

RIVEREAST

News Bulletin

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

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November 21, 2025

RHAM Volleyball Does It Again!!

By Josh Howard

For the better part of the last two decades, RHAM High School girls volleyball has been the gold standard on the local courts – and the dynasty added another chapter last weekend.

On Saturday, Nov. 15, the top-seeded Raptors defeated the No. 2-seeded Falcons of Joel Barlow High School in five sets (25-14, 18-25, 25-12, 21-25, 15-10) to win the Class M state championship.

It marked the program's 11th state championship – all since 2007.

RHAM head coach Tim Guernsey, who took over the program in 2002, stated that the taste of additional titles only gets sweeter.

"This is a very connected group," Guernsey said of his championship squad. "There's no drama [and] they loved coming to practice every day. It was just a fantastic season."

Following the marathon match at East Haven High School, RHAM senior Meredith Weir was named the Most Valuable Player (MVP) after hammering home 26 kills, many in crucial moments. She also added 20 digs.

"I owe it to everyone else," Weir said of the honor. "I just feel so much excitement. I feel so excited for everyone on the team, because everybody contributed."

Junior setter Rian Calhoun said working with the MVP outside hitter is a breeze.

"All I have to do is put the ball up and I know she'll put it down, which is awesome," added Calhoun, who dished out 43 assists in the victory.

Joel Barlow entered the title bout as the defending champions, beating Granby Memorial in the 2024 Class M championship match.



RHAM High School volleyball won an 11th state title, defeating Joel Barlow in the Class M state championship in East Haven on Nov. 15. Pictured here, head coach Tim Guernsey is flanked by his senior players Abby Simao and Brooke Arcari to his right and Cecilia Zito, Meredith Weir, and Victoria Ciesla to his left.

After the powerhouse programs traded the first four sets, the evenly-matched title came down to the fifth set.

Heading into the decisive set, Calhoun said the team wanted to leave it all on the court, add-

ing, "Joel Barlow is a tough opponent and going into that fifth set we didn't win the coin toss, so felt like the odds were against us, but we knew we could overcome it."

Calhoun started the frame with a kill as the

Raptors reeled off 10 of the first 13 points before the Redding-based Falcons narrowed the deficit to 12-10, promoting a timeout from Guernsey.

Weir said Guernsey told the team to "calm down", adding, "We wanted this. It was our time and we had to lay it all out on the floor."

"They just needed to relax," noted Guernsey, whose voice was hoarse following the victory. "I wanted them to relax and finish the game. They had done all the hard work up to that point, so we just had to keep it together."

The pep talk work to perfection as Guernsey group responded with three straight points.

Calhoun served up match point with a touch pass to senior Brooke Arcari, who pounded down the championship-clincher.

"We have such a great connection; she feels like family to me," Arcari said of her bond with Calhoun. "At the end we just looked at each other. I didn't say anything and she didn't say anything, but we just kind of knew."

As the team rushed and tackled Arcari on the court in celebration, the realization hit for Weir and the other seniors.

"It feels amazing to be part of a team that is so loving to everybody," explained Weir. "We're so good at communicating with each other and we have an amazing coach."

In the team's journey to East Haven, RHAM overcame adversity as all-conference middle hitter Cecilia Zito was forced to miss the post-season tournaments due to an injury.

Prior to her injury, Zito was the team leader in blocks in each of the past two seasons.

Junior Addison Garner came off the bench to fill the void and played admirably as the team

See Rham Volleyball, page 29

Affordable Housing Bill Spurs Area Debate

By Toriana Williams

Connecticut's newly passed housing legislation HB 8002, which state lawmakers approved last week, has quickly become one of the most debated proposals of the year – with local and state officials offering sharply different perspectives on its scope, impact and rollout.

The 104-page bill, adopted during a special session, aims to reshape the state's approach to housing by requiring every municipality to develop a housing growth plan, participate in regional planning and meet state-driven benchmarks for production of affordable units. It introduces as-of-right development in certain zones, establishes new planning and reporting mandates and aligns local planning with statewide housing goals.

Supporters say the reforms are necessary to address a long-standing shortage of homes that has driven costs upward and strained the state's workforce. Critics argue the bill diminishes local control, imposes unfunded mandates on small towns and was rushed through the legislature with inadequate public input. Interviews with local and state officials reflect the full spec-

trum of reactions to the bill.

State Representative Steve Weir (R-55), who represents Hebron, Marlborough, Andover, Bolton and part of Glastonbury, strongly opposed the measure. However, he did not vote on the bill itself; he said he had to step out of last week's state House meeting due to "bad timing," and was unable to return for the vote.

Weir said he was familiar with the earlier version, HB 5002, but noted that this version was provided to legislators with very little notice.

"This bill, while similar, was presented under 'emergency' status, and we didn't receive a copy of the final version of the bill until about an hour before the debate began," he said. Weir said portions of the bill never received a public hearing and added that the fiscal analysis was not immediately available, describing the process as "a very sloppy process on the part of the proponents."

Weir said his opposition is rooted in concern about the state dictating local planning.

"I've been transparent in my belief that the state of Connecticut should not be directing

housing goals for cities and towns," he said. He said he believes local planning and zoning bodies should retain authority over housing decisions and argued that if the state wants to support growth, it should focus on helping towns expand sewer and water infrastructure rather than imposing top-down targets.

Looking ahead, Weir said he expects the bill to produce unintended outcomes. He gave the example that "towns may not require minimum parking requirements for developments with fewer than 16 units," which he fears could lead to conflict between neighbors. He also said the reporting requirements "are onerous," describing the legislation as "yet another burden for our paid town staff."

Overall, Weir said, "I do not see how this bill will increase the housing stock, or how housing

See Affordable Housing, page 10

More Housing Bill
Reaction.....Page 30

Inside...

Marlborough	
<i>Honoring the Flag</i>	pg 9
East Hampton	
<i>Council Back to Business</i>	pg 11
Colchester	
<i>A Night of Unity</i>	pg 23
Colchester	
<i>WJMS Honor Roll</i>	pg 24
Hebron	
<i>Dispute Over Election Prep</i>	pg 27
Regional	
<i>Obituaries</i>	pg 32

Crossword Puzzle...Pg 26
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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 Andover.

If you have any questions, call Carol Lee at 860-989-6988.

Amston Artists in Local Show

From now through Dec. 28, Amston artists Elizabeth Dougherty and John Ros will have an exhibition of mixed media works entitled “Over Here” at Over Andover Barn-tique, 415 Route 6, Andover, as part of Artist Open Studios of Northeast CT.

Artist open studio hours will be 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Friday, Nov. 28, and 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, Nov. 29 and 30 and Dec. 6 and 7.

There will be an artist reception Saturday, Dec. 6, from noon-3 p.m.

For more information, visit aosct.org.

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Christmas Fair & Bake Sale

Andover Congregational Church, 359 Route 6, will 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.

Bingo & Basket Raffle

Andover Congregational Church, located at 359 Route 6, will hold the last Bingo & Basket Raffle Night of 2025 on 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.

Recreation Commission Vacancy

Any Andover elector interested in serving on the Recreation Commission for a term ending June 30, 2027 should send an email to clee@andoverct.org.

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Selectmen Hire Interim Town Administrator

By Toriana Williams

Andover's government is navigating a period of transition following the resignation of former Town Administrator Eric Anderson, who stepped down after stating he could no longer work "effectively or ethically" under the Board of Selectmen.

In the weeks since his departure, the board has moved quickly to appoint an interim leader – Jim Bellano, a veteran of municipal administration and economic development, who began serving in the temporary role.

Bellano, who previously worked for more than a decade in Windham, said the opportunity to serve Andover came to him through a chain of professional connections.

"I heard about it kind of through a mutual friend," Bellano said. He explained that during his years as Windham's economic and community development director, he stepped in twice to lead the town when its manager left. "I had been interim town manager there in 2017 and 2024," he said.

It was this experience that prompted a colleague to suggest his name once it became known that Anderson would be leaving Andover. After reaching out, Bellano met with First Selectman Jeffrey Maguire and then the entire Board of Selectmen. "We kind of went from there," he said.

Although some interim administrators pur-

sue the role permanently, Bellano made clear that this is not his intention. "It's not my thing," he said.

He explained that after roughly two decades in economic development, he's developed a reputation for stepping in when there are gaps in leadership. People tend to see him as someone who can stabilize things and guide organizations through periods of transition, even though that's not exactly how he would describe it. "There are people that go to school for this, have experience in this particular type of work, and that's just never been me."

Under Andover's town charter, the Board of Selectmen, together with the Board of Finance, would typically work with a search committee to begin looking for a permanent administrator, though it's not clear yet whether that committee has been formed or the search has formally started.

Bellano's interim contract lasts "up to six months," he explained, though the actual duration will depend on the speed of the search and the availability of the eventual hire. "It could be anywhere from three to six months, probably."

Following Anderson's resignation, concerns have surfaced among residents about the stability of town operations. Bellano said continuity has been easier to maintain than some might expect, in large part because of the strength of

Andover's staff.

He said he feels lucky because the department staff, including its leaders and employees, are "outstanding." He added that he isn't stepping into the role without context, and there's no need for him to take an overly hands-on, micromanaging approach. "These folks have been doing what they're doing for a long time, and they do it well," he said.

He praised every major department by name – public works, finance, the clerk's office, the assessor's office and the building department – adding that "they know how to do their job." He described this as a major factor in ensuring services continue uninterrupted during leadership changes.

Even in a temporary capacity, Bellano's responsibilities are broad. "You do have to manage the departments of the town," he said. Department heads come to him with questions or issues; and he executes any directives from elected officials.

In addition to the day-to-day management, Andover is in the middle of multiple grant-funded infrastructure projects. Bellano expects these to take up a significant part of his limited tenure.

"There's a lot on the plate here in Andover," he said. He listed two bridge projects – Bunker Hill Road and Long Hill Road – explaining that

"one is finishing, one's about to begin." There is also a new senior transportation garage, and additional grants involving the Veterans ballfield, pickleball courts and lighting. "These are all grants that are in the process ... that have to be shepherded through," Bellano said.

With a population of just over 3,000, Andover is dramatically smaller than Windham. Bellano noted the contrast immediately. "It's a different atmosphere," he said, noting that Windham had roughly 25,000 residents, while this community is much smaller, making it a very "different kind of town."

Still, he said the community's character stands out.

"It's charming," he shared, and characterized both the staff and the residents as highly involved and genuinely committed. He added that it isn't just the employees who show dedication – community volunteers who serve on commissions are also deeply invested in the town. "That's a nice thing to commit to," he said.

As the search for a permanent administrator gets underway, Bellano's task in the coming months will be to keep the town functioning smoothly while guiding major projects across the finish line – serving, as he put it, to "steady the ship" during Andover's latest transition in leadership.

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 p.m.

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

Thanksgiving Dinner: Thanksgiving Day, Nov. 27. Open to anyone; RSVP preferable.

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.

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.

See More Andover News, page 7

On behalf of the TANGO2 Research Foundation and the Morris family, we extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who supported the 5th biennial TANGO2 Banquet & Auction.

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Shop Two Coffee

Southbury Santa

Stella D'oro

Story & Soil Coffee Shop

Super Liquors in Putnam Plaza

Sweet Jean's Café

Tallwood Country Club

Ten Summit Yoga

The Flour Girl Bakery

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From the Editor’s Desk

Observations & Ruminations

By Mike Thompson

Hope you enjoyed your brief respite from early deadlines because, as Eminem might say if he had chosen to go into journalism: guess what’s back, back again; early deadlines are back, tell a friend.

Because of the Thanksgiving holiday next week, the *Rivereast* is going to press a day early. Ergo and therefore, all news copy – letters, press releases, event listings, etc. – **must** be in by **noon Monday, Nov. 24** in order to be included in next week’s paper. No exceptions will be made.

Since Christmas and New Year’s are also on Thursdays this year, that means we’ll be doing this all over again in a few weeks. But we’ll cross that bridge when we come to it. For now, focus on next week’s early deadline. And happy Thanksgiving from all of us at the *Rivereast*.

And speaking of Thanksgiving: made your pizza plans for next Wednesday yet?

Studies show the day before Thanksgiving is one of the top five pizza delivery days of the year. It makes sense – with the focus on preparing the Turkey Day feast, who the heck wants to think about what to cook for dinner the night before?

Speaking of pizza, the state recently unveiled its first-ever “Connecticut Pizza Trail.” It’s a map of the 100 allegedly best pizza places in the state, as voted on by the public. I say allegedly because some of my personal favorites didn’t make the list, but hey, that’s democracy

for you. Sometimes it can be quite cruel.

Anyway, two pizza places from *Rivereast*-land made the list. Congrats to Three Fellas in Marlborough and Rossini’s in East Hampton!

To see the other pizza joints that make up the Connecticut Pizza Trail, see the map at ct-visit.com/articles/connecticut-pizza-trail.

And by the way, in case you’re wondering what the top pizza delivery day of the year is – nope, it’s not Super Bowl Sunday. It’s Halloween. Which I suppose also makes sense; after all, if you have kids you’ve certainly got bigger priorities for Halloween night than figuring out what to throw together for dinner. Besides, what better way to cancel out all that sugary candy than a few slices of salty pizza? (Note: I am not a dietitian.)

Did you go to Portland High School, play soccer there, and are perhaps looking to burn off some calories the day after Thanksgiving? If your answer to this highly-specified question is ‘yes,’ you might want to take note of this next announcement.

All alumni of the boys and girls soccer teams at Portland High School, you’re invited to come join all former players as they turn back the clock and step onto the pitch to showcase their skills, in the annual PHS Alumni Game.

The game will be played Friday, Nov. 28, at Portland High School. Women play at noon, followed by the men at 2 p.m. Please arrive a

Editor’s Desk continued on page 5

Bulletin Board

As the Thanksgiving holiday draws near, my thoughts turn, not to the familiar black-hatted Pilgrims, but to the Native Americans who saved them from starvation all those many years ago.

As elementary school students (my generation, at least), we all learned about Squanto, friend of the white man, and his many contributions to their well-being—indeed, to their very survival. Today, some 400 years later, the question arises: would the Pilgrims’ indigenous benefactors have been so magnanimous had they known the future?

I suspect things might have gone more like this:

Pilgrim (stomach growling): Squanto, I’m really, really hungry.

Squanto: Yeah. Me too. I’ve been really scratching for nourishment ever since the grasshopper season ended.

Pilgrim: Do you have anything to eat?

Squanto: Just my breechcloth.

Pilgrim: How about that big bird over there?

Squanto: What bird?

Pilgrim: That bird with the big tail and the big blue and red ugly head that keeps making that weird gobbling noise.

Squanto: Oh. We call that a turkey.

Pilgrim: Turkey?

Squanto: Yeah. In English that means ‘Poisonous Bird of Death.’

Pilgrim (hopefully): Is it edible?

Squanto: Are heathens such as myself eligible for Salvation?

Pilgrim: Of course not. Don’t be silly.

Squanto: There you go.

Pilgrim: Good Lord, it’s snowing again.

Squanto: It’s beautiful, isn’t it? I just love the contrast of your shivering blue fingers against the white snow. It’s just so Picasso-ish, if you know what I mean.

Pilgrim: I’m so sick of shoveling snow out of the driveway I could puke. You sure you don’t have anything to eat?

Squanto: Here, have a piece of bark.

Pilgrim: Thanks. Say, what’s that yellow stuff you have there in your bag?

Squanto: Corn.

Pilgrim: Can you eat it?

Squanto: I use it to kill rats. It works even better than that butternut squash you were asking me about yesterday.

Pilgrim: Geez, isn’t there anything to eat in this New World besides bark and grasshoppers?

Squanto: I don’t know what you’re complaining about. Nobody asked you to come over here. If you wanted to sit around all day in a nice warm pub drinking ale and complaining about religious persecution, you should have stayed in merry old England.

Pilgrim: I’ll tell you what. Right now I’d like to persecute a nice hot beef and kidney pie. I’m not going to lie to you, friend, England’s looking merrier and merrier by the hour. On the other hand, I don’t really want to get burned at the stake or something.

Squanto: Well, at least you’d be warm.

Pilgrim: Maybe we could shoot a deer or something. Some venison stew would taste real good right about now.

Squanto: It’s not deer season. You can’t go around shooting deer out of season without the proper permits. Besides, you don’t even have a hunting license.

Pilgrim: What’s a hunting license?

Squanto: Never mind. What do you say we boil my breechcloth and make some soup.

Pilgrim: Ugh, actually I think I have some packing to do.

Squanto: Leaving so soon? Grasshopper season is just a few months away. It’s supposed to be a bumper crop this year.

Pilgrim: Naw, that’s okay. I don’t mean to be critical of God’s bounty, but I do get tired of picking their legs out from between my teeth.

Squanto & Fellow Tribe Members (sitting down to a luscious turkey dinner as the Pilgrims sail off for home, leaving them in peace): Let us give thanks.

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.



Preparing Pies... The RHAM Service Unit Girl Scouts (Girl Scouts of Hebron, Andover and Marlborough) always take an active role in helping to fulfill the need of our local food pantries by collecting pies from local residents, Girl Scouts and their families. Hebron and Marlborough Girl Scouts from Cadette Troop 65092 recently wanted to prepare pies with the senior citizens of Colebrook Village in Hebron. The scouts and seniors were able to prepare 31 pies for the Hebron Interfaith Human Services Food Pantry. This was the second collaboration for pies that the scouts and seniors have done together. If you would like to contribute to the pie donation for Hebron or Marlborough food pantries please contact RHAMGSSU@gmail.com this week.

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

Early Deadline Next Week

Due to the Thanksgiving holiday, the *Rivereast* will publish one day early next week. Therefore, all copy – letters to the editor, event listings, press releases, etc. – **must** be submitted no later than noon Monday, Nov. 24 to be included in next week’s paper.

No exceptions will be made.

Happy Thanksgiving from all of us at the *Rivereast News Bulletin*.

VFW Post 5095

To the Editor:

I would like to thank the VFW and very one helped to make a great Thanksgiving meal for the seniors. It was a great meal and a great time for everyone who was there.

Again, thank you so much for what you did for the seniors.

Shelley Grendzinski – East Hampton

Thanks for Your Support

To the Editor:

I would like to thank all those who supported me at the ballot box for a position on the East Hampton Board of Education. My goals for improving the quality of the each student’s educational experience while containing costs will always be in the forefront of my mind throughout my term in office. It is a great honor to serve our students, parents, teaching staff and taxpayers of this community.

**Nathan Jaycox, member
East Hampton Board of Education**

RIVEREAST

News Bulletin

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

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News copy deadline for *The Rivereast News Bulletin* is Monday at noon. Please address all letters & news articles to: *Rivereast News Bulletin*, P.O. Box 373, Glastonbury, CT 06033

Letter Writers: Letters must be 400 words or less, and must be submitted by **Monday** 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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Grateful for Marlborough
To the Editor:
As we approach the Thanksgiving holiday there are so many things I would like to extend my gratitude for in our little town of Marlborough. Apart from all its natural resources that are maintained so well by our local staff, I am thrilled to see the sense of community that Sandy Squillante is building with her willingness to host group events at the Marlborough Bakery and Cafe. She has graciously welcomed local sports and activity groups, candidate meet and greets and post-election gatherings with her friendly staff and delicious treats.
I would also like to recognize all the candidates of both parties who volunteered their service for boards, as well residents who took the time out of their busy schedules to vote in our recent local election. I am proud and honored to be part of this community.

Linda Earley – Marlborough
Note: Earley is secretary of the Board of Education in Marlborough, but said she is writing as an individual.

Thank You Colchester
To the Editor:
Thank you for once again reelecting me to the Board of Selectmen. It has been my honor to serve the people of Colchester. I believe in public service and giving back to the Town in which I live. I believe in working hard to make good decisions for the town based on facts and information. I hope for continued bipartisanship and civility at Board of Selectmen meetings so we all can focus on the work ahead. Thank you for your support and for helping us move Colchester forward. There is so much more to do. I look forward to the work ahead and to continuing to make Colchester a great place to live.
I would also like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a Happy Thanksgiving. Hope you have a wonderful time with your family and friends.

Sincerely,
Rosemary Coyle, Selectman Colchester

Thanks for Reelection
Dear Portland Community Members:
Thank you for reelecting me to the Board of Education. I am honored and humbled by your support. I appreciate your trust and the opportunity to continue serving our district.
I remain committed to moving forward with our school facilities work and ensuring that decisions are made responsibly, with a focus on providing students and staff with high-quality learning environments in the most cost-effective way possible. I look forward to continuing productive collaboration with families, educators, and community partners to ensure every Portland student feels a sense of belonging and can thrive.
Thank you again for your support.

Sincerely,
Kim Nagy-Maruschock – Portland

Sense of Accomplishment
Dear Colchester:
Thank you for all the votes on Nov. 4th. It was exciting to see so many Colchester residents exercising their rights in near record numbers! Margo and I were very grateful for the “Row C for BOE” support. Thank you to those who signed our petition to run on that row and those who allowed a sign in their yard.
I am feeling a great sense of accomplishment leaving the Board of Education. We worked right up until the last minute to finalize items and hand it off with confidence. I believe that we have made positive differences over the past four years and left the BOE better than we found it.
Serving on the Colchester Board of Education has been an honor, especially with my fellow members, R&D alike. We came from diverse backgrounds and didn’t always agree, but still arrived at some bi-partisan compromise through informed dialogue while remaining decent. I wish the incoming members likewise. We all win when the conversation continues in Colchester.

Donna Antonacci – Colchester

Thank You, Portland
To the Residents of Portland:
I am deeply honored and grateful to have been elected to serve on the Portland Board of Education. Thank you for placing your trust in me to help guide the future of our schools and support our students, teachers, and families.
Education is the foundation of our community’s success, and I do not take this responsibility lightly. I am committed to listening to parents, educators, and community members as we work together to provide the best possible learning environment for every child in Portland.
I look forward to collaborating with my fellow board members and engaging with all of you as we address the opportunities and challenges ahead. Your voices matter, and I encourage you to reach out to me with your ideas, concerns, and perspectives.
Thank you again for this opportunity to serve our community. I am excited to get to work on behalf of Portland’s students and families.

Sincerely,
Erin Livensparger, Member Portland Board of Education

Response to Complaint
To the Editor:
Last week Hebron Republican Town Committee chair Jason Guidone complained that proper notice was not given regarding the pre-election testing of voting tabulators. Here are the facts:
1. State law calls for the registrars to cause the tabulators to be tested. Typically, the registrars do this together after giving notice of the date and location as required by state law.
2. Guidone was on the ballot for Zoning Board of Appeals so his wife, Republican Registrar Michele May could not participate in the testing. As a result of this and because the tabulators, and May and her deputy, were new this year, May and I agreed to have a representative of the manufacturer conduct the testing.
3. The manufacturer’s representative was only available on Oct. 28th. While Ms. May had suggested that she would have preferred to do the testing on Oct. 30th, when I explained via text

message that the representative was only available on Oct. 28th, she texted back “Gotcha” and “I will be a silent observer.” She did not object to the date.
4. It was May’s job to give the Republican chair a day’s notice of the testing. I assume she did so. As such, if there was a problem with Guidone being notified, it was his wife’s doing.
5. Ms. May was in the room of the testing before abruptly leaving.
6. As to the nonissue Guidone raises about the testing being conducted at Town Hall while early voting was ongoing, state law allows party officials or candidates to be present in an early voting location while performing official duties or government business. They could have come.
There is no provision in state law which allows a hand count as suggested by Mr. Guidone. In addition, the public knows that studies have repeatedly shown that hand counts are less accurate, more time-consuming, and quite expensive. This would be particularly true in a situation like a municipal election in which voters choose multiple candidates for various boards and commissions.
This election was overseen by a Republican moderator in cooperation with Ms. May, town clerk Fran Villani, and me. I am proud of the work we do and pledge to the people of Hebron that we will continue to competently and fairly administer elections and referenda.

Elizabeth Fitzgerald
Democratic Registrar of Voters Hebron

Some Things Do Not Change
To the Editor:
In June 1799, Jonathan Trumbull Jr., the governor of Connecticut who had served as Washington’s military secretary during the Revolution, wrote to urge him to run for a third term as president. “Election of a president is near at hand,” Trumbull wrote, “and I have confidence in believing, that, should your name again be brought up . . . you will not disappoint the hopes & desires of the wise & good in every state.”
Washington had several reasons for not run-

Editor’s Desk continued from page 4
minimum of 30 minutes early to register for a jersey and warm-up.
For more information, contact John Dis-
cenza at johnnydis@sbcglobal.net.

Lastly, if you simply need a break this week-
end from planning the Thanksgiving feast,
you may want to head over to West Hartford
on Sunday, for what sounds like a fun and re-
laxing few hours.
More than 20 award-winning Connecti-
cut women artisans will display and sell their
work at the annual Fall Celebration of Wom-
en’s Crafts on Sunday, Nov. 23, from 9 a.m.
to 3 p.m. The event will be held at the Pond
House Café, located in Elizabeth Park, 1555
Asylum Ave. entrance, in West Hartford.
This show is now celebrating its 28th year,
and is a showcase for browsing and purchas-
ing a broad array of handcrafted gift items for

family and friends.
All artists will be present to meet shoppers
and discuss their work. Among the artisans’
creative renderings presented for sale will be
pottery, clothing, jewelry, artwork, sculpture,
and more.
Admission is free. As has become a tradi-
tional feature of this show, a gift raffle will also
be held, featuring hand-crafted items from
the participating artists and a Pond House
gift card, with the ticket proceeds donated to
Foodshare.
For more information email womenscraft-
celebration@gmail.com or visit the Women’s
Craft Celebration Facebook page at www.
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See you next week – and don’t forget the
early deadline!

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★ Letters cont. from page 5

ning again. There was his promise not to seek unfair power as a government official and his desire to avoid being, as he wrote to Trumbull, “charged . . . with concealed ambition.” There were also his “ardent wishes to pass through the vale of life in retiremt, undisturbed in the remnant of the days I have to sojourn here.”

Perhaps even stronger than those factors were Washington’s feelings about the country’s heated political climate. “The line between parties,” Washington wrote Trumbull, had become “so clearly drawn” that politicians would “regard neither truth nor decency; attacking every character, without respect to persons – public or private – who happen to differ from themselves in politics.” Washington wrote that, even if he were willing to run for president again, as a Federalist, “I am thoroughly convinced I should not draw a single vote from the anti-federal side.”

For Washington, the nation’s political parties had soured discourse and created a climate in which, as he predicted in his 1796 farewell address, “unprincipled men will be enabled to subvert the power of the people and to usurp for themselves the reins of government.” Referring to the Democratic-Republicans, Washington wrote, “Let that party set up a broomstick, and call it a true son of Liberty, a Democrat, or give it any other epithet that will suit their purpose, and it will command their votes in toto!”

And so, as you can see there was soured discourse back in 1799 but we as a state and as a nation lived through it and prospered and hopefully, we will do it again.

Ralph Bianco – Colchester

Thank You, All

To the Editor:

I had the pleasure of attending the swearing-in ceremony for Colchester elected officials at Bacon Academy on Sunday. It was wonderful to see nearly every candidate-elect be sworn in to their seat as the leaders of our town. Political party didn’t matter; they all stood together to take their oath. I am looking forward to seeing this positive progress continue in our town.

I would like to thank all those who came out to vote for me to continue in my role as a mem-

ber of the Board of Education. Running on a third row was different and fun. Four years ago I received over 800 votes running on the Republican ticket to win the seat and this election I received over 800 votes running on a separate row. Not enough to win a seat but it is beyond heartwarming that so many came out to vote for me and not a party line. Thank you to those who signed the petition for Donna and I to run on our own row, and for everyone who put a sign in their yard. I am grateful for your support and your appreciation of the work Donna and I have done with our fellow board members.

I am proud to say as a board we hired a competent and capable superintendent; we streamlined the function of central office by creating the role of assistant superintendent incorporating the director of teaching and learning role; we reviewed every single board policy and by-law; we streamlined the budget presentation to make it comprehensive for all to see; we revamped many areas of curriculum with the administration in each of our schools; we looked at non-traditional ideas to benefit the school and taxpayers of the town. We have seen our administration strengthen for the betterment of our students. We have all seen the amazing successes of the children in our schools. I look forward to new ideas and programs coming to fruition that serve our community with our new leadership team.

Thank you all once again for your support and I look forward to continuing to volunteer in our community in new capacities.

Marguerite Gignac – Colchester

‘Scouting for Food’ Thanks

To the Editor:

Scout Troops 72, 13, 109 and Cub Scout Pack 13 would like to thank all of Colchester’s friends and neighbors for their participation in the “Scouting for Food” collections on November 8th. The total collected of food and other needed items collected, this year’s total was 16,767 lbs. This is the largest amount even collected by the scouts and it shows that Colchester’s residents know how to take care of our own.

The Colchester Youth and Social Services Department and the volunteers also deserve con-

gratulations. Once the collected items started arriving at the Town Hall, the hard-working crew of volunteers and scouts hit the piles of donations with a plan and made short work of the mountain of food and goods received. They were on top of every vehicle that arrived and started sorting the donations as quickly as possible.

“Scouting for Food” is one of the largest public service projects done by Colchester’s Scouts. Thank you all for helping us help others.

The Troops and Packs are always accepting new members. If your son or daughter (Cub Scout age 5-10) or son and daughter (Scout age 11-17) might be interested in Scouting, please contact me at letendrej@sbcglobal.net for more information. Also note that each Scout group has a Facebook page for your review in regards to recent programs, meeting times and membership information.

Alphonse Letendre – Colchester

An Open Invitation

To the Editor:

Our local elections are over but America’s national political events remain deeply disturbing. Every Thursday morning from 7:30 to 8:30 a.m. at the intersection of Main Street and Route 66 in Portland, 10-20 of us representing Portland and East Hampton (supported by the groups Take Action CT and CT River Huddle) have held a rally and waved signs in support of our democracy. Most drivers have supported us with honking horns and thumbs-up gestures. We have also been met with a few obscene gestures and shouts that we should “get a job” or “support Trump.”

As we, and the drivers who disagree with us, exercise our First Amendment rights to speak freely, we have also been asked how others might join us.

By this letter, we thank you for your support and invite all who are interested to join us on any Thursday.

The sense of urgency that brought us together five months ago has only been increasing.

Cynthia Tyler – Portland
Nancy Goodwin – Portland
Lesley Braren – East Hampton

Change Has Come

To the Residents of Colchester:

A few years ago, I resigned from the Republican Town Committee (RTC) and changed my party affiliation from Republican to Independent. I did this because the atmosphere and the conduct of the meetings was like a zoo. Two of the primary leaders at that time were conducting themselves in a manner that was not only unbecoming but incredibly immature. I was embarrassed about my association with them. It was my time to break away and reassess my support.

This past week I agreed to attend an RTC meeting based on the promise of change. I was more than pleasantly surprised. The current leaders conducted the meeting in a professional manner. It was nice to see some fresh faces and not the usual old adversarial “old guard.” I witnessed a group of people who dealt with their loss in the last election with class even though two of the “old guard” decided to try and subterfuge the Republican ticket by running for office separately because they were not endorsed by the RTC.

At the meeting, the members of the RTC were planning on how to change the direction of the party and convince the Town of Colchester that the Republicans are no longer a group characterized by chaos, but it is a party of responsible citizens who are willing to work hard to have their ideas come to fruition. Their future plans are to take decisive action to convince our townspeople that Republicans offer a responsible and clear alternative to the present administration. They plan to become a party that is not attempting to divide Colchester but to do their best to work in a Bi-Partisan manner to advance their vision for our town and unite all voters.

The Democratic leadership in our town can lead in a demonstration of bipartisanship by electing a Board of Finance member that the RTC recommends instead of looking for an “easy mark.” This would go a long way in uniting our town.

I am looking forward to the future of the RTC and my support of them.

Stephen Worley – Colchester

Backtracking

To the Editor:

In 2004, Hebron investigated acquiring M&M poultry, an old chicken farm on Burnt Hill Road. The land was beautiful and well located and the town promised voters ten acres for a brand-new Public Works facility. Ahh. Life was good. By Halloween 2005, the deal was done. This, as far as I know, was Plan A for a new PW. However, these ten acres failed as a proper location for a PW.

In June 2011, then-town manager Bonnie Therrien came up with plans to rebuild the PW on Old Colchester Rd, including the CL&P land. (Eversource). She was ready for funding, for the drawings, when hurricane Irene hit. The town lost power, Bonnie moved on and the PW sat unchanged. This was Plan B. Plan B was later resurrected by former town planner Michael O’Leary. In a letter, to the Public Building Committee, dated May 10, 2016, he too believed the facility could remain on OCR. But the town got side tracked by a Horton property, aka 17 Kinney Rd. Suddenly, Plan B faded and Plan C was born. However, on March 7, 2019, July 15, 2021 and Sept. 19, 2022 Hebron voters boldly protested Plan C, and rightly so.

Meanwhile, Hebron’s Public Building Committed investigated multiple alternate locations for the new PW. In September 2021 the PBC gave a presentation to the Town Council, posting the information at hebronct.com. Detailed information regarding 17 Kinney Rd, including expert testimony, can be found at SaveHebron-Center on Facebook. Turns out Plan C, the Horton property, Plan A, Burnt Hill, plus all the other properties, are too environmentally sensitive for a PW making OCR the most responsible location.

On Sept. 16, 2022, the *Rivereast* reported the PW Union paid Hebron a visit and gave stern warnings about the working conditions at this facility. Former head of PW, Kevin Kelly, also warned Hebron about working conditions.

Now we’re back to Plan B. The PBC, Department of Public Works Action Committee, residents, volunteers and town planners have been working on plans for decades. As of June 2023, Hebron looked into a bond for this project. See Estimated DPW Building Project Costs: June 2023 hebronct.com or send the DPWAC an email. The monthly costs, divided across Hebron households, over twenty years, might be more affordable than you think and well worth the effort to rebuild this facility responsibly.

#save17

Jean Tulimieri – Amston

ENTERTAINMENT

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Community & Senior Center Happenings

The Andover Community and Senior Center, located at 25 School Rd., 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.

Holiday Closing: The center will be closed Thanksgiving Day, Nov. 27, as well as the next day, Nov. 28.

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.

Weekly Programs: The senior center offers a variety of weekly programs, including: Yoga, Food Pantry Trips, Movie Mondays, Knitting, Wednesday Lunches (with bingo every other Wednesday), Sewing, Various Exercise Programs, and more. For a full schedule of all weekly offerings, contact the center.

Upcoming Special Events: Transportation available for all programs. For full event descriptions, call the senior center or see the on-line newsletter.

Shopping Trips: Tuesdays, 8:30 a.m. – to Wilimantic on Dec. 2, 16 and 30, and Manchester

on Nov. 25, Dec. 9 and Dec. 23. Contact Linda to reserve your ride.

New – Games Club: Thursdays, Dec. 4, 11 and 18, 3-4:30 p.m. Enjoy free games of chess or checkers with neighbors. All skill levels welcome.

Coffee & Crafts: Friday, Dec. 12, 12:30 p.m. Sign-up is necessary.

Art Class with Kim: Tuesday, Dec. 16, 6-8 p.m. Cost is \$35.

Town Hall Open House: Wednesday, Dec. 24, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Stop by Town Hall and visit with your new town clerk, Roberta Dougherty.

Travel In Time Club: Friday, Dec. 19. This free field trip – an intergenerational partnership with Andover Elementary School – is based on *Travel in Time in Connecticut*, by local author and teacher Dan Blanchard. Contact Grous to participate or for more information.

PAL Program: People Across Lifetimes: Wednesday, Dec. 17. This free intergenerational pen pal program brings seniors and students together for activities. Contact Grous to participate, reconnect with your pal, or for more information.

Hair Care with Helen: Mondays, Nov. 24 and Dec. 29, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Cost is \$20. Need a trim? Sign up for a dry haircut. Hair must be clean and dry before your appointment. Transportation is available if needed. Space is limited; call the center at 860-798-6862 to reserve your spot.



Welcome Back!... The Andover Friends of the Library executive board welcomes back Gretchen Stein (seated right) as the incoming membership & communications chair. Pictured from left are Lisa Kurtz, gardening & decorating chair, Amy Orlomoski, library director, Julie Victoria, vice-president and acting president, Jean Mamonas, secretary, Lisa Burke, treasurer and Janice Bazzani, outgoing membership chair. Photo by Janice Bazzani.

ENTERTAINMENT

Homework Club

A Homework Club for students in grades 6-10 will be offered Tuesdays, 3-4:30 p.m., from Nov. 25-Dec. 30, at the Andover Community and Senior Center, 25 School Rd. Students are invited to a free space to complete assignments, study and build strong habits. Staff and volunteers will be on hand. Consent forms are required. Call the center for more information, at 860-798-6862.



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At their Oct. 28 meeting, the Marlborough Lions officially inducted a new member – Doug Zybrands. Pictured from left are Lions Vice District Governor Dave Boilard, Global Membership Chair Kathy Randal, Zybrands, and Past President Lion Megan Lloyd.

Lions Welcome New Member

At their Oct. 28 meeting, the Marlborough Lions officially inducted a new member. Lions Vice District Governor Dave Boilard and Global Membership Chair Kathy Randall conducted the ceremony as the Lions welcomed new member Doug Zybrands to the Club. Zybrands was sponsored by Marlborough Lions Past President Megan Lloyd. The Marlborough Lions provide many local

services including vision screening of elementary school students, collection of used eyeglasses and they also support local services like the Marlborough Food Bank. Anyone interested in joining the Marlborough Lions should call club President Jean Paul Bolduc at 860-798-2054 or secretary Ken Hjulstrom at 860-490-9116. New members are always welcome.

Holiday Open House at Thrift Shop

Second Blessings Thrift Shop, located at Marlborough Congregational Church, 35 South Main St., will hold its annual Holiday Open House during Thanksgiving weekend – Friday, Nov. 28, from noon to 3 p.m. and Saturday, Nov. 29 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Light refreshments will be served, along with a free drawing. Everything Christmas and winter will fill tables and shelves, all priced to sell. Items include jewelry, hand-

bags, small furniture, children’s books and toys, baking, decorating, gift-giving and more. Second Blessings gift certificates will also be available. The shop will be open Fridays from noon-3 p.m. and Saturdays from 10 a.m.-1 p.m., through Dec. 20. The shop will reopen Feb. 6, 2026. The shop accepts donations during shopping hours. Second Blessings sell year-round through eBay at bit.ly/MCCebay.

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★ *Affordable Housing, cont. from page 1* will become more affordable.”

State Rep. Mark DeCaprio (R-48), whose district includes Colchester, also opposed the bill. He voted against it, and, like Weir, had problems with both substance and process.

“The House received a 104-page, 53-section bill roughly an hour before special session – an unacceptable way to make lasting policy,” he said.

DeCaprio added he had heard significant concerns from municipal leaders about losing local decision-making power and said the bill “shifts too much authority from municipalities to the state, imposing one size fits all mandates that don’t reflect local conditions.”

DeCaprio argued that while Connecticut needs more housing, the state must pursue it collaboratively. He said the bill “tilts decisively toward state control,” adding that it narrows municipal discretion and adds processes that may increase costs.

DeCaprio said he anticipates challenges particularly for rural towns, noting that converting commercial properties to residential may have ripple effects such as “more students in local schools, added pressure on water, sewer and public safety.”

He concluded that the bill should not have been taken up in special session, saying, “I did not support this legislation and do not think this is a good approach for the 48th District and the State of Connecticut.”

State Sen. MD Rahman (D-4), whose district includes Andover, offered full support for the legislation and voted to adopt. Rahman emphasized the state’s obligation to address its housing shortage.

“I’ve long said we have a moral obligation to ensure Connecticut has enough homes to meet the needs of families in every community,” he said. He pointed to both economic and humanitarian concerns, noting that high housing costs limit business growth and workforce availability.

Rahman said HB 8002 “moves us forward by setting clear expectations for housing growth, lowering barriers to building near transit, and providing incentives for creating new homes.”

Rahman challenged the idea that the bill undermines local authority, saying it “enables towns and cities to grow in the manner that best

suits their communities.” He described the legislation as balancing statewide goals with local flexibility, allowing municipalities to plan individually or regionally.

As towns begin implementation, Rahman said he expects urgency to be the biggest challenge. Citing a recent survey conducted by the housing advocacy group, the Regional Plan Association (RPA), he said “nearly 90% of residents believe the state must do more on housing,” adding that communities will be under pressure to move quickly.

At the local level, Planning and Zoning Commission officials shared the viewpoint of small-town practicality. Andover PZC chair Jed Larson, a Republican, said he had not yet reviewed the full bill but said its effects were clear.

“Of course the bill will affect the town’s ability to control local zoning decisions. That’s the point of the bill,” he said.

Larson expressed concern about a one-size-fits-all approach and noted that the new mandates will require more support from a town planner, a cost he hopes can be offset with grants. Larson said Andover faces challenges including lack of sewers, public water and transportation, and said development interest is limited. He said the issue is “way too complicated ... to respond to before the ink is dry.”

In Hebron, selectman Keith Petit, a Republican, offered one of the most forceful critiques. “HB 8002 covers a lot,” he said, adding that the bill’s complexity “speaks to the fact that it isn’t good legislation.”

Petit said the bill forces towns into burdensome planning mandates and creates financial risk, describing it as “a continuation of years of state mandates and executive overreach from Hartford.” He said the new requirements will strain volunteer boards and create pressure to accept development that may not align with local needs, noting that high-density projects could “increase our tax burden rather than relieving it.”

Despite disagreements, all officials acknowledged the importance of addressing housing needs – but differed sharply on whether HB 8002 achieves that goal. For now, towns across the region are preparing for the significant planning, coordination and regulatory work the bill will require in the years ahead.

From the Superintendent’s Desk

As we embark upon the FY27 budget development process, the Marlborough Public School System remains steadfast in its commitment to educating the whole child. With this as its charge, the Board of Education prepares an annual operating budget which supports students, programs, and professional development as outlined in the MES Strategic Continuous Improvement Plan. You can read the full plan under the About Our School tab on the school district website, www.marlborough.k12.ct.us.

The Marlborough School District has demonstrated an excellent return-on-investment. Marlborough has one of the lowest Per Pupil Expenditures in its Demographic Reference Group (DRG-C, 28th out of 30 in spending) and among all PreK-6 school districts statewide (14th out of 16 in spending) while being one of the highest performing PreK-6 districts (4th out of 16). In 2024-2025, MES earned its highest score on the state’s Next Generation Accountability Report and was designated a School of Distinction.

With the support of Marlborough citizens and through an outstanding staff, we have successfully implemented a model Literacy Program which is resulting in notable student outcomes. We have also consistently had impressive performance in Mathematics. Our revitalized K-6 STEAM program is capturing students’ enthusiasm, inquisitiveness and problem-solving skills. Extracurricular activities expand opportunities for children to explore interests. There were 14 clubs last year with 118 participants, including Invention Convention and Future Problem Solvers. Fifty-two students participated in the Invention Convention with three students advancing to the state finals. Our Future Problem Solvers advanced to the State Bowl, collaborating to analyze global issues.

While the school district’s operating budget increase is consistently one of the lowest in the state (five-year average budget increase of 3.37%), the school district and town are aware that there are significant capital investments for the school building on the horizon, which will involve the community’s attention. It has been over 20 years since the school was renovated, and professional studies indicate that critical infrastructure (roof) and mechanical systems (HVAC and electric) are beyond their functional lives and require “major alterations” (vs. a “renovation”). The facility studies and a summary draft of next-steps are posted under the Facility tab of the school district website. The Board of Education is prepared to collaborate with a Public Building Committee, to be appointed by the town, so that these projects can be planned for in a thoughtful, cost-effective manner.

We encourage the public to attend Board of Education meetings (dates are posted under the Board of Education tab of the school district website), in person or virtually (link is found on the meeting agendas posted under the BOE tab), particularly prior to the drafting of the FY27 budget. You can provide input through the two opportunities for public comment during BOE meetings. The initial proposed operating budget and capital request will be considered by the Board of Education at its meetings in January (January 22 and 29). Deliberations with the Board of Finance take place in February and March before the Board of Education budget, as part of the town budget, is forwarded to town budget hearings and referendum.

Holly Hageman
Marlborough Superintendent of Schools

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.stjfishchurch.org.

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. 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 website.

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.

12 Days of Holiday Cheer Annual Silent Auction: The Friends of the Richmond Memorial Library are holding their annual holiday silent auction from Friday, Nov. 21, through Monday, Dec. 8. Outside of their membership campaign, this is the library’s single largest fundraiser and proceeds help the library pay for programming and to purchase new materials or add items to its library of Things. Some items in this year’s auction include a Beem Light Sauna gift card for a five-session package, ticket vouchers for theater performances, gift cards to local restaurants, themed gift baskets, and more.

Dungeons and Dragons Fungeon: Tweens and teens (ages 10-16) are invited to enjoy a single-session *Dungeons & Dragons* game on Mondays, Nov. 24, Dec. 8 and Dec. 22, at 5 p.m. All supplies provided but you will need a Level 4 character (made using 2014 rules). If you do not have one, the library will have some prepared for you to choose from.

Medicare Updates, Changes, and Benefits: Come and learn the ins and outs of Medicare and the differences between original Medicare and Medicare Advantage with Mark Macrina, a local insurance agent, on Wednesday, Dec. 3, at 3 p.m. or 6 p.m. This is strictly an informational seminar, and no individual health will be discussed.

American Job Center: Tuesday, Dec. 2, 5-7 p.m. The American Job Center will offer drop-in (no appointments needed) assistance with

Ministry, Social and Parish Community Events: An adult choir practices weekly; 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. 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.stjfishchurch.org, or look for the church on Facebook (Saint John Fisher Roman Catholic Church).

resumes, job search assessment, career coaching, computer literacy, mock interviews, and on-the-job training programs.

Yule Celebration: Yule is almost here and Rachel, the Replanted Witch, will help celebrate the season Saturday, Dec. 13 at 11 a.m. Hear the story of the Ivy King and the Holly King, make your own Yule log to take home, and create pine cone bird seed offerings to hang outside to honor nature. This program is for teens and adults.

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.

Nutcracker Wonder Dance: Ages 3-6 are invited for a dance adventure with Little Leaps Dance on Wednesday, Dec. 10, at 2 p.m. Using the *Nutcracker* story for inspiration, dancers will learn ballet skills, participate in movement activities, and explore their creativity.

Pajama Storytime with Yoga: Thursday, Dec. 18, at 6 p.m., for children of all ages. Enjoy a couple stories and then practice some calming yoga. Wear comfy pajamas and bring your favorite stuffed animal or blanket.

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.

Read to the Dogs: Monday, Dec. 15, 6-7 p.m. Young readers are invited to come in and read to a certified Reading Education Assistance Dog. Register for a 15-minute time slot to secure your child’s spot. Limit two children per time window (one per dog).

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Honoring the Flag in Marlborough

By Toriana Williams

For many Marlborough residents, the American flag is more than a symbol of the nation - it represents sacrifice, service and a shared sense of community. Local leaders are reminding residents of the importance of proper flag etiquette and the respectful retirement of flags that are no longer in proper condition.

Board of Finance member and longtime Marlborough resident Ken Hjulstrom says that while he strives to follow flag protocol meticulously, he is not perfect.

“I will admit that I am personally delinquent when it comes to one aspect of flag etiquette when it comes to leaving the flag out overnight,” he said. “When flown overnight, the flag should be illuminated, but I need to add a light to comply with doing so.”

Still, Hjulstrom is unwavering about the importance of keeping the American flag in good condition. “One area that I am [adamant] about is ensuring that flags are maintained in good condition,” he said. “Whenever a flag begins to

tatter or is extremely faded, it should be ‘retired’ in [an] honorable manner.”

Locally, the Marlborough American Legion accepts worn or damaged flags and performs ceremonial flag retirement ceremonies. “The American Legion in Marlborough will accept flags and periodically conducts a ceremonial burning, which is one of the most appropriate ways to honorably dispose of old flags,” Hjulstrom explained.

He said he often reaches out when he sees a flag in disrepair – including recently at a local business. “When I see a flag that is in disrepair, I am driven to bring the matter to the attention of the owner,” he said.

Many people, he noted, are not aware that flying a tattered or faded flag is itself disrespectful. “I would encourage others to bring the issue to their attention so that they will be made aware of the need to honor our flag,” he said.

For Hjulstrom, honoring the flag is personal. “I still have my father’s flag, which was presented to my mother when he passed away in



Longtime resident Ken Hjulstrom recently discussed with the *Rivereast* the importance of proper flag etiquette. Hjulstrom still has the flag of his father, a World War II veteran who passed away in 1968.

Congregational Church News & Notes

Sunday Worship at Marlborough Congregational Church, located at 35 South Main St., is held at 10 a.m. The service is also broadcast live every Sunday at mcc.marlconchurch.org and recorded for later viewing. Church pastor is the Rev. Valerie Seaver.

Childcare for infants and toddlers is provided downstairs in the nursery but children are always welcome at the worship service. Sunday school is open to all children in the community for children ages 3 through grade 8. Contact Elizabeth Kukich at ekukich@marlconchurch.org for more information.

Nov. 23 is Thanksgiving Sunday. The service will be led by Pastor Seaver with her sermon titled, “Our Wounded King.” The Chancel Choir will perform, singing “For All the Blessings of the Year.”

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.

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/MC-Cebay.

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. Donations can also be made through the church website, or mailed to the church at P.O. Box 57, Marlborough, CT 06447. For more information on the church or its programs, call Seaver’s direct line at 860-295-0432, email her at pastorval@marlconchurch.org, or contact the church office at office@marlconchurch.org.

1968,” he said. “The flag is proudly displayed in a wooden case. My father served as a SeaBee in the South Pacific during WWII.”

Guidance From the VFW

Commander Donald Butler, who leads the Marlborough VFW/American Legion Post 197, offered additional guidance on how residents should properly display and retire their flags.

When it comes to outdoor display, the commander stressed a key requirement: “If you fly it outside, you need to have a light on it at night.”

For those who hang flags indoors, Butler noted a common mistake involving the placement of the “union” – the blue field of stars. “If you’re displaying it on the wall, the union is on the left-hand upper corner, top left,” he said.

A flag must be retired once its condition begins to deteriorate. “If it’s tattered at all ... people would then bring them in,” Butler said. Stains, burns or any other damage also mean a flag should no longer be flown. “If it’s not in

prime condition, they shouldn’t be flying it.”

The local VFW and American Legion collect worn flags year-round. “People bring them down here and we collect them for a while, and then we bring them to the incinerator,” Butler explained. Ceremonial retirements also occur. “We ... end up just having a memorial service ... like when we put up a new flag or something like that.”

Butler, a veteran himself, emphasized the deeper meaning behind these practices. When asked about the importance of flying the American flag, he simply said: “Our vets did a lot for this country and we deserve the respect, and we respect the flag.”

Where to Bring Flags

Residents with worn, faded or damaged flags can bring them to American Legion Post 197 on South Main Street. Flags are collected for proper disposal and occasional ceremonial retirement.

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.

Holiday Closings

Marlborough Town Hall, Senior Center, and Public Works will be closed on Thursday and Friday, Nov. 27 and 28, for the Thanksgiving holiday.

American Legion Auxiliary Holiday Craft Fair

American Legion Post 197 in Marlborough, located at 128 East Hampton Rd. (Route 66), will host a Holiday craft fair Saturday, Nov. 29, from 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

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

Local Student Provides Peer Mentoring

Lauren Fenton of Marlborough is helping fellow students succeed as a peer mentor at the Emmanuel College School of Nursing.

As a peer mentor, Fenton provides support and guidance for at least one first- or second-year student. Participants also receive support from the faculty peer-mentoring team.

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Gathering on the Green!

The town’s annual Gathering on the Green celebration will be Saturday, Dec. 6, from 4:30-6:30 p.m. All are invited to this festive night celebrating the holiday season.

The gathering will feature a lighted fire truck parade, tree lighting, pictures with Santa, refreshments, music and a fireworks display. Rain date is Sunday, Dec. 7. A collection box will be available for anyone wishing to donate non-perishable food items to the food bank.

The Marlborough Volunteer Fire Department has started a GoFundMe page for residents wishing to donate to the fireworks show. Checks can also be mailed to: MVFD, P.O.Box 237, Marlborough, CT 06447.

Event timeline: 4:30-5 p.m., holiday music, refreshments, snacks; 5-5:15 p.m., Lighted Fire Truck Parade and arrival of Santa; 5:15 p.m., Santa lights tree; 5:15-6:15 p.m., pictures with Santa and Christmas carols with the RHAM choir; 6:15 p.m., Fireworks.

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Local family band Key of H will perform at Marlborough Arts Center tonight, Nov. 21.

Key of H Concert at Arts Center

The local family band Key of H will perform 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.

‘Key of H’ has been making music together for several decades now. You might even say that it is in their blood because they are a local family band from Marlborough. Emma, Owen, Lucy and Rosie, alongside their dad Jim Henderschedt, have spent many summer nights entertaining on the patio at Sadler’s, singing in local talent shows, and lending their voices to church choirs.

While the kids in the band have grown and scattered throughout the U.S., Jim has continued to create music with his local friends Paul Kriksciun on guitar and Janice Reska on piano. This musical threesome (“The Funraisers”) has brought laughter, smiles and creative musical

memories to the patio at Sadler’s, Shop Two Coffee, and other local venues.

Still, it is always a treat when the Henderschedt ‘kids are back in town’ to join right back in where they left off.

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.marlbrougharts.org or email info@marlbrougharts.org or 860-467-6353 for more information.

Children’s Holiday Christmas Party

American Legion Post 197 in Marlborough, located at 128 East Hampton Rd. (Route 66), will hold its annual Children’s Holiday Party and lunch with Santa Sunday, Dec. 14, from noon-2 p.m.

Children up to 10 years old are invited to come for cookie decorating, face-painting, pizza, and a gift from Santa. Come and have a free

photo taken with Santa.

All attendees are asked to bring a non-perishable food item to be donated to Marlborough food Bank.

If you plan to attend, call the post at 860-295-7810 with the age and number of children no later than Dec. 13.

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.

Upcoming Watercolor Classes at Arts Center

Marlborough Arts Center, located at 231 N. Main St., will offer a new pair of watercolor classes on Saturday, Dec. 6.

The first class will be an Intro to Watercolor running from 2-5 p.m. This is a class for a beginner or slightly more experienced painter. Demonstration of watercolor techniques and emphasis on brush strokes in painting a peace bird and flowers using reference photos can be turned into greeting cards or just be a nice painting.

The second class, Watercolor and Illustration, will also be held on Saturday, Dec. 6, 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 and brush techniques. Using graphic illustration, a peace bird and/or tulips will provide fun ways to learn to use the tip of the brush. These paintings can also be turned into greeting cards.

Both classes are tough by Marika Hahn, an illustrator from New York City who creates nature inspired art with watercolor. To see examples of her work, go to Marikahahn.com

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

Planning Underway for Local Celebration Of America’s 250th Anniversary

Next year, 2026, will mark 250 years since the signing of the Declaration of Independence stating the desire of the colonists to break away from England and become an independent country. Thus, this denotes the country’s semiquincentennial anniversary. In recognition of this milestone, communities across the nation are developing plans for their own celebrations, and Marlborough is doing the same.

A core group of volunteers have met a few times to begin the planning. They are: Mark Paul (a member of the Economic Development Commission), Deb Bourbeau (Board of Selectmen), Romano Ghirlanda (Marlborough Preservation Society), Aubrey Muscaro (Richmond Memorial Library), Christi Moraga (Commission on Diversity and Equity), Wayne Seidel (Marlborough Jr. Ancient Fife & Drum Corps), and Louise Concodello (Board of Selectmen, Board of Education, Nature Trails & Sidewalks Commission, Parks & Recreation Commission).

as well as civic groups and residents. Businesses will have the opportunity to become a Gold, Silver, or Bronze sponsor, and each contributing business will have a sign in their window or in their establishment recognizing their level of support. A Gold sponsor requires a donation of \$250. The other sponsorships, Silver and Bronze, require a \$150 and \$100 donation, respectively. Information will be forthcoming as to how to donate as a business, a civic group, or an individual shortly.

Many others have volunteered to be of help as well, such as representatives from Marlborough Elementary School (MES), Commission on Aging (COA), Cemetery Committee, Fire Department, American Legion, Planning Commission, Parks & Rec, and Sustainable CT.

Also, plans are being developed to tie in additional information and a “Calendar of Events” on the Marlborough Preservation Society website, marlbroughhistory.org.

Other places to find information include the *Rivereast* newspaper, the Senior Center/Park and Rec newsletter, and the Richmond Memorial Library e-newsletters (if you’re a subscriber).

The committee is discussing different activities that would be offered and is looking at a timeline for events. These events will be spread out over a few months, and the committee aims to have a variety of activities for all age groups.

The plans include four themes established by the America 250 CT Commission as well as strategies for programming, signature events, community engagement, fundraising, and the official campaign logo.

The four themes are: Tell Inclusive Stories: find stories that were previously untold or under-told so all Connecticut residents can see themselves reflected in the nation’s 250-year history; Power of Place: embrace the unique identities and contributions of communities throughout Connecticut before, during, and after the revolutionary period; Doing History: explore the history of Connecticut’s role in the development of our nation – its people, sites, and historic context; and For the Common Good: embrace civic engagement and continue work of shaping communities, the state and the nation around the democratic ideals outlined in the founding documents.

Fundraising is a major issue, and the committee is looking for help from local businesses

Some possible activities include the following:

- A pontoon parade - decorate your pontoon to show your American pride and dress for the occasion.
- A kayak, canoe, and paddleboard parade (separate from the pontoon parade) - decorate your water craft as well as yourself.
- Historic reenactments – see characters from the past at various sites around town and possibly neighboring communities to learn about our history.
- School assembly – learn about the Revolutionary War from special guests.
- Community assembly – another learning situation for all ages.
- Marlborough’s Top Dog competition: enter your dog to be judged by a panel of residents – take home the Top Dog prize (entry fee will be assessed).
- Richmond Library programs: starting in February, look for information about programs being offered by Richmond Library.
- Parade: the committee is hoping to be able to plan and offer a parade – and said help will be needed with this activity.
- Games and activities at Blish Park: the committee said it will see what the Parks and Recreation Department comes up with. Maybe the evening of July 4th there could be a fire pit for people to make your own toasted marshmallow or S’mores, music in the pavilion, and more.
- Activity Passport: get your passport stamped at the various venues and programs, and then submit it for a chance to win a special prize.
- The possibility of a Marlborough Celebrates America 250 music composition by a local composer
 - Fife and drum presentations.

All are invited to attend the committee’s planning meetings. Information can be found at www.marlbroughct.net. From the home screen, select the “Agendas and Minutes” Icon and then scroll down until you find the “America 250 – 2025” folder. In the folder, you will see all of the meeting agendas and meeting minutes or action/event tracking updates for this committee. Additionally, in the agenda files, you will find a Google Folders link which will provide you with access to all of the information that was provided to the committee members for reference and/or discussion during meetings.

Parks and Rec. Programs

Marlborough Parks & Recreation has announced the following. For full program descriptions or to register, visit www.marlbroughct.gov. For more information, call 860-295-6203.

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.

Pickleball: Wednesdays and Thursdays, 9-11 a.m., at the Blish Park tennis courts. No fee for this program.

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.

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@marlbroughct.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. **Holiday Closings:** The center will be closed Thursday and Friday, Nov. 27 and 28, in observance of Thanksgiving.

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.

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).

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

Technology Assistance: Thursday, Dec. 4, 9 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.

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.

Sweet Picks – Free Bakery Items: Monday and Tuesday mornings, local grocery stores donate bakery items (breads, desserts, etc.); delivery is between 8:30 and 9 a.m., Come take a look and take, in moderation, what you need. For senior center members only

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.

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.marlbroughct.gov, for the complete Transportation Policy. There will be no transportation Tuesday Nov. 25.

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Town Council Back to Business After Local Elections

By Anne Lilburn

East Hampton’s Town Council met on Nov. 12 for its first regular meeting since local elections – and a variety of topics were touched upon.

The meeting started off with public comments that included an update from Ryan Baldassario of the Brownfields Redevelopment Agency. Baldassario told the council that the agency was down to four properties that it was managing, and noted that the state Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) had funding available for green spaces that might be appropriate for properties in town.

In particular, he noted that the property at 3 Walnut Ave., a “grassy area” near the fire pump house, might be appropriate for redevelopment into a publicly accessible space. He said that the agency had worked with UCONN’s TAB (Technical Assistance to Brownfields) program to develop mockups of potential projects.

Council member Jack Solomon, a Democrat, said he wanted to compliment and commend the agency for its work, and acknowledged the difficulty of the task. Council member Rich Knotek, also a Democrat, asked whether there would be a formal public presentation of any plans for the public, and Baldassario said that there would be.

The council also heard a request from Town Manager David Cox to transfer unanticipated town revenues to the Board of Education to ac-

count for additional costs not in their budget, including special education costs and utilities. In addition, Cox explained that the Board of Education was looking to cover costs related to replacing a boiler at Memorial School. Cox explained that the boiler was over 30 years old and past its expected life.

Council member Ted Hintz, a Republican, said he wanted to know why the boiler hadn’t originally been accounted for in the Board of Education’s budget, given its age and expected life. He expressed frustration that other less critical items on the budget had been funded, while the boiler was not, and said he wished it had been planned for originally so that the department would not have to come and ask for additional funding.

Later, Cox presented information about a tax-exempt lease for a belt press at the Colchester-East Hampton Water Pollution Control Facilities. The joint facilities provide wastewater treatment services for East Hampton, Colchester, Hebron, Marlborough and Lebanon, and users in member towns pay rates that fund the services.

Hintz expressed concern that East Hampton taxpayers would be on the hook while other communities would not be, but he was reassured that users paid fees to use the system, and that those fees would be covering the cost. In

that respect, Cox likened the town’s role in the lease to that of a cosigner. The council approved the use of a lease to finance the belt press purchase.

The council also heard from Police Chief Dennis Woessner, who updated the council on some changes to the police department’s general orders on both use of force and use of body-worn and dashboard cameras. These changes were made in order to keep the department compliant with the Police Officer Standards and Training Council’s (POSTC) guidance.

With regards to the use-of-force guidelines, the chief said the changes were made due to a specific Taser model, which was classified as a firearm, and therefore required an investigation by the Office of the Chief State’s Attorney Inspector General if deployed. The updated order clarifies that a discharge by an “electronic defense weapon” such as the Taser 10 no longer requires an investigation by that state department, though Woessner did state that an inci-

dent involving the use of such a weapon would still be investigated, just not by that department.

The department also changed its official guidance concerning the use of dashboard cameras to account for situations, including domestic violence incidents or incidents involving minors, where victims may request that an officer turn off their camera. The new official policy will allow for officers to turn off cameras if it is requested by victims.

Last week was the first regular meeting of the Town Council since Election Day – but it had held a brief organizational meeting Wednesday, Nov. 5, at which the newly elected and reelected council members were sworn in.

Also at that meeting, Democrat Dean Markham was reelected council chair, and Solomon was named vice chair.

The next Town Council meeting will take place Nov. 25.

Parks and Rec News & Notes

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

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.
Twinkle & Spice Water Candle Kit Workshop: At Town Hall Thursday, Dec. 4, from 5-7:30 p.m. During the Belltown Holiday Market, stop by the craft table to create your own glowing water candle filled with citrus, star anise, cinnamon sticks, pine greenery and festive berries. Pre-registration is required. Cost is \$10.
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 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.
Holiday Build A Puppy Stuffy: Tuesday, Dec. 2, 3:30-4:30 p.m. Make your very own cuddly stuffed pup that barks. Cost is \$30.

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. **Holiday Closings:** The library will be closed Thursday, Nov. 27 and Friday, Nov. 28 due to the Thanksgiving holiday.

All Ages: Village Center Gingerbread House Contest: Winners will receive amazing prizes from local businesses. Drop off your gingerbread house at the library any time during normal hours from Dec. 1-6. Then vote for your favorite house between Dec. 8-19. Prize winners will be announced on Dec. 20 at 2:30 p.m. Open to all ages; check the library website for contest rules.

Jingle Bell Parade: Friday, Dec. 5, 4:30 p.m. Enjoy tunes from the East Hampton High School Jazz Band, sip hot cocoa from the Friends of the Library, snack on cookies from Parks & Rec, and write your letter to Santa. At 5:15 p.m., follow Santa downtown for the annual Christmas tree-lighting on the green. East Hampton Social Services will be collecting donations of new, stocking-stuffer sized items at the event.

Adult Programs: Cookbook Club: Tuesday, Dec. 2, 6:30 p.m. This month’s theme is Cookie Swap. Bring one to two dozen of your favorite cookies, and 12 copies of the recipe to share. Food should arrive ready to eat; the library will

provide the plates and forks. Register or drop in.

Teen Programs: Crochet with Kerri: Grades 5-12: Tuesday, Dec. 9, 6 p.m. Gather together in the Teen Space each month to create a tiny crochet project. All supplies and basic instruction included.

Children’s Programs: 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.

Lego at the Library – Winter Edition: Grades K-6: Tuesday, Dec. 2, 4:30-5:30 p.m. Help yourself to the materials provided and build a winter-inspired creation. The library will display the final creations in its display case for those who are interested.

Family Gingerbread House Decorating!: Saturday, Dec. 6, 10:30 a.m.-noon. Work together as a family to build and decorate a gingerbread house. Take it home with you after the program or leave it at the library to enter it into the Village Center Gingerbread House Contest. All supplies provided; one house per family. Registration is required, but, once registered, families can drop in anytime between 10:30 a.m. and noon to participate. Please register just one member of your family; your registration covers the whole group.

KENNETH BARBER & ASSOCIATES, LLC



Kenneth Barber, Esq.



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Joseph Cassidy, Esq.

YOUR ATTORNEYS

“Some family trees bear an enormous crop of nuts.”
—Wayne Huizenga

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The Joe Andruzzi Foundation (JAF) recently held a fundraising event at Rule of 3 Brewing in East Hampton, to benefit cancer patients. Pictured are Joe and Jen Andruzzi of JAF with cancer patient recipient Chris Gergovich of Newtown (far right) and his wife Amy.

Event at Brewery Raises Funds for Cancer Patients

The Joe Andruzzi Foundation (JAF), which offers financial support to New England cancer patients and their families through crucial financial support, hosted a ‘Hop Over’ event at Rule of 3 Brewing in East Hampton on Nov. 13. The event featured craft beer, food by Littleman’s Texas BBQ, an auction, and live music by Jeff Przech. The night raised \$16,000. The proceeds benefited the Joe Andruzzi Foundation. Since its founding in 2008, the foundation, which was founded by former New

England Patriot Joe Andruzzi, has granted over \$14 million to more than 47,000 cancer patients across New England to help ease the pressure of household expenses, food, transportation, extraordinary needs, and wellness resources while undergoing treatment. In 2024 alone, JAF distributed more than \$1.2 million in direct assistance to help more than 8,100 patients and their families throughout New England, including nearly \$150,000 in Connecticut.

Shop locally, support businesses in our town on Small Business Saturday - and all season.

RE11-21-25

The East Hampton Economic Development Commission

Police News

11/8: After an investigation into a vandalism complaint at the East Hampton Public Library parking lot that occurred on Nov. 1, Ethan Pitts, 18, of Killingworth, was arrested and charged with third-degree criminal mischief, East Hampton Police said.

11/8: A 16-year-old juvenile and a 17-year-old juvenile were arrested and charged with third-degree criminal mischief, police said.

11/11: Jameson O’Neill, 38, of East Hampton,

was arrested and charged with illegal possession of a large capacity magazine, police said.

11/15: Michael Bower, 28, of East Hampton, was arrested and charged with disorderly conduct, interfering with an officer and third-degree criminal mischief, police said.

From Nov. 10-16, officers responded to 15 medical calls, three motor vehicle crashes and two alarms, and made seven traffic stops, police said.

Ag Science & Tech Program

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. 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.middletownschoools.org/o/mhs/page/ag-sci.

Save with HeatSmart

This week, residents of East Hampton will be receiving a letter from Town Manager David Cox encouraging participation in the town’s HeatSmart 2025-26 program. HeatSmart promotes energy assessments, weatherization and other energy-saving upgrades, benefiting small businesses and residential homeowners and renters in cities and towns across the state, including over 20 environmental justice communities. “Signing up for the energy assessment is the key that opens the door,” said Cox. “By improving energy efficiency within the home, residents who participate usually receive hundreds of dollars in energy saving measures, and go on to save hundreds of dollars per year after participating. Residents who participate may not only save money, but may also find their homes much more comfortable.” Russ Kaplan, chairman of the East Hampton Clean Energy Task Force, noted another benefit.

“Our partner contractors, Lantern Energy and New England Smart Energy Group, will contribute \$25 for each assessment they complete here in our Town to the East Hampton Food Bank,” he said. “I hope to see vigorous participation, and a good deal of money for this critical lifeline to so many of our neighbors.” East Hampton, in partnership with the Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments (RiverCOG), the towns of Chester, Deep River and Portland, have been awarded a Community Partnership Initiative grant by the sponsors of Energize Connecticut SM, Eversource and Avangrid, Inc. subsidiaries Connecticut Natural Gas and Southern Connecticut Gas. East Hampton has also partnered with The Rockfall Foundation in this effort. Visit [HeatSmartCT.org/East Hampton](https://HeatSmartCT.org/East-Hampton) for more information, or call 877-878-3006 (be sure to mention HeatSmart).

Senior Center News & Notes

East Hampton Senior Center, 105 Main St., announces the following. **Registration is required for all programs** unless noted; register at myactivecenter.com or by contacting the center at 860-267-4426 or seniorcenter@easthamptonct.gov. Senior center hours are Monday-Thursday, 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m.; Friday, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Visit www.easthamptonct.gov/east-hampton-senior-center for more information and a list of regular weekly and monthly activities, including games, quilting, Bible study, monthly men’s and women’s groups, and more.

Closing: The Senior Center will be closed to members Nov. 21 through 30 and Dec. 1 for the new carpet installation.

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.

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;

Library Friends Book Fair All are invited to join the Friends of the East Hampton Public Library at Rule of 3 Brewing, 201 West High St., on Saturday, Dec. 13, from 2-5 p.m., for a curated used book fair. The Friends will sell books in like-new condition and other fun swag. Beverages will be available for purchase from the brewery, with a discount available for those who show their library card at the bar. For more information, email friendsofephpl@gmail.com.

stop by the senior center to complete and submit the form.

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 Hartford, followed by lunch on your own at the Legislative Office Building and a visit from state Rep. Irene Haines (R-34). Cost is a \$4 bus donation.

White Christmas the Musical at the Goodspeed Opera House: Thursday, Dec. 4, departing the Senior Center at 1 p.m. for a 2 p.m. matinee. Cost is \$70 for the ticket and bus donation. Register in person.

Painting with the East Hampton High School Art Club: Thursday, Dec. 11 departing the Senior Center, at 2:15 p.m. Join the art club members and their teacher for a group session on landscape painting. No painting experience needed. \$4 bus donation requested.

Volunteer Opportunities: Volunteers are needed to answer phones and grocery shop for senior center members. Stop by the center Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., to fill out the volunteer form. Call 860-267-4426 for more information.

Handel’s Messiah Concert

The Second Congregational Church of Middle Haddam at 52 Middle Haddam Rd. will host the annual Handel’s Messiah Concert, presented by the New England Chamber Choir, on Sunday, Nov. 30, at 4 p.m. The concert is open to the public and admission is a free will offering. Light refreshments will directly follow in the handicapped-accessible lower hall.

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:** 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.

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.

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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.

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 participating.

Celebration Coffee Hour: A special coffee hour will be held to celebrate the end of the Stewardship drive after the worship service on Nov. 23.

Thanksgiving Baskets: Food items for the four Thanksgiving baskets are due Nov. 23.

Christmas Gifts for Children in Need: The Missions Team is coordinating with the church's Covenant to Care-matched DCF social worker to provide gifts for ten children on their caseload this Christmas. See the sign-up sheet in the Parish Hall to sign up to help a local child.

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

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 wrapped.

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

Choir: Vocal Choir rehearses Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. Bell Choir rehearses Wednesdays at 5 p.m. New members are always welcome.

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

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.hn-covenantchurch.org.

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. Early Bird Bonanza will be at 6:20 p.m., with regular game play starting at 6:30 p.m. There will be a progressive jackpot and cash prizes.

The Auxiliary Café will be open before games and during intermission, offering hot snacks.

Turkey Shoot This Sunday

The Belltown Sportsman's Club will hold a Turkey Shoot 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.

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.



Goodreau Tidings and Joy.... Joe Goodreau, the owner of Lost Spring Farm in East Hampton, was featured on Channel 3 News where he discussed the upcoming holiday season. The farm, located at 26 Daly Road, allows you to cut your own Christmas tree and opens on Black Friday (Nov. 28) and will be open every Saturday and Sunday until Dec. 21. Hours of operation are 9 a.m. until dark.

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.

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.

Featured Artist for This Month: Longtime East Hampton resident Betsy Stickley Rich. Rich holds two associate's degrees in commercial art and fine art from Middlesex Community College and a Bachelor of Science in Graphic Design from Charter Oak College. Her subjects include nature, landscapes, and animals. She paints with oil and watercolors.

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, Dec. 6 and 17, 6-9 p.m., for all ages and skill levels welcome; lessons available. For

more information, contact pjhoffman1@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.

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.

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.

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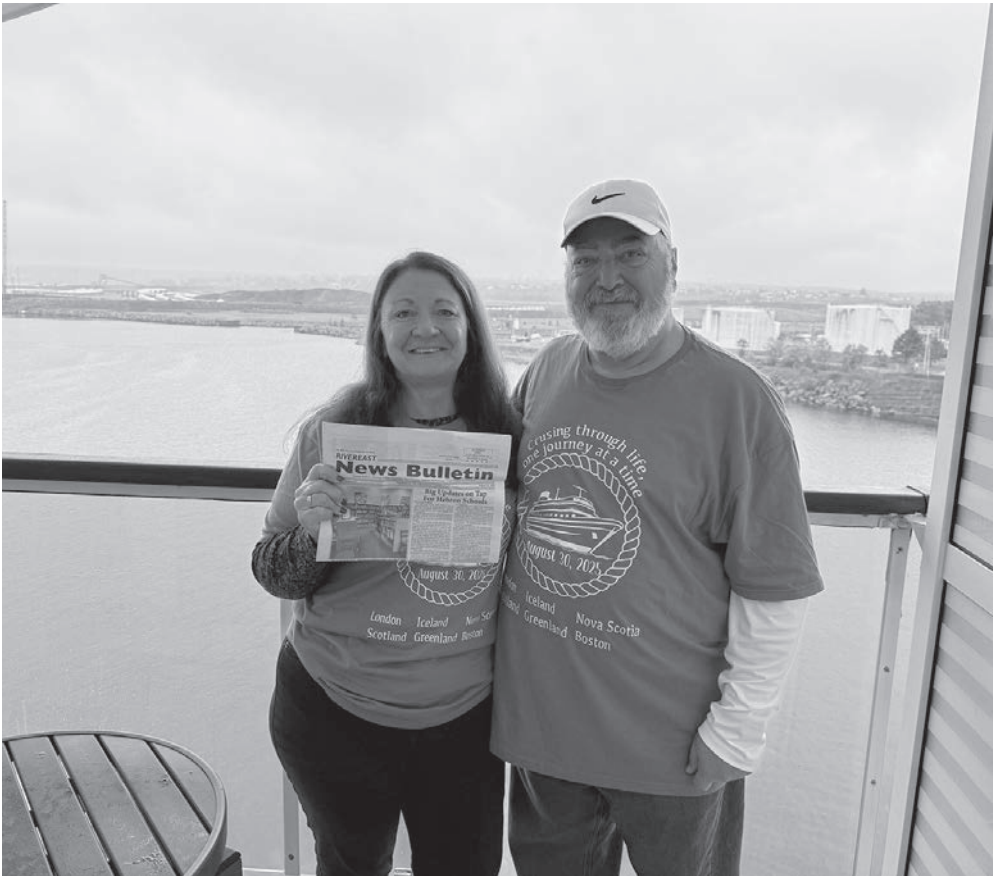
Taking a vacation or a day trip soon? Or simply going out to dinner? Bring the *Rivereast* with you! Whether it's across the globe or across town, we want to see where you've been! Simply snap a photo with the *Rivereast*, send it to bulletin@glcitizen.com and, if printed, you'll receive a gift card to Campagna Restaurant in Portland! Further details are listed below. Happy travels!



A Bevy of Bicycles... Lee & Beverly Heidemann from Colchester and Rick & Cindy Schaller from East Hampton at the 5,000-bicycle underground parking garage in Amsterdam, Netherlands.



Rivereast in Croatia... Emma Donohue of East Hampton and her friend, Madi Butts, recently traveled to Plitvice Lakes, the oldest and largest national park in Croatia! It is famous for its 16 crystal-clear, turquoise-colored lakes interconnected by more than 90 waterfalls, and is home to hundreds of protected wildlife species! While in Croatia, we also explored the country's beautiful beaches, islands, and historic towns!



Cruisin' with the Rivereast... Tom and Janice Mori of Colchester brought the *Rivereast* with them on their recent transatlantic cruise from London to Boston, stopping in Scotland, Iceland, Greenland and Nova Scotia.



Summertime Fun... Stephanie, Billie, Charlotte and Charlie Brown Bunting of Colchester, and Sarah Turner, Jonathan Gross and Ethan Gross of Glastonbury, took the *Rivereast* to Nantucket this summer!

Where in the World?

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Selectmen Learn About Procedures, Transportation

By Anne Lilburn

Portland’s Board of Selectmen met for a special organizational meeting on Tuesday, Nov. 18. It was the first meeting of the board in its current iteration, following the recent election.

The board first heard from attorney Kari Olson, who gave a presentation outlining both Freedom of Information Act guidelines and Robert’s Rules of Order, the parliamentary procedure guidelines that Portland’s government follows.

While much of her presentation was pertinent only to the board members and their roles as government officials, some of the points were relevant to the broader public, particularly in terms of the board’s obligation to comply with the federal Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) when it comes to making most of their meetings open to the public (with some specific exceptions).

“You are the Board of Selectmen for the town of Portland,” Olson told the board. “You are a public agency, so you are subject to FOIA.”

Olson then offered additional guidance about how to conduct meetings in order to remain compliant.

Olson also provided guidance on how to deal

with potential disruptions in the course of public meetings, reminding the board members,

“You’re not there to be abused,” she said. You are public officials who have dedicated yourself now, voluntarily, to doing what’s best for the town of Portland.”

“After 28 years of practicing,” she said, “it is so sad that we’ve reached a point in our society where I have to say to you, that if at any point you feel unsafe, you have to do whatever it is to protect yourself, and if that means shutting down the meeting, calling the police, whatever it is, you’re not there to be abused.”

Following Olson’s presentation, board members moved on to their next agenda item in perfect compliance with proper parliamentary procedure, and voted to approve the proposed 2026 public meeting dates for the Board of Selectmen. In general, meetings will continue to be held on the first and third Wednesdays of the month, with some exceptions made for holidays. Meeting dates are available on the town’s website.

The board then moved on to liaison assignments for board members to various town boards. Board members began the process of

volunteering for assignments, but later decided to finalize the process at the next meeting in order to be certain about meeting dates.

Moving on, the board heard from Brendan Geraghty, Transportation Planner for River Valley Transit, which provides various public transit options in Portland. Geraghty explained the services that his organization provides, including traditional bus service, which is mostly throughout Middlesex County, but also offers connections to other areas; ADA-compliant paratransit transportation for people with disabilities, which provides door-to-door service for those who have a doctor’s verification of need and who live within three quarters of a mile of the fixed bus route; Dial-a-Ride, a reservation-based curb-to-curb service; and a taxi voucher program that provides half-priced taxi rides for senior citizens or people with disabilities who may be going to places outside of the regular service area.

Geraghty talked about the plan to transition the fixed-route buses from a flag stop system to a

fixed stop system, which he said would improve both safety and operations. He said the transit agency would ask the public and the town for input regarding proposed bus stops, particularly those on town roads.

He also said one of his goals was to raise awareness among the public that the different transportation options exist, and explain to people how to use it. He said he was happy to set up demonstrations because he knew “transit can be intimidating if you haven’t used it before.”

Geraghty also mentioned that Senior Resources Agency on Aging had partnered with River Valley Transit to offer a donation-based option for seniors to use Dial-a-Ride at a reduced or even no cost option. Seniors must register first, and can get more information by calling River Valley Transit.

Lastly, the Board of Selectman read a proclamation regarding Gildersleeve Elementary’s Blue Ribbon School award, which was awarded to the school in September.

The next regular Board of Selectmen meeting will take place on Wednesday, Dec. 3.

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 (per-

mit required). Leaves not in paper bags must be emptied by the resident in an area at the transfer station designated by the attendant.

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 860-342-6733.

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 Christmas holiday, however, the final regular meeting of 2025 is scheduled for 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.

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.

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.

The church is open for prayer and meditation, 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 welcome.

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

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.

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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. 23, the church will celebrate Thanksgiving Sunday. 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. **Deck the Halls and Dinner Too:** Sunday, Nov. 23, 4 p.m. The Ministry of Spiritual Life invites all to this inter-generational gathering where folks will deck the halls of the church, sing carols and prepare for the holiday season. After decorating, enjoy a stew and bread dinner. For more information, call 860-342-3244 or visit firstchurchportlandct.org.

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 are 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.

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.

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.



Josh Abbott, now a senior at Portland High School, is continuing his Wreaths Across America mission once again this year.

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 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.

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RE10-31-25

A black and white photograph of a library display. In the foreground, a wooden table holds several crocheted chickens. One chicken is sitting in a light-colored sack. Another chicken is perched on a small wooden stand, and a third is sitting on the table next to it. A small crocheted Christmas tree is also on the table. In the background, there are library shelves filled with books.

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.



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RE5-30-25

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 alcohol-free 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.

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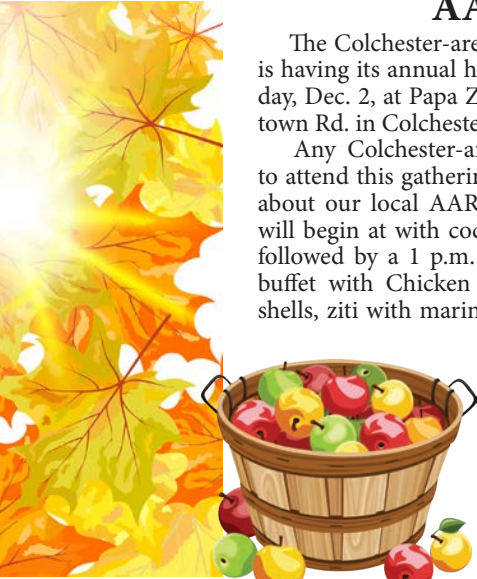
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AARP December Holiday Luncheon

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 rolla-

tini, 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 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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Five Course Meal \$30.00 • \$15 plate charge for sharing
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APPETIZERS

Stuffed Mushrooms Mushroom caps stuffed with seafood stuffing
Zuppa D' Mussels Sauteed in fresh tomato sauce or white wine sauce
Fried Mozzarella Topped with marinara sauce

PASTA COURSE

Penne Aglio Olio • Penne with garlic and oil • Penne Marinara
Penne Alla Vodka Asparagus, sun dried tomatoes in a vodka blush sauce

SOUP OR SALAD Cup of soup of the day or garden salad

DINNER CHOICES

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

Stuffed Pork Chop Stuffed with broccoli, gorgonzola cheese and ritz crackers in a brown cognac sauce
Stuffed Sole Crab meat stuffing served over spinach

DESSERTS — Ask your server for our selections

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As Thanksgiving approaches, we're taking a moment to reflect with gratitude on the many things we're thankful for — and you, our valued customers, are at the top of that list. Your patience and loyalty during our recent store remodel meant a lot. We know that construction can be inconvenient, and we're truly appreciative of your understanding and continued support throughout the process.

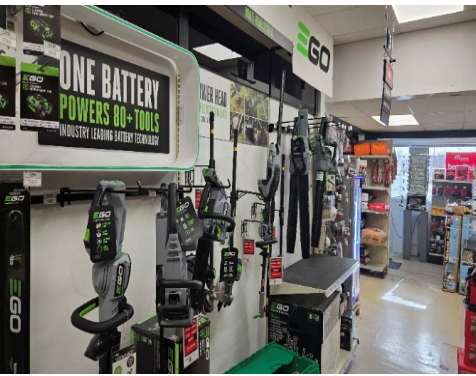
Now, we're thrilled to welcome you back to a new and improved shopping experience! Our refreshed layout was designed to make finding what you need easier than ever, and our shelves are now stocked with exciting new merchandise, including the latest tools, seasonal décor, and home improvement essentials.

To show our appreciation, we're also hosting a special **Post-Remodel Clearance Sale** — the perfect opportunity to take advantage of deep discounts on select items while exploring everything new in-store. It's our way of saying *thank you* for standing by us as we made these upgrades.

As we celebrate this season of gratitude, we want to express how thankful we are for your trust, friendship, and ongoing support. You are the heart of our business, and it's a privilege to serve this wonderful community every day.

From all of us at Hope Ace Hardware, we wish you and your family a warm, joyful, and safe Thanksgiving. We look forward to seeing you soon — and showing you all that's new!

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Colchester Officials Sworn In: A Night of Unity

By Toriana Williams

On Sunday, Nov. 16, the lights of the Bacon Academy auditorium glared brightly enough that state Rep. Mark DeCaprio (R-48) joked, “The lights are so bright in here, I can’t see anyone.”

Yet, the brightness suited the tone of the evening.

Amid suits, pearl necklaces, handshakes and laughter, Colchester held a bipartisan swearing-in ceremony – one filled with warmth, gratitude and a powerful sense of common purpose.

Residents, elected officials, family members and state leaders filtered into the historic auditorium, creating a hum of conversation that settled only when DeCaprio stepped to the microphone.

“My name is Mark DeCaprio,” he said, welcoming the crowd and acknowledging the hard-fought work of every candidate on stage. Before any official business began, he invited the room to rise for the national anthem and then the Pledge of Allegiance.

The anthem, sung by Bacon Academy 11th grader Keegan McKenzie, ended with applause before U.S. Navy veteran Eric Jackson led the pledge. “With liberty and justice for all,” the room echoed in unison.

A Lieutenant Governor’s Tribute

Lt. Gov. Susan Bysiewicz was also present for the ceremony, and delivered remarks that grounded the night in both civic pride and gratitude.

“Good evening, Colchester. It is a pleasure to be here with you to celebrate democracy,” she began. Her voice carried clearly across the auditorium, emphasizing sacrifice, service and the community’s right to choose its leaders.

She reminded the audience that the ceremony took place just a week after Veterans Day.

“We have this precious right to choose our leaders ... because of the sacrifice and the courage of our United States military veterans.”

She then asked veterans to stand, offering a loud and heartfelt, “Thank you so much for your service and your sacrifice.”

Bysiewicz also acknowledged the families of elected officials.

“It is the family members that support them in that important work,” she said. “So I’d like to ask all of the family members of the elected officials to please stand so we can say thank you.”

Her praise extended personally to First Selectman Bernie Dennler, who sat near the front of the stage. “He is someone who is very collaborative,” she said. “He is someone that listens. He’s someone that has remade the town hall... He’s an extremely hard worker, and you are very blessed to have him as your leader.”

Oaths of Office

One by one, newly elected members of Colchester’s boards and commissions stepped forward to raise their right hands.

Members of the Board of Assessment Appeals, the Board of Education, the Board of Finance, the Treasurer and the Board of Select-

men all repeated the standard oath: “Do you solemnly swear that you will support the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the state of Connecticut... and that you will faithfully discharge according to law your duties... to the best of your ability?”

Hands lowered. Applause rose.

At last, Dennler came forward with his family. Bysiewicz administered his oath, concluding with, “Congratulations.”

Dennler’s Reflections

Now officially sworn in for his second term, Dennler stepped to the microphone. “Good evening, everyone,” he began, thanking the lieutenant governor, DeCaprio, the vocalist and the community.

He described the last two years as both humbling and productive. “I grew up [here] and it’s always surreal to be on this stage,” he said, glancing around the same auditorium where he once sat as a student.

Dennler highlighted more than \$5–6 million in state grants that Colchester has secured in the past two years, and he nodded again toward state partners: “We really appreciate the support for the town of Colchester.”

But he quickly pivoted to the work ahead. He spoke openly about the aging condition of Bacon Academy’s facilities and the need to address athletic fields, the school roof and other building challenges. “I’m looking forward to working with the Board of Education [and] Board of Finance... We know there’s challenges there.”

Democracy, he said, requires participation – and gratitude.

“Thank you for stepping up. ... Thank you all,” he told the volunteers and candidates. To the families behind each official, he noted, “Every one of you ... has given up something ... and this process would not be possible if it wasn’t for the family members who stand by the candidates.”

As he closed, Dennler emphasized unity. “This team is ready to work together to make sure that Colchester continues to be a great place to work, live, do business and raise a family.”

Voices from the Newly Elected

Throughout the evening, newly sworn-in members shared their impressions.

Board of Selectmen member Rosemary Coyle, a Democrat, summed up the night as filled with “Enthusiasm... Pride in our town... believing that we can all work together.”

Treasurer David Koji, a Democrat, expressed gratitude for the chance to give back. “I’m so happy to be serving the town in this way... It’s a great honor to give back to the community that we love so much.”

Board of Education member Cody McNeely, a Republican, described the moment simply as “a humbling, joyous feeling.”

A Night of Bipartisanship

Smiles and small talk continued as a final group photo was organized – officials lining up, shifting positions, laughing when someone



Local Republicans and Democrats – along with Lt. Gov. Susan Bysiewicz and state Rep. Mark DeCaprio – gathered Sunday night for a bipartisan swearing-in ceremony.

joked, “Don’t laugh, anybody.” Another remarked, “Democracy in action” – a fitting sentiment.

In a moment when national politics often

feels polarized, Colchester’s bipartisan ceremony stood out as something rare and hopeful: a community choosing to move forward together.

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The works of Sylvina Rollins, center, will be featured at ARK Distillery throughout the holiday season. Rollins is flanked by ARK’s co-owners Susan Caron, left, and Alane Wilansky, right.

Artist Exhibit Runs Through Holidays

ARK Distillery is hosting an exhibit by fine artist Sylvina Rollins throughout the holiday season. All are invited to come visit and view Rollins’ original oil paintings and other fine art offerings inspired by farm life, color, gardens and pets.

ARK Distillery Is a woman owned estab-

lishment launched early this year. It is located at 200 Lebanon Ave. Rollins’ paintings compliment the restored historic building, which once housed a feed and grain store.

ARK stands for Acts of Random Kindness. For hour, visit arkdistillery.com, and for more on the artist, visit sylvinarollinsart.com.

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.westchesterconchurch.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: Knit-

ting 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 westchesterconchurch.org, email westconchurch@gmail.com or call the church at 860-267-6711. Pastor Ron Lake can be reached at 860-428-3460.

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 approxi-

mately 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.

Christian Life Chapel News

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

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: Through Monday, Nov. 24, the church will be a collection site for Operation Christmas Child. Collection times are: Friday, 5-7 p.m.; Saturday, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.; Sunday, noon-3 p.m.; and Monday, 9-11 a.m.

Colchester Federated Church News

Colchester Federated Church is located at 60 Main St., and pastor is the Rev. Lauren Os-trout. 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. 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 Friday at noon and Thursday at 10 a.m., and at 7:30 p.m. Mondays and Wednesdays. On Saturdays at 9:30 a.m., Al-Anon meets in the Jerusalem Room and AA meets in the Stage Room.

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

WJMS Honor Roll

William J. Johnston Middle School has announced its honor roll for the first quarter of the 2025-26 school year.

Grade Six

High Honors: Brynne Alford, Adrianna Anastasiou, Giuliana Arrigoni, Emily Auresto, Belen Barrios-Valenzuela, Emma Barthel, Delaney Berta, Elisabeth Boutote, Camila Bravo, Harper Brenek, Calleigh Carroll, Camilla Carroll, McKenzie Clarkin, Maggie Cleary, Owen Cote, Kennedy Cove, Bevin Cowell, Cole Deacon, Lolith Erdman, Henry Farrington, Aria Fecteau, Patrick Feldhouse, Amelia Fluck, John Forbes, James Ford, Caroline Frasier, Hugo Gostkiewicz, Isabel Hawes, Maureen Hickey, Harper Johnson, Caysen Jones, Jameson Kelleher, Brendan King, Zoey Koji, Emily Krepcio, Sarah Langdon, A’Maya Laureano, Edward Lengel, Danny Liu, Aubrey Margelot, Gabriella Mauro, Olivia McClain, Addison McElroy, Aria McLaughlin, Brody Michaud, Skyler Michaud, Julian Mula, Amelia Mundell, Mackenzie Nadeau, Charlotte O’Hara, Daniel Page, Bella Panus, Lilu Parks, Connor Peck, Jillian Post, Dmitri Potter, Luke Reid, Liliana Rioux, Ryan Rowe, Logan Sevigny, Leonora Smith, Joseph Spineti, Hayden Sposito, Stanley Szczur, Jacob Talarczyk, Luke Theriault, Nicolette Tichy, Kaydence Trudeau, Lucy Ver-ruso, Charlotte Walls.

Honors: Roaa Ali, Nhyira Badu, Gabrielle Bagnati, Mason Baker, Olivia Bishop, Finley Blanda, Rivers Boyd-Bingham, Katherine Brown, Samantha Busby, Grant Caplet, Todd Charlebois, Samarie Collazo, Mark Denesha, Lillian Donovan, Drew Dugan, Jojo Feinberg, Nolan Goggin, Hunter Graham, Alessandra Gruss, Brandon Hopkins, Magdalena Jantzen, Sean Jones, Lucas LaBarre, Brent Lachapelle, Karson Lastrina, Stella Launonen, Piper Lenk, Harrison Maher, Kellan Malone, Brianna Martinez, Daylianis Matias, Juliana Michaud, William Pagel, Mason Patenaude, Kaitlyn Peck, Hunter Pilney, Leia Priore, Aubrey Proudman, Luca Rago, Nelson Rooney, Lilian Sargenti, Elva Seals, Xavier Smith, Levi Stahl, Evelyn Suski, Skylar Tierney, Joseph Whitley, Elsa Wolf, Reika Zaler.

Grade Seven

High Honors: Kaydence Bedner, Delaney Beirn, Olive Boyd-Bingham, Hannah Buyniski, Sarah Candler, Jace Collins, Nora Creutz, Neil Drylie, Lochlan Fabry, Antonio-James Ferreira, Grady Greene, Addison Grosso, Christian Ingalla, Isabela Ireland, Adrien Lavertue, Ava Lizondro-Pane, Joseph Marotta, Zachary Martino, Isabel Mattison, Mairead McGloin,

Jasmine Morin, Evan Pazul, Rylan Ramos, Autumn Rettig, Rory Richardson, Kendall Scholl, Sophia Sherry, Tyler Siena, Kayden Summerlin, Otto Walter, Grace Wissler.

Honors: Lyra Ackroyd, Lukas Anastasiou, Brynn Angell, Jenalise Aquino, Elizabeth Belding, Samantha Bertash, Grace Bisi, Mason Catalina, Camden Christoff, Elizabeth Coats, Bailey Cobb, Stella DeGaetano, Josephine Doelger, Landon Duhamel, Jayson Eisenberg, Cosh Farrington, Aiden Francis, Hayden Fraser, Adrianna Georgens, Honorah Gillespie, Eve Gould, Courtney Hahn, Aubrey Henry, Nicholas Hiegl, Joshua Hunt, Jamil Jallow, Adeline Jordan, Cameron Kaiser, Jace Kaur, Grayson Kerrigan, Juliet Koonankeil, Sloan LaParre, Violet LaRose, Haoxi Liu, Ethan Lukra Matos, Krista Magnus, Carson Moroch, Elmina Mulaibisevic, Jacob O’Connor, Socrates Pena Valenzuela, Isaac Pensa, Joziah Perez, Henry Perham, Kailynn Rancourt, Logan Roberts, Landon Roman, Angel Sereno, Bryson Simone, Abigail Van Zilen, Daniel Vashbinder, Adam Wilinski, Sophie Wilson, Liliana Yu.

Grade Eight

High Honors: Fabiola Berard, Terry Boaz, Paul Brodeur, Jacqueline Busby, Molly Buscetto, Nina Caplet, Olivia Carrington, Chloe Civardi, Adrianna Colonghi, Tristan Cote, Bailey Cowell, Breena Cowell, Sophia Dean, Lauren Dittmann, Carter Doutre, Jacob Durfee, Lily Eppler, Caitlyn Griffin, Alexander Healy, Ruby Jeffries, Hunter Kovach, Lilah Martz, Grace McAlpine, Ryder Michaud, Camille Mickens, Lauryn Pac, Josslyn Post, Lyra Riley, Payton Sheldon, Lunaya Urban, Makenzie VanCamp, Emma Verruso, Jack Wissler.

Honors: Chelsea Albetski, Violet Ayotte, Jayden Bennett, Brady Bigelow, Gabriella Bishop, Emilie Boutote, Jacob Bradow, Grace But-taro, Evangeline Carroll, Cali Cruz, Lucas Dubreuil, Evan Faber, Trevor Garvie, Noah Hall, Taylor Hardy, Benjamin Healy, Skylar Jones, Stella Kauffman, Lily Koji, Carlton Kristoff, Aubrey Krummel, Jackson Lenk, Ryan Lombardo, Reagan Manganello, Jaxson Miller, Axel Monaco, Peyton Moynihan, Parker Nelson, Hannah Nitkowski, John O’Brien, Makayla Oddis, Kylee O’Marra, Piper Owens, Molly Parsons, Harper Perry, Chase Pilney, Nicolina Poresky, Madison Raulukaitis, Braeden Richards, Kyle Sands, Jenna Schoen-Rene, Gavin Siena, Michaela Smith, Kaya Struzik, Ethan Summerlin, Logan Szewczyk, Gino Uccello, Muhammad Usman, Jake Ward, Kadence Weisensee, Chloe Welikson.



Halloween Sing!... The Colchester Cooperative Nursery School wants to thank the Colchester Federated Church for allowing us to have a series of three Halloween concerts on their front steps. Students also enjoyed Halloween parties with themed food and fun games, and very festive costume parades.

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Salary Restored, Grants Advanced at BOS Meeting

By Toriana Williams

The Nov. 6 meeting of the Colchester Board of Selectmen moved briskly through a wide-ranging agenda marked by major grant approvals, long-awaited infrastructure updates – and a significant increase to the first selectman’s compensation.

Restoring the First Selectman’s Salary
Republican selectman Art Shilosky introduced a proposal to restore the salary of First Selectman Bernie Dennler to what he said it would have been had the previous administration of Republican Andreas Bisbikos not reduced it.

Shilosky explained that the pay cut made in 2022 had deviated from the town’s long-standing compensation policy. He stated that, for the 2021-22 fiscal year, the first selectman’s salary was \$90,526, and that, had the typical pay increase schedule remained in place, the current compensation would have been \$103,179.

Instead, Shilosky said, in 2022 the first selectman’s salary was reduced to \$80,000 and froze it there for the next two years – a move that Democratic selectwoman Rosemary Coyle flatly said “should never have happened.”

Shilosky emphasized that the adjustment was not retroactive, but rather intended “to put the position of first selectman back to where it should have been,” explained Coyle and ensure future adherence to policy. After lengthy back-and-forth – much of it procedural – Shilosky formally read the motion into the record, including a recommendation that the Board of Finance transfer \$13,000 from contingency to cover the salary increase for the rest of the fiscal year.

Dennler fully recused himself, saying, “While I appreciate the gesture, I am going to step out

of this conversation... I’m going to fully recuse.” The remaining three selectmen unanimously approved the motion. (Republican selectman Cliff O’Donal was absent from the meeting.)

Upon his return, Dennler thanked the board, noting the action was “for the position” as much as for the current officeholder, adding he had made his views known years earlier when the reduction was implemented.

Norton Park Moves Forward
In other news, the board unanimously approved awarding the design contract for Norton Park Phase III to Kent & Frost for up to \$96,900, funded entirely through state grants.

Director of Public Works Joe Leone emphasized the firm’s ecological design strengths. He described their “living shoreline” work and highlighted differences between their bid and the next-lowest competitor, including exclusions that made the lower bid deceptively cheaper.

One bidder had omitted engineering for a critical retaining wall – an omission that would have added substantial cost later. Leone explained that “the engineer had excluded that engineering work ... from their price,” whereas Kent & Frost had included it.

Coyle praised the choice, saying she liked the company’s “ecological approach” to the project.

Energy Broker Contract Approved
Facing the expiration of the town’s electricity contract – described by Leone as “probably one of the lowest rates in the state” thanks to pre-inflation timing – Leone recommended contracting with Titan Energy to secure future power pricing.

Selectmen expressed concern, especially about locking in long-term pricing in a volatile

market, but ultimately voted unanimously to proceed, recognizing Titan as the lowest qualified bidder.

Treatment Plant Cost Increase
A change order of \$56,493.76 was approved for the Cabin Road Treatment Plant project. Leone attributed the increase to inflation and federal tariffs, stating it was “directly related to increased cost of materials” for the filter vessels, and confirming existing contingency funds were sufficient.

New Senior Minibus Approved
Senior Services Director Patty Watts briefed the board on the Section 5310 grant that would fund 80% of a new 14-passenger accessible minibus. She noted that pandemic disruptions caused a gap in the usual replacement cycle, and that “this grant catches us up.”

Watts explained that despite having multiple vehicles, staffing constraints meant not all could be fully utilized. “Our drivers are slammed, and we’re turning away people,” she said, adding that a per-diem driver may soon be needed.

The board unanimously accepted the grant.
Additional Grants Accepted
A \$5,000 Department of Transportation micro-grant will fund downtown bicycle and pedestrian improvements, including racks, repair

stations, helmets and reflective gear.
The board also accepted the DOT 2025 STEAP Grant for \$900,000, funding major improvements to the Air Line Trail Spur, Mill Street sidewalks, signage, trees and parking re-configuration. Dennler noted that construction may begin in spring 2027, depending on coordination with Mill Fabrics.

The Board discussed and acted on the CEN Community Wi-Fi Grant in the amount of \$370,662.90. Library Director Kate Byroads described the town-wide Wi-Fi initiative, citing heavy existing reliance on library parking-lot Internet. “People are sitting in our parking lot 22 hours a day... with laptops ... studying or doing work,” Byroads said. The initiative will be funded by existing ARPA funds the town already has on hand.

The new network will extend to the Town Green, RecPlex and school athletic fields.

Lastly, the board also accepted a \$500,000 state bond grant for sound-field systems at Bacon Academy, a Board of Education initiative intended to support hearing-impaired students. Dennler expressed personal appreciation, sharing that as a child he was partially deaf and that early lack of support shaped his family’s commitment to accessible education.

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.

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 available.

All proceeds will support the Colchester Dog Park. For more information, email tag-nobark@gmail.com.

Festival of Lights Fundraiser

The Bacon Academy Board of Trustees will launch a new annual holiday tradition, the Festival of Lights, on Friday, 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 performances by the Bacon Academy Choir and Jazz Combo.

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.

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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.

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 on sale.

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

For more information, please call 860-537-3911.

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Applications Sought for BOF Vacancy

The Colchester Board of Finance is seeking applicants for a Republican-held vacancy. Per the town charter, applicants must be registered voters, and the seat must go to a member of the same political party as the individual who has vacated the seat. The appointee will serve until November 2027. Applications will be considered on a rolling basis until the position is filled. Interviews are expected to begin on Wednesday, Dec. 10. By charter, the Board of Finance shall make an appointment within 60 days of the vacancy, which became effective on Nov. 16. Applications can be found at ColchesterCT.gov and must be returned to the first selectman's office. They can be emailed to TScott@ColchesterCT.gov, mailed, or dropped off in person at Town Hall.

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. 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. 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. 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. For more information visit https://gateway.gocollette.com/link/1346389. See More Colchester News, page 33

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The Weekly Crossword

by Margie E. Burke

ACROSS

1 Baseball's Slammin' Sammy

5 NBC's "Meet the _____"

10 Babe in the woods

14 Bearded flower

15 Flaxlike fiber

16 Direction at sea

17 Young chaps

18 Like some imaginations

20 Shrub with olivelike fruit

22 Gold Rush mill owner

23 Computer data unit

24 Bedtime request

26 Give it a whirl

28 Some IRS workers

33 Consequential

35 American relief org.

36 Chilly attitude

37 Circled the sun

40 Goalie's gear

41 Preparing a needle

43 Cardiologists, et al.

46 Poetic tribute

47 "Green _____"

48 Long time, to a Brit

50 Man of many words

53 Reservoir's outlet

57 Lab worker

59 Break bread

60 Archipelago part

61 Gill or Vaughn

62 Bart's teacher

63 Poker game

64 Gardener's tool

65 Within earshot

DOWN

1 Fodder building

2 Kind of hygiene

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13

14 15 16

17 18 19

20 21 22

23 24 25

26 27 28 29 30 31 32

33 34 35

36 37 38 39

40 41 42

43 44 45 46

47 48 49

50 51 52 53 54 55 56

57 58 59

60 61 62

63 64 65

3 Adjacent

4 Test, as ore

5 Keeps safe

6 Rant and _____

7 "Nature" essayist

8 Title for Galahad

9 Ticket type

10 Omega-3, e.g.

11 Stepped down

12 "_____ Only Just Begun"

13 At no time, in verse

19 Rudely terse

21 No longer fresh

25 After-class aides

26 Loses one's footing

27 Go over

29 Royal home

30 Company that's "on your side"

31 What's hot

32 Wetlands plant

34 Without injury

38 Lawyer's fee

39 Swiss city on the Rhine

42 Sounding like a mad cat

44 Screen symbol

45 Get there

49 Like days gone by

50 Redding of soul

51 Take it easy

52 Rights org.

54 Walk to and fro

55 "Up in the Air" actress

56 Calendar span

58 El _____ (Spanish hero)

Answers to Previous Crossword:

A C A I A G U E S E M I T

B O R N N E R V E D I V A

B R I G H T E N E R A L A N

A N D R E I N U R S I N G

A D V I S E M E N T

C H I T I C E D W E A N

H O M E F R E E P A R R O T

E S P R U S T L E R I T O

R E L I E S H A N D L E R S

S I M S Z E S T U S E S

C A N V A S S E R S

D R A G O O N C A T N I P

R I T E L I N E O F F I R E

A C E R V E I L S U N I T

B O D Y O R B I T L O S E

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Funds for Food Bank... In this time of food insecurity, the Hebron Lions are proud to have donated \$10,000 to the Hebron Interface Human Services (HIHS) who operate the Hebron Food Bank. This donation will be used to help stock the shelves for the HIHS clients. Pictured from left are Lion Don David, Hebron Lions Charities Treasurer; Christa Goodwin-Babka, HIHS Director; Richard White, HIHS Board of Directors member; Jean D'Aquila, HIHS Board of Directors member; and Lion Brenda Johnson, Hebron Lions Charities President.

St. Nicholas Fair

St. Peter's Episcopal Church will hold its annual St. Nicholas Fair Saturday, Dec. 6, from 9 a.m.-3 p.m., at the church, 30 Church St. Holiday shoppers will be treated to a Country Store with homemade jams, jellies and other holiday treats, as well as a bake table featuring breads, pies, and more baked goods. There will be Christmas treasures, jewelry, homemade crafts and needlework, and orders for Rada cutlery. Boxes with arranged greens, as well as greened centerpieces, will be available for purchase. Have your child's picture taken with Santa Claus and get a free copy. Visit vendors with many unique offerings. A luncheon featuring Chef Kraemer's famous clam chowder and corn chowder will be offered. Egg salad, tuna salad and chicken salad sandwiches will be available, as well as hot dogs on the grill. Hot coffee, cocoa, and cold drinks will be available. Also, there will be Holiday Basket Drawings!!! Shoppers will be able to select from over 25 holiday and non-holiday themed baskets, all suitable for gift giving, and tickets are \$1 each. The drawing for the baskets will be held at 3 p.m. As part of the St. Peter's outreach programs, a portion of the profits will go to Oak Hill Hemlocks. For more details, call the church at 860-228-3244 or visit www.StPetersHebron.com.

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 5:12). **Kingdom Women: Women's Bible Study:** The study will be taking a break for the months of November and December. It will resume in January. **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.

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★ *Rham Volleyball cont. from page 1*
won four straight matches during the state tour-
ney run, losing only three sets total in the four
matches.
Weir said Garner was more than up for the
task, adding, “I love her so much and she was
so ready for it.”
Garner posted a team-high three blocks in
the championship match. Abby Simao added 16
kills and three aces, while libero Sami DeGray
registered a team-high 21 digs.
The championship match was also the last
dance for the five Class of 2026 members as
Weir, Arcari, Zito, Simao, and Victoria Ciesla
walked out of East Haven High School as cham-
pions.
It was the team’s four championships in five
seasons, meaning the seniors will be departing
the program as three-time state champs.
“I don’t know if I’ve ever been this happy be-
fore in my life,” expressed Arcari. “I was crying

because I am so happy and I’m so proud of all
of us.”
Guernsey said his seniors are a “very tight-
knit group,” adding, “They do a lot of things
off of the court – it’s just a really good group of
kids.”
Along with this year’s title, the Raptors also
have championship banners from 2007, 2008,
2009, 2010, 2013, 2016, 2017, 2021, 2022, and
2023 hanging inside the gymnasium at RHAM
High School. Five of those championship tri-
umphs have been against Joel Barlow.
Calhoun will lead a group coming back next
year eyeing a repeat and seeking No. 12.
But for now, the all-conference setter is just
happy to be part of the latest chapter in the pro-
gram’s growing dynasty.
“It’s really surreal,” expressed Calhoun.
“Knowing that the seniors got to feel this is just
so fulfilling.”





Which Way Is Up?

Perhaps you cry for the right way in these
times of confusion. Take a minute and listen
to God.

“There is **A WAY** which **SEEMETH
RIGHT** unto a man, but the end thereof are
the **WAYS of DEATH.**” (Proverbs 14:12)

“Enter ye in at the strait [narrow] gate: for wide is the
gate, and broad is **THE WAY**, that leadeth to **DESTRUC-
TION**, and **MANY** there be which go in thereat:
Because strait is the gate, and narrow is **THE WAY**, which lead-
eth unto **LIFE**, and **FEW** there be that find it.”
(Matthew 7:13, 14)

“The **WAY** of a **FOOL** is right in his own eyes: but he that hear-
keneth unto counsel is **WISE**”
(Proverbs 12:15)

Jesus Christ said, “I am **THE WAY**, the **TRUTH**, and the **LIFE**:
NO MAN cometh unto the Father, but **BY ME** (through **ME**)”
(John 14:6)

“For He [God the Father] hath made Him [Jesus Christ] to be sin
for us [at the cross], Who [Christ] knew no sin; that we might be
made the **RIGHTEOUSNESS** of God in Him [Christ]”
(2 Corinthians 5:21)

“The **WAY** of the wicked is an abomination unto the **LORD**: but
He loveth him that followeth after **RIGHTEOUSNESS**”
(Proverbs 15:9)

God’s Word “is a **LAMP** unto my feet and a **LIGHT** unto my
path.”
Psalm 119:105

Take your Bible, turn to the Gospel (“Good News”) of St. John.
Read through the Gospel of John asking **GOD** to speak to your
heart and show you the way. “These are **written**, that ye might
BELIEVE that **JESUS is the CHRIST**, the **SON OF GOD**:
and that believing ye might have **LIFE** through **HIS NAME.**”
(John 20:31)

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Affordable Housing Bill Divides Local Officials

By Anne Lilburn

The Connecticut state legislature passed a broad affordable housing bill last week, and state representatives and local officials from Portland and East Hampton shared their opinions about it with the *Rivereast*.

The bill passed mostly along party lines, with Democrats largely supporting it and Republicans opposing it, in both the state House of Representatives and the Senate. This bill, House Bill 8002, replaces a similar bill, House Bill 5002, which Governor Lamont vetoed back in June of this year. Lamont is expected to sign the bill, which he was involved in crafting.

“Connecticut’s housing shortage is among the most severe in the country,” said Lamont in a statement. “It is driving up costs for working families, deterring businesses from investing or growing, and worsening homelessness. Simply put, the status quo is unsustainable.”

HB 8002 makes many changes to the state’s current status quo in terms of housing. It requires towns to develop housing growth plans that set goals for affordable housing. It also changes minimum parking requirements for new development and encourages towns to establish zones near transit sites, such as train or bus stations, where new housing is prioritized. In return, towns will get access to a newly established state fund and higher reimbursement rates for school construction projects.

The bill also makes it easier to convert existing commercial developments into residential developments by bypassing local zoning boards, and increases the role of the regional councils of

government (COGs), as towns will have the option to either develop their own housing growth plans or join in a regional plan developed by their COG. Both Portland and East Hampton are in the Lower Connecticut River Valley COG.

State Rep. Christie Carpino (R-32), a Republican who represents Portland and Cromwell, voted no. She said, “I’m still reviewing the full impact of the affordable housing bill that passed last week, but I do have massive concerns about how it will affect the towns I represent.”

Like many other Republicans, Carpino expressed concern that the bill gave away too much local control.

“While I share the goal of ensuring Connecticut has housing options for working families, seniors, and young people,” she said, “the legislation as passed takes too much decision-making authority away from local communities.”

Likewise, state Rep. Irene Haines (R-34), who represents East Hampton, East Haddam and Salem, voted no. In a statement posted on her website, Haines said, “Instead of supporting towns, this bill turns the state into a top-down housing developer, dictating quotas and forcing municipalities into new planning obligations that many simply cannot meet. Local governments are left with all the liability, while Hartford gets all the authority. That is unfair and unworkable.”

State Senator Norm Needleman (D-33), whose district includes the *Rivereast* towns of Portland, East Hampton and Colchester, voted yes, and said he supported the bill.

“We have a housing crisis in the state,” Needle-

man said. “Of course something has to be done.”

Needleman expressed frustration with his Republican colleagues on this issue, saying that, unlike many on that side of the aisle, he didn’t believe that affordable housing was something that the free market would solve on its own.

Needleman cited high construction costs as one impediment, and added that he hoped that this bill would make it easier on developers to build more high-quality projects. As first selectman of Essex, he said he understood the challenges towns faced in trying to preserve historic character, but he said he also understood the very real challenges that working families and seniors faced as they struggled to afford housing.

“Rural towns fear density, fear large-scale housing complexes,” he said, “but some can be aesthetically pleasing and fit in.” He added that he had seen some successful multi-family affordable housing projects that involved partnerships with non-profits elsewhere in the state.

Locally, some politicians seemed initially cautious while evaluating the bill. Portland First Selectman Mike Pelton, a Republican, was one of those who said he was carefully re-reading the bill to fully understand its impacts on his community, but he did also add that, “In general, I support anything that helps increase housing, since it’s such a mess in Connecticut.”

Similarly, Portland Democratic Town Committee Chair Andrea Alfano said she did not have a comment on the ways the bill might affect Portland yet, but that, in general, “the Portland DTC supports policies that include access to affordable housing for Portland residents.”

In East Hampton, Town Council Chairperson Dean Markham, a Democrat, said he too was in the process of evaluating the bill, but noted

that he thought the cost of construction was still likely to be a big challenge for developers, adding that he didn’t believe that this bill was going to make that go away. He also said that he believed a considerable portion of East Hampton’s current housing might be classified as “affordable,” but that cost made an audit to determine that very challenging.

East Hampton Republican Town Committee Chair Melissa Engel wrote that the RTC was “very against” HB8002 and urged the governor to veto it, saying that “as a community, we have long been concerned about over-development.”

Engel expressed concern about the “erosion of home rule” and expressed concern that “denser housing equals a strain on our schools, emergency services, our infrastructure...and our taxes,” adding that the town “already [has] an issue with water.”

East Hampton Town Council member Karen Wanat, a Democrat, shared a letter that she wrote to Lamont, urging him to veto the bill. Wanat wrote that she “recognize[d] the urgency of Connecticut’s housing shortage and share[d] in the goal of expanding housing options,” but expressed concern that the bill “effectively erodes town-by-town decision-making authority.”

She wrote that she wished the legislature would return a bill that “preserves and respects local zoning and land-use decision-making.”

Needleman said he wasn’t surprised that the issue was a contentious one. He said that the state’s housing problem was a challenging one to solve, but “if you don’t try, you don’t fix,” adding that he believed that this bill was a “good-faith effort” made by people who were working hard to try to solve a challenging problem.

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 accoun-

tant 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.

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

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 projects.

AHM News & Notes

AHM Youth and Family Services has announced the following items of interest. Fore more information or to register, visit ahmyouth.recdesk.com.

Giving Tuesday: AHM is gearing up for #GivingTuesday on Dec. 2. The youth service bureau is aiming to raise \$10,000 to fund youth and family mental health support through its outpatient clinical program and student support services at all schools in Andover, Hebron, Marlborough and Columbia, as well as outreach through its HERE 4 YOU mental health initiative.

Virtual Book Discussion: Tuesday, Dec. 2, 7-8 p.m., via Zoom. *Good Inside* by Dr. Becky Kennedy will be discussed. AHM staff will discuss Kennedy’s concepts in raising emotionally healthy children, how to set boundaries in a compassionate way, and parenting issues that may arise such as tantrums, sibling rivalry, and lying. This program is free, but it is necessary to register to get the Zoom Link. Register online; contact Becky Murray at 860-228-0871 or bec-kym@ahmyouth.org with any questions.

Clay Holiday Trees: This is a two-part workshop where participants build their trees on Dec. 3, then return to paint and decorate them on Dec. 10. Best for age 6 and up. Cost is \$10 per participant. Register online.

Kids Polar Express Yoga: Thursday, Dec. 11, 5:15-6 p.m. Hop aboard the Polar Express for a

special yoga adventure, centered around movement, play and mindfulness. Kids will practice hot chocolate breathing, learn a variety of winter-themed yoga poses, enjoy a few mindful games/activities, then wind down with a relaxing savasana. Pajamas are welcome. This class is geared toward children 4-10. All levels are welcome. Register online.

Open Arts & Crafts Studio: Wednesday, Dec. 17, 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. Register online.

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!

A Day of Fun, Family and Service

On Saturday, Nov. 22, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m., 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 environmental care to supporting mental wellness 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 1 p.m.

For updates, message the Lions through the District 23C Lions Facebook page.

Standout Athletes of the Week

By Josh Howard

Here are the *Rivereast* Standouts of the Week for the week of Nov. 10 - 16:

Cayden Caplette – RHAM High School (Football): Caplette ran for 147 yards and two touchdowns as the Raptors scored a season-high in points during a loss (41-16) at Wethersfield High School on Nov. 13. Caplette, a senior, only needed 14 carries to reach his career-high in yards. He has been the Raptors main offensive weapon this season, amassing 597 rushing yards and seven touchdowns through the first nine games. Caplette is also a standout wrestler at the high school.

Abbey Pickel – Portland/East Carolina (Swimming): Pickel placed third in the 200 Butterfly with a time of 2:07.94 as East Carolina University (ECU) soundly defeated Barton College and the University of Lynchburg in dual meet competition on Nov. 1. Pickel, a 2024 graduate of Portland High School, is now a sophomore swimmer for the Pirates at ECU and is studying nursing at the school in Greenville, N.C.

Kaylee Gravel – East Hampton/CCSU (Cross-Country): Gravel, a senior at Central Connecticut State University, placed 10th over-

all as the Blue Devils won a second straight Northeast Conference (NEC) championship on Nov. 1. Gravel, a 2022 graduate of East Hampton High School, was selected All-NEC following her most recent season on the collegiate cross-country trails. As a Bellringer, Gravel was an All-Shoreline Conference SLC) selection and the runner-up at the 2021 Class SS state meet.

Lucian Dean – Bacon Academy (Football): Dean ripped off a 97-yard touchdown in the fourth quarter for the go-head score as the Bobcats defeated the Bears of Stonington, 8-6, on a rain-soaked field at Stonington High School on Oct. 30. Dean, a senior, finished with 113 yards and his electrifying scamper down the left sidelines. The win was the fourth of the season for the Bacon Academy/Lyman Memorial co-op, who now play in the Raptors of RHAM in the annual ‘Battle for the Rail.’ The annual rivalry game will take place at Bacon Academy this Saturday (Nov. 22) kicking off at noon.

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.

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 the area for 2025.

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

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 Bulletin*.

Regional • Regional • Regional • Regional • Regional • Regional • Regional • Regional • Regional • Regional • Regional • Regional • Regional

Connecticut Company Delivers Good Wood to Glastonbury



Based in Fairfield County, Vermont Good Wood has been delivering quality kiln-dried firewood to customers in southeastern Connecticut and Westchester County, N.Y., for nearly two decades. And now, it's expanded its deliveries to the Hartford region – including Glastonbury.

By Shawn R. Dagle

With the cold weather fast approaching, homeowners now have a convenient, clean and energy-efficient option to keep their fires burning. Vermont Good Wood is now offering home deliveries of their popular hardwood mixes, white birch firewood and other products and accessories in Glastonbury and the surrounding area. Started in Fairfield County in 2008, Vermont Good Wood has been delivering quality kiln-dried firewood to customers in southeastern Connecticut and Westchester County, N.Y., for nearly two decades.

The company recently opened a new warehouse north of Hartford and is now offering its kiln dried firewood to the Hartford region – including Glastonbury – and as far north as the Springfield area.

“We provide firewood predominantly for residential customers,” said Vermont Good Wood President Charlie Moroni.

The company’s firewood is harvested from forests in New England – with most sourced from Vermont and New Hampshire, he explained.

The wood is sustainably harvested and kiln dried to a moisture content below 15% – which creates a safer, cleaner and more efficient firewood, according to the company. The wood is also moisture tested to safeguard its consistency and quality.

The kiln dried firewood Vermont Good Wood uses are easier to start and maintain as a fire; burns hotter, longer and cleaner with less smoke, is USDA certified and contains no harmful bugs, pests or diseases, according to the company’s website.

Vermont Good Wood offers two varieties of kiln dried firewood: a hardwood mix which contains ash, beech, cherry, maple, oak and white birch species, 100 % white birch – which, according to the company, produces a brighter flame and sweeter aroma.

The firewood is split and delivered for free straight to the customer’s home or business.

“We also do a stacking service. We stack the wood for customers wherever they want it on their property,” Moroni said, adding that stack-

ing is also free. There are a variety of ways customers can reach out to the company to place an order. “Customers can get in touch with us by phone, email or our website,” said Moroni. Returning or repeat customers will often use text or email to reach out and place an order, according to Moroni, while newer customers typically use the company’s website. “After you place your orders, our customer service member, usually within the day, will set up a delivery window,” said Moroni. Typically, the company delivers the firewood within three days. Customers also get a communication the day before the delivery to let them know their wood is on the way. “We stop by, put the wood where you like it, and clean it up and make sure it is where you want it,” said Moroni. In addition to its firewood, Vermont Good Wood also offers accessory products including storage racks and fire starters, such as kiln dried kindling and birch bark tinder.

When it comes to its kiln dried firewood, Vermont Good Wood offers different sizes customers can order. The most popular that customers typically choose, according to Moroni, is a third of a cord which fits in a standard sized rack. “I think the customers really appreciate the time we take to stack and organize the wood,” said Moroni. “I think people really love that. The product speaks for itself.”

The frequency of purchase typically depends on the customer, according to Moroni. Some customers are seasonal buyers and some purchase wood every other season – while others still purchase wood as much as three or four times a season.

“We try to be as customer friendly as possible. We don’t have a subscription model. When your stack gets low, contact us,” said Moroni.

It’s a philosophy that has worked. Since the company was started in 2008 in Stamford, Vermont Good Wood has been steadily growing.

In the beginning – after years growing frustrated trying to find quality firewood and good service – Vermont Good Wood Founder Grant MacDonald met a small sawmill operator in Vermont in the late 2000s, who was using kiln ovens to dry local, sustainably sourced hard-



woods. MacDonald brought some of the wood home with him and discovered it was of really good quality. So impressed by what he had found, he decided to share the product with others and started Vermont Good Wood. “We were really the only ones providing this product when we started,” Moroni explained. “We started working with wood producers in Vermont. They were delivering it to local homeowners up there for fuel for heating in the winter. From there we founded Good Wood hence the name of the company.”

Since the company’s start in 2008, there has been growth in the product as more customers become aware of the benefits of kiln dried firewood. “We have been fortunate to be steadily growing,” said Moroni. The company’s recent expansion into the Hartford area – including Glastonbury – is just the latest example. “I’m excited to see how the category can evolve up here,” he said. Those interested in learning more about Vermont Good Wood – or who are interested in placing an order – are encouraged to visit the company’s website, vermontgoodwood.com.

From the State Representative’s Desk...

As we enter the holiday season, I wanted to provide a brief update on items that affect our district. We ended the regular session in June, and next year’s session begins in February 2026. We were called back into special session last week to address four bills that were called by Gov. Ned Lamont: 1) A proposal to appropriate approximately \$500 million for UConn to purchase Waterbury Hospital. 2) Stop Gap funding for SNAP benefits. 3) A proposal to limit communication between courthouse Judicial Marshals and ICE. 4) A sweeping 104-page Housing/Zoning/Banking bill.

The bill that I heard the most about from constituents was the housing concept and how it might affect our local zoning. None of the bills were made public until about an hour before session began and most legislators didn’t see the bills until that time. In fact, the fiscal note for the housing bill that shows the cost to the state wasn’t available until well into the bill debate. The questions I asked were around the process and what effect this might have on our local zoning boards. Our local boards and commissions are so important because they are made up of our friends and neighbors – the people closest to the issues. By removing any of that control, it’s granted to people with no connection to the community. Under the new proposal, cities and towns will be responsible for submitting housing plans. We will have to monitor the bill as pieces of it are implemented, and I’ll certainly be looking to hear any feedback on the impacts.

I look forward to next year’s short session, so we can hopefully get back to following the process of introducing new legislation, which is: Carefully vetted ideas, open public hearings and comment, robust & civil debate, and collaboration to improve bills whenever possible.

I will be holding Town Hall meetings around the district, and will certainly be attending different events across the district. I welcome invitations, so if you have a business function or event that you’d like me to attend, please reach out. I wish you a joyful holiday season!

Don’t hesitate to reach out with any questions or concerns. You can email me directly at: steve.weir@cga.ct.gov or call the office at: 860-240-8700. Additionally, you can sign up for my newsletter at: <https://www.cthousegop.com/weir> “Stay Connected - Sign Up!”



Weir

State Rep. Steve Weir
R-55th District

Note: The 55th Assembly District represents Andover, Bolton, Glastonbury, Hebron and Marlborough.



Better Dental HEALTH

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by George M. Mantikas, DMD

BEWARE OF TOO MUCH PRESSURE

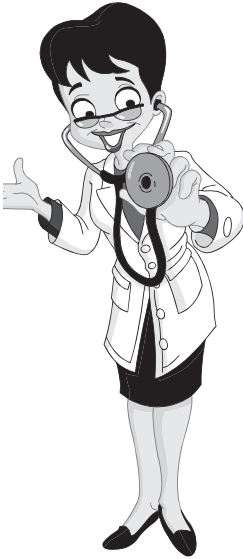
Did you know that it is possible to use too much pressure while brushing your teeth? Brushing too hard can permanently damage the gums, and surgery may be needed to correct the condition. One telltale sign that you might be brushing too hard is receding gums. Because there is no enamel on your teeth below the gumline, the tooth surface along the gumline may be darker when this area is exposed due to receding gums. Use a toothbrush with extra soft bristles to achieve the correct pressure while brushing. Hold it with three fingers in your non-dominant hand to apply less pressure. You might also choose an electric toothbrush with a pressure sensor that is designed to protect your teeth.

To maintain good dental hygiene and a healthy smile, it is essential to take the necessary steps to prevent both tooth decay and periodontal disease. This includes conscientious and correctly brushing and flossing and maintaining periodic professional cleanings and exams. Research repeatedly demonstrates that those people who own better dental health live longer, stay healthier longer, and enjoy a better life. If you'd like to maximize your oral health, thereby enhancing every day of your life, why not call us for an appointment?

P.S. Brushing teeth too hard can result in more sensitive teeth, especially when eating and drinking hot or cold items.

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Obituaries

Andover

Eric E. Anderson Jr.
Eric E. Anderson Jr., 81, of Andover, beloved husband, father, grandfather and friend, passed away peacefully Saturday, Nov. 15. Born in Hartford Aug. 2, 1944, he was the son of the late Eric Anderson Sr. and Marjorie Anderson. Eric spent nearly his entire life in Andover, a place he cherished and called home.



Eric leaves behind his devoted wife of 61 years, Lucille Billiel Anderson, with whom he built a lifetime of memories. He is survived by his three children: Pamela Anderson (Paul Ravinville) of South Windham; Marc Anderson of Monterey, Tenn.; and Shane Anderson (Tara) of Bolton. He will also be deeply missed by his seven grandchildren – Griffin, Gavin, Gabrielle, Patrick, Luke, Matthew, and Christian – all of whom brought him immense pride and joy.

A dedicated and skilled auto technician, Eric spent 40 years with Hoffman Enterprises, where he formed lasting friendships and earned great respect for his knowledge and work ethic. Beyond his career, Eric had a lifelong love of Appaloosa horses, a passion that reflected his quiet strength and appreciation for their beauty and spirit. He was also skilled at refinishing antique furniture, a craft he generously shared with many family members and friends. After retiring, he found new enjoyment in learning about and collecting classic cars, a hobby that brought him great fulfillment.

Eric will be remembered for his steady presence, gentle heart, and devotion to those he loved. His legacy lives on in his family and in all who had the privilege of knowing him.

Per Eric's wishes, there will be no calling hours. A burial service will be held at Townsend Cemetery in Andover at 11 a.m. Monday, Nov. 24. Family, friends, and acquaintances are wel-

come to attend. Following the service, all are invited to gather at the Anderson home in Andover to honor Eric's life and share the stories, values, and love he leaves in our hearts.

For online condolences, please visit www.tierneyfuneralhome.com.

Salem

June Ulfers
"I didn't expect to live this long," June Ulfers said many times in the past decade, and her great run wrapped up Saturday, Nov. 15, at her home in Salem, after a brief illness. She was 100.



June Kathleen Oliver was born June 9, 1925, in Bergen County, N.J., the sixth of seven children of Robert and Anna (Kelly) Oliver. She was the last sibling remaining.

June was a survivor. She endured scarlet fever at age 5 before antibiotics were available, two broken hips in her 70s, colon cancer in her 80s, and COVID-19 in her 90s. A child of the Depression, she made the most of everything she had in life and would repurpose a sheet of aluminum foil until it cried for mercy. The first two words of the motto "Reduce, reuse, recycle" were June's credo before marketing got ahold of them.

In her heart, June was a Jersey girl until the end, even though she lived in Salem for many years. She volunteered at the first Salem Apple Festival and was a Girl Scout troop leader from Brownies through Juniors. Later, she delivered Meals on Wheels.

June returned to the workforce after raising her children and worked in secretarial roles at Congregation Ahavath Achim, Amston Electric and Unidyne Corporation. She prided herself in always being in tune to current events, challenging people to ask her to name all nine Supreme Court justices. She was a devotee of the PBS *NewsHour* and NPR's *Wait Wait ... Don't Tell Me*. She loved everything about her town library and until her last days always could be found reading a large-print book. Her secret to longevity was to never stop being curious about other people and all that's going on in the world. She was a New York Baseball Giants fan, often going to games at the Polo Grounds with her dad. When that team deserted her, she adopted the Mets and would listen to their games on AM radio.

She loved animals, opening her home to many cats and dogs over the years. She was happy that, despite becoming a grandmother at nearly age 75, she was able to watch her grandchildren grow up and that they will have lifelong memories of her.

June leaves her son and caregiver, Stephen Ulfers of Salem; her daughter, Susan Banning, and her husband Chuck of Colchester; her grandchildren, Caroline, Alison and Luke Banning; her sister-in-law, Joan Kelliher of Kerrville, Texas; and many nieces and nephews.

June was predeceased by her husband, Louis Ulfers; they were married 55 years (despite him being a Brooklyn Dodgers and later Red Sox fan) when he died.

Services are private.
Donations in June's memory are suggested to be made to the donor's favorite animal shelter.

Amston

Dixie Card Merrifield
Dixie Card Merrifield, 79, of Amston, passed away peacefully Monday, Nov. 17, due to complications of Parkinson's disease, at the Marlborough Health and Rehabilitation Center, surrounded by the love of her family.



Born in Winsted Feb. 21, 1946, the daughter of the late Clarence and Pauline (Nash) Card, Dixie would attend the local elementary schools in Norfolk and graduate from Northwestern Regional High School in Winsted. She would go on to earn bachelor's and master's degrees from Eastern Connecticut State University.

Her career in teaching began in Colebrook, where she taught kindergarten for one year at the Colebrook Consolidated Elementary School. Moving from Norfolk to Hebron, she would go on to teach first grade at both Hebron Elementary School and Gilead Hill School for 34 years. In 1967, she would meet the love of her life, Robert Lynn Merrifield, and they would be married Aug. 16, 1969, at The Church of Christ, Congregational, Norfolk. They would settle in Hebron, and later to the Amston section of Hebron where they made their home and would raise their children.

Dixie had many interests and things she loved to do. She loved nature and being out in the fresh air working in her flower gardens while at the same time watching the birds, butterflies, deer and all that nature had to offer her as she was working in her yard. She enjoyed vacations to Cape Cod and Ogunquit, Maine, going to the beaches, quaint shops, restaurants and especially long walks on the Marginal Way.

She was an avid hiker and would take long hikes with her husband Bob, pointing out wildlife, which helped him with his wildlife photography. Dixie loved holidays. Thanksgiving and Christmas were two of her favorites. She would host as many as 35 family members for Thanksgiving. She loved decorating her home for Christmas and the gifts and smiles as the family opened their presents. Dixie was truly an exceptional person who enriched the lives of so many who returned their love to her.

Most importantly, she will be remembered by her family as a loving and devoted wife, mother and grandmother. Her loss will be mourned by all who knew her. She leaves her loving husband of 56 years, Bob; her children, Kristy Merrifield-Gawlak and her husband John Gawlak of Colchester, Robert Card Merrifield of Los Angeles, Calif.; her brother, Clarence W. Card Jr. of Bedford, Mass.; her stepsister, Donna Whitney of Richmond, Va.; two grandchildren, Meghan Lynn Wood and John Robert Wood; and many extended family members and friends.

In addition to her parents, Dixie was predeceased by her stepmother, Dorothy Nickerson Card; father, Clarence W. Card, Sr.; and her stepbrother, Peter Cleveland Platt.

Family and friends may call at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Road, Colchester, today, Friday, Nov. 21, from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. A funeral service will take place at 12:30 p.m. Burial will occur immediately af-

ter in the New Hebron Cemetery on Wall Street, Hebron.

In lieu of flowers, donations in Dixie's memory may be made to the Parkinsons Foundation at www.parkinsons.org.

East Hampton

Stephen Andrew O'Kelly
On Tuesday, Nov. 11, Stephen Andrew O'Kelly, age 57, died peacefully in his sleep after a brief illness at his home in Middletown where he lived with his brother, his stepdad, and "Ruca," his brother's dog.



Stephen was born with significant challenges to his health but never let his disabilities define him. He was a member of Citizens Advocacy and was a Special Olympian in his youth.

He was a "Rainman" with an amazing memory and capacity to learn new and complicated computer skills. Some of the many things he enjoyed were the simple things in life, like eating out, word search, watching his favorite soap opera, all types of music, and, of course, a good joke. His bear hugs let those close to him know they were loved. Steve spent his days at M.A.R.C. in Middletown and had worked in their supervised work programs.

Stephen was predeceased by his mother, Margaret O'Kelly, in 2021. He is survived by his brother, Matthew O'Kelly; his stepfather, Bruce Biggs; his father, John O'Kelly; his stepmother, Leslie O'Kelly; his sister, Aimee Carlson, her husband Len, and their children Ashley Carlson and Hunter Carlson, his sister Kristie Cannon and her children – Cole Cannon and Milo Cannon, as well as a large extended family and dear friends.

He will be ever present in our hearts.
Funeral arrangements are private.

Portland

Joseph Rocco Cannata
Joseph Rocco Cannata of Pompano Beach, Fla., formerly of Portland, entered into eternal rest Saturday, Nov. 1, at the age of 41. Born Aug. 22, 1984, he was the miracle son of Palma Rose (Todaro) and Joseph Cannata, who predeceased "Joey" in 1990 when he was 5 years old.



Joey attended Portland schools, graduating in 2002, and then continued on and graduated from New England Technical Institute. He was a self-employed home improvement contractor of Cannata Home Improvements.

Besides his mother he leaves behind his wife, Erin Novo and his most precious 2-year-old daughter, Maya Rose Cannata, who he adored more than words could ever convey. He also leaves his godparents, Rocco and Kerri Todaro, Uncle Joey and Auntie Denise Todaro, and a multitude of cousins and friends, each of whom he loved and deeply cherished in his life.

We pray for Joey's soul in heaven where he will now rest in eternal peace with his father, Joseph, and his grandparents, Midge and Josephine Cannata and Joseph and Santa Todaro.

A Mass of Christian Burial was held Monday, Nov. 10, in St. Sebastian Church. Burial was in the family plot in St. Sebastian Cemetery, Middlefield. Friends called at the Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland on Sunday, Nov. 9.

Please also pray for all who suffer from addiction and mental illness.

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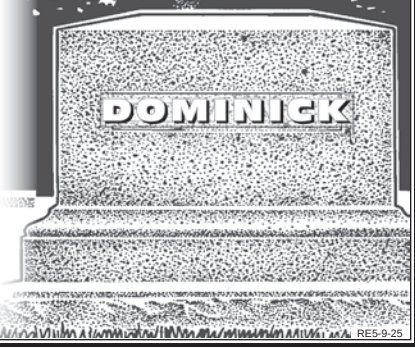
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LEGALS

HEBRON SELF STORAGE
Auction Legal Notice

Facility operator's sale for non-payment of storage charges pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes 42-159 through 42-169. For the satisfaction of the facility operator's lien, the following property will be sold at public auction on Friday, December 5, 2025 @ 10 AM, on the premises of Hebron Self Storage, 555 Church Street, Hebron, CT 06248. Hebron Self Storage reserves the right to cancel a sale at any time for any reason.

UNIT#	OCCUPANT	CONTENTS
O	Eric Schiffer	Household Goods

1TB 11/21

MARLBOROUGH CONSERVATION
COMMISSION
PUBLIC HEARING

The Marlborough Conservation Commission will hold the following public hearing on Monday, December 1, 2025, at 7pm in the Town Hall, 26 No Main Street
APPLICATION #05-25 – Jeffrey Popham and Jennifer Carini (Application/Owner) 11 Old Cider Mill Lane. Addition and walkway
APPLICATION #06-25 -Town of Marlborough – South Road culvert replacement, adjacent to #258 South Road
Written testimony will be received at the public hearing and written testimony can be sent to the Building/Land Use Department at the Town Hall ahead of the public hearing.
YVONNE BOLTON, CONSERVATION COMMISSION CHAIR

2TB 11/21, 11/28

LEGAL NOTICE OF ACTIONS
HEBRON CONSERVATION COMMISSION
15 GILEAD STREET, HEBRON CT

At its November 13, 2025 meeting, the Hebron Conservation Commission took the following actions:
Petition 2025-11 - Town of Hebron c/o Andrew Tierney, 15 Gilead Street, Hebron CT 06248 - Remedial excavation to remove and dispose of contaminated materials from the Turshen Mills Property at 459 Church Street, a designated Brownfield Site, and potentially the adjacent residential parcel to the north (at 447 Church Street). Work within the regulated area will include excavation, temporary stockpiling of material, and site restoration such as soil stabilization and restorative planting. Areas of remedial excavation are approximate and will be confirmed through screening during construction - **approved**, with the following conditions:
1. The applicant must come before the Commission if it becomes necessary to excavate within the wetland and the applicant must contact the Wetlands Agent if it's deemed necessary to excavate outside of the proposed area of excavation.
2. The applicant must notify the Wetland Agent prior to the initiation of work and after the installation of sediment and erosion control measures and species exclusion fencing.
Petition 2025-12 – Town of Hebron c/o Andrew Tierney, 15 Gilead Street, Hebron CT 06248 – Pavement rehabilitation of 2.4 miles of roadway with various general roadway improvements to include pavement milling, isolated spot repairs (partial and full-depth), paving of the entire roadway, replacement of sub-standard roadside barriers, reconstruction of existing driveway aprons, and turf establishment in various locations – **approved**, with the following condition:
1. The Wetland Agent will attend the pre-construction meeting and inspect SEC measures.
James P. Cordier, Conservation and Inland Wetlands Agent For: Thomas Loto, Chairman, Conservation and Inland Wetlands Commission
<https://transcripts.gotomeeting.com/#/s/61ad358afe5b4dc0c0a409e86cd8369a7ec743236fcd058633c4917a42da76de>

1TB 11/21

LEGAL NOTICE

Town of: Andover
Notice to Contractors:
Sealed bids for the construction of the following project will be received by the Town of Andover, Town Clerk at the Andover Town Hall, 17 School Road, Andover, CT 06232. until 2:00 pm, on December 23, 2025, after which time no further bids will be accepted. **NO EXCEPTIONS.** The bids will be publicly opened and read in the Administrative Office located in Town Hall at 2:00 pm.
FEDERAL PROJECT
F.A.P. #6001(012) Town of Andover
State Project No. 0001-0108
Replacement of Bridge No. 04582, Long Hill Road over Hop River
The Town of Andover (Municipality) hereby notifies all bidders that it will affirmatively ensure that in any contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, Disadvantaged Business Enterprises will be afforded full opportunity to submit bids in response to this invitation and that they will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, mental retardation or physical disability, including but not limited to blindness, in consideration for an award.
"Bid Proposal Form", "Schedule of Prices", "Bid Bond", "Non-Collusion Affidavit" and "Bidder's Prequalification approval letter" signed by the CTDOT Contracts Manager must be completed and returned with the submitted bid. Failure to properly execute and include any one of these five documents in the bid submission will result in the bid not being read and the subsequent rejection of the bid.
Plans and Specifications for the above project may be examined and/or obtained at Advanced Reprographics, 50 Corporate Avenue, Plainville, CT 06062, (860) 410-1020. Plans and Specifications may be viewed and/or obtained by going to the Advanced Reprographics website www.advancedrepro.net Prospective bidders should access the "Planroom" on the website and go to the "Public Jobs" area, no log in information is necessary. Plans and Specifications may be picked up at the Advanced Reprographics office. Plans and specifications may also be ordered by calling the Advanced Reprographics number listed above. Bidders are responsible for all printing costs and shipping costs, as applicable.
Form 819 Standard Specifications and Supplemental Specifications may be obtained via the Connecticut Department of Transportation's website: Standard Specifications for Roads, Bridges, Facilities and Incidental Construction, Form 819. All Proposals must be on the form furnished by the Municipality and must be requested for the above-named project.
NOTE: Prospective bidders must have a current sworn Statement (CON-16) on file with the Connecticut Department of Transportation and be prequalified to perform Group No. 9-Intermediate Bridges work. The Bidder's Prequalification approval letter signed by the CTDOT Contracts Manager shall be included as part of the bid package submitted to the Municipality.
NOTE: Any Contractor or Subcontractor engaged in surface preparation and/or coating application must be certified by the Steel Structures Painting Council.
NOTE: A Surety Company Bond, on the form furnished by the Municipality, for at least 30 percent of the amount of the bid must accompany each proposal. A certified check will not be accepted. The Municipality reserves the right to reject any and all bids.
CONTRACTORS that find discrepancies and/or errors in or between plans, specifications, quantities and other matters, must immediately notify Mr. Jim Bellano, Interim Town Administrator (townadministrator@andoverct.org) in writing not less than ten days before the scheduled bid opening.
Date: November 25, 2025
Town of Andover

1TB 11/21

EMPLOYMENT

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT PART-TIME: Small, faithful church seeking organized, personable assistant (approx. 10 hrs/week, 2 days). Duties include weekly bulletin and online newsletter prep, record keeping, and general office support. Must have Google & Mailchimp experience, strong communication and organizational skills. Send inquires/resume to Mary DeCoursey, marybdec62@gmail.com or send to Congregational Church of East Hampton 59 Main Street, East Hampton, CT 06424.

FINANCIAL PLANNING ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Small Financial Planning Firm looking for a full-time, Mon-Fri, in-office administrative assistant. Would be expected to perform normal office administrative duties. Must be proficient in Microsoft Office, especially Excel, QuickBooks, and have strong interpersonal skills. We do have our dog in the office, so you would need to be a dog lover. Salary to be determined, commensurate with experience. Email resume to laurie@briggswalthmgmt.com.

PART TIME: OFFICE ASSISTANT for a Mfg Company in Berlin. Looking for highly motivated person; candidate must be organized, able to multi task and must be computer-literate. Hours can vary 10-20 hrs/week, Mon- Thurs. \$20.00/hr to start, Email resume to libind@liberty-ind.com

PCA NEEDED FOR: wheelchair bound female in East Hampton. Mon 7:30am-1:30pm, Thurs 8am-2pm. Fri 7:30 am- 10:30am, & Sun 8am-12pm & backup coverage possible. \$22/hr. Please call 860-267-7012.

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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.
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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.
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WANTED \$500 & \$1,000 BILLS: Also interested in any other old currency & coins. Call 860-301-2777.

WANTED GRANITE STONES: mill stones, tether stones, entry steps, fence posts, feeding troughs, well covers, sinks, posts, curbing, stone boot scrapers, and carriage steps. 860-216-8144.

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.

WANTED TO BUY: All antiques; toys, military, watches, advertising, jewelry, 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. 860-663-2214.

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CIT1-12-23

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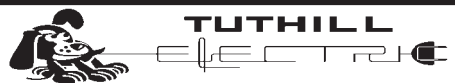
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