, live music from a Nashville pianist with ‘happy hour’ snacks, pizza & a movie, Scrabble (a chance to meet up with other Scrabble enthusiasts), bingo, numerous card games and other options. I can attest that the Wellness Night Program assistant is very open to your ideas for future programing since I noticed that no fewer seven new programs came from suggestions a couple of us made in mid-September.

Thank you for taking the time to read this...I hope this inspires you to “show up” and join in the fun. Many of our days are busy with too many commitments...consider taking Tuesday and Thursday evenings as time for yourself to relax, unwind, gather with friends and recharge. Hope to see you there soon!

**Sincerely,
Jane Popov – Colchester**

Supports Gilberti and Nelson
Dear Colchester Neighbors:

This week, I am asking for your support for two Board of Education candidates who would be new to elected office – but not new to the classroom: Gussie Gilberti and Nancy Nelson.

Many of you know that I am a fourth-generation Colchester resident and a product of Colchester Public Schools. I wouldn’t be serving as first selectman today if it weren’t for the great opportunities and inspiring teachers from elementary school through Bacon Academy. I want the next generation to have the same great opportunities that I had as a student.

Gussie Gilberti is a former Colchester Public Schools teacher and 30+ year resident of Colchester. She is retired now – with 45 years in public education, specializing in special education and education leadership. While working for Colchester, Gussie initiated, designed, and implemented Colchester’s first full day kindergarten program. She also served as an interview committee chair, helping to select teachers and administrators.

Nancy Nelson is a retired math teacher and math specialist of 30+ years. In Colchester, she has served on the Youth First Coalition, CORE Commission, and is an active volunteer at the Colchester Senior Center.

Gussie and Nancy would bring a wealth of hands-on experience to the Board of Education that will enable them and the board to be stronger advocates for the needs of students, teachers, and families in the classroom and beyond. Although they are retired from teaching, both of their hearts are still focused on promoting and developing the next generation of learners.

They know how to ask the tough questions to make sure we are continuing to deliver high-quality public education. Their voices at the table will strengthen Colchester Public Schools for those who need it most: students.

Please join me in voting for Gussie Gilberti and Nancy Nelson for Board of Education this November.

**Sincerely,
Bernie Dennler
Colchester First Selectman**

Value School Staff
To the Editor:

I am a Democratic candidate for Colchester Board of Education. I believe that every student’s individual success must be the highest priority for the Colchester School System.

In order to achieve this goal, the Board of Education, superintendent of Colchester schools and school administration must strive for success by attracting, supporting, retaining, and valuing highly effective professional educators and paraprofessionals.

Due to a variety of factors, educators are in extremely high demand these days. Finding the right fit for our school district could include-actively pursuing leads through local colleges, online interest groups, and advertising agencies. A strict screening process will lead to interviewing top applicants by administrators, teachers and staff. The best candidates may be asked to interview more than once or teach a sample lesson. The process is labor intensive and worth the effort if the right person for the job is found and decides to stay with us.

A competitive salary and benefits package draws the most qualified professional educators and paraprofessional and keeps them in our district. The package must attract and retain the very best professional educators and paraprofessionals.

A professional educator program should be maintained that strongly supports the new educators and paraprofessionals throughout their career. Identifying strengths of staff members can lead to further education and training in which they can support colleagues within the Colchester school system. Professional growth is essential to teachers in all phases of their careers so that they can continuously respond to the ever-changing needs of their students.

Colchester students’ individual educational success happens due to many factors, but most importantly, their educators. Having a highly valued effective staff supported by an excellent administration helps the students reach that success.

**Sincerely,
Nancy Nelson – Colchester
Democratic Candidate for
Board of Education**

We’re Running for Office
To the Residents of Andover:

My wife, Anna Dziadosz, and I, Andreas Halidis, would like to announce our campaign for local office. Anna is running for the Board of Finance, and I am running for the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Although we’ve only been residents of Andover for three years, we are not strangers to the area. We both lived near Andover and have a deep appreciation to the unique history and fragile ambience Andover and its surrounding towns currently has to offer.

We have two young children and have been married for four years. Anna and I feel getting involved in local government isn’t just a sacrifice but a duty to the community and our children’s future, which they need and deserve in today’s chaotic nonsense.

We believe leading by example will encourage others to step up and do as we do – getting involved, making a difference, and getting your voices heard.

Anna is a full-time real estate lawyer and has been practicing law since 2011. Prior to her current role, she worked for the Environmental Protection Agency in the White House as well as a staffer; a total of five years in the federal government. As a teenager and college student, Anna was a key component managing several of her parents’ rental units and has a strong background in regulatory language, spending, and local government. She has a Polish-American background and is a devoted mother, wife, professional as well as a practicing Catholic.

I was born and raised in Hungary before moving to the USA at the age of 14. English is my second language and I spent most of my teenage years working for my family’s pizza restaurant and doing labor-intensive work to pay my own car insurance. I’ve graduated from ECSU and currently hold three master’s degrees between health care and engineering. I spent most of my early days going to school and working odd jobs before starting my career in health care, then moving over to RTX in East Hartford.

My wife and I are both faithful believers of God. We love this country and deeply value the tranquility and uniqueness Andover has to offer. Anna and I look forward to representing you all to ensure the town of Andover will remain safe, accountable, unique to its history and residents, both young and old, who call Andover their home. We plan to be here for a long time, so this is important to us.

Thank you for your attention. We hope to get your vote so we can get to work and move forward to a brighter future we can all be proud of.

**Sincerely Yours,
Andreas Halidis and Anna Dziadosz
Andover**

Jayne Juravaty for Town Clerk
To the Editor:

The Andover Democratic Town Committee has endorsed Jayne Juravaty for Andover town clerk.

The town clerk position is vitally important to the town. The person in this position is the official record keeper, responsible for maintaining public records and providing information to the public while ensuring compliance with the state. She is responsible for the maintenance and preservation of municipal archival records, municipal codes, general bylaws and zoning bylaws, resignations, appointments, petitions, election results and administers the oath of office to elected and appointed officials. The town clerk processes requests under FOIA (Freedom of Information Act), ensuring residents can access public records as required by law.

One of the most important functions of the town clerk is acting as a liaison between town management and its residents. This can sometimes be a delicate balance.

As member services coordinator, Jayne worked in collaboration with other staff members and departments to support organizational goals. She managed membership records, processed payments, tracked statistics, analyzed data and prepared reports for management. She believes that treating everyone with respect is a fundamental to fostering positive relationships and creating a supportive environment.

Town clerks work for the citizens of the town who elected them. They are not beholden to other local officials, but rather to the voters directly. This is a key distinction from an appointed clerk, who would report to the appointing authority, such as a town manager or board of selectmen.

Andover needs new and diverse people who can offer fresh perspectives and ideas. We need to support the people who are willing to step up and enter a new role. Bringing in new individuals can bring solutions to longstanding issues and approaches that may not have been considered before. Jayne is willing to step up. Let’s support her.

**Catherine Magaldi Lewis – Andover
Chair, Andover Democratic
Town Committee**

DPWAC Update
To the Editor:

At last Thursday evening’s Board of Selectmen’s meeting, David Rose (chairman, DPWAC Communications Team and a member of the DPWAC) gave a presentation. This was a very thorough briefing regarding the ongoing environmental testing, and the potential future layout of the buildings at the Old Colchester Road site. The buildings shown were very much preliminary plans. They were representative of the size they need to be to accommodate the necessary space for our DPW staff and equipment for now and years to come.

It has become very apparent to me, after talking with several residents at the BOS meeting and on Saturday while attending the grand opening of our new Dog Park, that many residents are not really sure how this project will progress. First, we will have to secure a vendor for townwide household trash and recyclables and provide the appropriate containers for every household. This is a service that the town will need to provide (pay for) as the transfer station will be completely closed for approximately 1-1/2 years. This is necessary as every

building on the Old Colchester Road site needs to be demolished and disposed of, prior to beginning any sitework and construction of new buildings.

While the construction is going, on all of the town’s staff and equipment will be moved off site. The vehicle and equipment maintenance mechanic and tools, will be moved to Burnt Hill Park at the Park and Rec’s garage. The trucks are to be moved to the Lions Fairgrounds and will be parked outside. While the office staff will be moved to Company 2 Firehouse on Route 85 at the Colchester end of town.

I cannot emphasize enough that this is a massive undertaking, and will disrupt the way most of us do things. I invite all residents to learn what’s going on by attending our DPWAC meetings; the next one is Oct. 20, normally the third Monday of the month, at Hebron’s Town Hall, 6:30 p.m. on the lower level, or attend online on your smart phone or computer from the comfort of your own home.

As always, email me questions and concerns at: thabicht@hebronct.gov or visit the town’s website at www.hebronct.gov to read the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) with answers.

**Sincerely,
Todd Habicht, Vice Chairman
Hebron DPWAC**

Supporting Portland BOE
To the Editor:

I am writing in support of Portland Board of Education candidates Jody Grosso, Erin Livensparger, Kim Nagy-Maruschock and Bethanne Vergean in our municipal election.

First and foremost, all four candidates are strong advocates of public education, which I believe to be one of the most important characteristics of an effective member of a local Board of Education. All of their children have either completed their education in Portland, or are currently enrolled in Portland public schools. Additionally, through actions and ongoing conversations they have all demonstrated to me a commitment to excellence, opportunity, and achievement for all Portland students.

As a team they sat down together and took the time to develop what they believe to be important priorities for Portland public schools.

- Advance student achievement and ensure every child has the tools to thrive
- Invest in critical, strategic improvements to modernize our schools
- Protect the health, safety, and wellbeing of students and staff
- Exercise responsible financial oversight of district resources
- Promote civil discourse and model collaborative leadership

Over the next few weeks please take the time to learn more about Jody, Erin, Kim and Bethanne. You can see them at the Portland Fair, going door to door in your neighborhood, and at various candidate Meet and Greet events around town. Additional information about all the democratic candidates’ may be found on our website, www.portlandctdtc.com.

The Portland Democratic Team is ready and eager to work together alongside our other elected and town officials to move Portland forward in a positive direction.

Local elections matter, so please be sure to have a plan to vote! The early voting period is 10/20 to 11/2 at Portland Town Hall, or on Election Day, 11/4 at Portland Middle School.

**Sincerely,
Andrea Alfano – Portland**

Acceptance
To the Editor:

“Until man learns to respect and speak to the natural world, he can never truly understand his place on this Earth”. -free-diver Enzo Maiorca, 2009.

A great reminder that nature speaks if only we are willing to listen.

Unfortunately, USA culture is presently not predominantly geared towards listening to, protecting or respecting the natural world. A member of Hebron’s town hall once said, “Yes Jean, that’s correct, the most environmentally sound ideas, more often than not, are the least expensive.” Sound environmental ideas almost always pay us back in spades. But no, they generally do not create instant generational wealth. This has been a topic I have touched on before. Health makes wealth but pollution makes billions. Respectfully listening to nature helps build a healthier future for all.

Will we, as a people, listen to the scientists now? What harm can come from planning a future that incorporates sound ecological ideas into our present lives? Shouldn’t we look out for water supplies and the quality of that water? Shouldn’t we look out for our farms and food, friends and wildlife or simply throw all caution to the wind? Mother nature does not care either way. Its our suicide run. She will take back what is hers inch by inch leaving us to fight amongst ourselves. And while we seem to show less and less respect for her, and for those who defend her, our plight remains the same. We will be fighting over the finite amount of remaining natural resources. I always enjoy thinking of Earth as an Equal Opportunity Employer. From bullies to billionaires, from brokers to brick layers its all good and its we’re all the same. We are guests
See Letters, page 32

Obituaries

Hebron

Joseph P. Sheehan
In the early morning hours of Friday, Sept. 19, I ended my earthly journey and passed to the other side. I was predeceased by my parents May and Joe Sheehan, as well as my brother George, and nephew George Sheehan.



I want to share with you some of my life influences. Margot and I have two sons, Daniel and Brian. Daniel's daughter Joanna is the light of our lives! In her four years of life, she has brought us so much joy. Brian's son, Drew, like his dad, is a sports enthusiast. At the end of my life my boys were by my side which brought me deep peace. My sister, Ginny, has been a member of the Sisters of Notre Dame for many years. In 1960 I was ordained a Catholic Priest in Rome. Thirteen years later I left the priesthood. Those years introduced me to the need for social justice in our world and to an appreciation of what it means to be a member of our diverse human family. I am very grateful for those years. For 28 years I worked in several state agencies, serving both adults and children. Aug. 8, 1975, was the most significant day in my life. I married joyful, affectionate, compassionate, bright, witty, worldly-wise Margot Ryan, a.k.a. "Little Thunder"! Margot was the rock of my life. We had 50 years together full of much joy as well as some sorrow.

During my 90 years there were some people who had a profound influence on me. The long and unconditional love of Father Bill McGrath and Jack Giordano, a friendship I developed with my next-door neighbor, Ernie Harris and our professional relationship with Dr. Richard Feinberg, who supported us through some challenging times in our life. Each of these people lit the way on my path going forward.

Retirement has been an enriching experience despite the isolation hearing loss brings. For several years, I volunteered with Habitat for Humanity. Al Tarbox taught me how to restore stone walls, a task I loved because it was a perfect fit for my love of the outdoors, my zest for physical activity and my desire to contribute to the beauty of the world.

Margot and I searched for years for a faith

community that was open, affirming, and dedicated to service and love. Our search ended at the Gilead Congregational Church in Hebron. At the time we joined the church, Pastor Denise Esslinger, an amazing woman of deep faith, hope and love laced with humor, welcomed us warmly. We came to love the community of people who made up this Church and till the end of my days I found peace and meaning with our current Pastor Brian Hardee who helped us learn new ways to make the world a better place. The following truths have been my life guides. "It doesn't matter how much you have or where you go. It's whom you have beside you that matters most."

The quote from Micah 6:8 "Act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with your God."

Thank you to each of you who walked this 90-year journey with me. The road was long, but I was never alone.

My wake will be at the Farley-Sullivan Funeral Home, 34 Beaver Rd., Wethersfield, on Friday, Oct. 3, from 4-7 p.m. My memorial service will be at the Gilead Congregational Church, 672 Gilead St., Hebron, on Saturday, Oct. 4, at 11 a.m. Followed by lunch in the Fellowship Hall. Burial will be private.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Gilead Congregational Church or to Habitat for Humanity of North Central Connecticut, P.O. Box 1933, Hartford, CT 06144.

Hebron

Claire C. Hand Memorial Service

A memorial service for Claire C. Hand of Columbia will be held Saturday, Oct. 11, from 11 a.m.-2 p.m., at the Columbia Senior Center, 188 Route 66 in Columbia.

Claire passed away Tuesday, May 13. She had worked for the Hebron School System for nearly 50 years.

All are invited to attend the Oct. 11 memorial and share a story to celebrate a life well lived.

Claire's full obituary can be found at Legacy.com.

Portland

Edith Perry

Edith (Bleeker) Perry, 89, of Portland, passed away peacefully at Cobalt Lodge Healthcare on Tuesday, Sept. 30. Born in Ziegenfurt, Germany on July 4, 1936, she was the daughter of the late August and Wanda (Fritz) Dijer.

Edith lived in East Hampton and then moved to Portland and was the owner and operator of two restaurants, first Pete's Diner and later Edie's Place (now the Eggs Up) both in Portland. She was proud to be a business woman. Edith was married to the late Peter Bleeker, with whom she had her three children, and then to William Perry, who passed away in 1990.

Edith is survived by her two sons, Petrus Bleeker and his wife Laurie of East Hampton; Chris W. Bleeker and his wife Rebecca of Rhode Island; her daughter, Sonya Duquette of Georgia; her brother, Helmut Dijer and his wife Rose of East Hampton; also, her three grandchildren, Emery Duquette, Alana Clark (Geoff), Rebecca Pike (Stephen), and her two great-grandchildren, Blakely Clark and Colton Pike.

She was predeceased by her brother, Otto Dijer, and her sister, Ellie Klisowski.

Friends may call at Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, on Monday, Oct. 6, from 5-7 p.m. There will be a graveside service on Tuesday, Oct. 7, at 11 a.m., in the Swedish Cemetery in Portland.

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

RHAM • RHAM • RHAM • RHAM • RHAM • RHAM • RHAM • RHAM

Free Developmental Screenings, Home Visits

The AHM Family Resource Center (FRC) offers free developmental screenings and home visits to anyone with a child or children from ages Birth- 3 years in the towns of Andover, Hebron, Marlborough and Columbia.

Screenings: Using a questionnaire called Ages and Stages, FRC staff will look at your child's progress in different domains of development (communication, motor, and social-emotional skills) through activities and talking to you and your child. Instruction on how to use the free Sparkler App from the Office of Early Childhood is provided. Sparkler has information on Child Development, Parenting tips, and screenings. Screenings can be done in your home or at Gilead Hill School in Hebron. After the screening, you will get a copy of the results as well as a sheet with ways to encourage your

child's development in different areas. **Home Visits:** Visits – which can be in your home or the FRC room at Gilead Hill School -- are structured to include you and your child in conversation and play. FRC staff will bring an activity, talk about your child's development, and discuss parenting successes or concerns you may have (for example, sleep, feeding, discipline, or other issues).

For more information or to schedule either a screening or a visit, contact Becky Murray at beckym@ahmyouth.org, Ashlee Parks at ashleep@ahmyouth.org, or call the Family Resource Center at 860-228-0871.

See the full list of offerings through the AHM Family Resource Center at ahmyouth.org/programs-services/family-resource-center.

Fall Into Art

AHM Youth and Family Services will hold Fall Into Art, an autumn-themed community art show, on Saturday, Oct. 18, from 1:30-6:30 p.m., at AHM, 25 Pendleton Drive.

This event will take place during Hebron Harvest Moon Festival. There will be a rain date of Sunday, Oct. 19.

This free event is in collaboration with the Hebron Creative Collective. If you are an artist interested in showing your work, please register, by contacting AHM at ahmyouth.org.

Cover Story • Cover Story • Cover Story • Cover Story • Cover Story • Cover

★ *Community Rallies, cont. from page 1* doing it."

Kelsey said she was touched by the way residents rallied together not only for this event, but across multiple efforts to support Erik's family and honor and his memory.

"I would like to... just say thank you to everyone in the Hebron community, because it is really great to see how much support we get from our town," she said. "People are right there to help, so I'm grateful."

Other local businesses joined in the effort as well. Kelsey noted after Erik's passing, several restaurants stepped forward to hold fundraisers of their own. Two of them, Brick Cantina Mexican Restaurant and The Flour Girl Bakery and Café, also catered Erick's funeral.

Between the local business efforts, individual initiatives and the overwhelming success of the online fundraiser, Erik's memory continues to be honored in ways that reflect the impact he made on his peers and his town.

The scholarship fund will ensure Erik's name is carried forward, creating opportunities for students in the years to come, while the outpouring support from Hebron and Colchester residents and the RHAM community shows just how deeply the tragedy has been felt.

In the words of those who knew him, Erik was more than just a young man taken too soon – he was a friend, a son, a brother and someone who brought people together.

LEGALS

TOWN OF EAST HAMPTON PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION LEGAL NOTICE Notice of Hearing

Notice is hereby given that the East Hampton Planning and Zoning Commission will hold Public Hearings at a special meeting scheduled on Wednesday October 8, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. at the East Hampton Town Hall – 1 Community Drive, Room 107 and via ZOOM on the following Applications: PZC-25-009: Charles Dutch, White Birch Road, Two lot Re-subdivision. Map 30/ Block 65A/ Lot 2. PZC-25-005: Lake Overlook Estates, Phase II Open Space Re-Subdivision and Special Permit. Map 03A/ Block 44/ Lot 23. (Continued Public Hearing from 9/3/2025) Applications and Plans are on file in the Land Use Office 860 267-7450. Kevin Kuhr, Chairman

2 TB 9/26, 10/3

LEGAL NOTICE OF ACTIONS PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION HEBRON, CONNECTICUT

The Hebron Planning and Zoning Commission took the following action at their Special Meeting, which was held on Wednesday, September 24, 2025 at 7:00pm on the following: Petition 2025-22 – Petition of Carl Holmgren Jr. for Special Permit to construct an accessory structure exceeding 900 square feet in accordance with Section 2.E.8 of the Hebron Zoning Regulations at 523 East Street, Residence-1 District. Approved, with conditions. 1. Outstanding comments provided in the letter from Joshua R. Eannotti, P.E. dated September 19, 2025, shall be addressed to the satisfaction of Town staff prior to filing of the Special Permit on the Hebron Land Records. 2. Responses to the applicant's Request for Natural Diversity Data Base State-listed Species Review Form shall be provided to Town staff for review and incorporated in construction activities as directed. 3. Outdoor lighting shall be full cut off and of a color temperature between 2700 and 3000 Kelvins. 4. The building shall not serve any commercial uses. 5. If the applicant deviates from the materials and colors provided on the record, the applicant shall return to the Commission for review and approval. The video recording of the Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting can be seen using the following link: <https://transcripts.gotomeeting.com/#!/c358430513d7f96f574f660f1d6cc62f24f92d8d28b5fb6761e-a5e267d31780e>

1 TB 10/3

LEGAL NOTICE TOWN OF EAST HAMPTON INLAND WETLANDS AND WATERCOURSES AGENCY

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT THE INLAND WETLANDS AND WATERCOURSES AGENCY WILL HOLD A SITE WALK IN ASSOCIATION WITH APPLICATION: IW-25-030: TAYLOR RAND, 45 LONG HILL ROAD, 3 LOT SUBDIVISION, MAP 06/ BLOCK 12/ LOT 7A & MAP 06/ BLOCK 12/ LOT 7B DATE: OCTOBER 11, 2025 SATURDAY LOCATION: 45 LONG HILL ROAD, EAST HAMPTON, CT TIME: 8:30AM CHAIRMAN JOSHUA WILSON

1 TB 10/3

MARLBOROUGH CONSERVATION COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING

The Marlborough Conservation Commission will hold the following public hearing on Monday, October 6, 2025, at 7pm in the Town Hall, 26 No Main Street APPLICATION #Z-09-25 – 11 Old Cider Mill Ln, Jeffrey Popham and Jennifer Carini (Applicant/Owner) Addition. 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

2 TB 9/26, 10/3

LEGAL NOTICE TOWN OF ANDOVER REVENUE COLLECTOR'S NOTICE

To the property owners of the Town of Andover: The first installment of the taxes listed on the October 1, 2024 Grand List becomes due and payable to the Town of Andover on October 1, 2025. Payments must be US postmarked, paid on line, or brought to Town Hall by November 3, 2025 to avoid an interest charge. Interest will be charged starting November 4, 2025 on all delinquent bills at a rate of 18% per year (1½% per month) from the due date of October 1st, with a minimum charge of \$2 for each bill. View or pay taxes online at www.andoverct.org. Cash, check or money order payments are accepted at the Town Hall during business hours. Payments by check or money order may be mailed to the Tax Collector's office or placed in the drop box outside Town Hall. Typical office hours during collection months are Monday 8:15am- 7pm, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday 8:15 am-4pm. Please refer to www.andoverct.org for updated office hours. Failure to receive a tax bill will not invalidate the tax or any interest which may, by State law, accrue. If you have any questions, please contact the tax office at 860-742-4035 option 4.

3TB 9/26, 10/3, 10/24

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RES-9-25

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Tax-Aide Volunteers Wanted

For many years, the senior centers in Colchester, Hebron, Marlborough and East Hampton have hosted the AARP Tax-Aide Program, which provides free income tax preparation services for residents of these towns and surrounding communities.

Tax-Aide is the nation's largest free volunteer tax program, offered in conjunction with the IRS.

The Tax-Aide program is looking for compassionate and friendly people to join its volunteer

team. You don't need to be an accountant or tax professional; the volunteers come from a variety of backgrounds. Training and support are provided.

To apply to volunteer, go to aarpfoundation.org/taxaidevolunteer or call 1-888-AARP-NOW (888-227-7669).

If you'd like additional information before signing up, contact your local senior center and they will connect you with a local Tax-Aide volunteer.

Vaccination Clinic Schedule

Chatham Health District has announced its upcoming Vaccination Clinic Schedule, and clinics are scheduled in the *Rivereast* towns of Colchester, East Hampton, Hebron, Marlborough and Portland. The schedule is:

10/3, 11 a.m.-1 p.m., Quarry Heights in Portland; 10/7, 4-6 p.m., East Hampton Town Hall; 10/8, 9-11 a.m., Colchester Senior Center; 10/9, 9-11 a.m., Waverly (Portland) Senior Center; 10/9 3:30-5:30 p.m., Portland Library; 10/10, 3-5 p.m., RHAM High School in Hebron; 10/15, 4-6 p.m., KOCO Childcare Center in East Hampton;

10/20, 9-11 a.m., Marlborough Senior Center;

10/21, 9-11 a.m., Russell Mercier Senior Center in Hebron; 10/22, 10 a.m.-noon, East Hampton Senior Center; 10/29, 3-5 p.m., Colchester Federated Church.

Chatham Health is partnering with Beacon Prescriptions to offer a variety of vaccines to the community. Flu and COVID-19 (ages 3+), RSV, shingles, and pneumococcal vaccines are available. Most major insurances are accepted except Hospice and VA. For more information visit ChathamHealth.org

People with questions can call 860-365-0884 or email info@chathamhealth.org.



Portland High School girls soccer earned the team's fifth win of the season with a 2-1 victory over Lyme/Old Lyme behind a pair of goals from sophomore Lea Rivera.

Standout Athletes of the Week

By Josh Howard

Here are the *Rivereast* Standout Athletes of the Week for the week of Sept. 22 – 28:

Lea Rivera – Portland High School (Soccer): Rivera scored both goals as the Highlanders traveled to the shore and clipped Lyme/Old Lyme 2-1. Rivera, a sophomore, has helped Portland posted a record of 5-2-2 through the first nine games this fall. The team next travels to East Granby for a game on Monday, Oct. 6 (3:45 p.m.) before returning to PHS to host North Branford on Tuesday, Oct. 7 at 4 p.m.

Chelsea Ryan – East Hampton High School (Volleyball): Ryan, a senior captain, had 32 assists, 15 digs, three aces, and a pair of kills as the Bellringers rallied to defeated Cromwell in five sets (22-25, 25-20, 15-25, 27-25, 15-10) on Sept. 26. Two days earlier, Ryan served up 24 assists as East Hampton swept Haddam-Killingworth in three sets. The Bellringers are currently riding a five-game winning streak and next welcome Lyme-Old Lyme to EHHS tonight (Friday, Oct. 3) for match at 5:30 p.m.

Jack Levasseur – Bacon Academy (Soccer): Lavasseur netted a hat trick, scoring three goals

as the Bobcats trounced Lyman Memorial 9-0 on Sept. 22. Levasseur, a senior, is helping lead a Bobcats squad that is away for a pair of games -- at Morgan (Saturday, Oct. 4 at 6 p.m.) and at Fitch (Monday, Oct. 6 at 5:30 p.m.) -- before they return to Bacon Academy to host St. Bernard on Tuesday, Oct. 7 at 3:45 p.m.

Rian Calhoun – RHAM High School (Volleyball): Calhoun paved the way as the Raptors won three matches last week, taking down Bristol Central and E.O. Smith at home and Windsor on the road. Calhoun, a junior setter, packed the stat sheet in a four-set win over Bristol Central on Sept. 22 – tallying 37 assists, four kills, two blocks, and a pair of kills. Fellow junior Sami DeGray added a career-high 40 digs in the victory. The Raptors (currently 9-1 as of publication) return to RHAM High School on Monday, Oct. 6 to welcome East Catholic for a match at 6 p.m.

To nominate an athlete as a Standout of the Week, email joshhowardsports@gmail.com. Please include as many details about the athlete or performance as possible.

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

★ Letters, cont. from page 30

on a revolving planet.

As we anxiously await test results, from Old Colchester Road, Hebron, we reflect on the choices we have the ability to endorse. Confining our pollution to select locations, respecting groundwaters and preserving farmland, paints a better picture for generations to come. We hope these plans artfully include saving the open land on the Raymond Brook Watershed including 17 Kinney Rd., a.k.a. the Old Horton Property. We must stay focused on long term thinking and respecting nature for a healthy future. Additionally, we must also accept that many residents depend on this watershed for their water. Development here must be curtailed or, better yet, no development on this watershed at all. #save17.

Jean Tulimieri – Amston

Back Caterisano, Finn

To the Editor:

East Hampton Democrats have a golden opportunity to win a majority on the Board of Finance for the first time in more than a decade. We have two incredibly qualified candidates ready to swing the board, to the benefit of residents, economic development, and the local school system.

David Caterisano and Dan Finn bring impeccable credentials to the Democratic ticket. Both are committed to transparency and accountability, and collectively they have dozens of years of experience in finance. Just as importantly, they are well connected in the community and understand East Hampton's needs.

Caterisano is a Coast Guard veteran who has made a successful career in finance and banking. He understands the challenges facing the town and how important it is to plan for the future while keeping the present affordable.

Finn is not only a local resident, but he also runs, a successful business in East Hampton as a financial planner. He has worked with countless clients to help them achieve their financial goals, including paying for college, retirement, and everything in between.

Just as importantly, Caterisano and Finn are compassionate. As parents to students in East Hampton schools, they appreciate how quality education and programs benefit everyone in the community. At the same time, they recognize that East Hampton needs to be an affordable place to live for all residents. I have tremendous confidence that they can strike a balance.

There is a great deal at stake on Election Day. Caterisano and Finn will serve East Hampton with expertise and compassion. Please join me in voting for them, as well as the entire Democratic ticket, on Tuesday, Nov. 4.

Sincerely,
Matt Engelhardt – East Hampton

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

Responsible Budgeting for BOE

To the Editor:

If you read my letter in last week's publication, you saw how central office actually downsized not increased in size. But wait there is more...

Under the leadership of Superintendent Sullivan, with the support of the BOE, the legal line has been considerably reduced from our first year of 2021-22 being \$213,111.67. To 2022-23 \$190,534.05. To our best savings year in 2023-24 of \$78,527. Then 2024-25 \$116,118.28, this includes the cost of FOI requests and FOI hearings which increased in this past year.

How was this achieved? Again experience, knowledge and competent leadership. Superintendent Sullivan worked with our legal firm to decrease costs. He worked with all the unions to change the way negotiations were held. The unions

all gave positive feedback to the board and never want to go back to the old way where attorneys participated in negotiations. Not only is the old way more expensive, it has an adversarial feel.

Our superintendent worked diligently to fill key roles like special education director and assistant director; assistant superintendent, director of operations, and the IT department was revamped in-house and outsourced. The Director of Information Technology position was cut for a considerable savings. Outsourcing to Apex Technologies gave our schools an appropriate level of tech support that must be dedicated to us by their contract, keeping some in-house support. We began this school year fully staffed! A rare occurrence in most districts.

As a board, did we inherit over a decade of not planning for future projects like leaking school roofs and an ailing athletic complex? Yes we did! Did we inherit unions with gaps in pay, causing employees to take jobs in other districts? Yes we did! We as a board along with administration are working diligently and responsibly to correct these issues. Please don't let the facts get lost in the noise.

Today our town leaders are working together across all Boards to correct some of these major issues that have been passed down. Donna and I hope to continue to be a part of the positive progress the town and schools are making and appreciate your vote on Row C for BOE.

Marguerite (Margo) Gignac – Colchester

Note: Gignac is a current member of the Colchester Board of Education, but said she is speaking as a candidate for the board.

Hello Colchester Friends

To the Editor:

Marguerite (Margo) Gignac and I have been writing positive weekly letters to the editor to highlight the progress we have made in the Colchester Board of Education (BOE). We don't do it alone. We are only two of a seven member volunteer Board. Together we have helped bring transparent, responsible budgets to the voters. In the past week or two we have given the facts that support this.

Some people feel that budgets should just be cut, cut, cut. Some folks, even elected officials, say they plan to cut the budget without even looking at it. The standard feeling is that "They can get by and always have. Let's cut the increase in half." I have witnessed this myself. To simply make an arbitrary cut without even looking at the facts and necessary budgetary items is extremely irresponsible. This is how our Board inherited so many issues with Special Education, infrastructure and staff retention. Think about your home budget. Do you just say, "Nah, I'm not paying that electric bill anymore"? When you are scrambling around in the dark because the lights have been turned off, it's hard to recover.

With fiscal responsibility there are needs, wants and wishes. This BOE has brought the most factually accurate budgets forward showing the needs of the district in intricate detail. We did this by working across the aisle and asking the questions, "Is this a need, want or a wish?" We don't just guess or "feel" our way through it. One of my favorite political commentators is fond of saying, "Facts don't care about your feelings." It's true, Colchester, check the facts. Those same folks who want to make arbitrary cuts are also now talking about unity to resolve budgetary problems. The fact is that they have never acted in unity and only looked to divide. This BOE has had the experience of unified work. We have done nothing but cooperate with those on the BOE and the other boards. We understand unity because we have been living it for the past four years.

Please consider Row C for BOE, Donna Antonacci – Colchester

Note: Antonacci is chair of the Colchester Board of Education, but is writing as an individual.

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Portland Election Information

The November municipal election will be held Tuesday, Nov. 4, at Portland Middle School. Early voting will occur Oct. 20-Nov. 20, at Portland Town Hall.

The offices on the ballot this year are: first selectman, Board of Selectmen, Board of Education, Board of Assessment Appeals, Zoning Board of Appeals Term Starting 2025 & Zoning Board of Appeals Term Starting 2026.

Tickets Still Available for House Tour

Mark your calendars for Saturday, October 18. Ticket sales have been extended for the Portland Historical Society's tour of a home that melds the past and future.

Located on a wooded lot in Portland's countryside, this home will provide the young and young-at-heart with ideas for renovating or building a new home to meet the changing needs of today's family. Tour guides will share universal design features that could be incorporated into your own home to meet the needs of a loved one with physical challenges or aging parents. You will hear how every effort was made to make this home energy efficient. Tours will begin at 8:15 a.m., 11:45 a.m. and 3:15 p.m. and last approximately two hours.

Imagine being in Portland 200 years ago. Our early settlers cleared their land, designed their homes and with friends built their dreams. This tour is the story of a modern day couple with acres of woods and a dream of building a home – from clearing the land to designing an efficient home, from learning a CAD program to finding the perfect materials, they mirrored our early settlers using modern technology. You will gain helpful information on designing a home that may allow you to age-in-place.

The couple has chosen to share their showcase home as a fund raiser for the Historical Society. During this next year, the Historical Society is conducting a campaign to raise money to fund the rebuilding of the 1821 Gildersleeve Store on the grounds of the Ruth Callander House Museum of Portland History. This house tour is one of several special events being sponsored by the Society to raise funds for this major project.

Ticket sales have been extended. Children 12

Absentee ballots are now available from the town clerk's office. Call 860-342-6743 or stop into the office for an application. Residents can also apply for an absentee ballot on the secretary of the state's website: <https://portal.ct.gov/sots>.

Residents can also complete a voter registration form in the Town Clerk's Office, 33 East Main Street, or online at the secretary of the state's website.

and older are welcome to register and must be accompanied by an adult. Tickets for all registrants are \$50. Space is limited and this is a one-day-only event. Registration forms are available on the side porch of 492 Main St. or by downloading the form from www.PortlandHistSoc.org. Forms must now be mailed with payment and received by Wednesday, Oct. 8. Individual tickets may also be purchased online at www.PortlandHistSoc.org. Go to the Callander Cupboard and search for House Tour #1, 2 or 3. Be sure to purchase ticket for your preferred tour time. You will be mailed a ticket with your assigned tour time and the location of this home will be revealed.

A limited number of tickets may be available on Sunday, Oct. 12, during the monthly opening of the Ruth Callander House Museum of Portland History located at 492 Main St., from 2-4 p.m. Payment at the opening can be done by check, cash or credit card. No tickets will be available at the door on Oct. 18. Questions? Call Susan at 860-982-1486.

Each ticket purchased will move the society closer to its fundraising goal and the rebuild of the historic Gildersleeve Store, a link to Portland's shipbuilding legacy.

Blessing of the Animals

In remembrance of Patron Saint of the Animals, St. Francis of Assisi, the Blessing of Animals will take place Saturday, Oct. 4, at 11 a.m. (weather permitting) on the rectory lawn of St. Mary Church, 45 Freestone Ave.

All pets – furry, scaly, feathery – as well as stuffed animals are welcome to receive a blessing from the Rev. John Antonelle. This gathering is open to all members of the community.

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Glastonbury Spirit Shop Focuses on Customer Experience

By Shawn R. Dagle

Prior to purchasing Addison Fine Wine and Spirits in the spring of last year Ram Verma was a customer – often stopping in to the Glastonbury store on his way home from Travelers where he worked as a senior director in analytics.

During his visits to the store Verma was impressed by then owner Tom Taylor’s personal knowledge of the wines and various other liquors and products he sold and his one-on-one individualized approach when interacting with each of his customers.

It is a tradition that Verma says he is committed to continuing at Addison Fine Wine and Spirits as he looks toward the future and growing the popular neighborhood business.

“We are a small community type of store. A lot of the customers we have are repeat customers. We meet those customers one-on-one and we work with them and they get their products and we know what they like. We also guide them to other products. Tom was very good at doing so – educating the customers – and now I want to carry that on as I learn more about the suppliers,” said Verma.

Addison Fine Wine and Spirits is the first business Verma has owned. He purchased the store and property located at 802 Hebron Avenue – with his wife Uma –in May of 2024.

“I was at Travelers insurance company as a senior director in the analytic space. I resigned there. I was looking to do something in business. I used to be a customer here because this was on my way home – I live in Glastonbury – so I wanted to get myself in the business world,” he recalled.

In 2024 Taylor – who had more than four decades of experience in the liquor industry – was looking to sell Addison Fine and Wine Spirits. One time while in the store Verma said he learned that Taylor was selling. It peaked his interest.

“I thought maybe this was a good business to start. I had a conversation with some of the people I know,” Verma explained.

Since purchasing the business and property Verma has been in the process of renovating and improving the space.

“We improved the flooring. A lot of cleaning was necessary – organizing inventory,” he said.

Verma also started to organize the parking area and did some landscaping, including the trimming of bushes. He also put in place improved lighting. An old shack behind the build-

ing also was torn down.

“The roof of this property was in very bad shape. We ended up getting a new roof,” Verma said.

In the future there are plans to pave the parking lot, potentially enlarge it and paint new parking space lines. There are also improvements to inside the store that are planned. Some improvements however will have to wait.

“We are trying to raise the cash to do further renovations inside the store,” Verma explained.

When he purchased the store, Verma said the property’s septic tank broke. The town then indicated that the package store would need to connect to the town’s sewer, according to Verma. This he said is costly. The money for this had to be diverted for the time being from some of the future renovations that are planned.

“There will be some delay. We are trying to raise the cash to do other renovations inside the store,” he said.

As far as its products, Addison continues to have a large selection of wines, according to Verma – with many labels brought in when Taylor still owned the store. Verma said he kept Tom Taylor on as an advisor and mentor after he purchased the store until Taylor passed away in November.

“It was important to have him. By the time [of his passing] I had a lot of the knowledge acquired by him,” said Verma.

The store has also continued to carry other products that Addison became known for under Taylor’s ownership.

“We have wine, we have vodka, we have tequila and all kind of nips. We have beer - traditional beer, lager [and] a good selection of IPAs. We have cocktail drinks and seltzer-based drinks,” said Verma.

Addison’s red wines, rose, cabernet and proseccos have remained very popular according to Verma. The store also has a popular selection of whiskey and bourbon.

“We are a smaller store however we do offer our customers [the ability] to request from us a product they want to buy on a regular basis. We try to bring them in to satisfy the needs of the customer,” Verma explained.

Nips also remain very popular according to Verma. “We sell a lot of Fireball and other nips across the board – Jim Beam whiskey or vodka or high-end nips such as Jägermeister,” he said.

Addison also tries to stay competitive as far as pricing and offer sales when they can.



Addison Fine Wine and Spirits’ new owner Ram Verma says he is committed to continuing his store’s tradition of hands on, personalized, customer service that has made Addison one of Glastonbury’s most popular neighborhood package stores.

“A lot of our products are at minimum price. We are small but very competitive. We are trying to offer the products at a very low price,” said Verma.

Addison will continue to remain a small community neighborhood package store according to Verma.

“That is what our customers like. We pay attention to them. We know each other. We try to sell to our customers very well. I call it a community type of store. We get new customers. They like the store. They like the way we treat them,” he explained.

Another advantage Addison has, according to Verma, is its location. “We are right off the exit and right at the edge of the commercial area,” he said.

Customers can come to the store, get on the exit and continue on their way easily and conveniently he explained - often only in a few minutes.

“It is very convenient compared to going to the larger store and going into the parking lot and walking to the store. Before you know it, it is 20 minutes. Over here – sometimes in less than five minutes – customers are in and out,” said Verma.

According to Verma the store is open every day – though hours vary on Sunday. The store is open from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Saturday, said Verma, and from 12 to 5 p.m. on Sundays.

REAL ESTATE

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MARLBOROUGH APARTMENT FOR RENT: Available October 1st. Quiet area, off the road. 1st floor, 1 bedroom. No smoking. No dogs. Trash/snow removal. Heat/electricity not included. Washer/dryer hooks ups. \$1,400/monthly, plus security deposit, 1st and last month's rent. References. Email michaeldaigle39@gmail.com, 401-489-1869 or jesposito0912@gmail.com, 401-487-2337.

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2 bedrooms. No smoking. Small animals allowed, excluding dogs. Trash/snow removal. Heat/electricity not included. Washer/dryer hooks ups on 1st floor. \$1,500/monthly, plus security deposit, 1st and last month's rent. References. Accepting applications. Email michaeldaigle39@gmail.com, 401-489-1869 or jesposito0912@gmail.com, 401-487-2337.

HOUSING DISCRIMINATION IS ILLEGAL For Help Call 888-247-4401

If anyone refused to rent to you because of your source of income, race, color, national origin, sexual orientation, gender, religion, marital status, age, disability or because you have children, you may have been the victim of illegal housing discrimination. Contact the Connecticut Fair Housing Center.



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If you are interested in becoming a part of our team, please feel free to call us and ask for more information at 860-531-9426

RE3-15-24

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Applicants must have a bachelor’s degree OR must be over 18 years old with a high school diploma or equivalent and documented experience working with school-age children. The position reports to the principal or designee at the location to which they are assigned and is responsible for providing instruction and managing the learning environment.

Applicants for Paraprofessionals and Interventionists require two-year associates degree or equivalent. Substitute Teacher per diem rate is \$120.00 per day. Intervention Specialist pay range: \$21.90-\$30.11 hr. depending on experience Paraeducator pay range:\$19.52-\$27.23 hr. depending on experience

Please apply on-line at <http://www.applitrack.com/easthampton/onlineapp/>. For further information contact Mary Clark, mclark@easthamptonct.org. The Town of East Hampton is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

RE 10-3-25

Building Official/Blight Enforcement Official

Town of Portland, CT (EOE)

Deadline: until filled

Send Town application, resume & 3 letters of reference to: **First Selectman’s Office, P.O. Box 71, Portland, CT 06480** or Email: mceppaglia@portlandct.org

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Qualifications: Associates degree in construction technology or related field +6 years progressively responsible construction inspection experience including at least 2 years supervisory capacity or equivalent combination education/experience. Licensed as a Building Official by the State Building Inspector as required by Section 29-261 of the Connecticut State Statutes. Must possess valid CT driver’s license. Must have thorough knowledge of building inspection principles and practices. CAZEO certification a plus.

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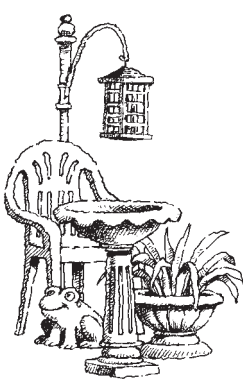
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