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# RIVEREAST ==

# News Bulletin

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

Volume 47, Number 43

Published by The Glastonbury Citizen

November 14, 2025



Teacher Wins National Award... Bacon Academy teacher David Mason was recently honored with the Milken Educator Award, a national award that celebrates outstanding educators across the country with a cash prize of \$25,000 for their dedication and innovation in the field. From left are Connecticut State Department of Education Program Manager Ashley Wright, Milken Educator Awards Senior Vice President Jane Foley, Connecticut Commissioner of Education Charlene M. Russell-Tucker, Mason, Bacon Academy Principal Amy Begue, and Colchester Superintendent of Schools Daniel P. Sullivan. For a full story about Mason winning the award, see page 24. Photo contributed by the Milken Family Foundation.

# Veterans Honored At RHAM Event

By Toriana Williams

On Monday morning, the gymnasium at RHAM Middle School filled with the sound of applause, music and pride. The occasion was one of the most meaningful events of the school year – an annual Veterans Day celebration that has become a deeply rooted tradition.

"We start in the morning," said eighth-grade teacher Karl Jancis, who has organized the event for nearly two decades. He explained that the day begins with a recognition ceremony in the gym, where the entire student body gathers to welcome the veterans. The guests are greeted with enthusiastic applause as the school band performs a series of military marches. The chorus then leads everyone in the national anthem, followed by students reciting the Pledge of Allegiance alongside the veterans, and lastly, one of the visiting veterans delivers a speech.

This year's speaker was Rob Mendulo from the local American Legion. He offered a few words and heartfelt remarks, setting the tone for a day that would be about gratitude, understanding and connection.

In total, a little more than 50 veterans attended the ceremony. Each one represented a different story of service – from recent deployments to long-ago wars – and each was met with appreciation by the school's students and staff.

RHAM Middle School Principal Michael Seroussi, who has been at the school for about 18 years, said that the event is a highlight of the year.

"It's a fantastic program and [Jancis] does a fantastic job coordinating it every year," Seroussi said.

He shared that what means the most to him is hearing from the veterans afterward. He said they truly enjoy visiting the school – both the recognition they receive and the chance to share their experiences – and it's clear from their expressions, as well as the students', how much the event is valued and appreciated.

"It's one of those events that sort of tugs at your heart," he added.

After the assembly, the event became more personal. Jancis said "the important part of the day" is when veterans are divided among different student teams and visit classrooms to talk directly with the students.

"They have small discussions where they're able to talk about their service and the things they did and why they served and why it's important," Jancis said.

Students listened closely, often asking thoughtful questions about what life in the military was like. "Middle school kids have a lot of energy," Jancis said with a laugh.

He noted that students listen with full attention as the veterans speak, and many eagerly raise their hands to ask questions about the veterans' experience. "It really is a time where the kids and the veterans are able to bond together."

Jancis began the tradition around 20 years
See Veterans Honored, page 3

# New Coalition Aims to Tackle Food Insecurity

By Anne Lilburn

A newly formed group of East Hampton community members are working together to take on the issue of food insecurity and hunger.

Motivated by concern over the interruption of SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) food benefits during the recent federal government shutdown, the group has been meeting to pool ideas and figure out how to collaborate and keep residents and community members informed of local resources.

Organizer Kim Clouser said she was already involved in fighting food insecurity in the area as a volunteer at the Epoch Arts Food Pantry. When she heard that the government shutdown might interrupt SNAP benefits, she became very concerned that East Hampton residents might be affected.

At the same time, other groups were having similar concerns and trying to figure out their own creative solutions. Clouser organized an initial meeting of 24 concerned citizens and gathered them at East Hampton Congregational Church to discuss how various people could collaborate to ensure community members

didn't go hungry during this time.

One of the people Clouser invited was Janet Royce, who is a co-administrator of the Buy Nothing East Hampton Facebook group. The Buy Nothing group had recently launched a project, which it is calling the "Buy Nothing East Hampton Food Fight," to collect and distribute food in ways that Royce said were in keeping with the "hyper-local, neighbor-toneighbor gifting" that is the founding spirit of the Buy Nothing East Hampton community. East Hampton residents can fill out an online Google form where they anonymously indicate that they need food and provide their address. From there, Buy Nothing community members contribute to fill the need.

Royce emphasizes that she is not trying to start a new food pantry. As of now, she has been storing much of the donated food in her living room, and volunteers have been coordinating to make sure that food gets where it needs to go. She says she knows that's not sustainable in the long term, but she hopes that it'll help get anyone in need through the current rough times.

Over at Epoch Arts' food pantry, where Clouser volunteers, artistic director and food pantry lead Elizabeth Namen said she hasn't seen a ton of increased need yet, but she has seen a lot of fear.

Namen said her food pantry has its origins in providing food to students in Epoch Arts programs who were facing hunger or food insecurity, and emphasized that Epoch's food pantry did not require any formal proof of need for people to receive aid. She said that they scheduled appointments for clients to get food, and also hosted meals for students on a regular basis.

The group that Clouser organized that first night set out on a plan to bring awareness to the resources that currently exist in East Hampton, and they have since launched a website, The Belltown Food Hub (www.belltownfoodhub. com), where those looking for food resources can find links to either seek out support, or to volunteer to help themselves. The page contains links to the town food bank and local food pantries, as well as a link to the Buy Nothing group's See New Coalition, page 25

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#### Cover Story • Co

#### ★ Veterans Honored, cont. from page 1

ago, alongside his fellow teacher the late Dawn Mallory. He explained that the idea began as a discussion about ways to help students become more aware of and involved in their community. He said he and Mallory realized that veterans were a group often overlooked or not well connected with the students, so the event was created to help bridge that gap and show that veterans are an important part of everyday life - people who live and work among them as teachers, public employees, barbers, truck drivers and more.

'These are everyday people of a community, including their own parents and grandparents, that they don't often recognize or realize," Jancis said.

When the event first began, it was a modest effort involving only a single team of students and a handful of veterans. The overwhelming appreciation from both sides inspired Jancis and Mallory to expand it to the entire middle

To this day, RHAM's Veterans Day celebration remains a hands-on learning experience. Students create thank-you notes for attending veterans, write to their own family members who have served and even make paracord bracelets that are shipped out to first responders and military personnel across the country.

Another favorite tradition among students is the working dog demonstration, a returning feature from the National Guard.

'We have a working dog group that comes and they show how the dogs work and their training," Jancis explained. "To be honest, it's one of the highlights for the kids."

He mentioned that students are naturally

fond of animals, so having the working dogs visit the school is always a big hit with them. These military dogs are trained for demanding tasks - detecting explosives, guarding and assisting their handlers.

"They're members of the military," he said. "They really have a strict training protocol, so not all dogs actually make it to service."

This year, the school added a special new gesture. RHAM presented plaques and display cases to the American Legion and National Guard's working dog group as a token of appreciation.

The plaques had been handcrafted years ago by substitute teacher and veteran Kurt Munson, then refurbished by the school's woodshop and art department.

"We sanded them down, coated them and had members of the art department paint them," Jancis said. "We were able to present them as a 'thank you for your service.''

For Jancis, the annual Veterans Day event is more than a school tradition - it's a lesson in empathy and citizenship.

"It's one of the most important days during the year," he said, noting that it's one of the events that students tend to remember most even after they move on to high school. "It's one of those opportunities for them to really learn lessons that are outside of school books."

What began as a small, simple idea has grown into one of RHAM Middle School's most meaningful traditions. It has built a bridge between classrooms and community, past and present. As the applause fades each year, what remains is a sense of connection that no textbook could ever teach.

# READY, SET, 860-916-3517 **Margaret Wilcox**



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#### AHM News & Notes

AHM Youth and Family Services has announced the following programs. Registration is required, at ahmyouth.recdesk.com.

Open Arts & Crafts Studio: Wednesday, Nov. 19, 6 p.m. This workshop will include a variety of projects and supplies, including seasonal and holiday-themed crafts. Participants select DIY projects of their choice. All materials will be provided. All ages are welcome.

Kids Yoga "Thankful & You Know It": Thursday, Nov. 20, at 5:15 p.m., for "fall yoga" centered around gratitude and love. Kids will

#### **RHAM Alumni Soccer Game**

Attention all former RHAM boys and girls soccer players - including graduating RHAM seniors! The seventh Annual Jim Fromme Memorial RHAM Alumni Soccer Game will take place at 11 a.m. Saturday, Nov. 29, at Oakwood in Glastonbury. Drinks and pizza will follow

If able to attend, email Pam at pamfromme1@gmail.com or call 860-478-0772 to confirm attendance. But if your plans change at the last minute, just show up!



practice maple breathing and then head out to the "forest" for a sweet Friendsgiving themed yoga adventure while learning a variety of animal-themed yoga poses. Class will end with a few mindful games and a relaxing savasana. This class is geared toward children 4-10. All levels are welcome.

#### Holiday Bazaar & Artisan Fair

Congregation Kol Haverim, located at 1079 Hebron Ave., Glastonbury, will hold its annual Holiday Bazaar & Artisan Fair Sunday, Nov. 16, from 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Buy local and handmade from 30+ artisans. There will be the Judaica Gift Shop, specialty foods, candles, winter wear, pottery, jewelry and more. Also, you can enter to win 30+ raffle

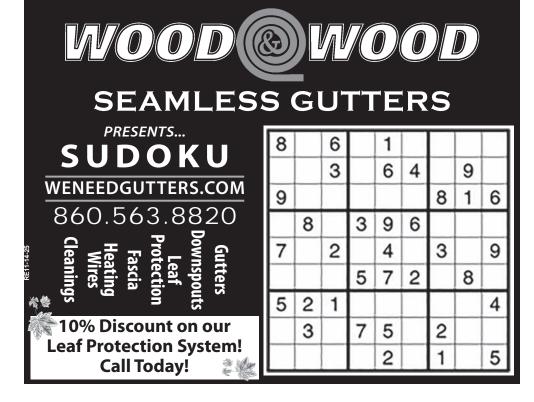
There will be free parking and free entry.

#### Giving Tuesday is Dec. 2

AHM Youth and Family Services is gearing up for #GivingTuesday on Dec. 2.

AHM is aiming to raise \$10,000 to fund youth and family mental health support through our outpatient clinical program, student support services at all schools in the towns AHM serves, as well as outreach through its "HERE 4 YOU" mental health initiative.

All donations are welcome. For more information, visit ahmyouth.org.



#### From the Editor's Desk

## **Observations & Ruminations**

By Mike Thompson

You've likely heard by now: last Tuesday, people from coast to coast showed up in large numbers to cast their ballots and make their voices heard. In many places across Connecticut, that also rang true – but here in *Rivereast*-land, the results were more mixed.

Don't get me wrong; the turnout was still great, for a municipal election anyway. Yes, not even half the number of registered voters cast ballots, but still, anytime it's above 35% in a town election, I'm pleased. Turnout should be higher than this, of course; municipal elections are frankly more likely to have a direct impact on you than a presidential one or even a state one. But they just don't carry the same juice; it is what it is.

For example, according to the secretary of the state's website, the statewide turnout for this election was 36.1%. While that's up from the 33.7% in 2023, and up even more from the 32.1% turnout in 2021, it's still not even half of the 76.2% that showed up for last year's presidential election - and also markedly down from the 57.6% voter turnout in the 2022 state

Still, 36.1% is up from the past two municipal election cycles, and thus something to be celebrated.

If you do a deeper dive into the closer-tohome numbers, you'll see the results here are rather, like I said, mixed.

According to CT Mirror, voter turnout this year was 42.6%, up from the 37% in 2021. On the flipside, though, Colchester saw a 40.2% turnout this year - a marked decrease from 47.5% in 2021. And in Portland - where, granted, the first selectman was running unopposed - turnout was way down; 41.4% this year versus 54.9% in 2021.

Yes, when you look at the state as a whole, more towns went up than down this year. For example, my hometown of Manchester saw a turnout 8% higher than in 2021 - and Deep River and Lyme saw huge increases of 33.7% and 31.2%, respectively.

What does all of this numbers analysis mean? Turnout was good this year, in some cases very good, but it's just a reminder that when you hear terms like "record-setting," "astronomical" and "turned out in droves," look closer. Things may not always be what they seem.

This was also the first municipal election to feature the early voting option in Connecticut. I certainly took advantage of that; did

According to CT News Junkie, 170,920 Connecticut residents participated in early voting. Of those, Democrats were definitely the majority; 83,479 Democrats voted early as opposed to just 36,525 Republicans. (About 50,000 of the early voters were not affiliated with either party.)

It'll be interesting to see how the early voting trends continue in the future. Personally, I think it's a wonderful option. It certainly makes the process of casting a ballot a lot more convenient.

Yes, while technically the next major holiday is Thanksgiving, we know the one that's on the majority of folks' minds – Christmas.

You'll see a ton of Christmas-related events



First-Place FC... Belltown FC rounded out its fall season with a 3-1 victory over East Windsor. An undefeated 4-0-1 league record secured a first-place finish. Match after match the boys displayed a solid defense accompanied by strong attacks. The team is anxiously awaiting the spring season. Pictured are, back row, Coach Omer Beristan, Sawyer McCarty-Nowak, Ollie McCarthy-Nowak, Ravin Perera, Kade Sheehan, Xavier Carillo, Captain Charlie McCarthy-Nowak, Eli Mitchard, Hunter Supinski, Ben Kennedy, Aiden Pierson, Coach Will Nafis; front row, Jeffery Walitynski, Gavin Ladue, Mitch Bombaci, Liam Twiss. Missing in photo Eli Laplant, Joel and Nolan Zavattero, Hudson D'Elia, Macklin Davis.

Reader Forum • Reader Forum • Reader Forum • Reader Forum

#### Thank You, Hebron

Dear Friends and Neighbors:

I want to express my heartfelt thanks to everyone who took the time to vote in this election and for the trust you've placed in me to continue serving on Hebron's Planning and Zoning Commission.

It's been an honor to work alongside so many dedicated residents who care deeply about our town's future. Together, we've shown that thoughtful planning, respect for our land, and a strong sense of community can guide Hebron forward in a positive way.

I'm grateful for your support and look forward to continuing the important work of keeping Hebron a wonderful place to live, work, and

#### With appreciation, David Sousa - Hebron

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

advertised in this paper over the next several weeks. Occasionally, you may even see some mentioned in this column, when one is maybe a little bit out of the Rivereast circulation area but still within driving distance. (Though, this is Connecticut; basically everything in the state is within driving distance.)

Such is the case this week, when I'm sharing the news that, in nearby Bolton, St. Maurice Church will hold its 54th annual Christmas Fair, entitled "Sleigh Bells Ring," on Saturday, Nov. 22, from 9 a.m.-3 p.m., at 32 Hebron

This holiday event features a Country Store filled with homemade jams, muffin and cook-

#### **Hunger Has No Place** In Marlborough

The outpouring of support from voters on 11/4 for our food bank shows who we are—a community that cares.

While Connecticut has stepped up to fund SNAP through November, the hardship won't end on Nov. 30. Our neighbors, families, veterans, military families, furloughed federal workers, and seniors still face rising food prices, higher healthcare premiums, and increased fuel costs as campaign promises go unfulfilled at the federal level. These vital SNAP benefits help, but they can't meet every need.

Now is the time to continue to give back please donate, volunteer, and check in on those who are struggling. Because in our town, no one should ever go hungry.

With gratitude, Karen Wilkinson - Marlborough

ie mixes, "sweet treats," assorted decorated wreaths and stocking stuffers galore. Fresh holiday evergreen baskets are featured along with a "Take-A-Chance" raffle basket booth with prizes. The "Second Time Around" shoppe holds special treasures. Also, there will be homemade apple pies, lunch - and many crafters.

It sounds like something for everyone! So if you don't have any plans next Saturday, it might be worth taking the short drive to Bolton and pick up some goodies.

See you next week.

#### **Bulletin Board**

A couple of weeks ago, my good friend A.W., a masterful gardener among other qualities, asked me if I'd like a bunch of carrots from his bumper harvest. Never one to refuse a free any thing, I said yes and returned home with a huge bunch of beautiful carrots which I presented to my wife with a suitable flourish.

'Don't say I never gave you anything," I said magnanimously.

While not perhaps as overjoyed as if I'd handed over a pair of diamond earrings or the keys to a brand new Lexus or something, she was suitably impressed with the vegetables of my friend's labors. "I'll have to peel them," she said. "Peel them?" I said. "Who peels carrots?"

"Everybody," she replied.

"My family never peeled carrots," I said. "I distinctly remember my father taking carrots out of the bag in the refrigerator and just eating them. I'm sure he didn't peel the things. He was about as likely to stand at the sink and skin a carrot as he was to put on a tiara and roller skate down Main Street."

She gave me one of those "don't blame me for your peculiar childhood" looks and reiterated, You're supposed to peel them."

"Why?" I said.

"Because they grow in the dirt."

"So do potatoes," I said. "You can still eat the jackets."

"You wash potatoes," she said (like that explained anything).

"So wash the carrots."

She sighed. "Just take my word for it. You're supposed to peel them."

"Must be an Italian thing," I muttered to myself (I thought).

"It is not," she retorted.

A couple of days later, I saw A.W. and after thanking him again for the carrots, I remarked, Let me ask you something. My wife says you have to peel carrots."

"Of course you have to peel them," he replied.

"I don't get it," I said. "Why on earth would you have to peel a carrot? I remember my father....etc. etc. etc."

"I can't believe you are how old?" he observed. "An adult male, married with children, functioning in society all this time, masquerading as a stalwart and mature member of the

If I'd expected support or understanding I was about to be sadly disabused—or abused as it

community and you don't know that you're supposed to peel carrots." (I'm paraphrasing a bit here, but you get the idea.)

"My wife says it's because they grow in the dirt," I said.

"Right," he said.

"So do potatoes," I argued.

He just shook his head and went on with some sort of malarky about how everybody knows you're supposed to peel carrots by which time I'd stopped listening because that's what I typically do when someone contradicts me. It's a gift I've had since childhood.

Anyway, when I got home that day I Googled "Do you have to peel carrots?"

The answer, it turns out, is NO. No you do not have to peel carrots. Especially if you're just going to eat them raw. It's a good idea to peel them if you're going to cook them because the skins can turn a little bitter and dry when they're cooked. However, according to JUST ONE OF SEVERAL BILLION ADVISORIES, "As long as you wash and scrub the root vegetables before chopping, dicing or otherwise preparing them for a recipe, you're likely okay."

I promptly e-mailed this revelation to my friend A.W. who replied something to the effect that you can find any kind of idiocy on line if you look hard enough.

This indicates to me that I'm not the only one who stops listening when he's contradicted. Anyway, I'll concede that it's probably a good idea to peel carrots when you plan to cook them. As for eating them raw, I'll start peeling carrots when I see Bugs Bunny standing at the sink with a paring knife.

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.

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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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#### Wreaths Across America

To the Editor:

Please sponsor Wreaths Across America program to honor our veterans. On Dec. 13, wreaths will be placed on veterans' graves in Townsend Cemetery, Olde Andover Burying Ground Cemetery, and at the Andover Congregational Church Cemetery to honor our veterans. This is an excellent program that will take place on the same day across the nation.

Visit www.wreathsacrossamerica.org/ct1070 to honor our veterans.

Thank you, Cathy Palazzi – Andover

# Thank You, Hebron Friends and Neighbors

To the Editor:

I am deeply honored and grateful for your support during the recent election. Thank you for taking the time to vote and for placing your trust in me to represent the RHAM community's students, families, and educators.

I am committed to providing every student with the opportunity to succeed. I am committed to listening to your voices, working collaboratively with fellow board members, and making thoughtful decisions that reflect the best interests of our schools and community.

To all who voted, to the DTC Chair, Cris Lawrence, to the DTC members and fellow candidates, and to those who offered encouragement along the way – please know how much I appreciate you. Your engagement and dedication make a real difference!

With sincere gratitude, Jessica Hall – Hebron Member-Elect, RHAM Board of Education

#### **Hand Count Needed**

To the Editor:

The municipal elections are the elections where the voice of each citizen is the loudest. The decisions made by those governing our town tend to impact our lives more quickly than those at the state or federal level. Thank you to all of you who decided that voting in this election was important. Hebron had an unusually high showing this year. Congratulations to all of the candidates who won their seats.

There is a bit of a dark cloud looming over the process leading up to the election as well as some of the early voting days where statutory protocols were not followed. The exclusion of the Republican Registrar from several of the planning steps, including the scheduling of the tabulator machine testing is an important process. State statute requires one day's notice (State Statute 9-244) to both the Republican and Democratic Town Committees so that they can get the word out to interested individuals. This year the notice was essentially not provided. The Democratic registrar unilaterally made the appointment arrangements. The Republican registrar, under the impression that Thursday or Friday were the target days, inquired about the arrangements during a Republican Town Committee meeting on Monday, 10/27 at 7:30pm+/-. The Democratic registrar stated that 10/28 is the test date and stated that the time was not known. The provided date was a surprise to all in attendance at our meeting, including the Republican registrar. The lack of detail was unsettling.

The testing of the tabulators was done at the polling location for Early Voting which automatically removes the opportunity for any candidate to observe the process. There is little to no way for us to know who actually observed the process, who handled the tabulator machines once tested, nor how the machines were handled since observers were effectively blocked from the process.

One way to salvage the integrity of this elec-

tion and reestablish trust in the process is to have a hand count of this municipal election in order to verify that the machine results match the results attained with the hand count. I see no other solution available that would significantly impact the trust of our voting population.

Thank you, Jason Guidone, Chair Hebron Republican Town Committee

#### An Honor to Continue

To the Editor:

I would like to thank the Andover voters who turned out in last week's election, and appreciate those who selected me for reelection to our Planning and Zoning Commission. I enjoy this position and take it seriously. It is an honor to be able to continue.

Leigh Ann Hutchinson - Andover

#### Hall of Fame Thanks

To the Editor:

On Friday, Oct. 24, at Blackledge Country Club in Hebron, the East Hampton Athletic Hall of Fame celebrated its 19th year by inducting 2002 graduate Blake Helveston, 2008 graduates Tyler Wosleger and Nicole Muhlberg, 2014 graduate Marvin Gorgas, and the 2014 Boys Soccer team that were Co- State Champions.

The nomination committee congratulates our newest inductees. Since 2006, the Hall of Fame has inducted 44 athletes, seven coaches, eight teams, and five athletic contributors.

The nomination process is now open for 2026 nominations. Please visit our website ehahof. wixsite.com/bellringer to obtain a nomination packet, learn more about the Hall of Fame and the selection process, and check out the past inductees.

We would also like to thank our sponsors. We would not be able to run the ceremony and banquet without them. They are Ken Barber & Associates, Chatham Property Services, George Mantikas, D.M.D., Mark's United Auto Parts, American Distilling, Dickinson's Witch Hazel, Classic Auto, Center Package Store, Loco Pero, Ace Hardware, Paul's & Sandy's Too, Blackledge Country Club, Two Brothers Cafe, and Rule of 3 Brewing.

The Hall of Fame is also looking for those interested in becoming members of our committee. If interested, email me at seidlt@sbcglobal.net.

Sincerely, Tom Seidl East Hampton Athletic Hall of Fame

#### **Thank You for Your Support**

Dear Hebron Residents:

I am deeply honored to have been elected to serve on the Board of Finance. I want to sincerely thank each and every one of you who took the time to vote, share your thoughts, and participate in this election. Your support and confidence mean a great deal to me.

I am grateful for the opportunity to represent our community and to work alongside my fellow board members to ensure that our town's finances are managed responsibly, transparently, and with the long-term interests of all residents in mind.

Public service is strongest when it reflects the voices and values of the people it represents. I look forward to listening, learning, and working collaboratively to make sound financial decisions that sustain and strengthen our community.

Thank you again for your trust and support. I'm excited to get to work and to serve you with integrity and dedication.

With appreciation, Brian O'Reilly – Amston Member-Elect, Hebron Board of Finance

#### **Guilt Must Be Proven**

To the Editor:

Back on May 23, Jim Hallas published a Bulletin Board piece on the Karen Read trial. In it, he made clear that he believed Read was guilty, even going so far as to call her attorneys an obnoxious collection of toads and trolls. I wanted to respond at the time, but budget season and then an election kept me busy.

According to prosecutors, Karen Read backed her SUV into her boyfriend, Boston Police Officer John O'Keefe, killing him and shattering her tail light in the process. It sounded straightforward enough – until you looked closer.

Once you dig into the evidence, that story collapses. The state's own medical examiner ruled O'Keefe's cause of death undetermined, not homicide. Prosecutors couldn't produce a single medical expert willing to say his injuries matched a car strike. Aside from a skull fracture, O'Keefe had no broken bones, no bruising

– nothing consistent with being hit by a vehicle. How could a tail light shatter from impact when the supposed victim shows no corresponding injuries? It couldn't. The crash never happened, and defense experts proved as much through detailed reconstructions.

On June 18, a jury found Karen Read not guilty of killing John O'Keefe. And this wasn't a close call or a "benefit of the doubt" verdict. Several jurors have since spoken publicly, describing her as flat-out innocent. They may not know exactly what happened that night – but they are certain it wasn't a car accident.

Karen Read is finally free, though the path there was far harder than it should have been. Meanwhile, the O'Keefe family may never get real answers, largely due to a deeply flawed investigation – one led by Massachusetts State Police Trooper Michael Proctor, who has since been fired. Now, other cases he handled are under review for possible misconduct.

Thankfully, we live in a country where guilt must be proven beyond a reasonable doubt – not merely declared by the state. One can't help but wonder what Mr. Hallas thinks of the case

Michael Dubreuil - Colchester

#### **Food Drive Thanks**

To the Editor:

Every year I write how thankful I am for the generosity of the residents of Portland who donate to our yearly food drive and this year is no different than the rest. This year we asked for 1,000 bags of food to honor my brother Shaun, and we received 1461 bags and \$700 in donations! I am overwhelmed by the outpouring of support for the food bank and our community members in need.

I would also like to thank all the volunteers that came out to deliver and pick up the bags as well as empty the bags and mark the food.

Most of all I would like to thank Kevin Back.

Most of all I would like to thank Kevin Backman and his volunteers that keep Portland Food Bank running every week.

Happy Thanksgiving, Kelly Mainetti

See Letters, page 6



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★ Letters cont. from page 5

#### Thank You

To the Editor:

I want to thank all Colchester citizens that took the time to vote in our town's municipal election! I am truly humbled by those that cast their vote for me to serve on the Board of Finance. Thank you for not only trusting me to serve but to serve with my fellow Democrats elected to BOF, Sean Gillespie and Jillian Vinci! We are ready to do the hard work ahead and please stay connected with your local govern-

Krista Kardys Member-Elect, Colchester Board of Finance

#### Thank You, Portland

To the Editor:

I would like to thank everyone who came out to vote on Tuesday November 4th! It was wonderful to see so many residents turn out! I would also like to thank all the candidates who ran from both parties. They volunteer their time and energy to help make our town better for everyone. I appreciate your support and will work hard on the Board of Assessment Appeals and look forward to serving a third term for the residents of Portland.

> William Donahue, Member Portland Board of Assessment Appeals

#### **Heartfelt Thanks**

To the Editor:

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to the residents of Andover for your overwhelming support and votes in this year's election. I am truly honored and humbled to serve as your new town clerk.

Your confidence in me means so much, and I'm deeply grateful for the encouragement, kind words, and trust you've shown throughout this process. I look forward to continuing the strong tradition of friendly, knowledgeable service that Andover residents have come to expect and de-

To celebrate and connect, I invite everyone to an Open House at the Town Clerk's Office on Monday, Nov. 24, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., at Andover Town Hall. This will be a wonderful opportunity to stop by, say hello, and share your thoughts and ideas for the future of our community. Light refreshments will be served, and all are welcome.

Thank you again for your incredible support. I'm excited to begin this new chapter and to continue serving the town we all love. I look forward to seeing many familiar faces and meeting some new ones on Nov. 24.

Sincerely, Roberta Dougherty **Andover Town Clerk** 

#### Thank You, Hebron

Dear Hebron Friends and Neighbors:

Thank you for voting. And thank you for your vote of confidence in me - and my entire team as we look ahead to Hebron's future in our new roles. I'm honored that you have decided to elect me to another term on the Board of Selectmen, and I get to serve this next term alongside my newly elected colleague, Jan Lawrence, and current board members Keith Petit, Claudia Riley, and Sean Fitzgerald - all wonderful colleagues and friends. We are ready to work on behalf of

Whether you voted for me - or didn't vote for me - I am going to be your selectperson (soon to be councilor). I'm here to listen to your concerns and get answers to your questions. Work will begin soon on the things we talked about on the campaign trail - researching a homestead exemption, working on housing choices, and responsible business development in our downtown.

It takes a team, which is why I'm so proud of everyone on Row A that was elected: Town Clerk, Board of Finance, Planning & Zoning, and both Boards of Education. I'm also grateful for the many volunteers on our campaign who came together with a common cause under a great leader in Cris Lawrence. We are so excited for this opportunity, because we're your neighbors, and we care about the same things you do. Again, thank you, and let's get started.

> 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.

#### **Preparing Your Home** for Aging

To the Editor:

When we think about growing older, it's easy to assume that if we're healthy and active today, we don't need to worry about the "what-ifs." But the truth is, life can change in an instant. A fall, an illness, or a sudden shift in mobility can make even the simplest daily tasks more difficult. That's why it's so important to plan ahead — to make your home safe and ready for the years ahead, even if you don't need those

Simple adjustments such as better lighting, grab bars in bathrooms, or reducing clutter can make a big difference. Thinking proactively about your home environment helps you maintain independence and gives peace of mind to you and your loved ones.

To support our community in aging safely and confidently at home, the Portland Senior Center will be hosting a series of local educational sessions featuring real-life residents and professionals who understand the challenges and solutions firsthand. These conversations will cover everything from practical home modifications to resources available right here

If you'd like to stay informed about upcoming events, sign up for our newsletter or check the Portland section of the Rivereast News Bulletin for details. Together, we can create homes that help us live well not just for today, but for all the days ahead.

Sarah Elliott-Caratasios, LCSW Director and Municipal Agent, Portland **Waverly Senior Center** 

#### **Letter of Appreciation**

I am writing to express my appreciation for newly elected Republican registrar, Michele May. Throughout our time working together, I found Michele to be dedicated, hardworking and attentive to every detail of her work. She provided timely updates at every meeting and maintained consistent communication with the secretary of state's office.

Michele demonstrated a welcoming attitude toward new participants, offering encouragement and support to those entering the process. She also showed great care and consideration for all the pole workers, ensuring their needs were met and their efforts valued. With constant transparency and her willingness to share her knowledge and information with anyone interested have set an excellent example of leadership and public service. I applaud her for her professionalism and dedication to her role.

Brenda Nicolo - Hebron

#### Thanks to Hebron Voters!

I wanted to extend a heartfelt "Thank You!" to everyone who participated in the recent elec-

First, thank you to the voters who took the time to cast a ballot, whether via early voting or on election day. The turnout in Hebron was amazing - nearly 3,000 people came out to make their voices heard.

I'm also very grateful to the poll workers, the volunteers, the candidates of both parties, and their families. Our democracy would not be possible without your hard work and dedication. Thank you for stepping up.

To everyone who supported me for the Hebron Board of Finance, and to those that supported the Hebron Democratic slate, thank vou for your trust and confidence. I will be honored to do my part to serve our community. Whether you voted for us or not, we continue to welcome your thoughts, ideas, questions, and concerns at dems@hebrondems.com.

Finally, I wanted to give a personal thank you to all the members of the Hebron DTC for your partnership, encouragement, and tireless hard work. I'm proud to work alongside such a dedi-

cated group of neighbors. There's a lot to do, but I'm looking forward to partnering with all the boards and residents to Make Hebron Stronger, Together!

> **Adam Ockman** Member-Elect, Hebron Board of Finance



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#### An Enormous Thank You!

To the Editor:

I want to send an enormous thank you to the voters of Hebron for coming out and making your voices heard in this year's municipal election. You really can make a difference when you show up and vote, and this election proved it. It's that kind of community spirit that keeps Hebron such a great place to live.

I also want to congratulate all of our candidates on their wins! I'm so proud of the work they put in, and I know they'll do a great job in their new roles helping move our town forward.

Cris Lawrence, Chair **Hebron Democratic Town Committee** 

#### A Tremendous Honor

To the Editor:

I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to the voters of Hebron for turning out in record numbers and for electing me to serve on the Hebron Board of Selectmen. It's an incredible honor to have your trust and support, and I'm truly grateful for the opportunity to represent our community.

Congratulations to my running mate and colleague, Selectman Tiffany Thiele, and to every Democratic candidate on our slate — all of whom were elected! Together, this team brings a wealth of experience, dedication, and community spirit that will serve Hebron well in the years ahead.

A special thank-you goes to our amazing volunteers and supporters who worked tirelessly throughout the campaign. Your energy, encouragement, and belief in our shared vision for Hebron made this success possible.

As I begin this new role, I remain committed to keeping Hebron a place where families can thrive, local voices are heard, and thoughtful decisions guide our town forward. I look forward to working collaboratively with residents, fellow board members, and town staff to serve our community with transparency, respect, and

Thank you again for this tremendous honor and congratulations to the entire Hebron Democratic team on a historic win!

> Sincerely, Jan Lawrence - Hebron

Note: Lawrence is a member-elect of the Hebron Board of Selectmen but said she is writing as an individual.

#### **Hebron Election**

To the Editor:

Hebron experienced record voter turnout for this municipal election, which is a wonderful sign of our community's engagement and com-

We are very pleased with the introduction of the new ES&S tabulators. They performed well overall, though we encountered a few challenges related to the "newness factor." The machines take more time to scan and evaluate each ballot, providing voter feedback as needed. To improve efficiency, one possible solution is to run two tabulators for in-person voting. Since Hebron has seven machines available, I recommend using two going forward.

We also ran out of Election Day ballots. Again, ordering ballots is never an exact science as it is based upon fluctuating voter turnout trends and history. We solved this problem by implementing the unused Early Voting ballots.

To explain further, because each tabulator is programmed for a specific ballot type, switching between Election Day and Early Voting ballots initially caused an error message. Our team quickly identified a solution by bringing the Early Voting tabulator back online for use following its use for merely tabulating Early Voting results. This allowed us to continue processing ballots, albeit less smoothly than we would have liked. Ultimately, we had to exit out of the previous tally of early votes to start over with the inperson tally. Effectively the machine count read zero because we started at zero at the switch over. Our ES&S technician commended our team for the prompt and effective workaround.

Looking ahead, I recommend the following

- Use two tabulators for in-person voting. - Increase the number of ballots ordered, an-

ticipating continued voter growth.

- Hire additional poll workers to maintain ef-

ficiency and reduce wait times.

It remains a privilege to serve the voters of Hebron. We're committed to continuous improvement and look forward to an even smoother process in future elections.

Sincerely, Michele May Republican Registrar of Voters Hebron

#### I Am Grateful

To the Editor:

In spite of the recent overall losses experienced nationwide by the Republicans, I owe everyone who came out to vote, to express their views and exercise their constitutional right, a thank you. Yes, you selected me to sit on the Board of Finance and to you, I am grateful. For those who didn't choose me, I will serve you as well as I possibly can too.

I will advocate a reduction in costs overall and insist on efficiency as well as cost-effectiveness in our small-town governance. I will remember the words that I heard about your property taxes going up and getting basically nothing in return, especially for those who have no offspring in the school system. Taxation will never be "fair" but we can make it a wee bit more palatable. That bill is a killer for most and I too feel in concert

I will write to you via the Rivereast, so stay tuned on occasion asking for your opinions and input regardless of whether we agree or not, I will still listen. And thank you once again for the privilege of serving the town on the Board of Finance.

Alison Walck Member, East Hampton Board of Finance

#### **Election Day Thanks**

To the Editor:

Marlborough's municipal elections are over, and newly elected members of boards and commissions will be settling into their roles, each committed to doing their best to serve the community that put trust in them.

A safe and successful election cycle is dependent on many people who have not always been recognized for their effort. Their commitment is not dependent on their party but on their devotion to community. The registrars of voters, Sandy Adams and Michelle Kacy, have had to work tirelessly for long hours, through trainings, technology, endless questions and concerns. Former ROV, Ann Kilby, has stood by to offer support and assistance as needed. For two long weeks, volunteers from both parties have sat through early voting days assuring everyone the opportunity to vote. On Election Day, moderator Russ Salvador again demonstrated the calm, ever present support to ensure efficient voting and integrity.

I write of another factor: the non-partisan enjoyment of working together among people who often are only in the same place at the same time during an election. Enjoyment is an honest word here. It is friendly, supportive, and respectful. It is all different ages, beliefs, and political leanings, working together for democracy's greatest foundation: the right, and responsibility, to vote.

Yet a further demonstration of our smalltown values is the bipartisan support of Marlborough's Food Bank. Food and money were collected at both party's tents, and again later at the Dems' after party, in support of our food bank and its value to our community. We are fortunate to live in Marlborough.

Ann Terezakis - Marlborough

#### Thank You, Voters

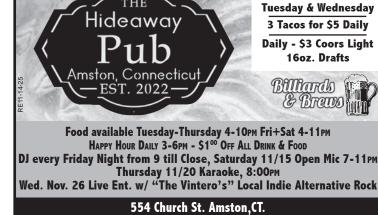
To the Editor:

Election Day has come and gone but the sentiment remains clear. Colchester residents are pleased with the progress that Bernie Dennler has brought to town since taking office two years ago. Earning 69% of the votes cast, Bernie, along with the entire Democratic team, secured a solid victory last Tuesday. Congratulations to them all. They can be proud of having run a positive campaign rooted in their common love for Colchester and the desire to do what is right

See Letters, page 8

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★ Letters cont. from page 7

for our town.

Thank you to the voters of Colchester, no matter how you voted, for making it to the polls. Our turnout was 40% and shows that our citizens are interested in being part of the process. Please stay involved by attending meetings, staying informed, continuing to exercise your civic duty in the voting booth, and even serving on a volunteer board or commission. Your participation is critical to our collective success. To those of you who spoke to us at your doors to share your ideas, the pleasure was ours.

As DTC chair, I cannot thank the people who contributed to this campaign in any way enough. Your passion, dedication, support, and teamwork made this happen. Every letter, word of encouragement, yard sign, effort to mobilize voters, and donation made a difference. The involvement of wonderful volunteers, alongside tenacious candidates, made this happen.

Speaking on behalf of the Democratic candidates, we thank you for placing your trust in the Democratic team. The newly elected officials are ready to stand up and deliver to keep Colchester moving forward.

With gratitude, Monica Swyden, Chair **Colchester Democratic Town Committee** 

#### Thank You Everyone!

Dear Citizens of Colchester:

I wish to thank everyone who supported me throughout my run as a Democratic candidate for Colchester Board of Education There are so many to thank: Monica, Bernie, Rosemary, Denise, Gussie, my dear sons Keith and Kyle, my wonderful sisters Gail, Joan and Karen, dear friends, the DTC team, every volunteer, my neighbors, everyone who wrote letters of support, and strangers that I met along the way. Thank you for believing in me as I could not have been successful without each and every one of you.

It was an experience that I never thought I would have, especially at this point in my life. I am so pleased to have learned so much about running for office, from what goes on behind the scenes that I had no knowledge of, to the more obvious. The team worked extremely hard and we were successful in securing seats in every area. It was a hard but fun run. Thank you to the entire team of candidates- you were fan-

Lastly, thank you to the citizens of Colchester for placing your faith in me your new representative on the BOE. I am excited to serve you and to have a role in making sure that our schools are the very best they can possibly be.

Thank you everyone!

Sincerely, Nancy Nelson Member-Elect, **Colchester Board of Education** 

#### **Hebron DPWY**

To the Editor:

Last week I shared information on the Hebron Department of Public Works Survey of 2022, where 68.57% of respondents said, "Keep Public Works at Old Colchester Road." I thought it might be helpful to share some of the reasons why these results came to be. The importance of keeping Public Works at Old Colchester Road centered around two significant issues, the value of drinking water and the environment, and the value of historic preservation.

The environmental significance is documented in two major environmental studies, The Mapleridge Farms study of 1992 and the Central Business District study of 2000. These reports were compiled by a State of Connecticut Environmental Review Team and focused on the properties flanking Kinney Road. Both studies identified a series of fractures in the underlying bedrock that are the source of drinking well water for nearby homes. The 2000 CBD reports on page 9, "A corollary to increased water supply, greater fracture density also suggests increased permeability and faster rates of groundwater dispersal and also faster rates of dispersal of potential contaminants that may enter the groundwater system. Dispersal direction of the NNW-SSE lineament fractures will likely be towards the SSE and Kinney Road..." These findings were confirmed in December 2022 by William Warzecha, CT DEEP specialist in groundwater contamination, who reported, "Given the likely threat of pollution to ground water and domestic wells on Kinney and Millstream Roads... It is not environmentally conscious to locate the facility in an area that represents a significant risk to drinking water quality."

The issues centering on historic preservation included the facts that Kinney Road is home to active 300-year-old agricultural fields and a truly unique series of stonewall laneways. The value of these laneways were confirmed by UConn professor Robert Thorson, the nation's leading expert in stonewalls. After a visit to the area in May 2023, Professor Thorson reported, "I have never seen a series of stonewall laneways like this. It took the planning and effort of the community to create them... This is a beautifully preserved community landscape... Envision the ellipse of good soil that is Hebron. At the top is the town center. To the west is historic Church Street, the main transportation route... To the east are the residual fields and laneways. These three elements go together to define historic

I urge all residents and officials to please support the current plan for the DPW project.

Sincerely, Kevin J. Tulimieri - Amston

#### Dementia Talks No. 37

To the Editor:

I think I know what the mom's out there felt when their kids cooled to giving out hugs.

Much of the caregiver journey for a loved one with dementia is like rewinding the clock, the calendar and life. At some point in our lives, we didn't know how to tie shoelaces, or zip up a coat; or how to greet people in different situations (work, family, friends, spouses).

We learn how to do things and how to act in social settings over time ... over a lifetime.

Then enters Alzheimer's on to center stage.

Time seems to goes in the reverse - like the movie Back to the Future – but in slow motion. Social filters are stripped away; skills disappear never to return and social interactions change.

Some time ago, I experienced the "No Hug for You" chapter of this journey. For context, when I get ready to leave Mom - I put out my hands, she puts her hands in mine, she will stand, we will hug and I will scoot out the locked door. Not today. Today my quest for a hug, turned into a game of avoidance for Mom and she relished in it. She put her legs out straight while I was holding her hands – as to keep me away. She held my hands and moved them left then right then flicked them up and away. "No Hug

So, I let her know she won the "game"; I leaned down and gave her a hug.

In that moment she realized the game was really over and I was really leaving. Then the barrage of questions came like a tsunami ... "Are you leaving?" "Where are you going?" "When will you be back?" She was back to needing me.

I know that our journey will continue to evolve. I know that I won't be ready for everything that comes my way, her way, our family's way. I just hope that I will continue to engage with grace, empathy, compassion and meet her right where she is in that given moment. Even when I am not ready, I hope I respond that way that makes her feel safe and loved.

Know you are not alone.

With much love and peace, Tonya Maurer - Amston Alzheimer's Hot Line 1-800-272-3900

#### We Can and We Do

To the Editor:

Last week's article "A Near-Clean Sweep for Andover Democrats" revealed some Republicans are newly considering Trump's impact on their brand. Republican Town Committee Chair Carol Barton admitted, "Maybe people were upset about certain things because it's Trump and all that." But then she complained, "You can't blame us for what Trump is doing".

But ves, we can and should blame them. The fact is that Republicans across the nation voted for Trump. They handed the keys to a known liar, narcissist, racist, misogynist, egotistical crime lord so he could enrich himself by billions of dollars, as he has now done, while driving our country and world off a cliff.

At least most Republicans voted for Trump, excluding a tiny minority that still hopes the Republican Party can return to its former glory days of wise Republican stewardship under Dwight Eisenhower, Teddy Roosevelt, U.S. Grant and Abraham Lincoln. Unfortunately, those days are long gone.

Short quiz for Republicans. Can you connect which of these former Presidents were the leaders that accepted war with the Confederacy to save the nation? That devoted a military career to destroying Hitler and fascism? That led our Connecticut boys in deadly battles against the Confederacy? That was known as the "Conservation" President who preserved 150 National Forests, 51 Federal Bird Reserves, 18 National Monuments, 5 National Parks and 4 National Game Preserves? And if you can, then explain why you voted for Trump, the antithesis of these former leaders? How do you ignore Trump being the go-to choice for Confederate revisionists and insurrectionists? Those biased against Blacks, Hispanics, Native Americans and empowered women? Those embracing increased oil, gas and coal extraction?

But let's skip the history lesson and refocus on how the national Republican Party is currently destroying our economy, our world standing, our world leadership, and all so many of our own Constitutional norms. Accessing any of our readily available mass media organizations, those that have won innumerable journalism awards, will cure you of your ignorance. But you spend your 'research' time with Fox News, OAN, Newsmax and other conservative radio and print media outlets. Which I believe to date, combined, have yet to win a single prestigious

Conservatives love imaging themselves the standard bearers of all things truly 'American'. But they are not, and now must be voted out of office, at every level of government.

Edmund Smith - Andover

#### Thank You for **Your Confidence**

Dear Colchester Residents:

On Nov. 4, you made a choice to elect a hardworking slate who will work to make Colchester the best it can be. Thank you for your vote, thoughts and confidence that we can work together for the interest of Colchester. The outcome was evidence that the town saw all the improvements Bernie Dennler and his team has brought to Colchester.

I know as a Colchester resident that the Democratic slate has the knowledge to make decisions based on needs and budget to move our town forward. We look forward to serving you.

I also want to thank all who worked hard, knocking on doors, writing postcards, putting up signs, organizing dinners, driving candidates, sign waving and more to show the people the qualities of the team. The Democratic Town Committee is supportive.

Monica Swyden, Democratic chairperson, has amazing skill, energy and compassion. She worked endlessly to share the skills of the team with the people. Bernie Dennler is a gifted person who loves Colchester and supported his whole team in the election. Thanks to you two and the whole Democratic Town Committee for the inspiration to run and work hard to get our platform and ideas out to the people.

It is an honor to have been selected to be on the Board of Education and I thank you all for your votes and confidence that we will work in the best interest of our students to make the Colchester school system the best it can be for all students.

Gussie Gilberti Member-Elect, **Colchester Board of Education** 

#### **Election Day Thanks**

To the Editor:

Election season is a time for voters to take notice of the candidates — their backgrounds, education, and experience. In Marlborough, the Democratic slate was exceptionally wellprepared to continue, or begin, lending fresh energy and broad experience to the decisionmaking process at Town Hall. Congratulations to all 18 Democratic candidates.

Less well understood or appreciated is the outstanding care and attention devoted to how our elections are set up and run. Election Day itself is a marathon for poll workers, registrars, and moderators. They set up the day before, return at 5:15 a.m. on Election Day, and from the moment the polls open at 6:00 a.m. until they close at 8:00 p.m., they remain careful and vigilant to ensure that every rule and regulation is properly followed. Marlborough's election ran smoothly, and results were reported promptly. Thank you to all our poll workers.

This year brought new challenges as early voting was implemented statewide. Once again, Marlborough rose to the occasion with professionalism and care. Thank you to everyone who worked tirelessly during early voting, from October 20 to November 2.

A particular shout-out goes to Sandy Adams, our Democratic Registrar of Voters, who succeeded longtime registrar Ann Kilby. This position required a year of mentoring under Ann, a series of trainings over an 18-month period, a high level of technical expertise and communication skills to train poll workers. Bravo to Sandy for her determination and dedication in carrying out this critical role in our democracy.

Finally, recognition is due to Head moderator Russ Salvador. As the Chief Polling-Place Official, the Moderator bears enormous responsibility: supervising election officials, maintaining order and compliance, and overseeing pre-election setup as well as the opening and closing of the polls. Mr. Salvador was an exemplary moderator as well as moderator Aileen Vrooman-Marlborough was truly in good hands during two weeks of early voting and on Election Day.

Thank you, Russ, Aileen and Sandy and everyone who helped make our elections fair, efficient, and well-run.

> Respectfully submitted, Dianne Dunn - Marlborough

Note: Dunn is a Marlborough Democratic Town Committee executive board member, but said she is speaking as an individual.

#### **Early Political Thinkers**

This week, I wanted to do something a little different. Rather than share my own opinions, I'm sharing a few quotes from some of the early political thinkers who helped shape the ideas behind our nation and its government. They're presented in no particular order but feel as relevant today as they did centuries ago. I hope readers find them thought-provoking, or at the very least, worth reflecting on.

"History will teach us...those men who have overturned the liberties of republics the greatest number have begun their career, by paying an obsequious court to the people, commencing Demagogues and ending Tyrants." - Alexander Hamilton, as Publius, in The Federalist No. 1,

"The accumulation of all powers legislative, executive and judiciary in the same hands, whether of one, a few or many, and whether hereditary, self-appointed, or elective, may justly be pronounced the very definition of tyranny." James Madison, as Publius, in The Federalist

"The moment the idea is admitted into society that property is not as sacred as the law of God, and that there is not a force of law and public justice to protect it, anarchy and tyranny commence." - John Adams, 1787

"A wise and frugal Government, which shall restrain men from injuring one another, shall leave them otherwise free to regulate their own pursuits of industry and improvement, and shall not take from the mouth of labor the bread it has earned. This is the sum of good government, and this is necessary to close the circle of our felicities." - Thomas Jefferson, Inaugural Address, 1801

Wherever the real power in a Government lies, there is the danger of oppression. In our Governments, the real power lies in the majority of the Community, and the invasion of private rights is chiefly to be apprehended, not from the acts of Government contrary to the sense of its constituents, but from acts in which the Government is the mere instrument of the major number of the constituents." - James Madison to Thomas Jefferson, 1788

There cannot any one moral rule be proposed whereof a man may not justly demand a reason. Every man has a property in his own person. This nobody has any right to but himself. The people cannot delegate to government the power to do anything which would be unlawful for them to do themselves." - John Locke, 1689

Jason LaChapelle - Colchester



Marlborough • Ma

# Marlborough Steps Forward to End Alzheimer's

By Toriana Williams

The Greater Hartford Walk to End Alzheimer's brought together thousands of people united in support, remembrance and hope during its annual event held on Oct. 19 at Rentschler Field in East Hartford.

Among the walkers this year was a group led by the head of the Marlborough Senior Center.

The walk is one of six hosted across the state by the Alzheimer's Association Connecticut Chapter, a tradition that, as Director of Communications Kristen Cusato stated, has deep roots -- "Our first walk in [Connecticut] was held more than 30 years ago in Fairfield Coun-

Cusato explained the scope of this year's Hartford event, noting, "There were an estimated 2,000 people at the Walk in Hartford this year, with 260 teams raising about \$430,000."

Participants came from varied backgrounds but shared a single goal: supporting families affected by dementia and advancing the fight against Alzheimer's Disease.

**Strength in Connection** 

Cusato emphasized how the walk serves as a powerful gathering point for people affected by the disease in different ways. Caregivers, patients, families and supporters all come together in solidarity, "to put forth the message that you do not have to go through this journey alone."

The event serves to educate, connect, inspire and empower, she said.

Sponsors attend to back families, local leaders provide helpful resources and the Alzheimer's Association highlights education, community support and volunteer opportunities for those affected by the disease.

"The connection made at a walk ripples through for years after they are made," said Cu-

That support is needed now more than ever,

she shared, as the disease affects growing numbers of families.

"There are an estimated 80,000 people in [Connecticut] living with Alzheimer's and 7.2 million in the United States," Cusato said.

Because of that, she said the organization works to ensure people know where to turn when a diagnosis comes.

Marlborough Joins the Fight

Among the many teams represented was one led by the Marlborough Senior Center. Team captain Shoshana Merced attended her first walk this year. She shared she was "very excited to see everyone," she said.

Merced, who serves the town as the director of human and social services and the municipal agent for the elderly, expressed how meaningful the experience already has been while preparing

Her team's unique fundraising idea -- a homemade human slot machine game - made its debut at Marlborough Day in August.

"We did a human slot machine that we made in house," she said. Their efforts paid off. "We raised \$181 from that event ... that goes to our team and then that goes to the overall fundraising efforts from this walk."

Five members made up her team, and while Merced is the only one connected to the senior center, she said their participation represents a broader community commitment to healthy aging and dementia support.

Merced said her drive to participate is both professional and personal.

"I had a grandmother who lived with dementia at the end of her life, [and] as a senior center director, I'm very committed to spreading awareness and any programming and support for family members and caregivers."

Merced said she has already seen what makes the walk such a powerful community-builder, having noticed teams from home health organizations, local businesses and assisted living facilities, making it "a really great opportunity" for those personally affected by Alzheimer's and professionals in the field to come together and connect.

Awareness, Support and Continued Action

Even after the walk, there are still many ways to stay involved. Cusato said, "People can register and donate through Dec. 31, 2025, also start a team for next year in January of 2026 or volunteer or share your story."

She hopes participants walk away with a message that stays with them long after the day ends.

"We hope people realize they are not alone," Cusato said. "There are thousands of people in our state who have gone through this journey or are going through it right now. There is strength in hearing from others who are 'on the other side' so to speak and have so much to share with people who are in it right now."

As the organization continues expanding outreach, she said increasing awareness will always be central to their mission, and Cusato encouraged anyone in need of information, guidance or emotional support to reach out.

"Our resources are free and available 24/7," she said. "If you have any questions about Alzheimer's or any other form of dementia, call our 24/7 Helpline at 1-800-272-3900 or go to our website alz.org/ct."

#### St. John Fisher Church News & Notes

St. John Fisher Roman Catholic Church is located at 30 Jones Hollow Rd. Pastor is the Rev. George S. Mukuka, Bill Gilles is deacon John McKaig is senior deacon retired. Heather Mancini is church secretary and can be reached at 860-295-0001; hours are Monday-Wednesday and Friday, 8:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. People are asked to call before heading over or connect via email at stjohnfisher30@ yahoo.com. The church website is www.stjf-

Liturgical Celebrations: Weekend Masses: 4 p.m. Saturday and 8:30 and 10:30 a.m. Sunday. Weekday Masses: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, 8:30 a.m. Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament: Mondays at 9 a.m. Weekly Sacrament of Reconciliation: Saturdays, 3-3:30 p.m., or by appointment.

Faith Formation Programs: Classes are underway for this season, with registrations still accepted. Cindy Bryan, Eileen Gilles and Helena Thomas lead the programs for grades K-10, to include a high school youth group. For more information, access the church

Ministry, Social and Parish Commu-

nity Events: An adult choir practices weekly (though is on break in the summer months); men's and women's prayer groups, Knights of Columbus, Christian Outreach and Prayer Shawl ministry meet monthly; and an active book club meets quarterly. Social activities are planned throughout the year to provide additional parish fellowship.

Community Outreach and Service: Food drives are held weekly for the Marlborough Food Bank to include the Thanksgiving Food Drive underway for November. Bags with specific shopping lists are available at the Masses. Sandwich-making and collection continues the last Thursday of the month for St. Vincent de Paul in Middletown. Other scheduled service opportunities can be found in the weekly bulletin.

Additional Programs and Offerings: For information on other programs, seasonal offerings, adult faith formation, youth group, OCIA, Knights of Columbus or other ministries, call the office, visit www.stjfchurch.org, or look for the church on Facebook (Saint John Fisher Roman Catholic Church).

#### **Senior Center News and Notes**

Marlborough Senior Center, 17 School Drive, is open for activities. For more information about any senior center program, call 860-295-6209 or email socialservices@marlboroughct. net. Follow the senior center on Facebook at Marlborough CT Senior Center.

Senior Center Hours: Monday-Thursday, 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.; Friday, 8 a.m.-3 p.m.

**Shopping Trips:** Monday, Dec. 1, the bus will go to N. Windham Walmart. Depart the senior center at 1:30 p.m. and return at 4 p.m. Call to reserve ride. Additional holiday shopping trips on 12/8 (Marshalls/HomeGoods) and 12/15 (Ocean State Job Lot or Ollie's).

Thanksgiving Lunch: Nov. 21, noon-2 p.m. There will also be a music performance by MES, and free raffles. Cost for lunch is \$10, exact cash or check. Must RSVP by 11/14.

**Open Enrollment**: Dec. 2, by appointment only. Change prescription plans, switch between traditional Medicare and Medicare Advantage plans.

Technology Assistance: Thursday, Dec. 4, a.m.-noon. One-on-one appointments with Richmond Memorial Library technology specialist. By appointment only.

Blood Drive: Thursday, Dec. 4. For more information or to make an appointment to donate, call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767) or sign up online at redcrossblood.org with sponsor code "Marlborough".

Encore Club: Wednesday, Dec. 10, featuring holiday music by Bill Naughton Jr. and light refreshments. RSVP by 12/3.

Ugly Sweater Party: Wednesday, Dec. 17, noon-2 p.m.; RSVP by Dec. 10.

Free Holiday Gift-Wrapping: Thursday, Dec. 18, 2-3 p.m., and Friday, Dec. 19, 9-11 a.m. Bring your gifts; they'll be wrapped for free. Call if interested.

Regularly Scheduled Programs: For full descriptions, call the senior center. Billiards: Mondays and Fridays, 10 a.m.-noon; Bingo: Mondays, 1-2 p.m. Each card costs \$1 and additional cards after are 50 cents; Cards: Monday, 2-3:30 p.m.; Wednesdays and Fridays, 1-3:30 p.m.; **Chair Massage:** Free 15-minute massages are offered Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Appointments required.

Blood Pressure Checks and Chatham

Health Education Presentation: Second Monday of each month. BP checks from 11:30 a.m.-12:15 p.m., and presentation from 12:15-12:45 p.m.

Coffee & Conversations: Meets the third Thursday of each month at 11 a.m. Each session includes a discussion on a particular topic of interest, activity and coffee.

Birthday Club: Tuesday, Nov. 25, 1-2 p.m., with cake. Open to all friends and family. It does not have to be your birthday month to celebrate. However, if it is, please RSVP.

Not Just Quilters: Wednesday and Friday from 9:30 a.m.-2 p.m.

Parkinson's Exercise: Visit www.beatpdtoday.com/class-schedule or call 860-918-9594 to register and for more information.

Mahjong: Wednesdays, 1:30-3:30 p.m., at Fire Station No. 2, 200 West Rd., and the second Friday of every month from 12:30-2:30 p.m. at Marlborough Bakery, 8 Independence Drive.

Tap: Wednesdays, 5-6:30 p.m.

Social Services: Food Bank: Located at 3 Wilhenger Drive, and can be reached at 860-295-6008. There is an open house Tuesdays from 10 a.m.-noon and 4-6 p.m. The food bank is in need of: canned vegetables (corn, green beans, peas, carrots), jam/jelly, fruit cocktail, and canned fruit. The food bank is open to qualified residents in need.

Meals on Wheels: Provides meals and daily visits for people 60 years of age and over, and their spouses or caregivers. Apply directly with CRT by calling 860-560-5848, or call the senior center for a referral.

Energy Assistance and Eversource Discounts: Income-based. Contact the center for an appointment.

Transportation: Rides to medical appointments, employment, essential services, the Senior Center and recreation activities are available to seniors and people with disabilities. Transportation is available on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays. Rides must be reserved two business days in advance. Call 860-295-6209 for more information. Visit the town website, www. marlboroughct.gov, for the complete Transportation Policy, which took effect Nov. 1. There will be no transportation Tuesday Nov. 25.



The Marlborough Lions Club recently received a private donation of \$200 in memory of longtime member Dennis Schultz, who passed away in 2024. Dennis' wife, Jo Schultz, is seen here with Lion Kevin McNally (left), who accepted the donation on behalf of the Connecticut Lions Low Vision Center.

#### **Lion Receives Donation for Low Vision Center**

vate donation of \$200 in memory of longtime member Dennis Schultz, who passed away in 2024. Dennis' wife, Jo Schultz, was on hand to acknowledge the donation on behalf of her late

Marlborough Lion Kevin McNally accepted the donation on behalf of the Connecticut Lions Low Vision Center, with which he is associated.

The Connecticut Lions Low Vision Center

The Marlborough Lions Club received a pri- has developed a partnership between the Lions Club and Hospital for Special Care, where individuals with low vision may now receive a formal Occupational Therapy evaluation. They will receive education in the skills needed to gain independence in activities of daily living and obtain magnification and low vision equipment.

> For more information on the Connecticut Lions Low vision Centers, please visit www.lionslowvisioncenters.org.

#### Correction & Clarification

As a result of faulty information provided by the town, it was falsely reported in Friday's Rivereast that Louise Concodello lost her bid for a seat on the Marlborough Board of Education. She actually won.

The Rivereast regrets the error.

Also last week, comments by Marlborough Republican Town Committee chair Judith Kelley were received by the Rivereast in time to be included in the story about the election, but inadvertently were omitted. Here is what should have ran, under the subheading "Republican Reaction":

Kelly congratulated all the winners and thanked the candidates who ran under their endorsement.

"It was a hard run," she said. "We look forward to working on our slate for 2027's elec-

Kelly thanked voters for their support and showing up to make their voices heard. "It was [an] incredible turnout for a municipal election," she said - noting that, in addition to voting, many who showed up on Election Day also contributed to a local cause.

The Republican Town Committee was able to raise \$1150.00 in donations plus food donations for the food bank," she said. "Pretty successful night for us in regards to helping the community."

Marlborough • Ma



The Marlborough Lions recently donated \$500 to the American School for the Deaf. Pictured from left are the school's chief financial officer, Jenn Pizzoferrato, Marlborough Lions President Jean Paul Bolduc, and the school's assistant superintendent, Paula Morabito.

#### Lions Donate to School for the Deaf

The American School for the Deaf, which is situated in West Hartford, held a dinner recently in appreciation for support from the many Lions Clubs around Greater Hartford. The Marlborough Lions Club donated \$500 this year and was among the many regional Lions Clubs recognized for donations to the school.

The American School for the Deaf, which was founded in 1817, provides on-campus and off-campus opportunities for 166 students from preschool through high school as well as services for adults. Students come from Connecticut and 17 other states.

The ASD recently initiated an Autism Program, which currently serves 17 students from elementary to high school age.

The Marlborough Lions meet the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month. New members are always welcome. For additional information on the club, call president Jean Paul Bolduc at 860-798-2054 or secretary Ken Hjulstrom at 860-490-9116.

#### **New Watercolor Classes at Arts Center**

Marlborough Arts Center, located at 231 N. Main St., will offer a pair of watercolor classes on Saturday, Nov. 15.

The first class will be an Intro to Watercolor class, running from 2-5 p.m. This is a class for a beginner or a refresher for a slightly more experienced painter. Demonstration of watercolor techniques and emphasis on brush strokes in painting lemons and leaves from reference photos will be a fun way to build skills in this medium.

The second class, Watercolor and Illustration, will be held also on Saturday, Nov. 15, from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. This class is designed for adults with an understanding of basic watercolor techniques and will focus on building skills to accomplish a completed painting. Using graphic illustration, anemones in a vase will provide a fun way to learn to paint with the tip of a brush.

Both classes are taught by Marika Hahn, an illustrator from New York City who creates nature inspired art with watercolor. She is a graduate of the Fashion Institute of Technology and has a beautiful and varied portfolio including books and magazines. To see examples of her work go to marikahahn.com.

Each class is \$65. To register go to www. marlborougharts.org. Online registration is preferred but mail in is also possible. For more information call 860-467-6353.



Billiard Table Repaired... The Rotary Club of East Hampton and Marlborough were the original donors of the Marlborough Senior center's billiard table, and the club recently donated \$1,500 for much needed repairs and maintenance. The table is used multiple times a week and has been central to a core group of players over the years. The Billiards Club is always looking for new members of all skill levels; the club meets Mondays and Fridays, from 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Pictured from left are, front row, Pete Strickland, Rotary Treasurer; Shoshana Merced, Director of Human and Social Services; David Quast, Chair of Giving Committee Rotary Club; Carolyn Bernarto, Marlborough Member of Giving Committee Rotary Club. From left, back row, are Senior Center Billard Club members Ross Dmochowski, John Aver, Mark Paul and Roger Paradis (absent: Al Harmon).



The East Hampton/Marlborough Rotary Club will hold its annual Breakfast with Santa Saturday, Dec. 6, at East Hampton High School cafeteria. Pictured at last year's event is Greyson Wolf from Marlborough.

#### Free Breakfast with Santa

The East Hampton/Marlborough Rotary Club will hold its annual Breakfast with Santa Saturday, Dec. 6, from 7:30-11 a.m., at the East Hampton High School cafeteria, located at 15 North Maple St.

As in the past, free breakfast will be served to all that attend and the children will be able to have a picture taken with Santa Claus as a keepsake. There will also be face-painting and other children's activities provided by the East Hampton High School Interact Club.

While breakfast is free, those planning to attend are asked to consider donating non-perishable food items for the East Hampton and Marlborough food banks. Monetary donations to support the food and fuel banks in each town will also be accepted.

For more information, call Kyle at 860-455-3192 or follow on Facebook at East Hampton/ Marlborough Connecticut Rotary Club.



The Key of H – made up of Marlborough resident Jim Henderschedt and his four children, Emma, Owen, Rosie and Lucy - will perform at Marlborough Arts Center, 231 N. Main St., on Friday, Nov. 21.

#### **Key of H Concert at Arts Center**

The Henderschedts, Marlborough residents and members of The Key of H, are performing at the Marlborough Arts Center's 4th Friday at the Arts Café on Friday, Nov. 21, at 7:30 p.m., at the center, 231 North Main St.

The group is made up of Jim Henderschedt and his four children, Emma, Owen, Rosie and Lucy. This family has been making music all of their lives. As a child, Jim Henderschedt played guitar and sang in his father's church. As he grew up, married and had a family, his children and he would gather for family singalongs, chorus concerts, musical shows and the children's choir at the local church.

Owen plays the piano, Emma, Lucy and Rosie sing in harmony, with father Jim playing the guitar. Jim and eldest daughter Emma have per-

formed numerous times on Sadler's patio during the summer season. At their gig at the arts center, it is expected that the audience will hear a mix of musical genres.

Admission to this program is free, subsidized by a grant from the Marlborough Greater Together Community Fund of the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving.

Doors open at 7 p.m. and the concert begins at 7:30 p.m. BYOW and nibbles to dine on. Other non-alcoholic beverages are available. There is on-site parking, and Marlborough Arts Center is fully accessible.

Marlborough Arts Center is a nonprofit regional center for the arts. Visit www.marlborougharts.org or email info@marlborougharts. org or 860-467-6353 for more information.

#### Volunteer. The Benefits Are Extraordinary!

#### **Extraordinary Benefits:**

You'll feel really, really good! You'll meet delightful dogs, fabulous felines. and some pretty special humans too!

Volunteer Positions Available

Day & Evening Hours:

• East Hampton & Wethersfield facilities Dogs: walking; clean & feed; socialization

• East Hartford facility – Cats: clean & feed socialization; medical & placement teams

Please call 860-569-0722 or visit www.poainc.org

#### **Resident Nominated** for Award

Kyle Wood of Marlborough was recently nominated for an award, following a successful run of an original Halloween production by the Emmanuel College Theater Arts Program.

The program, titled "Theatre Macabre: Dreamscape," is now a finalist for invitation to the Kennedy Center American College Theater festival. Selections for the festival will announced in December.

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#### Richmond Memorial Library News & Notes

Richmond Memorial Library, located at 15 School Drive, has announced the following items of interest. Registration required for all programs unless noted. For more information, full program descriptions or to register, call 860-295-6210 or visit richmondlibrary.info.

Babytime: There will be a baby-centered storytime with songs, rhymes, lap bounces, and a story on Fridays at 10:30 a.m. through Dec. 19. For children up to 24 months, with their caregivers. Held in the Storytime Room.

Crafty Kids: Wednesdays at 4 p.m. through Dec. 17, for kids ages 4 and up. There will be two projects on hand each week to choose from, or kids are welcome to use our supplies to create their own projects. Registration is not required.

#### Parks and Rec. Programs

Marlborough Parks & Recreation has announced the following. For full program descriptions or to register, visit www.marlboroughct.gov. For more information, call 860-

Special Event: Safe at Home - Grades 4-6: Wednesday, Nov. 19, 5-6:30 p.m., at Marlborough Senior Center. Participants will learn skills to prepare them to be safe when home alone. Registration fee is \$65/resident, \$70/non-resi-

Horseback Riding Lessons: Ages 5 and up, English or Western style instruction. The lessons are private and are an hour in length. The lessons days and times are flexible. Fee is four lessons for \$200/residents, \$205/non-residents.

Adult Programs: Zumba - Fall Session: Tuesdays, 6:30-7:30 p.m., at Marlborough Senior Center. Fee: \$50/residents, \$55/non-residents, or a \$12 drop-in fee.

Adult Volleyball: Thursdays, 8-10 p.m., at Marlborough Elementary School. Registration fee is \$5 per week.

Adult Drop-In Basketball: Sundays, 8-10 a.m., at MES. Registration fee is \$5 per week.

Driveway Reflective Number Signs Available: The cost of the sign is \$50. Help emergency services personnel find your home without delay. Vertical sign is double sided 8" x 24" with 4" numbers on blue highway reflective metal. Order forms are online and at Town Hall.

#### **New Grief Share Session Underway**

A Grief Share support group will run Tuesdays through Dec. 16, from 5-6:30 p.m., at Fellowship Community Church, 24 South Rd. The group started Sept. 16, but people can join at any time.

The group consists of videos and discussion sessions, with the last session being a Celebration of Life to honor your loved one. There is a \$20 one-time registration fee, which includes the workbook. You will get the workbook at the first session. If you have already paid the \$20 registration fee from the previous Grief Share program, you will not need to pay again.

For more information, call 860-338-1060 or email shopgirl53@sbcglobal.net. Registration is on GriefShare.org. Click 'Find a Group' and look for Fellowship Community Church. You may register there to see the schedule for the sessions and other information pertaining to Grief Share.

#### **Resident Named to Board of State Organization**

Marlborough resident Kevin McMillan, CPA, has been elected to the Board of Directors of the Connecticut Convention & Sports Bureau (CT-MEETINGS) - the state's official meetings and sports event sales and marketing organization. McMillan also was elected as CTMEETINGS'

"We are pleased to welcome Kevin McMillan to our Board and as our organization's Treasurer," explains Robert Murdock, president of CTMEETINGS). "His accounting expertise in a variety of industries and professions will be invaluable as we expand our work to generate business and funds for the State and the regions where the events take place."

Kevin McMillan is director of accounting services at Fiondella Milone & LaSaracina LLP (also known as FML) in Glastonbury, Conn. He brings more than a dozen years of public accounting experience, as well as three years working internally at a Fortune 500 corporation in the aerospace and advanced manufacturing industry. McMillan has been with FML for more than seven years and works within the firm's accounting services practice - specifically with not-for profit, professional service, technology, and manufacturing industries, along with companies in the early stages of operations. He previously worked within FML's audit practice, an experience that allows him to evaluate client needs in a comprehensive manner.

#### **Classical Guitarist and Student Concert**

Classical guitarist Gustavo Fernandez and sixth-grade instrumental students from Marlborough Elementary School, under the direction of Donna Arseneault, will present a concert on Thursday, Nov. 20, at 6 p.m., at Marlborough Arts Center, 231 North Main St.

Donations will be accepted at the door.

Marlborough Arts Center is a nonprofit regional center for the fine arts, performing arts,

#### **Veterans/Seniors** Thanksgiving Dinner American Legion 197 will host the Vet-

erans/Seniors Thanksgiving Dinner 2025 on Sunday, Nov. 23, from 1-3 p.m., at American Legion Post 197, located at 128 East Hampton Rd. (Route 66) in Marlbor-

All veterans and seniors from East Hampton and Marlborough are welcome.

RSVP is required by Thursday, Nov. 20, by calling 860-295-7810.



Kevin McMillan

McMillan earned his bachelor's and master's degrees in accounting from the University of Connecticut, and is a member of both the Connecticut Society of CPAs and the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. He lives in Marlborough with his wife, Crystal, and their

Holiday Craft Fair American Legion Post 197 in Marlborough will host a Holiday Craft Fair Saturday, Nov, 29, from 10 a.m.-3 p.m., at the post, located at 128 East Hampton Rd., Route 66.

All are invited to come support local vendors for some holiday shopping. There will be raffles, snacks, and refreshments for purchase.



RHAM Girl Scouts will hold their annual Children's Holiday Craft Faur Dec. 6. Pictured at last year's fair are members of Marlborough Girl Scout Troop 61097.

#### Girl Scouts Holiday Craft Fair

RHAM Girl Scouts will hold their 31st annual Children's Holiday Craft Fair Saturday, Dec. 6, from 9 a.m.-noon, in the Marlborough Elementary School community room.

Scouts are busy putting the finishing touches on their unique, handmade items that will be available for purchase at the fair.

Open to the public, the fair is the ideal holiday shopping destination for ages 2 to 102. All items are priced at \$10 or under, and each purchase comes with free gift wrapping.

The Children's Holiday Craft Fair is Connecticut's only event where young children can shop for gifts, on their own, for their favorite people and pets. Older Girl Scouts will be ready to assist the youngest shoppers with gift selections and financial transactions. Children should bring a list of who to buy for and some money to purchase holiday presents for their friends and loved ones. Shoppers of all ages are always proud to purchase gifts on their own for their favorite people.

Family members can watch from afar or relax in the cafeteria while young shoppers pick out the perfect gifts. There will also be a bake sale in the school cafeteria with a selection of baked items for shoppers and their families to enjoy. Free drinks will also be available. This year, the Girl Scouts will also be collecting non-perishable donations for the Hebron and Marlborough food banks to help members of the community.

All craft fair proceeds go directly to the local troops for activities and community service

#### **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.marlcongchurch.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@ marlcongchurch.org for more information.

Nov. 16: The service will feature the Joyful Blue Bluegrass Band who will lead parishioners in handclapping, sing-along music along with a special musical piece performed by the group. The service will be led by Seaver.

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

AA: The church sponsors three weekly meetings: Wednesdays at noon and Thursdays at 5:30 p.m. 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.

Stretch and Strength for seniors, led by certified instructor Barbara LeBlanc, is held Fridays at 9:45 a.m. upstairs in the Thienes

Lounge. The weekly drop-in fee is \$25.

Outreach: The church collects non-perishable food items year-round for Marlborough Food Bank with a basket located in the narthex for Sunday worshippers to bring donations. A luncheon for Florence Lord Housing residents is held monthly. The church-sponsored Drive Thru Café, for Marlborough Food Bank clients and their families, will be Sunday, Nov. 30. Free tickets are available at the food bank.

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/MCCebay.

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@ marlcongchurch.org, or contact the church office at office@marlcongchurch.org.





Ask about our curriculum & special programs!



The Winning Ticket... East Hampton Lions Club Scholarship Chairman Tom Denman and Lions District 23C Cabinet Secretary Teri Schlosser hold the winning ticket to this year's raffle. The East Hampton Lions say thanks to all who bought tickets.

#### **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.

Adult Programs: LibrarYoga: Tuesday, Nov. 18, 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.

**Book Club:** Wednesday, Nov. 19, 6:30 p.m. Copies of the current month's book are available at the circulation desk. This month's book is *My Side of the River* by Elizabeth Camarillo Gutierrez.

Teen Programs: Teen Advisory Board: Grades 8-12: Tuesday, Nov. 18, 6 p.m. Take a leadership role in shaping how the library serves teens. Help plan programs, improve the Teen Space, and more.

Children's Program: Animal Hybrids with the GIANT Room!: Saturday, Nov. 15, 11 a.m.-

1 p.m. The library will partner with the GIANT Room to combine STEM skills and creativity in this hands-on workshop where you'll design your own animal hybrids and turn them into real, printed trading cards. Cards will be available for pickup a few weeks after the event. Registration is required, but families can drop in any time to participate. Please register just one member of your family; this program is for all ages and your registration covers the whole group.

Read to a Therapy Dog: Grades K-3: Tuesday, Nov. 18, 4:30 p.m. Readers will be assigned a 15-minute time slot between 4:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. to read to Jovie, a certified therapy dog.

STEMtastic: Recycle City for Grades 1-5: Monday, Nov. 24, 4-6 p.m. Grades 1-5 are invited to this drop-in program all about recycling, featuring hands-on activities.

**DIY Days for Grades K-8:** Saturday, Nov. 29, 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.

#### **Rotary Participating in Thanksgiving Drive**

For 22 years, the Liberty Bank Rotary Club Thanksgiving Drive has helped local families during the holiday season. That tradition continues as Liberty Bank, the Community Foundation of Middlesex County and 41 rotary clubs again team up to raise money for the cause. This year's drive will end Nov. 17 at 3 p.m.

The East Hampton/Marlborough Rotary Club is among the clubs participating.

Tub is among the clubs participating.

In addition to providing warm meals this

Thanksgiving, donations made to the drive will help stock local food pantries for the winter months. Monetary donations can be made online at www.middlesexcountycf.org, or by mailing a check to the Community Foundation of Middlesex County, 49 Main St., Middletown, CT 06457. Please include the name of the rotary club that will benefit from the donation in the memo line.

#### Free Breakfast with Santa

The East Hampton/Marlborough Rotary Club will hold its annual Breakfast with Santa Saturday, Dec. 6, from 7:30-11 a.m., at the East Hampton High School cafeteria, located at 15 North Maple St.

As in the past, free breakfast will be served to all that attend and the children will be able to have a picture taken with Santa Claus as a keepsake. There will also be face-painting and other children's activities provided by the East

Hampton High School Interact Club.

While breakfast is free, those planning to attend are asked to consider donating non-perishable food items for the East Hampton and Marlborough food banks. Monetary donations to support the food and fuel banks in each town will also be accepted.

For more information, call Kyle at 860-455-3192 or follow on Facebook at East Hampton/Marlborough Connecticut Rotary Club.

#### **New Puppy Training Program**

Paws-n-Heel Dog Training Center in East Hampton is administering a new American Kennel Club (AKC) training program geared towards puppies and their owners.

The AKC S.T.A.R. Puppy Program rewards responsible owners who take the time to train and socialize their new puppies. S.T.A.R. stands for Socialization, Training, Activity and a Responsible owner, all things a puppy needs to have a good life.

The AKC S.T.A.R Puppy Program teaches dogs and their owners the first important steps to becoming responsible members of the community, said Michelle Larson.

"It is our hope to diminish the number of dogs relinquished to shelters through the education offered by the AKC S.T.A.R. Puppy Program," Larson said. "Early training and socialization are key to having a well-behaved dog."

To get started, owners enroll in the Puppy Kindergarten class instructed by Paws-n-Heel

Dog Training Center. Classes will include training tips for puppy-owners – such as how to housetrain and lessons on practical skills for puppies such as coming when called. The program is open to all dogs.

At the end of the course, the instructor will administer the test and upon passing, owners

and their puppies will be enrolled in the AKC S.T.A.R. Puppy Program and will receive the Puppy Package including a certificate, Puppy Medal, Puppy Handbook, and more.

To sign up for classes, visit: paws-n-heeldog-training.com. For more information on AKC S.T.A.R. Puppy, see: akc.org/starpuppy.

#### Community Supports TANGO2 Research at Banquet

The fifth biennial TANGO2 Banquet & Auction, held recently in Cromwell, brought together families, friends, and supporters for an evening of connection, remembrance, and hope in the fight against TANGO2 Deficiency Disorder (TDD).

With 170 attendees and more than \$50,000 raised, the event advanced critical research and strengthened support for families affected by this rare disease.

The banquet was 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). Ryan Morris is a 2020 graduate of East Hampton High School.

A TANGO2 angel mom who traveled from Texas, reflected on the meaning of the gathering.

"It's my third time attending the banquet, and

I feel there is a lot of love here. I appreciate that they never forget my son Sammy. He may not be here, but when I show up in that room, it makes me feel like he is. And that's why I show up for the Morris family."

This year marks the Morris family's eighth year leading the TANGO2 Research Foundation, which recently surpassed \$1 million in direct research funding. These grants have supported more than 30 researchers across 18 countries.

Recent milestones include expanded support for the TANGO2 Natural History Study, the creation of a TANGO2 Clinician Hotline, and new partnerships with the Baylor College of Medicine. Looking ahead, the foundation will host the first-ever TANGO2 Innovation Summit in 2026 in Houston, Texas – bringing together experts from around the world to collaborate on care guidelines and future research.

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#### **Helping Hands**

Helping Hands is open again on the first and third Saturdays of each month, from 9-11 a.m., at 27 Skinner St.

Helping Hands offers free clothing, household items, toys, books etc. to anyone in need.

Donations are only accepted on the Saturdays Helping Hands is open, from 9-11 a.m., and on the Thursdays of the week it is open, from 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

For more information, call Beth Cunningham at 860-365-1054.

#### **Christmas Bazaar**

The Second Congregational Church of Middle Haddam, at 52 Middle Haddam Rd., Middle Haddam, will host its annual Christmas Bazaar on Saturday, Dec. 6, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Bazaar offerings will include baked goods, peanuts, Rada cutlery, a silent auction and Christmas tag sale items.

A light lunch of sandwiches, desserts, coffee, tea and punch will also be served.

#### Art on Display

Local artist Valerie Stockburger will display her oil paintings at Town Hall during 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.

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.

#### Bingo at VFW Post

All are invited to bingo every Thursday at VFW Cobra Post 5095, located at 20 North Maple St. Doors open at 5:30 p.m., and games start at 6:30 p.m. There are cash prizes.

Pre-order a fresh homemade sandwich to eat or a drink in the bar to be served during intermission.



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#### **Veterans Sought for American Legion**

In an effort to save one of the oldest military organizations in East Hampton, American Legion Post 64 is inviting any interested veteran to join. Young or old are eligible; all you need to have completed is basic training. The purpose of this organization is to provide outreach to veterans, offer scholarships to new recruits, and support the Rocky Hill State Veterans Healthcare Center.

Post 64 currently meets bi-monthly at the East Hampton VFW at 20 North Maple St. Its next meeting is Wednesday, Nov. 19, at 7 p.m.

#### **Diecast Collectors Unite!**

On Sunday, Nov. 23, from 9 a.m.-3 p.m., at VFW Post 5095, diecast enthusiasts from across the region will gather for a day of collecting, trading, buying, and browsing.

Vendor set-up begins at 7 a.m., with tables available at \$20 per spot. Spectators can join in on the fun after 9 a.m. for a \$2 entry fee.

The kitchen will be open, serving breakfast

sandwiches and a selection of lunch items. Meanwhile, the Post Canteen will serve drinks from 9 a.m. until close.

Proceeds from the show will benefit local veterans and VFW Post 5095.

For additional information, vendor reservations, or general inquiries, please contact Tommy Cruz at 203-600-9635 directly.

#### **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.

**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.

Bible Study: Contact Bobette Reed Kahn at

bobette@khan.com if you are interested in par-

Celebration Coffee Hour: A special coffee hour will be held to celebrate the end of the Stewardship drive after the worship service on

Thanksgiving Baskets: Food items for the four Thanksgiving baskets are due Nov. 23. There is still time to sign up to bring a donation. Check the sign-up sheet in the Parish Hall.

Information/Assistance: Contact Senior Warden Donna Hryb at 860-633-0472 or donnadubehryb@gmail.com for more information.

#### Wreaths Across America to Return

Fowler-Dix-Park Post & Auxiliary 5095 is looking for sponsors for its Wreaths Across America wreath-laying event in December. Sponsorships are due today.

Wreaths Across America is a worldwide event honoring veterans with the laying of a wreath on their headstone or marker. East Hampton's ceremony will take place at the Book of Names Memorial, located across the street from the VFW Post at 20 North Maple St., on Saturday, Dec. 13, at noon. Seventeen wreaths are placed during the ceremony, one for each branch of the service, a Prisoner of War/Missing in Action, one in memory and honor of Governor William O'Neil, one for each of the Auxiliary's 'adopted' eight forgotten soldiers who are buried in the Middletown State Veterans' Cemetery.

The VFW Auxiliary is asking the public to

sponsor additional wreaths to be placed at various soldiers' gravesites in all 12 cemeteries in town. Sponsors are asked to donate \$17 per wreath to help provide as many wreaths as possible. As volunteers place a wreath on a soldier's grave, they repeat the soldiers' name aloud.

One can sponsor a wreath by sending a sponsorship form to VFW Auxiliary 5095, 20 N. Maple St., East Hampton, CT 06424. Checks should be made out to "VFW Auxiliary 5095" with "WAA" on the memo line. Forms can be found at the Post and East Hampton Public Library. In lieu of a form, send name, address, phone, email, the number of sponsored wreaths at \$17 each with a check to the above address.

All forms should be returned by Nov. 11. To learn more about Wreaths Across Ameri-

ca, visit www.wreathsacrossamerica.org.

#### **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.

Foster Child Gifts: The collection of gifts for foster children must be done by Dec. 7. The gifts must be new in its original packing and not

Operation Christmas Child: This is a project of Samaritan's Purse that delivers shoeboxes filled with school supplies, hygiene items, toys, and sports equipment to children who live in difficult circumstances. The church welcomes community participation in this project. The boxes are available in the church office and need to be returned by Nov. 16.

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

#### Thanksgiving Dinner for Local Seniors

VFW Post 5095 invites East Hampton seniors to a festive Thanksgiving Dinner on Sunday, Nov. 16, beginning at 1 p.m. The celebration will be held at the Post Hall, located at 20 North Maple St.

Sign-up sheets are available at the following locations: East Hampton Senior Center; Chatham Acres and Bellwood Court senior housing; VFW Post 5095; and Town Hall

For questions or to sign up directly, call the post at 860-267-8837.

# **Veterans/Seniors**

Thanksgiving Dinner
American Legion 197 will host the Veterans/Seniors Thanksgiving Dinner 2025 on Sunday, Nov. 23, from 1-3 p.m., at American Legion Post 197, located at 128 East Hampton Rd. (Route 66) in Marlborough.

All veterans and seniors from East Hampton and Marlborough are welcome.

RSVP is required by Thursday, Nov. 20, by calling 860-295-7810.

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 though Bible stories where the characters are friends with God. A toddler nursery is also available. All are welcome.

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

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

Women's Fellowship: The next gathering will be Thursday, Dec. 11, from 1-3 p.m., at Mary's.

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.hncovenantchurch.org.



The works of East Hampton resident Betsy Rich – including the ones seen here – will be displayed at Middle Haddam Public Library all month, with an artist's reception planned for next Friday, Nov. 14.

#### Resident's Art on Display

Lifelong East Hampton resident Betsy Rich has her artwork currently on display at the Middle Haddam Public Library. The exhibit will run through November, with an Artist's Reception on Friday, Nov. 14, from 4-6 p.m.

Rich began painting at age 6 and knew she was on to something when she won an ice cream sundae as a prize for one of her paintings from a local dairy. She has been painting ever since.

Rich holds two associate's degrees, in commercial art and fine art, from Middlesex Community College and a Bachelor of Science degree in graphic design from Charter Oak College. Her subjects include nature/landscapes and animals - mostly her beloved pets. She enjoys painting with oil and watercolors.

#### 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.

Knit So As To Turn Water: The History of New England's Maritime Knitting: Saturday, Nov. 15, 5 p.m. Presented by the Dirty Blue Shirts, an experiential history collective of living historians, scholars, and artists from eastern Connecticut. Call the library to register.

Open Mic Night: Friday, Nov. 21, from 6 to 8 p.m. Share your talent or just come and listen to music. Performers, call the library to register.

Chatham Community Chess Club is Back: Wednesdays, Nov. 19, Dec. 6 and Dec. 17, 6-9 p.m., for all ages and skill levels welcome; lessons available. For more information, contact pjhoffmani@juno.com

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

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

Saturday CommuniTea: Is on hiatus, but stop by during regular library hours and staff will put the kettle on. Yoga with Erin Day of Ten Summit Yoga:

Mondays and Saturdays at 9 a.m., and Tuesdays at 7 p.m. Cost is a \$15 drop-in fee. Register at tensummitst@gmail.com. Saturday Family Yoga with Kathleen: The

first Saturday of each month at 11 a.m. Cost is \$12 to drop in for two people and \$3 for each additional person. Register by emailing zenlotus860@yahoo.com

Chair Yoga with Kathleen: This 'gentle yoga' program is held Fridays at 9 a.m. Cost is \$15 per class. Register by emailing zenlotus860@yahoo. com or calling 860-638-9097.









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# **Turkey Plunge Raises over \$47K for Food Bank**



Over 100 plungers took to the waters at this year's East Hampton Turkey Plunge on November 8. *Photo Credit: Kristen Keska* 

By Anne Lilburn

Over 100 people took to the chilly fall waters of Lake Pocotopaug last Saturday for the 16th annual East Hampton Turkey Plunge, and together they raised more than \$47,000 in donations for the East Hampton Food and Fuel Bank.

The event was founded 16 years ago by East Hampton's Crean family during a time when they had high school-aged kids. Several years ago, with their children now grown, the family handed over the role of organizing and managing the event to the local Rotary Club and East Hampton High School's Interact Club, which is a service club for teens that is affiliated with Rotary.

East Hampton High School teacher and Interact Club advisor Kristen Keska has been involved since the first year. These days, she says she organizes the event with a lot of help from some very motivated students, who were there to help her by picking up donations, choosing T-shirt colors, and putting up signs, all while fundraising themselves for the event.

Keska said that, in addition to the Interact Club students, other student groups also formed fundraising teams, with different clubs or classes working together to collect donations and compete to raise the most money. Forty-five

students got in the water, she said, and the top student fundraiser was Juliana Ware, who raised \$500. The top over-18 fundraiser was Pete Evans, who Keska said raised \$3000, in the form of cash, gift cards and sponsorships.

Overall, plungers had raised \$38,000 by the day of the event, and sponsor Liberty Bank made a 25% matching donation to put the total over \$47,000. With that said, Keska said that donations were still trickling in even after the event

Keska said the whole school community got involved. She said she was one of at least seven EHHS teachers in the water, and while over 100 people got in the water, an even bigger crowd gathered to cheer them on and support the cause. The mood was one of fun and celebration, even as they raised funds for an important cause.

Participants ranged in age from the youngest attendee, a 2-year-old boy named Colt, who won the "Littlest Gobbler" award and whose entire family dressed as pilgrims, to the oldest plunger, 77-year-old Lynn Miller, who won the "Most Overcooked Turkey" prize.

East Hampton residents and friends Margaret Wilcox and Maria Tralongo attended the event for the second time this year, and came dressed



As they did last year, Maria Tralongo and Margaret Wilcox took the Pocotopaug plunge – and this time they were dressed as pilgrims.

Ag Science & Tech Open House

as pilgrim

Tralongo said it was an upgrade from the turkey costumes they wore last year, because they got to "show off our buckles," she joked.

"It's always good to have a buckle as an accessory," she added.

Tralongo said she enjoyed being able to have fun at an event that was also worthwhile.

"In this time where so many families are having trouble making ends meet," she said, "it's such a good feeling to see the community come together." She added that East Hampton was

Middletown High School boasts the public

school choice program Middletown Agriculture

Science & Technology - and applications are

now being accepted for the 2026-27 school year.

prospective students on Wednesday, Nov. 18, at

6:30 p.m. at the Agriculture Science & Technol-

ogy Center at Middletown High School, 200

LaRosa Lane, Middletown. The program will

feature a presentation followed by an interactive,

The Middletown Agriculture Science program

guided tour of the Ag facility.

In addition, there will be an Open House for

"little, but mighty."

Wilcox agreed with her friend, and said she had brought her grandsons, who are three and a half and six years old, to the swim. And while she said she had fun seeing them get involved, Wilcox noted that she was even more inspired by the young people she saw who were a bit older than her grandkids.

"There were so many young high schoolers [there]," she said, adding that "It's rewarding to see the younger generation embracing community giving."

#### **Bethlehem Lutheran Church News**

Services at Bethlehem Evangelical Lutheran Church, located at 1 East High St., are held Sundays at 10 a.m. There is Sunday school every week following the sermon.

The church sanctuary is handicapped-accessible by using the lift.

**Upcoming Events:** Tuesday, Nov. 18, Thanksgiving service, 6-7 p.m. Bring an item

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for the Food Bank.

Jingle Bell Craft Fair and Stuff-A-Cruiser: Saturday, Dec. 6, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Christmas Carols: Sunday, Dec. 14, 6 p.m. For more information, call 860-267-1248 or visit www.facebook.com/BethlehemEH or www.bethlehemeh.org.

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# **Turkey Shoot This Sunday**

The Belltown Sportsman's Club will hold Turkey Shoots Sunday, Nov. 23, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m., on the club grounds off of Tartia Road, which is off of Route 16. (Follow the signs.)

Bring your own shotgun or one will be provided. Gauge is 20 and 12. The club will supply the shells. Cost is \$4 a shot.

Refreshments will be available. For more information, call Kurley at 860-638-7221.

offers an individualized, hands-on learning experience with all the benefits and academic rigor of a comprehensive high school education. The curriculum offers instruction in animal & veterinary science, plant science, natural resources, and agricultural engineering & mechanics.

High school students from the *Rivereast towns* of Portland and East Hampton are eligible to apply for the program. All tuition and transportation costs are provided by the sending town.

For more information about the Middletown Agriculture Science and Technology Program, call 860-704-4594, email nescim@mpsct.org, or visit mhs.middletownschools.org/o/mhs/page/ag-sci.

#### 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.

#### **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:

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



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# **Healthy Aging Event Draws Crowds**

By Anne Lilburn

The East Hampton Commission on Aging's Home and Health Expo took place on Saturday, Nov. 8, at Town Hall, and the building was filled with seminars, fitness classes and exhibitors ready to talk with seniors about a wide range of topics related to healthy living, from aging in place to staying fit.

Commission on Aging member Cookie Mankowski was one of the organizers of the event, along with fellow Health and Wellness Working Group member Kathy Megan. Mankowski said that the two women had been discussing planning a health fair since early last year.

"We're always trying to think of ways to be positive and creative in addressing the needs of older adults in our community," she said, "and a couple of big things that we know, just statistically, is that social isolation and the lack of social support are two impediments to healthy aging. And so we say, okay, how do you address that?"

Mankowski said that while planning the event, she and Megan realized that another working group focused on housing was also looking to host an event. The two teams joined forces and worked to create a comprehensive event that focused on living well in one's senior years.

One hundred thirty-five people showed up to the fair on Saturday to hear lectures on a variety of topics ranging from mental health to longterm care and Medicaid planning. In one room, more than a dozen different organizations and businesses were represented, from sound healing and Reiki experts, to chiropractors to home health care organizations.

One person who spoke with a lot of people that day was Mairead Painter, Connecticut's State Long Term Care Ombudsman. Painter said she heard from both seniors and caregivers at the event

"I think the biggest thing we heard across the board," she said, "was that people want to be able to remain in their community of origin, so not to have to go somewhere else to find housing, not to have to go somewhere else to find home health care."

Painter said she was happy to see people being proactive about their plans for where they wanted to live as they aged, and encouraged people to contact their local area agency on aging, which in East Hampton is Senior Resources Agency on Aging.

She said they can do an assessment and determine what resources a person may qualify for that might allow them to stay in their home.

She also cautioned people not to make big moves like giving up their home or reducing assets until they have talked to the agency and done their research to determine if that is the best or only option for them. She likened it to the research one does before applying for a home or car loan.

"People should plan early on," she said. "That's why I loved the fact that there were so many people there getting information before they ever need it, so that they're fully informed, or at least starting to get informed."

#### Garden Club Wreath-Making

The Belltown Garden Club will meet at the Congregational Church of East Hampton, 59 Main St., on Monday, Nov. 24, from 5:30-8:30 p.m., for its annual wreath- and garland-making event. Members are reminded to bring an assortment of greens and evergreens, gloves and wire cutters.

The wreaths and garland being assembled

will be displayed at the Comstock Bridge, East Hampton Library and the town gazebo.

Additionally, the club will make live green table centerpieces that will be sold at the public library as a fundraiser during the holiday season.

This event is open to the public, and all are welcome. For more information, call Donna Marsden at 860-267-2853.

#### Nominations Sought for Humanitarian of the Year

The East Hampton Lions Club is seeking nominations for its 2026 Humanitarian of the Year, who will be honored at the Lions District 23-C Annual Humanitarian Banquet on Jan. 18, 2026.

Each year, the East Hampton Lions recognize an individual who exemplifies compassion, generosity, and a strong commitment to serving others. The nominee must either live in East Hampton or have performed humanitarian acts that have made a meaningful impact within the East Hampton community.

Community members are invited to submit

a one-page letter explaining why they believe their nominee deserves to be recognized as this year's Humanitarian of the Year.

Nomination letters should be mailed to: East Hampton Lions Club, P.O. Box 153, East Hampton, CT 06424.

Letters should include the nominee's name, contact information, and a description of their contributions or service that demonstrate why they should be honored.

The deadline for submissions is Dec. 1. For additional information, call Lion Mary

Krogh at 860-977-5760.

p.m. Join actress and director Val Bozzi for this

monthly program where participants bring sto-

ries to life by reading and exploring a variety of

Family Tree: Friday, Nov. 21, 10:30 a.m.

Learn more about your family history through this interactive workshop with Ken Doney.

Nov. 21, 1:30 p.m. All are invited to this inter-

active class with an experienced drumming

Trips: Tour the State Capitol: Wednesday,

Dec. 3, departing at 10:30 a.m. for an 11 a.m.

guided walking tour of the state capitol in Hart-

ford, followed by lunch on your own at the Leg-

islative Office Building and a visit from state

Rep. Irene Haines (R-34). Cost is a \$4 bus do-

White Christmas the Musical at the Good-

speed Opera House: Thursday, Dec. 4, depart-

ing the Senior Center at 1 p.m. for a 2 p.m. mati-

nee. Cost is \$70 for the ticket and bus donation.

Volunteer Opportunities: Volunteers are

needed to answer phones and grocery shop for

senior center members. Stop by the center Mon-

day through Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., to fill out

the volunteer form. Call 860-267-4426 for more

Bring laptop, iPad or cell phone to the class. **Drum Circle with Mark Zurillo:** Friday,

scripts together. No experience needed.

leader. Cost is \$3.

Register in person.

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-hamptonsenior-center for more information and a list of regular weekly and monthly activities, including games, quilting, Bible study, monthly men's and women's groups, and more.

Are You 55?: The new minimum age to join the East Hampton Senior Center is now 55. Stop by to join, take a tour and learn about programs and services. Also, new carpets are coming! Stay tuned for information on senior center hours during the installation period.

**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.

**Trailblazers Walking Group:** Monday, Nov. 17, 9 a.m., at Air Line State Park, 69 Smith St. All paces welcome.

Floral Arranging with Old Bank Flowers & Greenery: Monday, Nov. 17, 10:30 a.m. Cost is \$8. Register in person.

Blood Pressure Readings: Monday, Nov. 17, 12:30 p.m. Offered by Chatham Health. Dropins welcome.

Book Club: Tuesday, Nov. 18, 10:30 a.m.,

featuring *The Mostly True Story of Tanner and Louise* by Colleen Oakley. **Design & Create:** Thursday, Nov. 20, 1:30

.m. **The Script Society:** Thursday, Nov. 20, 2:30

RTC Meets Next Week

The East Hampton Republican Town Committee will meet at The Dublin at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 18. All Republicans are invited to come learn about volunteer opportunities in the community.

For more information, email ehctgop@gmail.com or visit www.easthamptonrtc.com.

Commission on Aging Vice Chair and event co-organizer Cindy Craig said she was happy with the turnout. She mentioned that she thought one of the most important lectures of the day was from the town's first responders, who emphasized that residents should always feel comfortable calling for help.

And while some of the exhibitors and lectures may have taken on a serious tone, there was also plenty of fun to be had. There were fitness and yoga classes at the event, and in one room, personal trainer Mary Henderson, who teaches classes at the East Hampton Senior Center, talked about the importance of strength training for seniors, especially women.

"I highly, highly, highly recommend you lift weights," she told a group of three women who had showed up for her class. Henderson then led the group through an exercise class using exercise bands, which she said were a great option. The women also did wall and chair pushups, as well as lunges.

"Resistance training doesn't have to mean dumbbells," she told the group, adding that people should keep revising their goals so they continually make progress and stay challenged. She emphasized movements, like biceps curls, that mimicked moves that people would use around the house to do things like lift a pot, for example.

Mankowski said that, overall, she thought the event was very successful,

"I was kind of perusing all over the place, sitting in on talks and talking to people," she said, "and everybody was just 100% enthused. People were just thanking us, like, 'Thanks for doing this. Oh my God, this was great, thanks for doing this."

#### **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 East Hampton Food Bank.

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 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.

#### 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.

Christmas Bazaar: St. Patrick Church is hosting a Christmas Bazaar on Saturday, Nov. 8, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., at St. Patrick Parish Center. Come and shop for all kinds of Christmas items. Take a chance on the many basket raffles, browse the display of jewelry and treat yourself or a neighbor at the bake sale or come for lunch.

#### 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.east-hamptonrec.com.

Thanksgiving Table Workshop – A DIY Workshop for Your Holiday Table: At Town Hall Wednesday, Nov. 19, 6:30-8 p.m. Cost is \$35. In this hands-on workshop, create your own stenciled table runner and decorate seasonal candles in glass.

Holiday Wreath Workshop: Monday, Dec. 1, at Jessica's Garden in Marlborough. There are two sessions to choose from: one from 4-5:30 p.m. and one from 6:30-8 p.m. Fee is \$35. Gather your friends and design a holiday wreath. Parks and Rec. will have a curated selection of fresh evergreens, pinecones, ribbons, accents, and holly for you to adorn your wreath to your own style. All materials are provided. BYOB and snacks.

Belltown Holiday Market: At Town Hall Thursday, Dec. 4, 5-8 p.m. This community event brings together local crafters, artisans, and food vendors. Discover one-of-a-kind handmade gifts, explore seasonal treats to take home, and enjoy the warm spirit of the season. Admission is free.

Wolf Pack Tickets Now Available: At PeoplesBank Arena in Hartford (formerly XL Center) on Saturday, Jan. 10, 2026, from 6-8 p.m. Tickets are \$25 each and are in the lower level, Section 109. Register online.

Afterschool Programs at Memorial School (Grades K-3) – Dragon Slayers Obstacle Challenge!: Tuesday, Nov. 18, 3:30-4:30 p.m. Climb, crawl, jump and dash your way through the challenge. Cost is \$25.

**Dragon Scale Slime:** Tuesday, Nov. 25, 3:30-4:30 p.m. Make your own glittery, gooey dragon scale slime to play with and take home. Cost is \$25.

#### Portland • Portland •

#### Support Sought for Joshua's Mission

Joshua's Mission has been participating with Wreaths Across America since 2015 – and is looking for support again this year.

Josh Abbott, now a Portland High School senior, has continued his mission for 10 years making sure local veterans are always remembered. Every, year wreaths are laid at veterans graves throughout the United States on the national wreath-laying

**Toys for Tots** 

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.

All are asked to donate new, unwrapped toys to children in need. Donation location: Portland Town Garage, 505 Glastonbury Tpke.

Town-Wide
Thanksgiving Service
The annual town-wide Thanksgiving

The annual town-wide Thanksgiving service will be hosted this year at Zion Lutheran Church on Sunday, Nov. 23, at 2 p.m., at the church, located at 183 William St. All are welcome.

The speaker will be from Caritas Immigration Legal Services in Middletown. Monetary donations will be collected for the Legal Services agency, as well as food donations for the Food Bank in town.

day, which this year is Dec. 13. Joshua's Mission is looking for sponsors to purchase wreaths to be laid at the Connecticut State Veterans Cemetery in Middletown on that day.

Wreaths can be purchased for \$17 each, or buy two for \$34 and get the third one free. Checks can be made out to Wreaths Across America and mailed to Joshua's Mission, 50 Fairview St., Portland, CT 06480 before Nov. 30. Donations can also be made by visiting his Facebook page "Joshua's Mission" and clicking on the link there to go directly to his Wreaths Across America website page to pay by credit card.

All are invited to participate in helping place the wreaths on Saturday, Dec. 13, at noon.

# Service of Lessons and Carols

All are invited to join the parish music and lector ministries at Saint Mary Church, 45 Freestone Ave., on Sunday, Dec. 14, at 3 p.m., for a Service of Lessons and Carols.

Listen to readings from Scripture and seasonal choral music, sing beloved Christmas carols, and help neighbors in need by bringing items to be donated to the Portland Food Bank (shampoo, conditioner, body wash, deodorant, small size dish soap/laundry detergent and men's and women's warm socks).

Enjoy a reception and fellowship following the service.

# Veterans Share Experiences with PHS Students

By Anne Lilburn

Portland High School sophomores honored Veterans Day a few days early this year, with the school continuing its annual tradition of hosting local veterans and current service members to come talk with the students about their service to the country.

Last Friday, Nov. 7, students gathered to hear from James Stotler, a Navy veteran; Wayne Mergel, who served a long career in the Air Force; and sisters Aimee and Kristin Gondek. Aimee is currently serving in the Army National Guard, while Kristin is in the Army Reserves.

Stotler was once a social studies teacher at PHS, and helped to organize the first year of this event shortly after he had returned from a deployment to Iraq as a Navy reservist in 2009.

Prior to the event, students worked together in classroom groups to come up with questions to ask the service members. Social studies teacher Mike Kenney moderated the event using the student's questions as a guide. The questions and answers ran the gamut from practical career advice to thoughtful discussions on camaraderie among troops, readjustment to civilian life, and the lingering influence of a military career on someone's life.

Many of the panel members emphasized the opportunities the military had provided them. Stotler said he appreciated that he got to "travel and see places I wouldn't normally have seen," adding that he had experiences while serving that had "made me a better and stronger per-

Mergel, who served in the Air Force in the

'70s and '80s, agreed that getting to go overseas and experience different cultures had been important to him, as was the sense of family that he felt among the military community.

Both Gondek sisters said they were grateful for the career opportunities that they had had thanks to the military. Aimee is currently working as an X-ray technician in the Army National Guard, which is a career that she hopes she may be able to pursue in the civilian world as well, while Kristin has been working to pursue an additional bachelor's degree and is also preparing to graduate from the Department of Corrections training academy, all while serving in the Army Reserve.

On the career advice front, Mergel offered some practical advice to students who may be considering enlisting.

"Do your research," he told students. "Check all the branches and see what they offer." Mergel added that while the career opportunities might be there, new recruits often had to intentionally seek them out to make sure that they were able to pursue training in areas where their interests

One topic that provided a thoughtful moment involved acknowledging the contributions of veterans who had come before. Mergel, who was just entering the service at the tail end of the Vietnam era, said he was acutely aware of the ways that veterans had been treated by the public in the past.

Stotler, who enlisted in 2003 and served in Iraq, agreed, adding that "We have been treated very well for our service, and it's been a very



Local veterans Kristin Gondek (Army Reserve), Aimee Gondek (Army National Guard), James Stotler (Navy) and Wayne Mergel (Air Force), shared their experiences in the military with Portland High School students. Photo Credit: Rowyn Kootz, Portland High School Sophomore

open and accepting environment."

He said that Veterans Day, to him, was about the generation of vets who "didn't get treated so well, about those who blazed the trail."

The students who attended the presentation said they appreciated hearing from the veterans.

"Getting insight on what it's like to be in the military," said sophomore Lily Hale, "really puts

in perspective the sacrifices they make.' Sophomore Jack Hallinean said that he has family in the military and that he had considered joining the military in the past, so he appreciated the practical advice he heard at the event, particularly as it related to careers.

Kenney and fellow sophomore social studies

teachers Sara Fogle and Ryan Ott emphasized that the visit was a chance for students to interact with veterans, but also an opportunity for them to get a different perspective on history, including on topics that their curriculum hasn't gotten to yet.

"They're hearing from real service members and veterans on active duty and retired, and so that's really cool," Ott said, "so that later in the year, when we get into some of the historical foreign policy and war and all that type of stuff, they have this to like reflect back on and connect back to a little bit, just to make it a little bit more personal, and understand how it affects real people."

#### Trinity Episcopal News

Trinity Episcopal Church, 345 Main St., invites all to services on Sundays at 9:30 a.m. Bible Study starts at 8:30 a.m. each Sunday. The church schedule can always be located at www. trinitychurchportlandct.org.

Service Projects: In November, church members will gather to bake and pack Christmas cookies for Streetfire Ministries.

The church is open for prayer and medita-

tion, and the church office is open, from 2-4 p.m. each Friday. Anglican Prayer beading sessions are held at this time as well; all are wel-

Check www.trinitychurchportlandct.org for more information. If you have any prayer requests to lift up, email the church office at trinitychurchportlandct@gmail.com.

a ramp, plus general completion and mainte-

nance of the new park. Between now and the

end of this year Portland resident Rick Sharr

land, CT 06480 and make the check out to the

Brownstone Quorum with the memo stating

"Riverfront Access Park." Note: your donation

Send your donations to P.O. Box 402, Port-

will match any donations, up to \$10,000.

#### **Public Riverfront Access Progress**

Portland's Riverfront Access Committee is looking for donations.

The committee announced that, since its groundbreaking ceremony in October, Butler Construction has cleared a pathway to the river, and will soon construct a roadway with a parking area near the water.

The committee said it has a state grant to cover most of the initial road costs - but is asking interested canoers, kayakers, paddleboarders, and water & fishing enthusiasts for donations to support the addition of picnic tables, signage,

#### Adult Used Coat Craft & Vendor Fair Collection

Freestone Council 7 Knights of Columbus, St. Mary Church, is sponsoring an Adult Used Coat Collection.

The Portland Food Bank has requested the local Knights to once again sponsor a town-wide Coat Drive this fall appealing for gently used coats for adults.

To donate an adult used coat, a large receptacle is available in the Rosary Room at the Church of Saint Mary, 45 Freestone Ave.

is eligible for a federal income tax deduction, as this is a 501(c)(3)c organization. Also, if you are interested in Riverfront Access Park news,

please include your email and address.

PHS Class of 2026 Project Graduation will hold a Craft & Vendor Fair Saturday, Nov. 22, from 9 a.m.-3 p.m., at Portland High School, 95 High St. - and vendors are welcome.

There will be various local artisans and small businesses offering unique handmade gifts. If interested in being a vendor, email phsprojectgrad@yahoo.com.

#### **Organize Your Life!**

St. Mary Church will host a program entitled "Organize Your Life" on Thursday, Nov. 20, from 6:30-7:30 p.m., at the church, 45 Freestone Ave.

The program will be presented by Lynn McPhelimy, a nationally recognized life organizer and coach, bestselling author and speaker featured on The Oprah Winfrey Show, NBC's Today show, PBS, and also in The New York Times, Chicago Tribune and Woman's

McPhelimy will instruct you on how to be prepared for emergencies, illness or loss that can change everything in an instant. She has a special event offer of 50% off for her bestseller book *In the Checklist of Life*. Cost is \$10 (cash or check). Refreshments will follow in the church hall.

RSVP preferred but not required, by calling/texting Diane Bascom at 860-985-1861 or calling Janet Capello at 860-214-1909.

#### **DTC Meeting Schedule, Volunteer Opportunities** The Portland Democratic Town Committee

(DTC) generally holds regular monthly meetings on the last Thursday of each month at the Waverly Senior Center, 7 Waverly Ave., Portland. Due to the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays, however, the final two regular meetings of 2025 are scheduled for Thursday, Nov. 20, and Thursday, Dec. 18, at 7 p.m. both nights. Meetings are open to all registered Democrats in Portland.

Additionally, for Portland residents interested in becoming more involved in their community there are various opportunities to serve on a board, commission or committee, with a number of terms beginning in January 2026. Any registered voter in Portland may be considered. More information is available at www. portlandct.org under Government - Boards and Commissions.

For more information about the Portland DTC or to inquire about open positions on the various boards and commissions, please send an email to portlandctdtc@gmail.com and follow on Facebook at www.facebook.com/PortlandDemocraticCommittee.

# Ag Science & Tech Open House Middletown High School boasts the public The Middletown Agricul

school choice program Middletown Agriculture Science & Technology – and applications are now being accepted for the 2026-27 school year.

In addition, there will be an Open House for prospective students on Wednesday, Nov. 18, at 6:30 p.m. at the Agriculture Science & Technology Center at Middletown High School, 200 LaRosa Lane, Middletown. The program will feature a presentation followed by an interactive, guided tour of the Ag facility.

The Middletown Agriculture Science program offers an individualized, hands-on learning experience with all the benefits and academic rigor of a comprehensive high school education. The curriculum offers instruction in animal & veterinary science, plant science, natural resources,

and agricultural engineering & mechanics. High school students from the Rivereast towns of Portland and East Hampton are eligible to apply for the program. All tuition and transportation costs are provided by the sending town.

For more information about the Middletown Agriculture Science and Technology Program, call 860-704-4594, email nescim@mpsct.org, or visit mhs.middletownschools.org/o/mhs/page/



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#### **Trinity Church Holiday Fair**

Trinity Church, located at 345 Main St., will hold its annual Holiday Fair Saturday, Nov. 22, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Seasonal crafts and baked goods, pies and treats, children's crafts and activities, crown jewels (costume jewelry) and raffles. Also, visit with Santa and take a photo.



860-342-4273

# **Burke Brothers Twinning and Winning**

By Josh Howard

Breckin and Hayden Burke have been racing

The identical twins were born about a minute apart with Breckin entering the world first and Hayden making his appearance moments later.

Now seniors at Portland High School, the all-state runners continue to race towards fin-

Isha Murphy, the cross-country coach at Portland High School, said the brothers have "elevated each other to a higher level of success

"They came from eighth grade with a strong work ethic and had some early success as freshman, and they have just continued that," added Murphy, who also coaches track and field at PHS.

The Burkes recently wrapped up their high school careers on the cross-country trails with a memorable championship season in which they finished first and second at the Shoreline Championship (SLC) championships on Oct. 16.

Racing at Hammonasset Beach State Park, Breckin won the conference clash with a time of 16:13 and was followed by Hayden with a time of 16:20.

"Shorelines were a really good experience," recalled Breckin. "It's a really good reminder of all the work we've done. It's good to know that all of our work paid off."

At the Class S Division Championships on Oct. 25, Breckin placed 2nd and Hayden was 4th. It was a similar finish at the State Open as Breckin (26th) and Hayden (28th) crossed the finish line within a few seconds of each other.

Prior to the championship season, Hayden won both the Harry Geraghty Invite and the Wickham Invite, while Breckin placed as the runner-up in both races.

"I've told them several times that there is no shame in finishing runner-up to your brother," noted Murphy, who also taught the two at PHS. "It didn't matter if Breckin was winning or Hayden was winning, they were both pushing each other to be their best. They brought out the

best in each other."

With speeds that are nearly identical, the brothers said they are competitive with the rest of the field, but not necessarily each other.

"We both know that we can push each other to be better," noted Breckin.

Along with going stride for stride in races, the Burkes do most of their training together with the duo logging 50-60 miles per week during peak summer training.

Hayden said the two "fuel" one another, noting that distance running is about keeping "good mindset".

"It's just about believing in yourself and putting in the work," he added.

Originally born in Middletown, the Burke family moved to Portland when the twins first entered grade school.

The long-distance running trait is something they inherited from their mother, Becky, who was a college athlete and a marathon runner.

After playing soccer and basketball during their formative years, the brothers joined the running teams in middle school and never

Deb Rooth, who coached the speedy siblings at Portland Middle School in both cross-country and track, called the twins, "Very coachable and an absolute pleasure to work with."

Rooth joked, "My biggest hurdle with them was telling them apart."

Once on the trails, the brothers quickly worked up the leaderboards and became Rooth's pack leaders for two seasons at the mid-

"Obviously they are very talented, but these are the kind of kids that make coaching worthwhile," added Rooth. "They never complained and they did exactly what I asked them to do."

The success in middle school allowed the Burkes to hit the ground running at PHS where they each competed in the division championships the past four years and the State Open the

Along with earning hardware on the trails,



Portland High School seniors Breckin Burke (left) and Hayden Burke are standout runners for the Highlanders running program. Photo: Ron Knapp, MySportsResults.com.

they have also been standouts during the indoor and outdoor track seasons where they are specialized in distances and have etched their names in the record books several times, most recently joining forces as part of the recordbreaking 4x800 relay team last spring.

The brothers' personalities also fit the community, noting that being from a small town has

"We get a lot of people congratulating us after races," explained Breckin. "It's a great feeling to know that we are representing our school."

Hayden added, "We have a good team bond

and we feed off the energy being the underdogs." Next up are the indoor and outdoor track seasons, which will be the Burkes last chance to compete for the Highlanders.

Both noted that as their time in Portland is winding down, they are feeling nostalgic about leaving the area that allowed them to take their passion for running to new levels.

The long-term plan is to compete in college, but the destination is still undetermined.

But one thing is for certain, the twins plan to continue competing side by side at the collegiate

#### Plan Now for Festival of Wreaths

The Portland Historical Society is planning its 14th annual Festival of Wreaths, "Jingle & Mingle," for the weekend of December 6 and 7.

With holiday decorations already in the stores, members and friends of the society are encouraged to keep their eyes open for "trinkets" that will make for a unique and special wreath for this year's festival. Last year over forty wreaths and tabletop decorations were donated. The possibilities for the wreaths are endless, the decora-tion can range from traditional to innovative, from sophisticated to child-like.

Individuals, families, businesses, clubs and organizations are invited to donate a deco-rated wreath for this "tea cup" style raffle. Wreaths can be real or artificial, can be a size and shape of your choice and can even be made from other materials — shells, pinecones, scrapbook papers, candies. It can have a theme, e.g., "Glistening Snowflakes" or "Forest Wonderland," or be decorated to attract a particular audience Legos or Crayolas for the younger boys and girls or cookie cutters for the home baker. A gift card or certificate for a service can be attached as part of your decoration.

All wreaths should be pre-registered by Thursday, December 4 by sending an email to: PortlandCThistory@gmail.com.

#### **Bereavement Support** Group

St. Mary Church, located at 45 Freestone Ave., invites all to attend the Bereavement Support Group.

The evening session of the group meets the second Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m. in the church hall. The afternoon session meets the fourth Tuesday at 2 p.m. in the church rosary

Call Susan Bongiorno to register at 860-685-1966.

#### Coat Drive

Zion Lutheran Church, located at 183 William St., will hold its second annual coat drive to support Amazing Grace Food Pantry on Saturday, Nov. 8, from 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Located in Middletown, Amazing Grace Food Pantry services 8 towns, including Port-

Prior to Nov. 8, gently used or new coats, vests or heavy sweaters of all sizes may be dropped off at the church. Contact the church office at 860-342-2860 or Kathy Richards at 860-982-7624 to make arrangements for drop-offs.

If you would like to participate but don't have time to create a wreath, for a donation of \$30.00 an Historical Society "elf" will decorate one for you. Your name, business or organiza-tion will be listed as the donor. Email PortlandCThistory@gmail.com to make arrangements for a Society elf to "work" for you. If you prefer to make a financial donation, your name will be posted as a supporter during the event.

For the second year, the Festival of Wreaths will be at the Grange Hall located at 17 Sage Hollow Road. All decorations must be dropped off by their creators on Thursday, December 4 or Friday, December 5. The festival will be open for the public on Saturday and Sunday from noon to 4 pm at the Grange Hall. On Saturday at 3pm, the Portland High School Acapella group under the direction of Samuel Tucker will entertain us

All proceeds from this event will be used to further the society's mission to preserve Portland's history and to fund educational projects for the community.

#### **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. Pastor is the Rev. Judith Cooke.

This Sunday, Nov. 16, will feature the Celebration of Gifts. Cooke will preach on "Blessed and

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 - Pre-K children will enjoy playtime and an age-appropriate lesson.

For more information, call 860-342-3244 or visit firstchurchportlandct.org.

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#### **Zion Lutheran News & Notes**

Zion Lutheran Church is located at 183 William St. All are invited to participate in worship. Sara Stall-Ryan is pastor.

**Worship Notes:** Zion offers Sunday worship each week at 9 a.m.

**Learning:** Sunday School classes, for children ages 3 through 8th grade, meet the first and third Sunday of each month, from 10:15-11:15 a.m. For more information, call Sylvia LeShane at 860-342-0658.

The Adult Education group is continuing its review of *The Chosen* video series. Episodes are viewed on the first and third Sunday at 10:30

a.m. Discussions will be held the second and fourth Sundays at 10:30 a.m. Contact the church for details.

Giving: Pull tabs are collected year-round and donated to the Ronald McDonald "House that Love Built," supporting families with seriously ill children. Zion recycles computer ink cartridges to support office supplies for Sunny Hill Preschool and Zion.

For more information about any church activities, or if you are in need of pastoral assistance, call 860-342-2860, email zion.lutheran@snet.net, or visit zionlutheranportland.org.

#### Middle School Honor Roll

Portland Middle School has announced the honor roll for the first marking period of the 2025-26 school year.

High Honors, Grade 8: Dylan Arnold, Avery Berard, Timothy Bolstridge, Sadie Campbell, Cora Chenier, Miriam Clements, Leo Dean, Maya Finkelstein, Whitney Gatto, Luz Glick-Grappo, Lillian Hallinean, Rowan Kirsche.

Honors, Grade 8: Arianna Aquino, Caiden Bouchard, Aleah Brown, Audrey Burton, Charlotte Carroll, Rory Connelly, Joshua Corriveau, Lucas DeYoung, Rocco Glick-Grappo, Kristina Gonzalez, Alexa Goodrich, Jack Grover, Amaya Huff, Hannah Lamson, Aiden Lawrence, Justin Lin, Noah MacDonald, Jude Matterfis, Ana McMicken, Christine Morse, Gabriel Ngunjiri, Griffin Poach, Anthony Quiles, Amani Reynolds, Mason Richey, Larissa Rossi, Evaliyah Salcedo, Taylor Sobieski, Carmelo Spada, Juliette Srb, Kyrinn Stone, Danica Strayhorn, Evan Warner, Abel Wells, Easton Yardis.

**High Honors: Grade 7:** Hailey Briggs, Cartier Brockers, Marshall Clarke, Lauren DeMerchant, Booker Edie, Gavin Hungerford, Kenzie Kroeber, Ella Libera, Emma Maronde, Juliana

Martin, Benjamin Martinez, Tessa Napp, Spence Papke, Andrew Quesnel, Christian Quesnel, Landon Richey, Sofia Rotaru, Nathan Tine, Madison VanDeventer, Bianca Vibberts, Raymond Vicino, Isabelle Vieira-LeMay, Rodney Warren, David Williams.

Honors: Grade 7: Sophia Adamaitis, Ella Agosta, John Bankoski, Elizabeth Barone, Colette Brault, Mason Buckley, Skylar Caldwell, Titan Caldwell, Max Campbell, Pearl Carmon, Daniel Carpenter, Lily Cavalier, Roman Christensen, Joshua Clark, Payton Clarke, Lester Coppola, Connor Cummings, Brayden Cunningham, Izabella DeCrescenzo, Fabian DeLeon Ortiz, Logan DuBerry, Reid Fournier, Brady Furtak, Landon Gallmon, Selena Gregoire, Maya Hale, Noelle Haniewski, Emmit Koch, James Kowalchik, Noel Lloyd, Sophia Lopez, Zachary Martin, Joseph May, Connor McAllister, Connor McKeaveney, Selma Payne, Jacob Phelps, Samuel Pickett, Cooper Quinn, Nicholas Rago, Adele Rogers, Logan Schmidt, Sofia Trojanowski, Nicholas Vibberts, Aidan Witschy, Jasmine Wolf.

#### **Senior Center News & Notes**

The Waverly Senior Center, 7 Waverly Ave., is open Monday-Thursday, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., and Friday, 9 a.m.-noon. For more information or to register, call 860-342-6761.

**Food Share Mobile Pantry** comes to the Food Bank every other Monday; the next pantry visit will be Nov. 17.

**Weekly Programs:** Unless noted, all programs are free. **Monday, 11/17: Light Aerobics,** 9:30-10:30 a.m.

Tuesday, 11/18: Bears on a Journey, 9:30-11 a.m., Help make fleece teddy bears for cancer patients. Bears on a journey are seeking donations of light fleece (one yard or more) for making teddy bears for cancer patients throughout CT. If you would like to donate, please contact 860-342-0809; Watercolor Class, 9:30 a.m., for more info please contact Bivenne at bivenne@ yahoo.com; Congregate Meal, noon. Cost is \$3 suggested donation (must fill out form) Menu: sliced turkey with gravy, green bean casserole, stuffing, roll & butter, milk, cranberry sauce; Coupons for Troops, 1-4 p.m.; Setback, 1 p.m.; SyncoCize, 5-6 p.m.

Wednesday, 11/19: Light Aerobics, 9:30-10:30 a.m.; Chair Yoga with Gia, 10:30-11:15 a.m., fee is a \$5 donation to instructor; Rug-Hooking Group, noon.

Thursday, 11/20: Tone & Stretch, 9:30 a.m.; Knit & Stitch, 10 a.m.; Congregate Meal, noon – cost is \$3 suggested donation (must fill out form). Menu: meatloaf with gravy, roll and butter, peas, smashed potatoes, milk, melon; Mahjong (FULL), 12:30 p.m.; Scrabble, 1 p.m.

Friday, 11/21: Light Aerobics, 9:30-10:30 a.m.; Mah Jongg, 10 a.m.

**Upcoming Events:** Unless noted, all events are free. **Live Well Workshop:** Mondays through Dec. 1, 2-4:30 p.m. This workshop began Oct. 27, and focuses on gaining the knowledge and skills needed to live well with ongoing health conditions. Connect with others weekly and explore planning and problem solving, working with providers, healthy lifestyle choices and more. Registration required as limited space is available; contact Heather to register.

**Bingo with Sean from Ageless Insurance:** Monday, Nov. 17, 1:30 p.m. Free event, but registration recommended.

Live Well, Age Well: A Free Diabetes Sup-

#### **Turkey Shoot**

Portland Fish and Game Club will hold its annual Turkey Shoot Sunday, Nov. 23, from 11 a.m.-2 p.m., across from the Exchange Club Fairgrounds.

This is a perfect opportunity to have some fun and maybe take home your Thanksgiving turkey! The cost is \$3 for one shot or two for \$5. Food and drinks will be available. Families are welcome.

**port Group**: Tuesday, Nov. 18, 1 p.m., led by retired physician Dr. Elsamma Chacko. This group focuses on living well with diabetes and aging in place by bringing expert guidance and lived experience together in a supportive setting. Registration suggested.

Walking Club: Wednesday, Nov. 19, 9 a.m. The walk is about a mile and a half and there is parking adjacent to the trail. The group meets at the trail crossing by Breezy Corners Road.

Lunch at Monet's Table and Outing:

Lunch at Monet's Table and Outing: Wednesday, Nov. 19. Outing destination to be determined. Leave the center at 10:30 a.m. Registration required. There is a \$5 ride fee, and you pay for your own lunch. Stay tuned for more info about this trip.

A Taste of the New England Tavern at Fair-field Museum: Sunday, Nov. 23. Food historians Keith Stavely and Kathleen Fitzgerald will discuss and present food in New England taverns. Limited spaces available; registration required. There is a \$20 event fee, and a \$5 ride fee.

Hair By Jessica: Monday, Nov. 24. The travelling hairstylist will offer men's and women's shampoos, cuts and styling. Call the center for details

**Center Closed for Thanksgiving:** Thursday and Friday, Nov. 27 and 28.

Cooking for One with Marilyn: Monday, Dec. 1, 11:45 a.m. The theme is "Just Desserts!" Fee is \$10; registration required.

Holiday Center Decorating & Pizza Party!: Tuesday, Dec. 2, 1-2 p.m. Registration recom-

Wreaths Around the Community: Wreath Stroll & Happy Hour at Marlborough Health & Rehabilitation: Tuesday, Dec. 2, 2-4 p.m. Cost is as \$5 ride fee; registration required

**Ikea Shopping Trip**: Wednesday, Dec. 3, leave the center at 10:30 a.m. Cost is a \$5 ride fee; registration required

Bingo with Sean from Ageless Insurance: Tuesday, Dec. 9, 1:30 p.m. Registration recommended.

**Medical Rides:** The center offers ADA-accessible transportation for seniors to medical rides. The fee is \$5/person round-trip. Give a two-week notice.

**Foot Care:** The senior center is taking appointments for the Foot Clinic with Stacey Cormier, RN. She will offer many services starting at \$35. Call to register and for more information.

Food Bank: The senior center asks that residents not leave Food Bank donations at the senior center unless the Food Bank is open. The Food Bank is open Mondays and Thursdays from 9 a.m.-noon. Also, donations should be of food only; call the senior center to inquire if staff is seeking medical equipment donations at this time. Due to limited space, staff cannot accept donations at the senior center without prior approval by the director.

# Fatal Crash Closes Arrigoni Bridge

By Anne Lilburn

A head-on two-car collision on the Portland side of the Arrigoni Bridge on Tuesday night killed one and closed the bridge for several hours.

Portland Police Sergeant Dan Knapp said that the department received a call about the accident at 8:43 p.m. on Nov. 11. The crash involved a red Subaru, traveling westbound, and a black Ford Escape, traveling eastbound. The driver of the Subaru, a 70-year-old man who was a Middletown resident, was pronounced dead on the scene. The other driver, a 31-year-

old Portland woman, was transported to Hartford Hospital, where police said she was "treated for potential serious injuries based on the mechanism of the crash."

The accident closed the bridge for approximately five hours while police investigated. The bridge reopened Wednesday morning.

Portland Police reiterated that the crash is still an active investigation, and that anyone with information about the crash should call the department, at 860-342-6780.

#### St. Mary Church News & Notes

St. Mary Roman Catholic Church, located at 45 Freestone Ave., invites all to attend its services and events. For more information, visit www. stmaryportlandct.org.

Worship: Weekday Masses are Monday and Tuesday at 8 a.m., and Friday at 12:10 p.m. Weekend Masses are Saturday at 5 p.m. and Sunday at 8 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.

**Reconciliation:** Saturdays between 4 and 4:45 p.m. Call 860-342-2308 to make arrangements.

Bereavement Support Group: All are invited to attend. The group meets each month on the second Monday at 6:30 p.m. in the church hall and every fourth Tuesday in the church library

at 2 p.m. Call Susan Bongiorno at 860-685-1966 for additional information.

**Baptism:** Call Sue Ferraiolo at 860-342-2308 to make arrangements.

**Marriages:** Contact the office at 860-342-2328 to make an appointment with the Rev. John Antonelle.

**Holy Hour Benediction:** First Friday of every month following the 12:10 p.m. Mass.

**Blessed Mother Mass:** First Saturday of every month at 9 a.m.

**Hours of Operation:** Church hours are 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily. Office hours are 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday-Friday.

#### Parks and Rec. News & Notes

Portland Parks and Recreation offers various programs for adults and children. For a complete list, full course descriptions and costs, or to register, visit portland.recdesk.com or call 860-342-6757. Advanced registration is required.

Annual Tree Lighting and Tree Lighting Parade: Save the date! Saturday, Dec. 6, at Brownstone Intermediate School. Watch for more info. Also, Vehicles Are Sought for the parade! Parks and Rec. is inviting people to decorate their ATV, tractor, truck or car and show their holiday spirit! Individuals and businesses welcome. Register to participate via portland.recdesk.com or by calling 860-342-6757.

Skyhawks Basketball Clinics (K-2): Saturdays, Jan. 3-Feb. 7, at Gildersleeve School.

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.

**Bench and Tree Donation Program:** Parks and Rec. is now accepting donations for benches and trees at the Portland Recreational Complex. If you're interested in dedicating a bench or tree, call Andy for more information at 860-342-6757.

**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.

#### **Portland Library News & Notes**

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

**Hours:** Monday through Thursday, 10 a.m.-8 p.m.; Friday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. **Holiday Closing:** The library will be closed all day Thursday and Friday, Nov. 27 and 28, for Thanksgiving.

Children's Programs: Cooking with Italian Flair: Thursday, Nov. 18, 3:30 p.m., for grades 3-5. A staff member from Food Explorers will teach how to make two different Italian-inspired dishes: pizza naans and cannoli croissants.

Mad Science Presents: The Science of Superheroes: Monday, Nov. 24, 2 p.m. Children will explore the science of flight, how science can make things invisible, and how Spiderman might walk up walls using fun, high-energy experiments.

**Drop-In Crafternoon:** Tuesday, Nov. 25, 1-3 p.m., for grades K-5. Drop in on this half day of school and see what you can make with the items the library has on hand. Registration not required for this program.

Family Craft Night: Gingerbread Houses: Monday, Dec. 15, 6:30 p.m. Use your imagination to create a house to bring home with you using graham crackers, frosting and other edible supplies. This activity has steps that are appropriate for all ages, but a parent or guardian must be with children to help with supervision. Registration will open Monday, Nov. 24, at 10 a.m. Space is limited.

#### PHS Class of 2015 Reunion

The Portland High School Class of 2015 is organizing a 10-year reunion for Saturday, Nov. 29, at Terrazza in Portland. It will start at 7 p.m. and include dinner and a cash bar.

Contact Erica Backus at 860-719-7058 or join the Facebook page for additional details.

Celebrate Hanukkah!: Monday, Dec. 1, 4 p.m. Portland residents Barbara Sequenzia and Liz Hibino will present stories, songs, games and latkes. This program is geared towards kids and their families, but all are welcome – whether you celebrate Hanukkah or not. Registration is open now.

Holiday Storytime: Tuesday, Dec. 16, 10:30 a.m. Kids birth to 5 and their caregivers are invited to come for a morning of holiday stories, songs and activities. A craft will be offered at the end of the program. Registration will open Monday, Nov. 24, at 10 a.m. Space is limited.

Teen Program: Gingerbread House Party! Monday, Dec. 8, 3:30 p.m. Students in grades 6-12 are invited to build and decorate their own gingerbread house. All supplies will be provided by the library as well as holiday music and snacks. Registration will open Monday, Nov. 24, at 10 a.m. Space is limited.

Magician Ed Popielarczyk: Tuesday, Dec. 30, 1:30 p.m. Magician, balloon sculptor, flea circus master, and storyteller Ed Popielarczyk will return to the library in an interactive show for ages 3 and up. Registration will open Monday, Nov. 24, at 10 a.m. Space is limited.

Adult Programs: Weekly Knifty Knitters Group: Saturdays, 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Adults of all experience levels are welcome. No registration required; simply drop in. Museum Passes: The library has several

printable museum passes that can be checked out including The American Clock & Watch Museum in Bristol, the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame in Springfield, Mass., and more.

Book Clubs: Mystery Lovers Book Club: Tuesday, Nov. 18, 1 p.m. Whose Body? by Dorothy L. Sayers will be discussed. Talk About Books: Tuesday, Dec. 2, 1 p.m. Christmas Bells by Jennifer Chiaverini will be discussed. 1st Thursday Night Book Club: Thursday, Dec. 4, 6:30 p.m. The Humans by Matt Haig will be discussed.

**Movie:** Wednesday, Dec. 10. *The Family Stone* (2005; rated PG-13) will be shown. Run time is 102 minutes.

#### 2025 Leaf Pickup

The Town of Portland Department of Public Works will conduct its annual leaf pickup beginning Monday, Dec. 1.

Leaves must be placed in paper bags at the curb so as not to cause a sight line issue. Leaves must be out no later than Nov. 30. Plastic bags will not be picked up.

Residents who do not place their leaves at the curb can bring them to the transfer station (permit required). Leaves not in paper

bags must be emptied by the resident in an area at the transfer station designated by the

Public Works requests that homeowners refrain from blowing or raking leaves into the roadway as blocking the storm drain inlets may cause flooding and create safety hazards.

For more information, call Public Works at

#### **Vocal Chords Holiday Concert**

"Winter Musical Celebration" will be presented by the Middlesex Hospital Vocal Chords (MHVC) on Sunday, Dec. 7, at 2 p.m., at Portland High School, 95 High St. The concert will feature 90 voices, directed by Samuel Tucker, and a 10-piece orchestra, directed by Alan Dougherty.

The program will feature pieces that have a pop rock feel, bells ringing with spirit, fast swing, Venetian music by Vivaldi, and more.

The MHVC will perform "Light One Candle"

recorded by Peter, Paul and Mary and arranged by local music educator Jack Zaino, honoring those who fought for freedom, along with a choral medley from Polar Express and many other holiday favorites.

Tickets to the event are \$25 and can be purchased from any member or by calling Joyce at 860-342-3120 or Diane at 860-347-2787. For more information, go to vocalchords20.org or visit MHVC on Facebook, Instagram and You-



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# Kenneth Barber & Associates, LLC Welcomes New Attorney: Lauren DeCaprio

Kenneth Barber & Associates, LLC is pleased to announce the addition of Attorney Lauren DeCaprio to the law firm.

Lauren has called Portland home for the past 13 years, where she lives with her blended family. Being deeply committed to her community, Lauren has served on the Portland Board of Education from 2020–2022, the Portland Equity and Inclusion Coalition and was elected to the Zoning Board of Appeals, for a term beginning in 2026. She continues to remain an active participant in many local civic organizations.

Lauren holds both her Master's Degree in Music Education (summa cum laude) and her Bachelor's Degree in Music (magna cum laude) from the University of Hartford's Hartt School and before pursuing her legal career, Lauren was an elementary school music teacher.

Her passion for service led her to Quinnipiac University School of Law, where she excelled academically and professionally. Lauren graduated in May 2025 with her Juris Doctor degree. She attended on a full merit scholarship (Dean's Fellows Scholarship), and has received multiple awards including the 1L Award for Oral Advocacy and Best Closing Argument in the intramural mock trial compe-

tition. She has competed at the national level as a member of Quinnipiac's Mock Trial and Society for Dispute Resolution teams.

Lauren's prior experience includes impressive legal internships with the United States Attorney's Office in New Haven, and multiple placements with the Connecticut Office of the Attorney General, gaining experience in litigation, privacy and data security, as well as courtroom proceedings.

"We are thrilled to welcome Lauren to the firm," said Attorney Kenneth Barber. "Her intelligence, work ethic, and commitment to community service align perfectly with our mission. She brings a unique blend of legal skill, creativity, and compassion for our clients."

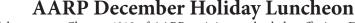
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The Colchester-area Chapter 4019 of AARP is having its annual holiday luncheon on Tuesday, Dec. 2, at Papa Z's, located at 173 Middletown Rd. in Colchester.

Any Colchester-area senior is encouraged to attend this gathering and also to learn more about our local AARP chapter. The gathering will begin at with cocktails from 12:30-1 p.m., followed by a 1 p.m. luncheon. The meal is a buffet with Chicken Francaise, baked stuffed shells, ziti with marinara sauce, eggplant rollatini, tossed salad, coffee/tea. Door prizes and a holiday game are part of the celebration.

The cost is \$30 per person which includes tax & tip. Reservations and payment must be made in advance with Colchester AARP by by Monday, Nov. 24. Checks are payable to "Colchester AARP #4019 Luncheon."

Any inquiries about Colchester AARP or the luncheon can be made by email to dupwat@ gmail.com.







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#### **Turkey Basket Drive**

Rotary's Turkey Basket drive is in full swing - and donations are sought to help the Rotary achieve its goal of providing for those in need.

Please consider purchasing a turkey leg in any amount at the registers at both Noel's and Westchester markets. Those who wish to donate by check can send to "Honor Rotary," P.O. Box 775, Colchester, CT 06415.

#### **Holiday Fair** & Open House

The Colchester Senior Center, located at 15 Louis Lane, will hold its annual Holiday Fair and Open House Saturday, Nov. 22, from 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

Explore the new senior center while you shop a wide assortment of handcrafted items, Colchester Garden Club's handmade wreaths, the Gift Basket Raffle, Homemade Bake Sale and the Holiday Café with breakfast and lunch items

All sales benefit the Colchester Senior Center's programs and services or the Colchester Garden Club.

For more information, please call 860-537-

#### **Donations Sought** for Wreaths

This year's Wreaths Across America ceremony will take place at Westchester Cemetery Saturday, Dec. 13, starting at noon sharp. The 55 service members buried there will be honored with the placement of live, balsam veterans' wreaths.

Donations are welcome in the form of purchasing a wreath for a soldier and laying wreaths at gravestones. Each individual \$17 sponsors a fresh balsam wreath that will be placed on a veteran's headstone on Dec. 13. To learn about event details, visit www.WreathsAcrossAmerica.org/CTWCCC. You can also send your contribution to Wreaths, c/o Joanne Rioux, 219 Lakeview Dr., Colchester, CT 06415.



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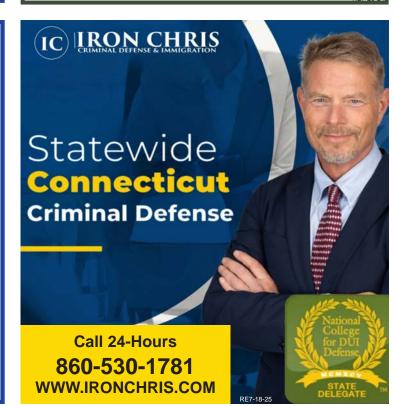
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#### **Holly Fair Dec. 6**

Colchester Federated Church will hold its annual Holly Fair Saturday, Dec. 6, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m., i at the church, 60 Main St.

There will be handmade crafts, baked goods and cookies by the pound, the White Elephant Room, paint-your-own ornaments, raffle baskets, and the Holly Café. Santa and Mrs. Claus will be there too! All are invited to stop by.

#### **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.

For more information (including the Zoom link), email contact-6976@toastmastersclubs. org. The club can also be found at airlinetrail. toastmastersclubs.org.

#### 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.

## **Annual Holiday Bazaar & Artisan Fair**

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# Ripples of Reflection in Steve Caron's Koi Pond

By Toriana Williams

Steven Caron has lived in Colchester since 1988, but his story began in the small town of Baltic, where he spent his childhood surrounded by hard work and quiet perseverance. Now 70 years old, he sits by his koi pond - the same one that inspired his new book - and remembers how an ordinary backyard project transformed into something extraordinary.

The idea for Koi Pond Reflections started not with a plan to write a book, Caron said, but simply from moments of stillness. He had what he referred to as a "problem backyard," filled with gravel and small hills and decided to landscape the area by adding a waterfall and koi pond. What surprised him most was what happened

"I'd find myself sitting by the pond. I'd have a cocktail, some music, the fish ... and a memory would come to me." A long-lost one at that, he said. "Once it would come to me, my brain would focus on it - they were connected to my heart - and then I would write about that."

Those writings, first shared on Facebook among friends, became a healing ritual. He titled each post Koi Pond Reflections, never expecting it to grow into a published book. "There was no intention," he said.

But family and friends began urging him to preserve the stories permanently. Then, Madi Balman from Skellydog, a marketing company located in Groton, approached Caron and offered to help produce it. For three years, Caron and his small team organized, edited and designed what would become Koi Pond Reflections - a collection of essays on memory, loss and wisdom.

Caron's reflections span decades, covering everything from his days as a police lieutenant to his role as a caregiver, a father and a man trying to make sense of the quiet moments life offers. He described the writing process as cathartic, emotionally challenging and deeply fulfilling.

One reflection, he said, "took me 60 years to write." That story, titled "You're Not Smart Enough," was born from an experience in eighth grade, when a teacher told him he wasn't intelligent enough to succeed.

'My classes are for smart kids, and you'd never get in there," Caron recalled the teacher saying. Decades later, Caron saw things differently. He realized that intelligence could be measured in more ways than academics. He learned how to build strong teams, empower others and lead with empathy.

"Just embrace your own intelligence," he said. "Be the best you can be using who you are." Taking that advice to heart, Caron continued to share openly - and others soon connected with his honesty.

The people who read his reflections online often approached him unexpectedly, telling him how much his writing meant to them. One woman in Wisconsin reached out after reading about a time when Caron, then running a tree service, quoted a struggling young family \$400 for work.

"I felt like \$400 for me was different than for them," he explained. "So after I got the tree work done, I said, forget the bill." The mother of the family began crying, and Caron remembered his own struggles when money was tight. That story, like many in his book, demonstrates the quiet acts of compassion that have shaped his

Caron's stories also confront loss. He wrote about caring for his mother through years of dementia, and about his daughter, Jennifer, who passed away at age 37 after battling cystic fibrosis and enduring a double lung transplant. Writing those reflections, he said, was "like my own

Jennifer had faced her death with grace, arranging her own funeral, selecting her music and headstone and even writing her eulogy with a friend. Caron said she found joy in her final months, not despair. "She was amazing," he said. "It was a relief for her... She was actually joyful that the struggle was coming to an end."

Her memory remains central to his book.

"We all die twice," Caron said. "The first time when your soul leaves the body. The second time, when nobody says your name again."

In Koi Pond Reflections, there is a section dedicated to Jennifer - his effort to ensure her name is never forgotten. He still visits her gravesite regularly to spend time with his daughter.

"I read a reflection to Jennifer at her gravesite," he said. "Then I have a discussion with her. It's healing for me."

Caron's professional life was as layered as his personal one. He spent over two decades in law enforcement, rising to the rank of police lieutenant. Later, he managed public safety at the University of Saint Joseph and worked in bioterrorism and pandemic planning. Throughout



Steven Caron flips through the pages of his book, pausing at a photo of his late daughter, Jennifer - a moment of remembrance and reflection captured in his story.

those roles, he believed that giving people dignity - especially those with the least - was the truest form of leadership. "The people who have the least in life," he said, "you give them a little dignity, show them a little respect and they'll take the shirt off their back for you."

His lessons often found their way into speeches. He used to tell nursing students about envy - how it grows from comparing your life to others'. "You can look at other people and say, I wish I had what they have," he said, "but when you find out what's behind the scenes, there's no way you'd want to be in their shoes."

Now retired, Caron continues to write. He said plans to republish Koi Pond Reflections through the online self-publisher IngramSpark to support independent bookstores, and has even considered an expanded edition. He's also begun inviting readers to visit him by the pond

that started it all.

"I'm hoping everybody finds their koi pond," he said. He added it doesn't have to strictly be a koi pond, but rather "a place where they can center themselves and make those connections."

When asked what he would tell his younger self if they could sit together beside that pond, Caron didn't hesitate.

"The worst critic you're ever going to face is when you're looking in the mirror," he shared. "Have confidence... don't be too harsh... and live your life in a manner of joy."

For Caron, peace is found in reflection - quiet water, golden fish and the echoes of memory. His koi pond is more than a backyard feature; it is a mirror to the past, a sanctuary for the heart and a reminder that even in loss, there is beauty in remembering.

#### 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.

#### **Colchester Federated Church News**

at 60 Main St., and pastor is the Rev. Lauren Ostrout. The church office is open Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., and can be reached at 860-537-5189 or cfc06415@gmail.com.

Worship: Sundays at 9 a.m. The service is also broadcast via Facebook Live. Worship videos are at www.colchesterfederatedchurch. org under the Worship tab. Updated information is on the church's Facebook page.

Advent Schedule: Sunday, Nov. 30, First Week of Advent: Hope; Sunday, Dec. 7, Second Week of Advent: Peace; Sunday, Dec. 14, Third Week of Advent: Joy; Sunday, Dec.

Colchester Federated Church is located 21, Fourth Week of Advent: Love & Annual Christmas Pageant.

Christmas Eve Services: Tuesday, Dec. 24: 5 p.m., Family Service; 9 p.m., Lessons & Carols. Twelve-Step Meetings: AA meets in the church library Monday-Wednesday and Fri-

day at noon and Thursday at 10 a.m., and at 7:30 p.m. Mondays and Wednesdays. On Saturdays at 9:30 a.m., Al-Anon meets in the Jerusalem Room and AA meets in the Stage

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

#### Dog Park Fundraising Photo Shoot

The Colchester Dog Park Committee is hosting a fundraising pet photo shoot with Santa. Children and families are welcome too. The event will be held at Colchester Fish & Game Club on Sunday, Nov. 30, from 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

The committee will sell digital images, 5x7 and 8x10 photo prints, Christmas cards and ornaments. All orders will be available for pickup at Park & Rec by Dec. 12. Cash, check and Venmo are accepted.

A new photo setting is available this year. Photography donated by SMS Photo of Colchester. For appointments, call Janice at 860-608-8489. Walk-ins will be accepted if time is

All proceeds will support the Colchester Dog Park. For more information, email tagnobark@ gmail.com.

#### Senior Center Upcoming Trips

Colchester Senior Center has announced a trip coming up. Trips are available to senior center members and their adult guests over the age of 18. Membership is free for Colchester residents aged 55 and older. There is an annual fee of \$15 for seniors residing outside of Colchester. For more information or to register, call 860-537-3911 or email csc@colchesterct.gov.

Majestic Cities of Central & Eastern Europe: Oct. 4-17, 2026. Explore Berlin, Prague, Vienna, Budapest and Krakow. This 14-day, 13-night trip includes airfare, hotels, and meals (12 breakfasts, one lunch, and six dinners). Cost is \$6,499 per person for double occupancy, if booked before Feb. 26, 2026. This is a small group tour (only 24 people in total on the tour) so space is limited. There will be a trip presentation at the Colchester Senior Center on Monday, Nov. 17; no registration required. For more information visit https://gateway.gocollette. com/link/1346389.

Newport Playhouse - A Twisted Christmas Carol: Tuesday, Dec. 2, 9:15 a.m. A Twisted Christmas Carol is a Texas spoof of Charles Dickens' classic A Christmas Carol. It's Christmas Eve in a small west Texas town, and cantankerous barbecue joint owner Buford Johnson is visited in a dream by ex-business partner Hank Walker, who takes Buford on a journey like Scrooge's. The cost is \$160 per person and includes a huge buffet dinner and cabaret style performances. Space is limited.

Discover the Canadian Maritimes Coastal Wonders: May 23-June 2, 2026. This 11-day. 10-night trip includes airfare, hotels and meals (10 breakfasts, two lunches and four dinners). Cost is \$4,299 per person for double occupancy, if booked before Nov. 23. For more information or to register for this trip, visit gateway.gocollette.com/link/1346736.

#### 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.



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# Colchester Teacher Wins National Milken Award

By Toriana Williams

Bacon Academy technology teacher David Mason received the surprise of his career this fall when he was recognized with the prestigious Milken Educator Award – an honor often referred to as the "Oscar of Teaching" by the Milken Family Foundation.

The award, which comes with an unrestricted \$25,000 cash prize, celebrates exceptional early-to-mid career educators who are improving education in innovative and meaningful ways nationwide.

The surprise assembly was organized under the guise of recognizing Bacon Academy's strong performance in college and career readiness measures. Mason said he believed the school gathering was to acknowledge the state Department of Education ranking Bacon Academy as the number one public school in the state for college and career readiness for the 2022-23 school year.

"At the time, I was under the impression that the assembly was to celebrate all the wonderful things Bacon Academy has achieved," Mason said. He added that the announcement took him completely off-guard.

Mason shared that when Milken Educator Awards Senior Vice President Jane Foley called his name, "I was in complete shock. It was surreal, and the support our students and staff were giving was something I will forever cherish."

Mason is the only Connecticut educator to receive the Milken Award during the 2025-26 cycle and is the state's 104th recipient since the program began recognizing Connecticut teachers in 1988.

The award highlights not only what Mason has achieved in his career so far, but the promise of what he will continue to accomplish with expanded opportunity and national recognition.

Mason emphasized the significance of joining a group of distinguished educators.

"I know that the winners of this award are top tier educators who make a profound impact on their school and students," he said. "To be named into this group is an honor that I never expected and feel a deep sense of gratitude to my colleagues and students."

**Transforming Manufacturing Education** 

Mason leads Bacon Academy's manufacturing program – now one of the largest and most respected in the region. The program has grown into a four-year career pathway, with high enrollment and diverse opportunities for students to earn credentials while still in high school.

"Our manufacturing program at Bacon has been intentionally structured to provide students with a pathway into the field after high school if they wish," Mason explained.

The program offers students the ability to earn college credits and 150 pre-apprenticeship hours through the state Department of Labor. Coursework spans a wide range of high-demand industrial skills including blueprint reading, welding, metal fabrication, machining, forging and CNC plasma cutting.

During his time at Bacon, Mason has helped secure grants that brought state-of-the-art industry equipment to the school, ensuring students gain real-word experience with technology they will see on the job.

"The exposure to this makes it real for them and the learning curve once they enter a job is smaller," he said. "Students can leave Bacon with a solid knowledge base and skill set in a variety of processes that makes them well prepared to enter the work force."

Mason also credits the school's strong partnerships with workforce development organizations and major employers across eastern Connecticut.

"The other factor that has helped improve our program is our partnership with the Eastern CT Workforce Investment Board (EWIB) and its Director of Operations, David Allard," Mason said. "Allard has been instrumental in aiding the growth of our program and ensuring that our students have the connection and resources they need after high school to land jobs."

These industry ties have made Bacon Academy a state model for manufacturing career pathways. Students regularly move into internships and full-time work with companies such as Electric Boat, Pratt & Whitney, Westminster Tool and more.

#### **Changing Lives Through Opportunity**

For Mason, the most rewarding outcomes are his students' successes - especially those who faced challenges before discovering a passion for skilled trades.

He recalled one student whose future once appeared undetermined. "His future was uncertain and he didn't know what he wanted to do, but he wanted to work," Mason shared.

With guidance and hands-on learning, that student ultimately entered the Manufacturing Pipeline Program and was hired by Electric Boat before graduation. "He is now three years into his career at EB and is currently a Quality Inspections Supervisor."

Dozens more alumni have stepped directly into high-skill careers thanks to the foundation Mason's program provided. He said these accomplishments fuel the work.

"I would say all those success stories are what motivate us to keep our programs going. The trades are highly valued again and seen as a viable option for students instead of the traditional college or military routes."

Deeply Meaningful Moment for Growing Family

Mason said the award came at a particularly exciting – and busy – time in his personal life, as the Mason family recently welcomed home another baby girl.

As for how the \$25,000 award will be used, the family hasn't made any decisions yet – but it will almost certainly support their children in some way.

For now, though, Mason said he is still processing the honor – and the national recognition it brings for Bacon Academy and its students.

"Receiving the Milken Award certainly was a surprise, and I am beyond honored to be the recipient of it this year," he said.

As one of only 30 educators nationwide selected this season, he will join his fellow recipients in Washington, D.C. next summer to collaborate with leaders in education and the national Milken Educator Network.

But even as his influence expands beyond Connecticut, Mason remains focused on the future careers being shaped inside his classroom – the ones holding welding torches, designing blueprints and preparing to build the state's workforce. Because at the heart of this award is what he values most: A teacher changing lives – one student at a time.

**Christian Life Chapel News** 

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

**Women's Bible Study:** Tuesdays, 10-11:30 a.m., studying the book of Revelation.

**Community Bible Study:** Wednesdays at 7 p.m. All are invited.

**Donuts with Don:** Is back Fridays at 10 a.m. It's an open discussion on the theme: How does God fit in this thing called life?

Operation Christmas Child: From Monday, Nov. 17, to Monday, Nov. 24, the church will be a collection site for Operation Christmas Child. Collection times are: Monday, Wednesday, Friday: 5-7 p.m.; Tuesday and Thursday, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.; Saturday, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.; Sunday, noon-3 p.m.; and Monday, Nov. 24, from 9-11 a.m.

**Color House Ornament Trail** 

This holiday season, The Color House Art & Pottery Studio is inviting the community to join in a brand-new tradition: the first annual Color House Ornament Trail.

Running Dec. 1-21, 100 handcrafted ceramic ornaments created by artist Tina Parsadanov and her team at The Color House will be hidden all around Colchester, from local parks to small businesses. Each ornament is unique, and free for whoever discovers it.

Participants are encouraged to visit partici-

pating Colchester businesses to collect stamps in their Ornament Trail Digital Passport. Even if an ornament has already been found at a location, visitors can still stop in to scan the business's unique stamp. For every five stamps collected, participants will earn an entry into grand prize drawings featuring handmade pottery and gift cards from town favorites. Visit www.cohoct.com/ornamenttrail for more information and to register.

**CCT to Hold Auditions for Musical** 

Auditions are coming up for the Colchester Community Theatre's production of *Sister Act*.

Based on the hit musical, which was in turn based on the hit 1992 Whoppi Goldberg movie, *Sister Act* is a celebration of music, friendship, and finding your voice.

Auditions will be held Friday, Nov. 14, from 6:30-8:30 p.m. and Saturday, Nov. 15, from 9:30-11:30 a.m. at Bacon Academy High School cafeteria, 611 Norwich Ave. Please prepare 32 bars of a song in the style of the show (pop, disco, soul, or gospel). An accompanist will be provided. No a cappella or backing tracks please. Sides from the show will be available at auditions. All auditionees should be prepared to move. Please

bring comfortable clothes and appropriate footwear (jazz shoes or sneakers) to learn a brief dance combination.

To sign up for auditions and receive additional information regarding the musical, please visit www.colchestercommunitytheatre.com. CCT is seeking a diverse and talented cast ages 16+ including BIPOC roles to bring this story to life on stage. For more information, email info@colchestercommunitytheatre.com

Show dates for this production are Feb. 13, 14, and 15, 2026. Anyone who is unable to attend the auditions on the above dates must contact CCT before Nov. 13 to make other arrangements.

#### **Festival of Lights Fundraiser**

The Bacon Academy Board of Trustees will launch a new annual holiday tradition, the Festival of Lights, on Thursday, Dec. 5, at 6:30 p.m., at Historic Bacon Academy, 84 Main St.

The event will showcase locally decorated tabletop holiday trees and wreaths donated by community members, all of which will be auctioned to support the ongoing restoration efforts at the historic school.

Tickets are \$25 and include a wine tasting from Priam Vineyards, cider or hot chocolate, and hors d'oeuvres. Each guest will have the opportunity to vote for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners in both the tree and wreath categories. A silent auction will offer attendees the chance to bring home one of the artistically decorated pieces.

The evening will also feature festive perfor-

The Bacon Academy Board of Trustees will mances by the Bacon Academy Choir and Jazz unch a new annual holiday tradition, the Fes-

Event proceeds will support Phase 2 of the Trustees' preservation plan, which includes installing an ADA-compliant ramped entrance and a first-floor restroom, helping ensure that Historic Bacon Academy remains accessible and vibrant for the entire community.

The decorated trees and wreaths will also be open to the public on Friday, Dec. 6, from 4-6 p.m., during Holiday Homecoming on the Colchester Town Green. The Trustees will host an open house and offer guided tours of the building for all who are interested.

Tickets may be purchased by emailing info@ baconacademytrustees.org or visiting baconacademytrustees.org/festivaloflights.html.



All That Jazz... Jazzercise-Colchester instructors Jennifer Collingwood and Kelly Ouellette recently celebrated 10 years of teaching Jazzercise. They bring high energy and fun to the Jazzercise-Colchester studio, located at 188 Norwich Ave. This dance-based fitness program combines cardio, strength training and stretching for a full body workout appropriate for all fitness levels. To learn more about Jazzercise, go to Jazzercise.com/studio/ct/colchester-ct.



Scouting for Food a Success... On Nov. 8, scouts, leaders and family members of Troops 13, 72, and 109 and Pack 13 in Colchester collected thousands of food and personal care items and delivered them to the Colchester Town Hall where items were sorted and stored for distribution to those in need. Photo by Alice Csere.

#### Westchester Church News

Westchester Congregational Church, located at 98 Cemetery Rd., holds worship Sundays at 10 a.m. All are welcome to attend. The church choir always welcomes new members. Services are also available on Zoom; visit www.westchestercongchurch.org for login information. Sunday School for children meets during the worship service.

Twelve-Step Meetings: Al-Anon meets in Canney Hall Wednesdays at 7 p.m. AA meets in Canney Hall Fridays at 7:30 p.m.

Scouts: The church sponsors Scouting America Troop 109. During the school year, Troop 109 meets on Tuesdays at 7 p.m.

Outreach and Other Opportunities: Knitting Group meets Thursdays at 10 a.m. Many knitted, crocheted, and quilted items have been sent to Native American reservations, hospitals for babies, and other places to help those in need. The Blessings Box is at the end of the church parking lot and contains donations of non-perishable food, personal care, and other items for those in need. Take what you need; donate what you can. Also, the church sponsors the Wounded Warrior Project, a donation opportunity to help veterans.

For more information, visit westchestercongchurch.org, email westcongchurch@ gmail.com or call the church at 860-267-6711. Pastor Ron Lake can be reached at 860-

#### **Christmas Polka and Toy Drive**

The St. Joseph's Polish Society of Colchester, located at 395 South Main St., has announced a pair of upcoming events. For more information, call 860-537-2550.

Christmas Polka: Sunday, Dec. 14. Hors d'oeuvres will be served from noon-1 p.m., with Christmas music by The Snowman Buddies. Dinner will be served from 1-2 p.m., with your choice of roasted pork or chicken. Dennis Polisky and The Maestro's Men will perform from 2-6 p.m. for your dancing pleasure. Tickets are \$25 per person.

Toy Drive: The club is hosting its fifth annual Army vs. Navy football game and Toys for Tots fundraiser Saturday, Dec. 13. Watch the football game in the hall on the big screen TV. Doors open at 2 p.m. and kick-off is at 3 p.m. There will be a buffet and raffle prizes. Please bring a new unwrapped toy or a \$15 donation per person to attend this event.

#### **CLT Upcoming Events**

The Colchester Land Trust (CLT) is hosting the following upcoming events, and all are invited. For more information on any of the events, to register, or for info on CLT in general, visit colchesterlandtrust.org.

Hike The Babcock Wildlife Management Area: Dec. 14, 10 a.m.-noon. As a wildlife management area, Babcock provides 1,500 acres of forest, swamps and ponds. It contains miles of unmarked hiking trails. The hike is approximately four miles long, mostly on a logging road and open paths. Adults, children and leashed dogs are welcome.

Directions: From Route 16/Middletown Road in Colchester, turn on Bulkeley Hill Road, follow approximately two miles to Bulkeley Hill Preserve. The wood sign post and the entrance to the gravel parking lot will be on your right. For GPS use the mailbox across the street from the lot, 243 Bulkeley Hill Road, Colchester.

From Route 2 eastbound, take Exit 16 and turn right onto Route 149 South. Go approximately one mile and take left onto Cato Corner Road. Follow Cato Corner Road to intersection of Cato Corner and Route 16. Go straight across onto Standish Road, off Route 16. Bear right at first stop sign. Turn right onto Red School House Road, and park in the cul-de-sac at the end of the road.

Route 2 westbound travelers, take Exit 16, turn left onto Route 149 South and follow directions above. Email foundersway10@gmail. com for additional information. Visit colchesterlandtrust.org for updates on the hike.

The fee for this hike is free to members of the CLT, \$5 per non-member adult, and free for all children under 18. The hike will be rain or shine, and is not stroller-friendly; trails are not groomed and have rocks and roots and wet areas. Advanced registration strongly suggested. Wear appropriate footwear and clothing for the weather and terrain. Bug and tick protection strongly suggested. Dogs are welcome on leash, but bring waste bags to dispose of off property.

#### Cover Story • Co

#### ★ New Coalition, cont. from page 1

"Food Fight" and a map showing "tiny pantry" locations where residents can find donated food.

Clouser says that while the situation with SNAP benefits may seem more optimistic than it did a couple weeks ago when the group first formed, everyone involved knows that the problem of hunger will not be going away any time soon. Both Royce and Namen mentioned that their organizations did not ask for proof of income or SNAP eligibility in part because they know that there is a wide range of reasons for

someone to feel worried about where they will get their next meal, especially during a time of rising grocery prices.

Royce and Namen, along with Clouser, said that while they hoped that the fear many people felt around where they might get their next meal would subside in the coming weeks, they knew hunger would not go away. Clouser said, moving into the future, she hoped the website could be a continuing resource for the community.

#### Project Graduation Fundraiser at Marlborough Big Y

For the entire month of November when you purchase a reusable Community Bag at the Big Y located at 7 East Hampton Rd. in Marlborough, \$1 will be donated to Bacon Academy Project Graduation.

Project Graduation has a goal of selling 200 bags.

The mission of Bacon Academy Project

Graduation is to enhance drug and alcoholfree awareness by providing safe and healthy graduation events for all graduating seniors of Bacon Academy. Direct donations are always welcome. Visit baconacademyprojectgrad.org for more information, or follow on Facebook at Bacon Academy Project Graduation.

#### **Senior Center News & Notes**

Colchester Senior Center, 15 Louis Lane, has announced the following. Unless noted, registration is required for all programs. For full program descriptions and to register, call 860-537-3911, email csc@colchesterct.gov, or for a full list of activities, visit www.colchesterct.gov. senior-center.

Monday, Nov. 17: 9 a.m., Making Memories, Commission on Aging meeting, Exercise w/ Anne; 10 a.m., Sittercize; 10:30 a.m., Majestic Europe Trip Presentation; 11 a.m., Learn to Sign; 11:30 a.m., TVCCA lunch served early; 11 a.m.-noon, fitness orientation by appointment; 12:30 p.m., Mah Jongg, Bridge, Setback.

Tuesday, Nov. 18: 9 a.m., Making Memories; 9:45 a.m., Tai Chi; 10:30 a.m., Book Club; 10:30 a.m., Floral Tablescapes Class; 12:30 p.m., Pinochle; 12:30 p.m., In the Know; 1 p.m., Cornhole; 1:15 p.m., Bingo; 4-8 p.m., Wellness

Wednesday, Nov. 19: 9 a.m., Making Memo-

ries, Walking Group; 9 a.m.-3 p.m., Reflexology by Appointment; 10 a.m., Adult Coloring, Hand and Foot Card Game, Sit & Be Fit; 11 a.m., Friendsgiving Luncheon; 1 p.m., Sew-cial Time; 1:30 p.m. and 2:30 p.m., Cardio Drumming;

2:30 p.m., CSC Staff Meeting. **Thursday, Nov. 20:** 9 a.m., Exercise w/ Anne; 10 a.m., Sittercize, Wii Bowling, Card-Making with Barbara, Bereavement Group; 11 a.m.; Yoga; noon, Benefits Counseling; 12:05 p.m., Chair Massage by appointment; 12:30 p.m., Dominoes; 1 p.m., Knit & Crochet; 4-8 p.m., Wellness Nights.

Friday, Nov. 21: 9 a.m., Social Services Hours, Open Art Studio, Seasonal Crafting; 10 a.m., Sit & Be Fit; 10:30 a.m., Choral Group; 11 a.m., Yoga; 11:30 a.m., AARP Driver Safety; no Bingo today; noon-4 p.m., Holiday Fair Set-Up.

Saturday, Nov. 22: Senior Center Holiday Fair & Open House, 9 a.m.-2 p.m.



# The Weekly Crossword by Margie E. Burke **10** Give off, as light 14 Springsteen title Copyright 2025 by The Puzzle Syndicate

4 Ungrateful one software

6 Word for Wally

9 Fluid with

"Up"

52 Tabby intoxicant 56 Baptism, for one

57 You don't want to be in it

60 Computer brand 61 Bridal

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62 Part of CPU

**ACROSS** 1 Exotic berry

5 Feverish fits

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15 Audacity

16 Aria singer

17 Detergent

20 NBA star

26 Voucher

29 Type of tea

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34 Chatty bird

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42 Animal trainers

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65 Leave in the dust

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1 "Waterloo" singers

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5 Like Norton

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7 Ashes holder

8 Tied, as a score

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11 Fighting groups

12 Dr. Pavlov

13 Zingy taste

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22 Finder's payoff

24 Frosts a cake 25 Burns

26 "Strong Enough" singer

27 Fire engine gear

28 Involved in, as a crime

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33 Central Califor-48 Swedish auto 49 Flving Brits nia citv

34 Seven Sundays after Easter

35 Turn's partner **38** Glasgow gal

41 Figurative writing

43 Lascivious

45 More madcap

58 Pen point 59 Peyton's brother

50 Dull color

54 Blue flower

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55 Tennis's

**51** Puerto 53 Spanish boy

Answers to Previous Crossword:

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Hebron • Heb

# 'Greenkeeper's Revenge' Returns to Blackledge

By Toriana Williams

In the quiet hills of Hebron, where winding roads give way to soft greens and rolling fairways, the Blackledge Country Club stands as a living tribute to family, tradition and the enduring love of golf.

But once a year, it gets a little crazy.

Founded in 1963 by Ernie Anderson and three partners, Blackledge began humbly as a nine-hole course. Over the decades, it grew first to 18 holes, then to 27 and eventually to 36 - with each expansion reflecting the family's deep commitment to the sport and their community.

"My dad started it," William "Bill" Anderson said. "He worked at Pratt & Whitney ... along with two of the other partners, Nelson Friese and Jack Darby."

The idea came to Ernie when he realized how long he had to wait just to get a tee time at another course. "[Ernie] said, 'There must be such an interest in golf. I'm going to build my own golf course.'

Bill's uncle, Doug Porter, was also a partner at the time.

From those modest beginnings, Blackledge blossomed into one of the region's most beloved public golf courses. Despite its "Country Club" name, Bill emphasized that it remains open to all. "We're a public golf course that also offers memberships."

The club's two 18-hole courses, complete restaurant, music nights and indoor simulator make it more than a golf destination - it's a community gathering space.

Family is the lifeblood of Blackledge. Generations of Andersons have tended the greens, run tournaments and welcomed guests. Even Bill's mother helped shape the club's legacy.

"My grandmother was one of the first to start the Women's league here," said Christopher "Chris" Anderson, one of Bill's two sons and business partners. Chris shared that his grandmother, Bea Anderson, was incredibly influential in welcoming women to golf in the area.

"It's funny – back in the day, the men went to play golf while women stayed home. It's almost the opposite now," Chris smiled.

The spirit of fun and inclusion is never more alive than during one of the club's most famous events - the Greenkeeper's Revenge tournament. It's a tradition that has delighted golfers for more than half a century.

The tournament began in the early 1970s, said Bill. "This is our 55th year."

Originally created by the Men's Club and

member Al LaChapelle as a thank you to the maintenance crew, it quickly became a commu-

'It's actually a fundraiser for the maintenance crew," said Bill. "They get to set up the course in a crazy way, and whatever [money] was raised would go to the crew for all their hard work."

"Crazy" is putting it mildly. Each November, this year held on Nov. 7, the staff transforms the meticulously maintained course into a playground of obstacles and laughter. For example, some of the holes you tee off a toilet and then you putt into a toilet seat," said Chris.

This year, one hole had four clotheslines strung across the green with laundry, including underwear, hanging off it.

"Another had ten big Christmas trees set up with snowballs all over the place," Bill added.

And while other golf courses may have similar events, "our Greenkeeper's Revenge is on steroids," Bill laughed.

Every hole - 18 in total - is decorated with its own theme. The tenth hole features roughly 20 pieces of maintenance equipment arranged as obstacles across the fairway, with a line of shovels going all around to create an added challenge.

"You can't run it up – you've got to get it over," explained Bill.

That creativity and humor have earned the event near-mythical status among local golfers. The tournament has grown so popular that all three days fill up within just a couple hours after the registration email goes out, Bill spoke.

'We could do a fourth day, but it's so involved to set it up and take it down."

Each year, the tournament runs Friday through Sunday. This year, 144 players attended each day - or 432 in total.

In true Blackledge fashion, it's as much a celebration as a competition. After the 11th hole, players gather at a pavilion for drinks and food, including chili and hot dogs. There's also a chipping contest where participants aim for old appliances like ovens and air conditioners. For \$5, golfers get five shots and anyone who lands one earns entry into a 50/50 raffle.

The numbers from this year's tournament tell the story of its scale: "We went through about 30 gallons of chili, 500 hot dogs," said Ryan Anderson, one of Bill's two sons and partners. "And five or six kegs of beer and a couple bottles of Fireball," Chris laughed.

Ryan explained that the tournament follows a scramble format, which keeps the game fun and relaxed for players of all skill levels. In this setup, each team is made up of four players, and everyone hits from the same spot after the best shot is chosen. He noted that it takes the pressure off individuals while still keeping the competition lively.

"It gives you four chances to make one good shot," he said, adding that the format encourages teamwork and makes the event more enjoyable for casual golfers. Winners of the tournament receive "Pro Shop credit" in amounts of \$100 to the first-place team, \$75 to the second-place team and \$50 to the third-place team.

Despite the revelry, the purpose of the event remains heartfelt.

#### Help for the Holidays

With the holidays coming up, bereavement support group meetings can provide a safe place to share stories of loved ones, and learn about the process of grief with others as well as strategies that might help people through the holidays and beyond.

The Grief Journey: A Bereavement Support Group is held Wednesday evenings from 7-8:30 p.m., at the Church of the Holy Family parish house, 185 Church St. The group is facilitated by grief educators Michael Glazier and Stephanie Haines.

All grieving adults are welcome, whether your loss is recent or past, and you may come to one session or as many as you would like. This support group is non-denominational and brought to you by a collaborative effort of the Hebron faith communities. There is no registration.

#### HIHS Food Assistance Available

down and the delay in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, Hebron Interfaith Human Services has announced the following information about its programs and how others can help.

Community Food Pantry: The HIHS Community Food Pantry, located at 26 Pendleton Drive in Hebron, is open to any income-eligible individual or family in Connecticut experiencing food insecurity. Hebron/Amston residents can shop once per week and out-of-town guests can shop twice per month. Food distribution hours are Tuesday/Thursday, 9 a.m.-6 p.m., and Friday, noon-5 p.m. Guests are asked to bring their own clean folded shopping bags.

Mobile Foodshare: The CT Foodshare mobile produce truck will be at the Church of Hope parking lot (junction of routes 85 and 66) every other Tuesday from 11:15 to 11:45 am. Everyone is welcome and guests are asked to bring their own reusable bags to hold their selections. The remaining dates for 2025 are Nov. 18, Dec. 2, Dec. 16 and Dec. 30. Please dress accordingly for colder weather.

Holiday Assistance: Assistance for Thanksgiving and Holiday gifts is available on the HIHS website, www.hihsct.org. Holiday gifts

With the ongoing federal government shut- are limited to parents/guardians with children living in their households in Hebron, Andover and Marlborough.

Donations Needed: Non-perishable donations of pantry staples, hygiene products and cleaning supplies are welcome. Items must not be expired, rusted or dented. Most-needed items: canned meats, hearty/chunky soups, pasta & sauce, instant potatoes, cereal/oatmeal, canned fruits. Grocery gift cards always welcome to use towards meat, dairy and eggs.

Thanksgiving Food Drive: Saturday, Nov. 15, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. There will be two collection locations - at Ted's IGA, 127 Main St., and at the HIHS Community Food Pantry. HIHS will collect foods to make Thanksgiving bags, as well as gift cards.

Monetary Contributions: Can be made online via www.hihsct.org or in person during normal pantry hours, which are Tuesday/Thursday, 9 a.m.-6 p.m., and Fri, noon-5 p.m.

Holiday Sponsors Needed: Bring joy to a child this holiday by becoming a gift sponsor for \$35 or a clothing sponsor for \$50. Details available at www.hihsct.org.

For more information on HIHS, visit www. hihsct.org, email hihsfoodpantry@gmail.com or call 860-228-1681.



For one of the holes during Blackledge Country Club's Greenkeeper's Revenge, a busted-up vehicle was "offered" as a "prize" if golfers got a hole in one.

"It's just a nice way of showing appreciation for all the work the maintenance crew does throughout the year," Bill said. The proceeds are shared among assistants, mechanics and other staff members who contribute to organizing the tournament. Bill chose not to disclose the amount of money raised and gifted to his employees from the tournament.

The maintenance team's work is no small task. "We take care of everything outside – all turfrelated issues, mowing, irrigation, drainage," said Ryan. "They're here at 4:30 in the morning on weekends," said Bill. "It's a very daunting job, really. A lot of dedication."

That sense of dedication and pride designs the entire operation. "We're big on being a family here," Bill said. During the summer season, the club employs around 110 people, and the annual holiday party draws the entire team together, shared Bill. Many of those employees have been with the club for decades - some for over 40 years.

Even with its growth and modern additions – like the practice facility named for Bill's mother, Bea - the course remains rooted in its original

"I worked here as a kid picking rocks when it was being built," Bill recalled. "All the families were involved. It's always been a family busi-

Today, the third generation of Andersons manages the greens, with hopes that a fourth will one day take the reins.

"My sons are my partners now," said Bill. "And hopefully my grandkids will be next to take it over."

That continuity - between past and present, between fun and hard work - is what gives Blackledge its character. Whether it's the smell of fresh-cut grass at dawn, the laughter echoing from the pavilion during the Greenkeeper's Revenge or the taste of delicious meals at their restaurant, the Anderson family's love for their course is undeniable.

And in Hebron, where tradition runs as deep as the roots beneath those fairways, the story of Blackledge's Country Club continues – through every swing, every season and every passing generation.

#### **Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service**

On Sunday, Nov. 23, at 7 p.m., the Catholic community of the Good Shepherd will host the annual Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service and Celebration at the Church of The Holy Family (185 Church St, Hebron), in partnership with Gilead Congregational Church, St. Peter's Episcopal Church, and the United Brethren of Hebron Synagogue.

After the service, all are invited to gather for food and fellowship in the church hall. In keeping with the spirit of the season, please bring an appetizer or dessert to share and a non-perishable food item that will be donated to Hebron Interfaith Human Services.

Contact Nicole (860-228-3727 ext. 107) for more information.

#### St. Peter's Roast Pork Tenderloin Dinner

St. Peter's Episcopal Church will hold its next monthly community dinner Saturday, Nov. 15, starting at 3:30 p.m. The menu will include pork tenderloin, gravy, applesauce, roasted potatoes, winter squash, rolls and dessert. The cost is \$17.

This meal is takeout-only. You will be given a ticket for each meal you order. A server will come to your car, take your ticket(s), your payment, and your dessert order. They will bring your change, meal and dessert back to your car, and place all in your back seat or trunk. You won't need to get out of your car.

As part of the St. Peter's outreach programs, a portion of each meal sold this month will go to the Windham Area Interfaith Ministry.

The church is located at 30 Church St. For more details, contact the church at 860-228-3244 or visit www.StPetersHebron.com.

#### **Knights of Columbus Food Drive**

The Knights of Columbus Council 11835 of foods of all kinds) are appreciated by CSK clithe Catholic Community of the Good Shepherd [Church of The Holy Family in Hebron and St. Columba Church in Columbia], is sponsoring a food drive through Nov. 30 to benefit the Covenant Soup Kitchen (CSK) in Willimantic.

Items Needed to Stock the Pantry: Breakfast: cereals; oatmeal (cooked or instant); and breakfast & granola bars; Canned Goods: pasta meals (ravioli, etc.); fruits (also dried); vegetables (corn, carrots, beets, potatoes & spinach); protein (chicken, beef, tuna) & baked or kidney beans; hearty soups; crushed tomatoes; and pasta sauce & tomato sauce (cans or jars); Dry Goods: rice & pasta; flavored rice & pasta mixes; noodle cups; Ramen noodles (all varieties); and macaroni & cheese; Beverages: juice (bottles, boxes & pouches); shelf stable milk and non-dairy alternatives; Pantry Staples: cooking oil, sugar, flour, spices & seasonings; Toiletries: shampoo, conditioner, soap (bar, body wash & hand soap); deodorant; toothpaste; body & hand lotion; and feminine hygiene products; Baby Supplies: diapers sizes 5,6,7; and baby wipes (scented & sensitive); and Pet Supplies: dog & cat food; and cat litter.

Note: Healthy options (no added sodium, no added sugar, low sugar, sugar free and low fat

ents with chronic health conditions. Allergenfriendly options are also needed for those on restricted diets. Healthy snacks for children are highly encouraged.

Items Needed for Thanksgiving: Turkeys: Deliver frozen turkeys and all other items requiring refrigeration to CSK, 220 Valley St., Willimantic, Phone 860-423-1643. Do not leave turkeys or any other frozen or refrigerated food in the church collection bins. Other needs: stuffing mix, cranberry sauce (jellied or whole berry); gravy (jar, canned or packet); fresh or canned potatoes & sweet potatoes; corn & peas (frozen or canned); cornbread mixes & other quick bread or muffin mixes; dinner rolls; pie fillings (pumpkin & fruits); and pie crusts (frozen or refrigerated). Place donations in the designated bins located in the entry ways of CHF and SC. If delivering donations to CSK, direct staff to attribute them to "Parish of the Good Shepherd K of C Food drive."

**Grocery Store Gift Cards:** Gift cards are also most welcome. Parishioners are directed to put gift cards in an envelope marked "K of C Food Drive" and place them in the collection baskets.

Contact Karl (860-781-0293) with questions.

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# Town Manager Honored for a Lifetime of Dedication

By Toriana Williams

When Andrew Tierney began his public service career four decades ago, he never imagined he'd someday be recognized by the International City/County Management Association for 40 years of governmental service.

"It's hard to believe," Tierney said. "I don't

keep track... It went by fast."

At 62 years old, Tierney has spent the majority of his professional life serving the people of Hebron, Connecticut. Before coming to Hebron, he spent a decade in East Haddam as the town's public works director, then came to serve Hebron in 1996. "January will be 30 years," he

Tierney's journey through town government mirrors the slow, steady growth of the community he has served. He served as the town's public works director until 2012, then was named interim town manager before he was officially hired for the role permanently.

Despite his longevity, Tierney's humility remains as evident as his work ethic.

"It's been a good career life," he said. "It's ... rewarding for me to finally realize that I've been doing it for 40 years.'

Tierney spoke of the congratulations he received from colleagues and coworkers, and how they appreciated his dedication. "I appreciate that as well," he shared.

Tierney's recognition came during the 2025 ICMA Annual Conference, held in Tampa, Fla. The milestone, while impressive, was not something Tierney sought out. "It's just so rewarding," he said simply.

The Hebron town manager's leadership has guided the community through challenges both natural and unprecedented.

"You're in charge of the safety and the well-being of the whole community," Tierney said. "Whether it be inclement weather, fires, major power outages - things like that."

One memory that stands out for him came from a 2013 storm that forced the town to can-

"It snowed, and we ended up having to cancel trick-or-treat out on the local streets because the wires were still down," he remembered. That moment, though difficult, sparked a new community tradition. "The result coming from that is that we started doing trunk-or-treat, which is now a big success and we continue doing that here each year."

Tierney also led the town through the uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We had to shut things down and try to keep the government running at the same time when a lot of employees were not ... in the office," he said. "But we did okay with that, we fared well."

For Tierney, the heart of the job lies in community connection and steady stewardship.

"If you give Hebron a report card, I think we do pretty well," he said.

He believes that residents are generally happy with how the town is run and the improvements being made, noting recent additions like ballfield lights, a skateboard park, pickleball courts and dog parks - all part of ongoing efforts to enhance community spaces.

He also has held key regional positions, serving as chairman of the Chatham Health District and participating in a regional insurance consortium that covers multiple towns and school

"It's a lot of work," he admitted, and he noted that he is likely the longest-serving town manager Hebron has had since the community adopted the town manager form of government.

That longevity, said former Board of Selectmen chairman Dan Larson, has been a blessing to Hebron. Larson explained that Tierney came to Hebron about 30 years ago, beginning his career as the town's public works director, and later applied for and was selected to fill the open town manager position.

"He was a perfect fit. We have been just totally blessed to have Andy serve in that capacity," Larson said.

Friday Film: Nov. 21, 1 p.m. The Naked Gun

Teen: TAB Meeting: Wednesday, Nov. 19,

Children: Lego Club: Every Monday, 4-5

Storytime: Tuesday and Thursday mornings.

Tuesday is ideal for ages 15 months to 3 years

old. Thursdays are geared to ages 3-5 years old

as they learn letters, numbers and colors. Sib-

of each month, at 6 p.m. There will be stories,

PJ Storytime: The first and third Tuesday

STEM for Homeschoolers: Wednesday, Nov.

lings are always welcome at either session.

19, 1-2 p.m., for grades pre-K through 4.

songs, and crafts.

p.m. All kids are invited to come build some

3:30-4:30 p.m. Come share ideas and earn one

community service hour. Sign up to volunteer at

the Hebron holiday craft tables on Dec. 6.

(rated PG-13) will be shown.



In January, Andrew Tierney, middle, will celebrate 30 years of service to Hebron, and outgoing Hebron Board of Selectmen member Dan Larson, left, said Hebron is 'blessed" to have Tierney serve the town. Also pictured is former selectman Gayle

As a longtime member of various Hebron boards, Larson has worked with Tierney for decades. He described his colleague as a stabilizing force.

"He has always been just so solidly pro-Hebron," Larson said.

Larson added Tierney has devoted the past three decades to improving Hebron, and the town has greatly benefited from his dedication and genuine care for the community.

Larson said he believes Tierney's leadership shone brightest during times of crisis.

"Probably the most perfect example was CO-VID," Larson said. "Good, solid leadership and good staff helped to get us through that."

He recalled that during his tenure as board chairman and board member, they worked together to navigate challenges, find solutions and ensure that Hebron continued to progress.

Larson's admiration is grounded not only in Tierney's effectiveness but in his character.

"It's been a great ... marriage between Andy and the town," he said. "I've got nothing but praise and admiration for him and for his commitment."

When asked what people might not realize about Tierney's role, Larson didn't hesitate.

'The hardest thing is, you've got to make decisions," said Larson. He noted that leading is simple when the choices are easy, but true leadership is tested when difficult or unpopular decisions have to be made.

For Tierney, those decisions are all part of the

"It's a 24/7 commitment," Tierney said. "I get calls Sunday morning at 8 o'clock and sometimes Saturday nights at midnight."

Despite the constant demands, he sees the role as a privilege.

"It's apolitical," he explained. "You make your decisions based on what's in the best interest of the town, not the government or a political

When asked about his favorite part of the job, Tierney's answer was simple: "The people of the community and the people that I work with, and the honor of them trusting me to let me serve for them."

After 40 years in public service - and with plenty more years ahead – Tierney remains as steady and committed as ever.

"Slow and steady wins the race," he said, and added with a laugh, "I try to stay out of the newspaper as much as possible - at least for the right reasons."

#### Parks and Rec **News & Notes**

Hebron Parks and Recreation is offering the following. For full program descriptions - including costs - and to register, please visit hebronct.recdesk.com/community or call 860-530-1281.

Youth Basketball: Registration is open for Recreational programs for grades 9-12.

#### **Upcoming at the Library**

The following events are taking place at Douglas Library. For more information, call 860-228-9312 or visit douglaslibrary.org.

Adult Programs: Art History Film Series: Every Monday in November, 6 p.m. Celebrate National Arts and Humanities Month (which was in October) by learning about art and artists with these films.

Cookbook Club: Tuesday, Nov. 18, 6:30 p.m. Each month, read a different cookbook and each member of the club will choose a recipe to make and share with the group. This month we'll read and cook from "Dinner in One."

Craft Swap: Wednesday, Nov. 19, noon-5 p.m. Bring those extra craft supplies and unfinished projects to give away and then choose some new supplies to take home. Donations can be dropped off any time from now through Nov.

Book Discussion: Wednesday, Nov. 19, 7 p.m. The Great Divide by Cristina Henriquez will be discussed. The group meets at the American Legion.

American Job Center: Thursday, Nov. 20, from 3-5 p.m. William Newton of the AJC will be here to assist with your resume and answer any questions you may have.

Red Cross Blood Drive: Monday, Nov. 24, from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Receive a pair of Red Cross x Pac-man socks while supplies last.

#### **Transfer Station Hours Change**

Hebron Transfer Station hours have changed to the winter schedule as of Nov. 2. Hours are now: Sundays, 7:30 a.m.-2 p.m.; and Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m.

# **Community Chorus**

**Spring Concert**The Hebron Community Chorus is performing its fall concert, entitled "Fill the World with Song," on Saturday, Nov. 15, at 7 p.m., at St. Peter's Episcopal Church, 30 Main St.

The chorus, consisting of 25 singers from Hebron and surrounding towns, is under the direction of Andrey Stolyarov, who has been its director since its founding by The Town Center Project in 2022.

This program features the world premiere of the song "Lovely Chance," commissioned by the chorus in honor of its founder Judith Podell, and five seasons of music.

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#### **Colebrook Village Food Drive**

Colebrook Village at Hebron is holding a community-wide nonperishable food drive through Monday, Nov. 24, to benefit the Hebron Interfaith Human Services Food Pantry. Donations can be dropped off in the lobby of Colebrook Village at Hebron, located at 55 John E. Horton Blvd.

The food drive aims to help local families in need during the holiday season by collecting a variety of shelf-stable food items and

household essentials. All are asked to donate. Most-wanted items Include: hearty soups (such as Campbell's Chunky or Progresso), canned meats (tuna, chicken, Spam, ham, salmon), pasta and tomato products (diced, crushed, sauce), rice sides, pasta sides, stuffing mix, canned fruit, jelly (squeeze bottles preferred for student food packs), laundry detergent, dish soap, shampoo and body

10 a.m. Connects parishioners and friends via

Nov. 15, 2:30 p.m. Meet in the parish hall to as-

semble dinners for the Project Hope homeless

Project Hope Meal Preparation: Saturday,

Outreach: This month, food donations will

go to Marlborough food pantry. A collection

basket is in the church and outside the parish

hall. St. Peter's is also a supporter of Project

Recurring Meetings: Balance Class: Mon-

days, 10:30-11 a.m., \$5; Connections: Mon-

days at 2 p.m.; Weekly Weeders/Garden Com-

mittee: Mondays at 4 p.m.; Choir: Wednesdays

at 6 p.m.; Monthly Meetings: Building and

Zoom for an online social gathering.

shelter in Willimantic.

Hope in Willimantic.

#### St. Peter's News & Notes

St. Peter's Episcopal Church, located at 30 Church St. (mailing address: P.O. Box 513) in Hebron. Priest is the Rev. Ron Kolanowski. The church is located on Route 85, a quarter-mile south of the intersection with Route 66, at 30 Church St. For more information on St. Peter's, visit stpetershebron.com or search for St. Peter's Hebron on Facebook.

**Sunday Worship:** Sunday services are at 8 a.m. (Rite 1 without music); and at 10 a.m. (Rite 2 with hymns). A coffee hour is held following each service. Sunday School is offered at the 10

Book Club: Meets Mondays through November from 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. This fall, the group is reading *The Dream of God* by Verna J. Dozier. Bring your lunch and enjoy fellowship and food. Weekly Virtual Coffee Hour: Wednesdays at

Grounds, Community Events planning, Finance, Liturgy, Pastoral Care and Vestry.

#### **Gilead Congregational Church News**

Gilead Congregational Church, an Open and Affirming Congregation located at 672 Gilead St., has announced the following. For more info, see the bulletin at gileadchurchucc.updates. church, email gcc@gileadchurch.net, or call the Parish House at 860-228-3077. The church office is open at the GCC Parish House Monday-Thursday, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Worship: Sunday worship is at 10 a.m., followed by coffee hour at 11 a.m. Services can also be viewed online at YouTube at www.bit.ly/ GileadChurchUCC and on Facebook at tinyurl. com/GileadChurchUCC.

This Week's Scheduled Events/Meetings: Saturday, 11/16: Church Workday: Fall Cleanup at 9 a.m., outside; Sunday, 11/16: Worship Service at 10 a.m. (in-person in the sanctuary, as well as online and livestreamed); Sunday, 11/16: Coffee Hour at 11 a.m., Fellowship Hall; Sunday, 11/16: 'Gilead to Go' Meals Information Session at 11:30 a.m., Fellowship Hall; Monday, 11/17: Bible study at 9:30 a.m., online via Zoom; Tuesday, 11/18: AA Meeting at 7:30 p.m., Social

Hall; Wednesday, 11/19: Yoga at 9:30 a.m., Fellowship Hall; Wednesday, 11/19: Book Group at 10:45 a.m., Fellowship Hall; Wednesday, 11/19: Choir Practice at 7 p.m., sanctuary; Thursday, 11/20: Trustees at 7 p.m., Parish House; Friday, 11/21: Giggles at Gilead Comedy Fundraiser at 7 p.m., Fellowship Hall.

Annual Church Workday: Saturday, Nov. 15, 9 a.m. Join the Trustees as they spend time cleaning up the church grounds and facilities. Rain date: Saturday, Nov. 22.

Faith and Film Potluck Series: Friday, Dec. 5, 6 p.m., in Fellowship Hall. Bring a dish to share and enjoy a movie, food, and fellowship. All are welcome.

Save the Dates: Sunday, Nov. 30, Hygiene Kit Assembly at 11:30 a.m. for Church World Service – help pack essential supplies for those in need. Sunday, Dec. 14: Women's Fellowship Annual Cookie Sale at 11 a.m.; Sunday, Dec. 21: Children's Christmas Pageant during worship at

#### **Senior Center News & Notes**

Russell Mercier Senior Center has announced the following programs. For more information and full program descriptions, and to register, call the senior center at 860-228-1700. Pre-registration is required for all programs unless **noted.** For an online senior newsletter, visit hebronct.com/town-departments/senior-center.

Medicare Open Enrollment/Winter Fuel Assistance: The Open Enrollment period takes place annually from Oct. 15 through Dec. 7. This is your opportunity to review all of your options and decide to stay with your current plan, or switch to another plan, or change the way that you receive your Medicare benefits. To set up an appointment, call the senior center and ask for Sharon or Dennis.

RHAM Bingo: Mondays, Nov. 17 and Dec. 8, 2:30-4 p.m. The RHAM National Honor Society Students come and call the games, provide refreshments, and prizes. You can play up to 4 cards for free and they play a total of 8 games.

Sound Healing: Tuesday, Nov. 18, 10:30 a.m., with staff from The Residence at Glastonbury. Through soothing vibrations from instruments like crystal singing bowls and the Native Flute, you'll be guided into a meditative state that promotes deep relaxation and emotional release.

Chatham Health Monthly Educational Series: Thursday, Nov. 20, 12:15 p.m., topic to be determined. Chatham Health's Stephanie Reves will present..

Monthly Blood Pressure Screenings: Thursday, Nov. 20, 11:30 a.m.-12:15 p.m., offered by Chatham Health. No registration required. Then, stay for the monthly educational series immediately following.

On Yoga: The Architecture of Peace: Monday, Nov. 24, 10:15 a.m. Yoga instructor Laurie Pasteryak will show this documentary, which will be followed by a discussion. It will be a "yoga gratitude party" in honor of the Thanksgiving holiday week. Since there will be no yoga class

on that Thursday it will be a different type of gathering: a movie + discussion (known as satsang"). It is free, but if you plan on coming, please pre-register for set-up purposes, but drop-ins are welcome too. You do not have to be in the yoga class; this is open to anyone.

Weekly Shopping Trips: Pre-registration is required by noon the day before the trip. Schedule: Friday, Nov. 21, Big Y; Closed on Friday, Nov. 28; Friday, Dec. 5, 11 a.m., Walmart.

Senior Transportation: Offered to ages 60 and up and all adult disabled individuals, for medical care, personal needs care, grocery shopping, or other pre-approved needs. Transportation available Monday-Thursday, 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m., and Friday, 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m. Appointments must be scheduled a minimum of 24 hours in advance, but 48 hours is recommended – and required for new riders. For more information or to schedule an appointment, call 860-228-1700.

Recurring Daily/Weekly Happenings: Some programs have a fee, and some are no-cost; most require pre-registration. More information in the monthly newsletter or at the senior center. Monday through Friday: Exercise Equipment Room, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. - though from 9 a.m.noon on Fridays.

Mondays: Enhance Fitness via Zoom, 9-10 a.m.; Massage, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Tuesdays: Knitting/Crocheting Group, 10:15-11:45 a.m.; Hand and Foot Canasta (cards), 12:45-3:15 p.m.; Card-Making, 1-2:15 p.m. Wednesdays: Enhance Fitness via Zoom, 9-10 a.m. Thursdays: Yoga, 9-10 a.m.; Sunshine Singers, 10:15-11:45 a.m.; Tai Chi, 10:15-11:15 a.m.; Chatham Health blood pressure screening, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. on the third Thursday of the month; Chatham Health Education Series, 12:15 p.m. on the third Thursday of the month; Massage, 12:30-6:30 p.m.; Mahjong, 12:45-3:15 p.m.; Bingo, 1-3 p.m.; Fridays: Enhance Fitness via Zoom, 9-10 a.m.

#### 'Giggles at Gilead' – Laughter for a Cause

"Giggles at Gilead," a night of comedy, community and giving back, will take place Friday, Nov. 21, at Gilead Congregational Church, 672

Presented in partnership with Funny 4 Funds, this PG-13 comedy fundraiser will feature local comedians, raffle baskets and more -- all to support local charitable causes.

Doors open at 6 p.m., and the show starts at 7 p.m. Tickets: \$25 per person. Popcorn will be provided; bring your favorite snacks.

Space is limited. For tickets and more information, visit tinyurl.com/2hcm3xsw.

For more information, contact the church office at gcc@gileadchurch.net or 860-228-3077.

#### **Christ Lutheran Church News and Notes**

Christ Lutheran Church and Early Childhood Center (daycare) is located at 330 Church St.

Worship Service with Pastor Matthew Hardaway: 9-10 a.m. Sundays. All are welcome. Those unable to attend in person can join online at www.facebook.com/clchebron/live.

Bible Studies: Sundays at 10:30 a.m., following service and fellowship time. All are welcome. A new Men's Bible Study will begin in January, focused on "Seven Rules All Good Christians Should Face."

Early Childhood Center (Daycare): Offers

childcare, preschool, and before/after school care, and is open to all faiths. For more information, call director Jennifer Johnson at 860-228-5134. Application forms are at www.clec-

Caring Shepherds Social Ministry Group: Open food pantry days held to distribute food staples, household and hygiene items as well as Bibles and prayers. All are welcome. For more information about donating or participating in food pantry days, call the church at 860-228-

#### **Hike Hibbert Preserve**

All are invited to take a guided hike Saturday, Nov. 22, at 1:30 p.m., on Hebron's Hibbert Preserve, to Celebrate National Take-a-Hike! Day.

Join Hebron Trail Ranger co-leaders on a guided hike on the Hibbert Preserve townowned open space bordering the Air Line State Park Trail. Co-leaders will observe and identify plants along the "blue trail" and note any invasive ones for future control.

The orange-chained entryway is at 310 Old Colchester Rd., just north of the Air Line Trail and south of Northam Road. Park safely either on the grassy area along the west side of Old Colchester Road (near the yellow "caution-pedestrian" sign) or at the Air Line Trail designated parking. Carpooling is highly encouraged. Please see hebronpaths.org/hibbert for more info.

The trail is an easy-to-moderate 2 miles round trip with some muddy spots, so hiking shoes are recommended. As always when hiking, wear bright clothing, tick protection, and be sure that soles of shoes are clean when entering. (Consider keeping a clean pair of shoes in your vehicle for return.) Allow 1.5 hours to enjoy this hike. Steady rain cancels. The event is free and open to all. Please keep pets leashed.

#### The Worship Center News & Notes

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

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

Adult Bible Study: Every Sunday at 9 a.m. The study, on the First Epistle of Peter, is led by Elder George Logan. The theme is "Standing Firm in Grace: A Call to Holiness in a Hostile World." All adults welcome to join in this study, where together they'll learn what it means to "stand firm in the true grace of God" (1 Peter

Kingdom Women: Women's Bible Study: The study will be taking a break for the months of November and December. It will resume in

Kingdom Men: Men's Breakfast: Saturday, Nov. 15, 8-10 a.m., at the church. All men are

Youth Group: First Friday Fellowship! Ornament Swap & Cookie-Decorating: Friday, Dec. 5. All middle and high school youth are welcome for food, a lesson, an ornament swap and cookie-decorating. Kids are welcome to come either at 6:30 p.m. for dinner and the whole event, or arrive at 8 p.m. for dessert and activity. Pick up is at 9:30 p.m.

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

One-to-One Confidential Christian Care: Provided by Stephen Ministry to people in difficult life situations. If in need of help, call the church office; there are several new ministers trained and wanting to help.

#### **Church of The Holy Family News**

The Church of The Holy Family, 185 Church St. (Route 85), celebrates weekend Masses Saturday at 5 p.m. and Sunday at 9:30 a.m.; and weekday Masses Tuesday at 7 p.m. and Thursday at 6:30 a.m. Visit www.goodshepherdct.org for more information. The church office can be reached at 860-228-3727. Church of The Holy Family is a member of the Catholic Community of the Good Shepherd, with the Rev. Michael Phillippino serving as Pastor.

Sacrament of Reconciliation: Phillippino is available for the sacrament on Thursdays at 7 a.m. and on Saturdays at 4 p.m., or by appointment (church phone ext. 110). Refer to the parish website for other available times at St. Columba Church in Columbia.

Praise Band and Choir Rehearsals: New members (voices and musical instruments) are welcome. Choir rehearsals are Tuesdays at 7:30 p.m., and Praise Band rehearsals are Thursdays at 7 p.m. For details, contact Nicole Bernier, Music Ministry, at music@goodshepherdct.org or see her after Mass.

"Neighbors Feeding Neighbors": The Social Outreach Committee collects breakfast cereal on the second Sunday of each month for the benefit of the Covenant Soup Kitchen (CSK) in Willimantic. The next collection date is Dec, 14. However, cereal is most welcome any time.

Like us on Facebook RivereastNewsBulletin Place bagged donations in the oak collection box near the Robing Room.

Meatloaves for CSK: The parish also provides meatloaves to CSK each month. Parishioners are asked to deliver a cooked meatloaf to the freezer in the garage (use side entrance) closest to the Parish House or the freezer in the St. Columba church hall by the 4th Tuesday of the month. Meatloaves are delivered the next day. The next due date is Nov. 25. Contact Diane (860-508-9959) for more information.

Youth Ministry: This group for parish teens in grades 8-12 meets in the St. Columba Youth Center at 6:30 p.m. every second Saturday of the month from September through June (except for the third Saturday in May) for an evening of games, food and discussion. See the parish website for more info.

Collection for Project HOPE, Inc. (Home**less Shelter):** The Social Outreach Committee is collecting the following items for the shelter: household cleaning products (great need), paper towels, TP & 13- and 35-gallon trash bags (55-gallon no longer used); men's crew neck T-shirts & boxer briefs (M,L,XL,2XL); women's briefs (sizes 6-10); men's & women's wool socks; new or gently-used and clean winter clothing and coats; women's personal hygiene products; and laundry pods or liquid detergent. Place bagged donations in the oak collection box next to the Cry Room. Call Monica McKerracher (860-228-4211) for more information.

**Homebound Ministry:** The church ministers to homebound parishioners who wish to receive the sacraments. Call the church office (860-228-3727 ext. 106 or 110) to set up a schedule.

Andover • Andove

# Kid Governor Bus Brings Civics to Life

By Toriana Williams

A blast of excitement rolled into Andover Elementary School last Thursday, Nov. 6, when the Kid Governor bus made a special stop, turning civics education into a real-world celebra-

The Kid Governor program - a statewide initiative promoting hands-on civic learning - has become a cornerstone of the fifth grade curriculum in Andover. Fifth grade teacher Lisa Hopkins explained that it is a program designed to introduce civics to elementary-age students, especially those in fifth grade, "and get them immersed in the whole process of becoming a governor."

Created in 2015 by program director Brian Cofrancesco at the Democracy Center in Hartford, it mirrors the real responsibilities of running for governor, from campaigning to leadership development.

Hopkins has been leading the program locally since its early years, and she said it gives students both purpose and voice. They study voting history, examine leadership qualities and choose a community issue that matters to them. After researching, each student develops a three-point platform and a speech, then campaigns in front of peers.

The program is "very much like [what] an adult would go through to become governor of a state," she said. "They have to do some research and they choose a community issue that is important to them, one that fifth graders could work on."

Once students present their speeches, the fifth grade votes to select a school-wide nominee. That candidate then advances to the state-level

#### Need Holiday Assistance?

Does your family need help with gifts this holiday season? Do you know an Andover family who could use a little help?

Please reach out to either Roberta Dougherty, Town Clerk & Social Services/ Municipal Agent, at 860-742-7305 ext. 4218 or townclerk@andoverct.org, or Tess Grous, Community & Senior Center Director, at 860-742-7305 ext. 4510 or tgrous@andoverct.org.

**Donations Sought for** Clothing Sale
Andover Congregational Church, located at

359 Route 6 in Andover, will hold a Clothing Sale on Saturday, Nov. 15, from 9 a.m.-2 p.m., with a bag sale from 1-2 p.m.

#### **History Museum Open Saturday**

The Andover Historical Society will open its Museum of Andover History this Saturday, Nov. 15, from 4-6 p.m. New items are continuously being added to the display.

The museum is located in the Old Town Hall on Monument Lane.

#### Instructional Basketball for Kids

The instructional basketball program, for kids in pre-k through grade 2, will start on Saturday, Dec. 6.

Boys and girls in first and second grade will be from 9 a.m. until 10:15 a.m., and Pre-K and Kindergarten will be from 10:30 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. Fill out the registration form that is posted on the town website, andoverconnecticut.org, and bring it to the first practice along with cash or a check for \$30 payable to the Town of An-

If you have any questions, call Carol Lee at 860-989-6988.

#### **Your Money Matters**

Your Money Matters, a budgeting game experience, will be held at the Andover Community and Senior Center on Wednesday, Nov. 19, from 6-8 p.m. Students in grades 7-12 and their parents are encouraged to attend.

Led by Rebecca Bentley, assistant director at UConn's One Stop Student Services, this interactive game puts students in teams to tackle the real-world rollercoaster of monthly income and expenses. From rent and groceries to surprise car repairs and unexpected bills, participants will navigate the twists and turns of financial decision-making in a collaborative setting.

For more information, call the center at 860-

742-7305 ext. 4510.

contest, where finalists appear on a statewide ballot and the winner becomes Connecticut's Kid Governor for a one-year term.

#### Small School, Big Participation

This year, enthusiasm was unmistakable, said first-year Andover fifth grade teacher Maureen Sullivan. "We had nine or ten" students decide to run for Kid Governor, she shared, which is just under half of the entire grade.

Sullivan said the program is designed for meaningful student engagement. "It's fantastic. It's geared toward fifth grade, so it's very developmentally appropriate," she said.

All students participate in lessons on government branches, elections and real responsibilities of leadership - whether they choose to run

The process is rigorous, Sullivan shared.

"It requires organization and analytical thinking," she said, adding with a laugh, "It requires public speaking, which, yikes, right?"

But, Sullivan said, every student rose to the challenge and made her proud.

Through campaign speeches and a formal ballot vote, students ultimately elected nominee Eli Clark, whose platform focused on school

"School safety, which is really interesting," Sullivan said. "The kids ... really connected with that."

#### **Bringing Civics to the Front Door**

Just one day before the statewide vote, the Kid Governor bus arrived at AES - one of only a handful of schools selected for the in-person

Hopkins described the bus as unmistakable and full of energy. "It is decked out for Kid Gov-

#### **Townsend Cemetery** Fall Clean-Up

Residents are asked to remove any personal items and decorations from the Andover Townsend Cemetery prior to Saturday, Nov. 15.

All items found to be in violation of cemetery rules and regulations or a hindrance to maintenance will be removed. These items include pots, shepherd hooks, glass objects, cans and any items in front of the stone. Please remove and take home any item you plan to use next

#### Christmas Fair & **Bake Sale**

Andover Congregational Church, 359 Route 6, will be hold its annual Christmas Fair & Bake Sale on Saturday, Dec. 6, from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. There will be vendors, raffle baskets, silent auction, baked goods, and Grandma's Attic items.

If you are a vendor and are interested in renting a table, they are \$20 and include a six-foot table and two chairs. Call the church to reserve!

If you have any questions, leave a message at the church, at 860-742-7696.

#### Meet Andover's **New Town Clerk**

The Town of Andover invites residents to an Open House Monday, Nov. 24, from 10 a.m.-6 p.m., at the town clerk's office in Town Hall, 17 School Rd.

All are invited to come meet Roberta Dougherty, Andover's newly elected town clerk. Light refreshments will be served.

This is an opportunity for residents to learn more about the services provided by the town clerk's office. Avery will answer questions, and sharing her plans for continuing excellent service to Andover's residents.

#### Bingo & Basket Raffle

Andover Congregational Church, located at 359 Route 6, will hold a Bingo & Basket Raffle Night Friday, Nov. 21, starting with dinner at 5:30 p.m. The game starts at 6:30 p.m.

Admission is \$12 and includes dinner, drink, dessert and bingo. No reservations required. Leave a message at the church at 860-742-7696 with questions.

#### Fire Department **Turkey Drive**

The Andover Fire Department is holding its 2025 Turkey Drive. Donations will be collected Saturday, Nov. 15, from 9 a.m.-noon, at the firehouse on School Road.

The department has a goal of 100 turkeys for the Andover Food Pantry. The department is in need of turkeys, stuffing and monetary donations. Checks will also be accepted, made payable to Andover Food Pantry.



Students at Andover Elementary School gathered for a special visit from the Kid Governor and program representatives, who arrived aboard the colorful Kid Governor Bus for an inspiring rally.

ernor. You know when you see the bus that it is a Kid Governor bus," she said.

The event included the current Kid Governor, Keudy Martinez of Waterbury, several cabinet members and program staff who poured out of the bus with a loudspeaker in hand to kick off the rally. The cabinet members are composed of students that made it on to the ballot but were not elected for the governor position.

Sullivan called the visit "fabulous," saying the school had prepared students in advance without revealing too much - heightening anticipa-

She said, "The bus pulls up and out comes ... the Kid Governor, his cabinet ... and the kids all knew who this was. It was fantastic. So they were just thrilled to see him."

Students answered questions such as the three branches of government to earn prizes, while learning more about the candidates they'd be voting on the next day.

"It was clearly a big deal," Sullivan said. "Here was the real Kid Governor on a real coach bus." Hopkins agreed the rally pumps up excite-

ment for civic engagement. "They are just getting the kids excited about civics, teaching them about the new people that are on the ballot," she said

#### Advocating for the Future

Hopkins said she has seen firsthand how transformational the program can be. In 2023, AES student Scarlet Beaulieu even served a oneyear term on the Kid Governor cabinet. Hopkins recalled that Scarlet "thanked me, saying that she was a better writer, a better speaker and it was all because of the Kid Governor program."

Hopkins said she believes every district should participate.

"I am such an advocate for this program that literally, whenever I meet a fifth grade teacher, I'm like, do you do Kid Governor?" she said. "I absolutely think it makes a difference."

Sullivan echoed that it empowers children to feel their voices matter.

"It really has to organically be from them," she said. "It's extremely student driven, and I think there's a lot of power in that."

As Andover's fifth graders wait to learn which student will become Connecticut's next Kid Governor, their teachers say they already see the most important victory: young people discovering their ability to lead.

"It really teaches them the way of the world," Hopkins said.

#### **Congregational Church News**

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

Children's Church: Is provided. Choir: At 9 a.m. Sundays in the sanctuary.

Food Pantry: Mondays from 5-7 p.m. Bring 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

Sonshine Stampers: Thursdays, 9:30 a.m. Thanksgiving Dinner: Thanksgiving Day, Nov. 27. Open to anyone; RSVP preferable.

#### 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 Director Tess Grous 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. To receive the newsletter by email each month, ask for Haley at the center, at 860-742-7305 x4510.

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: Call Linda at 860-498-2326 to schedule transportation. Provide one week's notice for all requests. All seniors, veterans, and disabled are welcome.

Upcoming Special Events: Transportation available for all programs. For full event descriptions, call the senior center or see the online newsletter. And for a listing of all weekly programs, see the online newsletter.

Food Pantry: Wednesday, 8 a.m., Nov. 26. Foodshare Truck: Wednesday, Nov. 19, 8:30 a.m. Transportation to Andover Congregational Church, both the pantry and the truck, is available. For more information on other available dates and times please contact Joan Soucy at 860-208-3226.

Lunch: Wednesday, Nov. 26, noon, cost is \$5. Bingo/Lunch: Wednesday, Nov. 19, noon. This will be a free Friendsgiving light lunch with prize bingo to follow.

Chair Massage with Linda: Wednesday, Nov. 19, 30-minute appointments available from 3:30-5:30 p.m. Cost is \$32. Sign up by calling Linda Derick at 860-655-4409.

Coffee & Crafts: Fridays, Nov. 14 and 28, 12:30 p.m. Sign-up is necessary.

Field Trip: UConn Rock & Roll Museum Exhibition: Friday, Nov. 21. This is free.

Art Display: Artist Kim Desrosiers is our highlighted Artist of the Month. Stop by and see her work. Call the center if you would like to display your work in the upcoming months.

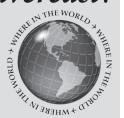
Chair Massage with Linda: Wednesday, Nov. 19; 30-minute appointments are available from 3:30-5:30 p.m., cost is \$32, call Linda Derick to sign up at 860-655-4409.

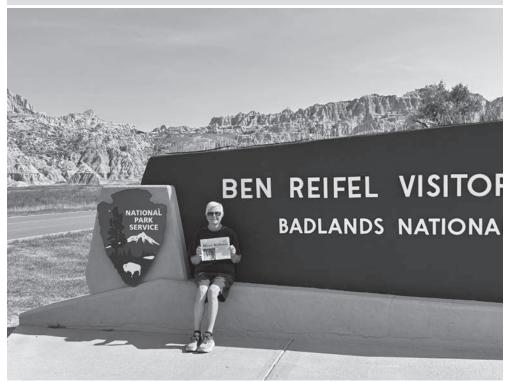
PAL Program: People Across Lifetimes: This intergenerational pen pal program resumed Nov. 10. Call Grous for more details.

Center Closed for Thanksgiving: Thursday,

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

Taking a vacation or a day trip soon? Or simply going out to dinner? Bring the *Rivereast* with you! Whether it's across the globe or across town, we want to see where you've been! Simply snap a photo with the *Rivereast*, send it to bulletin@glcitizen.com and, if printed, you'll receive a gift card to Campagna Restaurant in Portland! Further details are listed below. Happy travels!





The Bulletin in the Badlands... Deb Bourbeau of Marlborough is pictured at the Badlands National Park in South Dakota. She and friend Sally Robinson of Savannah, Ga., spent six days touring the Badlands, Black Hills, Mount Rushmore, the Crazy Horse Memorial and other scenic places in southwest South Dakota.



What's Up, Chief?... Linda Nowotynski and Barbara Jarzabek were on vacation in Narragansett, R.I., and are shown here with a statue of Chief Cananchet (leader of the Narragansett in 1675) and a copy of the Rivereast!!



Enjoying the Island... Barbara Hahn of East Hampton is shown here upon her arrival on Mackinac Island in Michigan. Mackinac Island is located on Lake Huron. Motorized vehicles (except for emergency) are not allowed on the island. In fact, Barbara added, if you call a taxi, it's horse-drawn!



Hello from London!... Tom and Janice Mori are shown on their recent trip to London prior to their transatlantic cruise. They are on the 37th floor of the Walkie Talkie building for dinner at Sky Garden with their son and future daughter-in-law.

# Where in the World?

# Going on a trip? Bring along the Bulletin!

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

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



Regional • Regional •

# **Future Smiles Never Looked Brighter**

By Margaret O'Callaghan

From the painted artwork on their windows to their friendly and compassionate staff Smiles for the Future in Glastonbury knows how to create a welcoming environment for young pa-

One of the largest pediatric dental practices in the state, Smiles for the Future has been providing inviting, quality care for its young patients for more than 50 years.

The team at Smiles - which includes six doctors, a half dozen dental assistants, eight hygienists and more than a dozen other patient experience specialists, orthodontic assistants and other staff - is willing to nerd out, talk sports, and listen to a typical school day while they provide each of their patients the best care possible.

Smiles for the Future – located at 379 Naubuc Ave. in Glastonbury – is a space where inclusivity is encouraged and thrives. Each doctor has come from a different path, allowing all sorts of perspectives to be utilized at the office.

Dr. Gary Schulman has a master's degree in architecture, practiced historic preservation in Wilton prior to becoming a pediatric dentist and is an avid swimmer and cross-country skier. Dr. Lorin Sher likes to kayak, cook and practice yoga while Dr. Wenjie Jessica Yu is fluent in Mandarin.

Dr. Laura Borodic is into drawing, ballet and loves to read a good mystery while Smiles for the Future's newest pediatric dentist - Dr. Caroline Wilson - holds a degree in chemical engineering, is a proud UConn Husky and Nittany Lion, is fluent in Spanish and has a black belt in the Korean martial art of Taekwondo.

While it's important that all their young patients feel welcome when they come into Smiles for the Future, the team has made their office especially welcoming for children with special

needs and their parents. Schulman grew up with a brother who had special needs and has been inspired to create a safe environment for all who visit.

Smiles for the Future's core values are simple: impeccable care and comfort, connections to community (especially education) and "providing care in concert" - meaning they strive to collaborate with those who could use the care

Smiles for the Future's mission goes far beyond simple dental care. Wilson recalled a saying her instructor gave while she was still a student. "We're treating the whole patient," the instructor explained. It's a lesson that has stuck with her ever since.

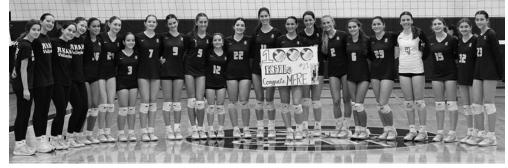
Wilson always knew she was interested in the medical field, though it had taken her a while to decide to pursue a career in dentistry. She had always heard great praise about Smiles for the Future and is very glad to have joined the team.

Schulman had a similar experience. He was originally studying architecture but knew he wanted to take care of people and have an impact on the lives of children with special needs. He also is very involved in the Hartford Dental Society and continues to educate students at UConn.

In addition to in person dental services Smiles for the Future also provides parents on their website with useful information on a wide range of topics including teething, a child's first visit to the dentist and fluoride.

Smiles for the Future also now provides adult dentistry with the addition of Yu to the team. Smiles also offers orthodontic care.

For more information on Smiles for the Future, call 860-633-5246 or visit their website at smilesforthefuture.com.



Meredith Weir eclipsed 1,000 career kills in the state tournament. Weir, surrounded by teammates and coaches, also broke the program-record for most career aces earlier

# **Standout Athletes** of the Week

By Josh Howard

Here are the Rivereast Standout Athletes of the Week for the week of Nov. 3 - 11:

Meredith Weir - RHAM High School (Volleyball): Weir, a senior, eclipsed 1,000 career kills as the Raptors beat Weston in the Class M state quarterfinals. Weir has had a memorable final season at RHAM, also breaking the program record in career aces when she tallied her 213th ace in October. The all-conference outside hitter leads RHAM in kills and aces this

season and is second on the team in digs.

Chelsea Ryan - East Hampton High School (Volleyball): Ryan, a senior captain, put up monstrous numbers through the first three rounds of the Class S state tournament to lead the Bellringers to three straight victories. Ryan totaled 89 assists, 58 digs, 12 kills, and five aces in the three matches as East Hampton eliminated Oxford, Holy Cross, and Cromwell to reach the state semifinals. In the quarterfinals win over Cromwell, Ryan posted 32 assists and 32 digs as the Bellringers ousted their conference foes at EHHS on Nov. 7.

Allison Field - Bacon Academy (Volleyball): Field, a sophomore, surpassed 500 digs this season as she served as a libero for a Bacon Academy squad that advanced to the second round of the Class M state tournament. Field powered a defense that helped the No. 22 seed Bobcats upset the No. 11 Wildcats of Seymour High School in five sets to open the state tourney on Nov. 4.

Brody Ouinn - Portland High School (Soccer): Quinn, a senior captain, was named All-Shoreline Conference (SLC) second team after helping the Highlanders qualified for the state tournament. Quinn was joined on the all-conference team by junior teammate Brady Daggett, who earned honorable mention status. It was the second season in row that Quinn was selected All-SLC.

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.

#### **Tri-County American Legion Baseball**

Registration is open for those interested in being considered for one of the Tri-County American Legion baseball program's 2026 summer teams. Deadline to register is Nov.

Serious players who will be between the ages of 12-19 in 2026 - and who have a parent residing in Andover, Colchester, East Haddam, East Hampton, Hebron, Lebanon and Marlborough - are eligible. This includes Little League players born before Sept. 1, 2014,

who could join one of the teams after their 12U season is complete.

Depending on interest, Tri-County can again form teams at all four levels of American Legion (19U, 17U, 15U and 13U), as well as teams to compete in Babe Ruth (13U-16U).

Interested players should register at www. tclegion.com or contact GM Len Lampugnale at Lampugnale@comcast.net or at 860-295-0437 for more information.



The team at Smiles for the Future works hard to create a welcoming environment for all patients. Pictured from left are Carolyn Wilson, DMD, Gary S. Schulman, DMD, Magdalena Tauber, DMD, Lorin Sher, DMD Orthodontist and Laura Borodic, DMD. Not pictured is Wenjie Jessica Yu, DMD.

#### **AARP Tax-Aide Seeks Volunteers**

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; 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.

#### A Day of Fun, Family and Service

On Saturday, Nov. 22, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m., vironmental care to supporting mental wellness the Lions clubs of District 23 (Eastern Connecticut) will host the Lions Service Carnival at Cromwell Town Hall & Library Complex Gymnasium, 41 West St., Cromwell.

The Eastern Connecticut District governor, Jim Tripp of Portland, welcomes all district residents; the district serves Middlesex, New London, Tolland, and Windham counties

The carnival invites families to spend National Family Volunteer Day engaging in various hands-on activities. At each of the 15 exhibitor stations, visitors can experience what it means to serve - from promoting vision health and en-

and veterans in need. Pick up a "service passport." Children can visit stations for "passport stamps" and earn a "Service Hero" cape for a selfie backdrop and for keeps.

The event will feature RJ and the On the Spot Jug Band (audience sing-along and percussion), balloon animals, face-painting, and a "Servant Hero" selfie backdrop. There will be free lunch for up to 75 participants between 11:30 a.m. and

For updates, message the Lions through the District 23C Lions Facebook page.

#### **Top Sports Moments of 2025 Nominations**

We are once again approaching "The Most Wonderful Time of the Year" and will soon be reflecting on the best sports moments from

Nominations are being accepted through Friday, Dec. 19 for any team or individual athletic accomplishment from any level (youth, high school, or adult). The performance did not have to take place locally, but Bulletin.

must include a local team, player, or resident that accomplished the feat.

Submissions can be sent to joshhowardsports@gmail.com for consideration. Please include as many details (names, dates, statistics, scores, etc.) as possible.

The Top 25 Moments will be revealed in the Jan. 2, 2026 edition of the Rivereast News

## Volunteer. The Benefits Are Extraordinary!

#### **Extraordinary Benefits:**

- · You'll feel really, really good!
- · You'll meet delightful dogs, fabulous felines, and some pretty special humans too!

#### **Volunteer Positions Available —** Day & Evening Hours:

- East Hampton & Wethersfield facilities Dogs: walking; clean & feed; socialization
- East Hartford facility Cats: clean & feed; socialization; medical & placement teams



**PROTECTORS** 

**TANIMALS** 

Please call 860-569-0722 or visit www.poainc.org

#### Obituaries

Portland

#### Patricia Katherine Schulte

Patricia Katherine (Gutt) Schulte, 83, beloved wife to the late Francis H. Schulte Jr., of Colchester, passed away peacefully with her children by her side Wednesday, Nov. 5. Patricia was born in Hartford on Sept. 7, 1942, to the late John and Theresa (Sieminski) Gutt.



Patricia was raised in Glastonbury and was a graduate of Glastonbury High School, class of 1960. As a teenager, Patricia helped cut and hang tobacco every summer on her dad's family's farm, Gutt Family Farm, located on Addison Road, with her brother Robert Gutt and many cousins. The original Gutt family farm house still stands today along with a small roadside farmstand. As a young girl, Patricia watched Route 2 be built from her grandmother's farm fields and farmhouse, which is now Sycamore Street. Patricia was very proud to have been raised and have her family roots in Glastonbury.

Patricia had her home in Enfield, built in 1967 where she raised her children and called home for the past 46 years. After Francis' passing in 2013, Patricia moved to Colchester, where she lived for the past 11 years.

Patricia was a woman of many interests such as UConn women's basketball or traveling; whether it was Florida for a long stay or Chicago for a day, she was always going somewhere. Patricia loved to tend to her gardens and work in the yard. Patricia took a cake-decorating course years ago and was very talented decorating wedding cakes. Patricia loved to cook and bake for family, friends and whomever visited her home.

Patricia will be most fondly remembered as someone who brought family and friends together. She would host every family holiday party, a multitude of parties for families and friends and always made sure everyone was fed and had a drink in their hand. The most important thing to her was family. She loved and doted on her children and her loving grandchildren, who knew her as Nana. We will miss her forever and we are grateful for the wisdom she gave us and the memories we shared.

Patricia is survived by her children, Kimberly Langdon and her husband David of New Hartford, Brian Schulte and his wife Margot of Monson, Mass., Dennise Gray of Enfield, and Deborah Brede and her husband Conrad of Amston. Patricia will also be dearly missed by her grandson, Thomas Herzig of Enfield, and her twin granddaughters, Madison and Leah Brede of Amston.

Patricia is predeceased by her husband, Francis Schulte Jr.; mother, Theresa Sieminski; father, John Gutt; daughter, Deborah Schulte; granddaughter, Nicole Katherine Whidtfeldt; and her brother, Robert Gutt.

There will be a memorial service held Saturday, Nov. 15, at noon, in the Farley-Sullivan Funeral Home, 50 Naubuc Ave., Glastonbury. Patricia will be laid to rest along side her mother in Saint Augustine Cemetery, 180 Hopewell Road, South Glastonbury.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations in Patricia's name may be made to Protectors of Animals, 144 Main St Unit O, East Hartford, CT 06118, the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, 13770 Noel Rd, Suite 801889, Dallas, TX 75380 or to the American Kidney Fund, 11921 Rockville Pike, Suite 300, Rockville, MD 20852.

For further information, or to leave a condolence, please visit FarleySullivan.com.

Hebron

#### Judith B. Knowlton

Judith B. Knowlton, 80, of Hebron, beloved wife of the late Douglas Knowlton, died Sunday, Nov. 2. Judith was born May 17, 1945 in Morristown, N.J., to the late Herbert and Helen (Noble) Stevens. A graduate of Tufts University, Judith worked as a physical therapist at several hospitals and home



health settings, ending her long career at St Francis Hospital.

A longtime resident of Marlborough, Judith was an active member of the community. She was a Girl Scout Leader, a member of Tri-M, and very involved in the Episcopal Church, most recently at St James in Glastonbury and St Peters in Hebron. She volunteered as a deacon, mentor and eucharistic minister, providing communion to the homebound.

Judith, a lifelong learner, enjoyed continuous self-education by auditing many ministry courses at local universities and seminaries, in person and online. For relaxation, she enjoyed reading, sewing, knitting, many bridge clubs, games, and puzzles.

Judith is survived by her daughters, Sandra Dorn and her husband Chris and Deborah Fitzsimmons and her husband Ryan; and her grandchildren, Sarah Lynn Dorn, Caleb Fitzsimmons and Tiernan Fitzsimmons; as well as her brothers, Jack and Ted Brewster.

Besides her husband Doug, she was predeceased by her brother Steven.

A memorial service will be held today, Friday, Nov. 14, at 3 p.m., in St. Peter's Church, 30 Church St., Hebron, CT. A calling hour will be from 2-3 p.m. prior to the service. Subsequent interment will be attended by immediate family.

For online condolences, please visit www. mulryanfh.com.

In lieu of flowers, donations to St. James of Glastonbury or St. Peter's of Hebron are welcome.

Colchester

#### Selma Nirenstein

Selma (Seavey) Nirenstein passed away peacefully Friday, Nov. 7. She lived a long, productive life. She was born in Portland, Maine, grew up in Brockton, Mass., and lived in Colchester since the mid-1950s.

She was a graduate of Lesley College in Cambridge, Mass., and taught kindergarten as well as worked as a reading assistant and substitute teacher. She also worked at Hartford Steamboiler. Selma volunteered in elementary school in later years, and loved participating in a high school life course. She also volunteered to do taxes for people at the senior center for a number of years. Selma was a member of the Ahavath Achim Synagogue. She was an avid participant in many Colchester Senior Center activities and cherished her many friends there!

Selma was predeceased by her adored husband, Morris Walter Nirenstein, as well as her youngest daughter, Randi Lee Goldberg. She was a loving mother, grandmother, and greatgrandmother and was so proud of all of us! She is survived by her daughter, Bea Norman and son-in-law, Tom, daughter Ruth Hollm and son-in-law Bob, and special friend Judy Scott, who she considered an extra daughter! Also,

her grandson David Norman-Schiff and wife Annie, and their beloved daughter, Eve Shana, granddaughter Rachel Norman, grandson Joshua Hollm, and Randi's husband, Alan.

The funeral service was held at Ahavath Achim Synagogue on Sunday, Nov. 9, in Colchester.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to a charity of your choice.

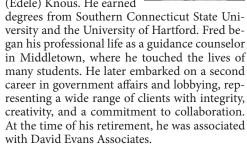
Visit weinsteinmortuary.com to leave an online condolence.

Portland

#### Frederick Robert Knous

Frederick Robert Knous of Portland passed away unexpectedly Friday, Nov. 7, at the age of 87. He was the beloved husband of Amy (Charpentier) Knous for 43 years.

Born in New Haven, Fred (a.k.a. Fred-Bob) was the son of the late Frederick Knous and May (Edele) Knous. He earned



Fred was deeply involved in public service and local government throughout his life. While living in Clinton, he served on the Board of Education and as town treasurer. He went on to serve two terms in the Connecticut State Senate representing the 33rd District, as well as several terms as a selectman in Portland, and participated on numerous town boards and commissions.

Fred will be remembered for his optimism, easygoing nature, and wonderful sense of humor. He and Amy shared a rich and full life surrounded by family and friends. They traveled extensively – Germany, France, Alaska, and Ireland were among their favorites. They treasured their time at their home on Block Island, where they enjoyed entertaining loved ones, walking the beach, watching sunsets, and simply relaxing together. Some of Fred's passions included a lifelong love of sports (especially horse racing), gardening, reading, history, playing blackjack and spending time with his feline companions.

In addition to his wife Amy, Fred is survived by his three loving daughters: Marcia Knous of Ormond Beach, Fla.; Daria Knous of San Jose, Calif.; and Kristin Knous and her partner Gene Pence of Sarasota, Fla.; his sister, Cheryl Hurst of Hamden; as well as many loving cousins and dear friends. He will be greatly missed by all who knew and loved him.

Calling hours were held Thursday, Nov. 13, at the Farley-Sullivan Funeral Home, 50 Naubuc Ave., Glastonbury. A memorial service celebrating Fred's life will be held at noon Friday, Nov. 14, in the funeral home.

To honor Fred's life, please take a moment to appreciate the beauty of a sunset, share a laugh with someone you love, or simply enjoy the company of friends and family – just as he always did.

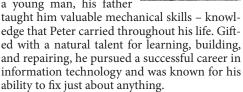
For more information, or to leave a condolence, please visit FarleySullivan.com.

Colchester

#### Peter Lewis

Peter Lewis, 70, of Colchester, passed away peacefully Monday, Nov. 3. He was born May 10, 1955, the son of the late Ralph and Beulah (Wallbridge) Lewis.

Peter grew up in Manchester, where he graduated from Manchester High School in 1973. As a young man, his father



Peter's greatest joy was spending time with his beloved wife, Mary Ann (MacKenzie) Lewis. Together, they shared a love of the outdoors – whether boating, walking, fishing, or simply enjoying the fresh air. He enjoyed hunting in the fall for many years with his friends.

Peter was always willing to lend a hand to others and was well known for his generosity and kindness. One of his recent accomplishments was the co-creation, alongside local business Champion Karate, of The Cane Fitness and Self-Defense program, designed to educate and empower individuals who utilize canes.

Even in passing, Peter continued his lifelong spirit of giving by choosing to donate his organs, providing the invaluable gift of life to others in need.

He is survived by his beloved wife, Mary Ann; his brother, Ron Lewis, and wife, Arline; his sister, Kathy Lewis Williams; and several wonderful nieces and nephews.

Peter was predeceased by his parents and his brother, Joe Lewis.

Family and friends are invited to gather for visitation on Friday, Nov. 28, from 9:30-11 a.m., at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. A memorial service celebrating Peter's life will follow at 11 a.m.

Peter will be remembered for his boundless curiosity, his helpful spirit, and his love of family, friends, and the outdoors. His kindness and generosity will continue to live on through the lives he touched and the lives he helped to save.

To share a memory or condolence with Peter's family, please visit www.auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

#### East Hampton

#### Dorothy Burdick-Heise

It is with great sadness we announce the passing of Dorothy "Dottie" Burdick-Heise, 95, on Tuesday, Nov. 4. She was born in Willimantic to Rosario and Aurora Bedard

After marrying Robert M. Burdick, they lived in East Hampton where they raised their eight



children. She worked as a nurse at Middlesex Hospital for 25 years. After her husband passed, she was fortunate to meet and marry Brooks B. Heise Sr. and they resided in Haddam for 20 years. Together they enjoyed many trips abroad and spending summers at OKP in Westbrook. An avid reader, she could always be found sitting in her chair at the beach with a book. She loved her family, friends, the beach, books, movies, knitting, and anything sweet.

She leaves behind her seven surviving children: Patricia McGlynn, James Burdick, Daniel Burdick (Patti), Peggy Radcliffe (Art), Pamela Rizy (Art), David Burdick, Paula Agogliati (Michael). She had 15 grandchildren, seven greatgrandchildren, numerous nieces, nephews, and cousins.

She was predeceased by her parents, brother, Roger Bedard, her husband(s) Robert M. Burdick, and Brooks B. Heise Sr.; a daughter, Cynthia Burdick; and son, Thomas Burdick (Jacqueline).

The family would like to thank the staff of the former One McDonough Place in Middletown and Masonicare of Middlewoods in Newington.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be held Saturday, Nov. 15, at 9:30 a.m., at St. Patrick Church, East Hampton, followed by a gravesite service at St. Patrick Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to The American Red Cross, or The Office of Radio and Television, 15 Peach Orchard Rd., Prospect, CT 06712-1052.

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





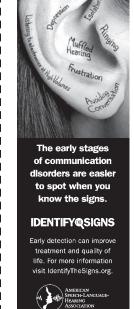
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366 Windham Road, Willimantic, CT

860-456-8658

www.TriCountyMemorials.com

tcmemorials@aol.com



#### Obituaries -

Colchester

#### Thomas Skylarr Concorde

Thomas Skylarr Concorde, 73, died unexpectedly Sunday, Nov. 2, at his home in Nelson, N.H., with his wife Carol Jane Concorde at his side. He died peacefully in his sleep due to heart complications. He was born July 7, 1952, in New Britain, the son of Stanley and Violet Chojnowski also



of New Britain. Thomas attended New Britain High School, where he graduated in June 1970. He then attended the CT School of Broadcasting in Farmington.

Tom's lifelong passion was writing original music lyrics and playing lead guitar. He was especially good at creating original rock music. In the early 1970s, Tom had the privilege of being asked to go on tour with the #1 rock band at the time: Pink Floyd. This tour was Pink Floyd's Dark Side of the Moon. Along with Dennis Marturano and Peter Sheridan, Tom was responsible for Pink Floyd's special sound effects, lighting and pyrotechnics, which are world-renowned.

Tom married his longtime girlfriend, Elizabeth Burrows of Colchester. They had a daughter on April 5, 1975, and named her Valerie. Tom truly loved being a father. Tom moved his young family to Newington, where he established his first recording studio in the basement of his large home. This enabled Tom, a very accomplished lead guitar player, to not only have his own band, but to write original music and record it. Tom had bi-weekly jam sessions in his basement/studio where he recorded some of his best original songs. The marriage ended when his daughter was approximately 16 years old; however, it was very important to Tom to keep a very close relationship with his daughter, his son-in-law and his two grandchildren, which he did until the day he passed away.

Tom married Carol Burtt on May 22, 1999, and they were married for 26 years. Tom and Carol lived in Colchester, Palm Coast, Fla., and Nelson, N.H. They enjoyed their retirement together. Tom and Carol would garden, go to the beach, cook and take in the beauty of nature. Tom also enjoyed spending time with his grandsons. He talked with them about God, lifelong skills, family, music and preparing them for their bright futures.

While living in Newington, Tom held the position of department manager for a large retail store in Newington called Lechmere. Thereafter, he worked as an account executive for an audio equipment sales company, where he advised clients worldwide on what equipment was best for their purposes and sold it to them. This was followed by Tom establishing his own company called Thunder Lightning, where he, once again, sold audio equipment to many large bands on a worldwide basis.

In addition to his wife Carol (Burtt) Concorde, Tom is survived by his daughter, Valerie Michelle Petocchi and her husband Raymond

> MIDDLE HADDAM HISTORIC **DISTRICT COMMISSION** REGULAR MEETING THURSDAY, November 20, 2025 6:30 P.M. AT TOWN HALL **LEGAL NOTICE**

Public hearing will be held to consider the following: Continued from Oct. 23, 2025. Application 615 for a Certificate of Appropriateness for Andrew and Heather Groeper of 8 Bates Drive, Middle Haddam, to install fencing from their house to the e and then west to a stream. The fence would inclu a section of stockade fencing and another section of post and rail fencing with black wire.

The foregoing application is available for public review at the East Hampton Town Hall. At this hearing interested persons may be heard and written communications will be received. 1TB 11/14

**PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE** TOWN OF ANDOVER ZONING BOARD of APPEALS THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2025 7:00PM TO 9:00PM TOWN HALL COMMUNITY ROOM 17 SCHOOL DRIVE

#25-14 ZBA APPLICATION OF STEVEN ROCKEFELLER SEEKING A VARIANCE

Applicant is seeking relief from Sections 11.2 and 4.1.4 of the Andover Zoning regulations to merge lots within the Andover Lake District at 45 Lakeside Drive and 47 Lakeside Drive, demolish an existing residence on 45 Lakeside Drive, construct an addition to 47 Lakeside Drive and construct a workshop. The overall proposal intends to decrease rear yard and side yard non-conformities that currently exist. It will also require front yard and side yard variances for a proposed workshop Interested parties may ask questions and/or offer comment, either verbally or in writing.

Please contact the Building and Land Use Office a minimum of 24 hours prior to the hearing date @860.742.7305, X - 4220.

Zoning Board of Appeals - Chairperson

Petocchi of East Hampton. Tom also is survived by his two grandsons, Ryan Petocchi and Devin Petocchi of East Hampton. Lastly, he is survived by numerous nieces and nephews, offspring of his predeceased sister, Violet Balicheski of Palm City Fla.

Tom is forever loved and his life song lives in eternity with Our Heavenly Father; Jesus! John

Services are under the care of Cheshire Family Funeral Home, Chapel, and Crematories. For online condolences, visit www.cheshirefami-

Portland

#### Phyllis K. Jakubiec

Phyllis K. (Polek) Jakubiec, 96, formerly of Portland and Middletown and wife of the late Dr. Frank J. Jakubiec Jr., passed away peacefully Tuesday, Nov.

She was born in Enfield, daughter of the late Albert and Josephine (Szarowicz) Polek. Prior to her retirement, Phyllis was a recep-

tionist while working for Covenant Village in

Phyllis is survived by her son Dr. Robert Jakubiec and his wife Dorothy of Middletown; daughter Catherine Archer and her husband Gregg of Portland; grandchildren Chris, Julie, Michael, Cheryl and Tommy; great-grandchildren Rylynn, William, Owen, Emily, Collins and Crawford; as well as numerous nieces and nephews.

She was predeceased by her husband Frank and son Thomas Jakubiec, six brothers and five sisters

Phyllis dearly loved her family and especially her six great-grandchildren who brought so much joy and love to her heart. She loved her birds and was an avid bridge player into her 90s. Phyllis loved gardening, the beach and sunsets and was a devoted UConn girls' basketball fan. She was a gifted painter, as many now covet a precious treasure. Phyllis thoroughly enjoyed their getaway palace in Vermont spending hours just driving around the state while Frank took pictures.

Phyllis had another family. At Water's Edge for Health and Rehabilitation everybody knew Phyllis, and she was dubbed "Best Dressed." Before going to daily bingo she had to fix her hair and put on her makeup. She gave many staff members a hard time, and the compassion and love the staff and residents all showed Phyllis and her family on the day of her passing was truly heartwarming. The family extends its most sincere appreciation to Water's Edge.

The funeral liturgy was held Saturday, Nov. 8, at St. Colman Church, Middlefield, with the burial following at Calvary Cemetery, Middletown. Family and friends gathered prior to the service at the Biega Funeral Home.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to St. Mary Church, 45 Freestone Avenue, Portland, CT 06480.

To share memories or express condolences online, please visit www.biegafuneralhome.com.

#### TOWN OF EAST HAMPTON PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION NOTICE OF ACTION

At the regular meeting on Wednesday, November 5, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. at the Town Hall and via ZOOM, the East Hampton Planning and Zoning Commission took the following actions: PZC-25-012: Julia Henry, 27 Sillimanville Road, Special Permit for Accessory Dwelling Unit in Basement, Map 36/ Block 96/ Lot 1B. – Approved

PZC-25-005: Lake Overlook Estates, Phase II Open Space Re-Subdivision and Special Permit. Map 03A/ Block 44/ Lot 23 - Approved with Conditions Kevin Kuhr, Chairman

1TB 11/14

#### **TOWN OF COLCHESTER** AQUIFER PROTECTION AGENCY LEGAL NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The Colchester Aguifer Protection Agency will hold a Public Hearing on November 19, 2025, beginning at 6:30 PM in the Colchester Town Hall Meeting Room at 127 Norwich Ave, Colchester, CT to revise the Town of Colchester Aquifer Protection Area Regulations.

At this hearing, interested persons may be heard and written communications received. A copy of the draft revised regulations is located in the Land Use Department and Town Člerk's Office, Town Hall, 127 Norwich Avenue, and may be inspected during regular business hours (8:30 AM - 4:30 PM, Monday through Friday). The draft revised regulations are also available on the Colchester Aquifer Protection Agency webpage at <a href="https://www.colchesterct.gov/planning-zoning-department/">https://www.colchesterct.gov/planning-zoning-department/</a> aquifer-protection-agency.

Joe Mathieu, Chairman

2TB 10/31, 11/14

#### **TOWN OF PORTLAND PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION LEGAL NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

Notice is hereby given that the Portland Planning & Zoning Commission will hold a Public Hearing on Thursday, November 20th, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. in the Buck Foreman Room (2nd Floor), 265 Main Street, Portland, CT.

PZC Application #25-07: 862 Portland Cobalt Road. Request for Special Permit for a medical spa. Application of Jessica Blancato and property of Realejo Properties LLC. Map 31 Lot 23. Zone B-2.

Dated at Portland, CT this 5th day of November 2025

Planning & Zoning Commission 2TB 11/7, 11/14

#### **LEGAL NOTICE** PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION **HEBRON, CONNECTICUT**

The Hebron Planning and Zoning Commission will hold a Public Hearing at a meeting scheduled for Wednesday, November 19, 2025, at 7:00 P.M., to be held virtually through the GoToMeeting Platform, on the following:

I. Petition 2025-23: Petition of Stephen Kowalski, owner, for Special Permit to construct an accessory structure exceeding 900 square feet (2,592 sq. ft.) on a lot less than 5 acres (4.34 acres) in size in accordance with Section 2.E.8 of the Hebron Zoning Regulations at 389 Martin Road, Residence-1 District. Petition 2025-23 Kowalski Barn

II. Petition 2025-24: Petition of Proud Light LLC for Special Permit for the sale of open alcoholic beverages at a miniature golf course in accordance with Section 5.0.1 at 290 Church Street, Neighborhood Convenience District. Petition 2025-24 Alcohol at Mini Golf

Planning and Zoning Commission
Nov 19, 2025, 7:00–10:00 PM (America/New\_York) Please join my meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone. https://meet.goto.com/866794845 You can also dial in using your phone. Access Code: 866-794-845 United States: +1 (872) 240-3412 Get the app now and be ready when your first meeting starts:

https://meet.goto.com/install Dated at Hebron, Connecticut, this 4th day of November 2025. Frank Zitkus, Chair

2TB 11/7, 11/14

#### TOWN OF PORTLAND **ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS** LEGAL NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Notice is hereby given that the Portland Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a Public Hearing on Thursday, November 20, 2025 at a meeting to start at 6:00 p.m. in the Buck Foreman Room (2nd Floor), 265 Main Street, Portland, CT. Application #25-02: 381 Gospel Lane. Request for a variance from Zoning Regulation Table 3.17.C for the minimum distance from the street for a pool with a setback of 50 feet where 75 feet is required. Application and property of Alicia and Parker Strong. Assessor's Map 68, Lot 10-18. Zone R-25. At this hearing interested persons may appear and be heard and written communications will be received. A copy of this application is available for public review in the Portland Land

Dated at Portland, CT this 5th day of November 2025.

Joan Giesemann, Chair

2TB 11/7, 11/14

# **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

## TO BUY

WANTED \$500 \$1,000 BILLS: Also interested in any other old currency & coins. Call 860-301-2777.

WANTED TO BUY: your sterling silverware, tea set, or any item made of sterling. Top cash price paid on the spot. I can come to your home or meet you at a place of your choosing. Call/text Dominic at 860-836-5013 or email dmbappraisal@sbcglobal.net.

**WANTED JUNK CARS:** and unfinished projects. Contact 860-216-8144.

FINANCIAL ADMINIS-

WANTED TO BUY: All antiques; toys, military, advertising, coins, clocks, signs, all musical instruments, guitars, saxophones. keyboards, trumpets, amplifiers, accordions, vintage electronics, hi-fi stereo, amplifiers, pro-audio, radios, ham equipment, tube type equipment, plus more. 1 item or entire estate. Call 860-707-9350.

WANTED: Individual firearms, collections & estates including, military & related items. Federally licensed firearms dealer. Appraisal. Richard Pleines. 860-

#### PET TRAINING

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



CASH PAID for any Toyota

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203-600-4431



# **PICTURE** THIS:



CALL US **TODAY AT:** 860-633-4691 PCA NEEDED FOR: wheelchair bound female in East Hampton. 7:30am-1:30pm, Mon 8am-2pm. Fri Thurs 7:30 am- 10:30am, & Sun 8am-12pm & backup coverage possible. \$22/hr. Please call 860-

267-7012.

ADMINISTRATIVE AS-SISTANT PART-TIME: Small, faithful church seeking organized, personable assistant (approx. 10 hrs/week, days). Duties include weekly bulletin and online newsletter prep, record keeping, and general office support. Must have Google & Mailchimp experience, communicastrong tion and organizational skills. Send inquires/resume to Mary DeCourmarybdec62@ sey, gmail.com or send to Congregational Church of East Hampton 59 Street. Main Hampton, CT 06424.

TRATIVE ASSISTANT: A Glastonbury Wealth Management firm is seeking a full-time Fin-Administrative Assistant. Experience in the financial services industry is required. Must be detail-oriented and organized to work independently, ively, and efficiently with minimal supervision. Responsibilities include service to existing clients, processing new business, and assisting in preparing client meetings and reviews. Experience with BD's LPL preferred. Please email resume to iames@4vourassets.com.



#### HELP WANTED

General Contractor/Construction Manager based in Hartford area is seeking a dedicated, experienced Field Superintendent with healthcare/commercial experience to manage and direct the day to day coordination of trade subcontractors, who has a thorough understanding of contract documents and all phases of construction experience.

Minimum 2-5 years of experience in healthcare/general construction in a supervisory role. Proven record of successfully leading and managing teams in complex projects. Has communication and interpersonal skills.

Foreman experience will be considered.

Email resume and/or qualifications: labor23@yahoo.com

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ROOM APARTMENT:

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month's rent. Electricity

not included. No Smok-

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required. Email michael-

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401-489-1869 or jesposito0912@gmail.

com, 401-487-2337.

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removal.

# **EMPLOYMENT**

# **EproMoldplastics**Custom Injection Molding & Moldmaking

#### **Production Worker: 2nd Shift (Portland)**

Compensation: Minimum Wage & Up
 Full time production worker to work 2nd shift in a clean modern plastics mfg. facility supporting production by running machines, moving raw material and finished goods etc. Will train candidates eager to learn.

#### APPLY ONLINE

https://promoldplastics.com/general-application or in person between 9 AM and 4 PM at 91 Main Street, Portland, CT 06480

New Beginnings for Life is a smaller company with a big heart that cares for individuals with intellectual disabilities. We are seeking kind, patient, and passionate candidates to join our team. We have individuals who need care and companionship in Colchester and surrounding towns. We have great benefits, and the rate of pay is \$17.25 per hour. For our day support program, which is from 8am-4pm and 2pm-5pm, the towns are in Salem, Groton, Hebron, Lebanon, Higganum, East Haddam, New London, Norwich, East Hampton, Colchester. For our group home positions we have Monday-Sunday open second and third shift which is 3pm-11pm and 11pm-7am. These positions are in Colchester.

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

## REAL ESTATE

VACANT LAND FOR SALE: Chestnut Hill Road, Colchester. Between Lot 169 and 195. 12.8 Acres. Sale by Owner. \$73,900. Call 860-913-6723.

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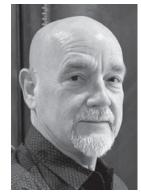
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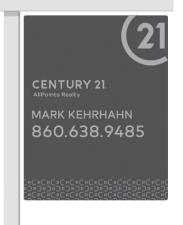
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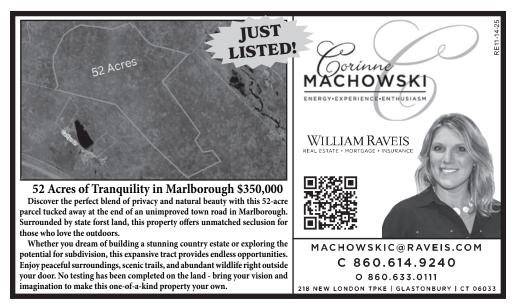
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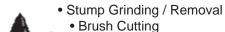
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**POLISH HOLIDAY** FAIR HARTFORD: Saturday, November 22, 2025 9am to 3 pm. SS. Cyril & Methodius Church Hall 63 Popieluszko Court. Hartford. Homemade frozen pierogi and golabki, kielbasa sandwiches and Polish food, delicious pastries, Polish imports, vendors/crafters. Free admission. Wheelchair accessible. Information 860-659-0356.



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