

RIVEREAST

News Bulletin

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

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Cheering the Girls... Two East Hampton High School seniors recently coordinated a powderpuff football game, for their capstone project. Two teams of girls played – while the boys, shown here, acted as cheerleaders. For additional photos, and more information about the project, see page 12.

Council Changes Mind, Sends Letter to Lamont

By Anne Lilburn

East Hampton’s Town Council changed course at its most recent meeting on Nov. 25, voting to send a letter to the governor expressing the community’s concerns about the impact of HB 8002, the state’s new affordable housing bill – just four days after it voted to reject a similar resolution.

That first resolution was voted on at a special meeting on Friday, Nov. 21. Council member Karen Wanat, a Democrat who had expressed her dissatisfaction with the bill and who had already written her own letter to the governor urging him to veto it, was not able to attend. The resolution was met with a tie vote and therefore did not pass because it did not have the necessary majority.

But the council met again last Tuesday, Nov. 25 – after press time – and voted unanimously to send a similar letter to Gov. Ned Lamont, calling for veto of the controversial bill.

The letter was drafted by Town Manager David Cox and based upon a truncated version of the original resolution from the prior week. Cox said he had just finished the letter the Wednesday before Thanksgiving when news broke that Gov. Ned Lamont had signed the bill.

A revised letter was sent the morning of Dec. 3. It noted that the council had voted unanimously to express their concerns with the bill and indicated that the town would be advocating to their state representatives for changes and revisions to the bill. Cox said that a copy of the

letter was also sent to state Sen. Norm Needleman (D-33) and state Rep. Irene Haines (R-34).

Prior to agreeing to send the letter, the council members discussed the bill and their concerns and also what they believed next steps would be to protect the town. Wanat advocated strongly for establishing a committee to work on the town’s housing plan, so that the town and its citizens would have a chance to steer any resulting development from this bill in the right direction. Wanat said that a comprehensive plan was overdue.

“We’ve never clearly defined development and what we want for development,” she said. “We’ve never defined what kind of housing we should have, what areas that housing should be in, and we’ve never adequately identified what our infrastructure can support in regards to housing. That vacuum means that developers end up shaping the town more than the town shapes itself.”

Council member Ted Hintz, a Republican, seemed concerned that the establishment of a committee might distract from his goal of trying to get the governor to veto the bill, or from another goal of preventing the bill from fully coming to pass through legal means.

“I would rather plan with our neighboring communities to get that legal group together,” he said, “and probably go after it and say that we want to keep [regulation] at the town level

See Council Changes Mind, page 7

Grant Accelerates Marlborough Sidewalk Project

By Toriana Williams

Marlborough’s long-running effort to create a fully walkable town center has taken another significant step forward with the award of a \$348,224 state Community Connectivity Grant (CCG) that will fund an additional 1,100 feet of sidewalk along the rest of the east side of Lake Terramuggus.

The project marks the latest phase in a plan nearly two decades in the making, aimed at linking neighborhoods, recreation space, local institutions and the commercial district through a continuous, safe pedestrian network.

The funding comes through the Connecticut Department of Transportation’s CCG Program, established to support small-scale municipal projects that improve conditions for pedestrians and bicyclists. The program seeks to create safer, more attractive and more accessible community centers while encouraging environmentally sustainable travel.

Gov. Ned Lamont and Connecticut Transportation Commissioner Garrett Eucalitto announced the Marlborough award as part of nearly \$12 million in statewide grants to im-

prove local transportation safety and mobility. Now in its seventh funding round, the program has helped dozens of Connecticut towns advance sidewalk construction, crosswalk upgrades and other walkability improvements.

For Marlborough, the new grant supports an expansion that directly aligns with the town’s long-established vision. Planning and Development Director Peter Hughes said the foundation for today’s sidewalk network began almost 20 years ago when the Nature Trails & Sidewalk Commission developed the Town Center Sidewalk Plan.

The Town Center Sidewalk Plan was created in 2005 by the Nature Trails & Sidewalk Commission to help link the commercial, institutional and government areas of the town center with a connected pedestrian network.

“The overall plan is to construct sidewalks throughout the Town Center and around Lake Terramuggus to provide a safe walkable area for residents regardless of where they live in town,” Hughes said. He added that the broader goal was to make the area more vibrant by increasing

everyday foot traffic.

“People would have three safe and convenient parking areas,” such as Blish Park, Town Hall and the school, “to access the sidewalks for exercise and socialization. The idea is feet on the street creates vibrancy.”

The town’s intent, Hughes explained, has always been to create connectivity not just around the lake, but between the major civic and recreational destinations in the community. 40% of Marlborough’s population lives within a mile of the town center, making walkability a realistic alternative to vehicle travel for many residents. Hughes emphasized that the sidewalk network links multiple important facilities and public lands.

“The sidewalk connects residents with the commercial center of the town along with town facilities and offices,” including Town Hall, the Senior Center, the library and the school, Hughes said. “It links the town’s largest recreation area, Blish Park, on the northern end to the two miles of walking trails in the 140 acres

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EARLY LETTERS DEADLINE
There will be an early deadline for letters to the editor for next week’s *Rivereast*. All letters **MUST** be emailed to bulletin@glcitizen.com by noon Monday, Dec. 8. No exceptions will be made.

Crossword Puzzle...Pg 25
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CIT11-13-25

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RE12-5-25

From the Editor’s Desk

Observations & Ruminations

By Mike Thompson

I’m not a fan of snow. At all. I suppose a nice blanket of it Christmas Eve night is nice – and even then I’d prefer it if it were melted away by Dec. 26. But other than that, anything beyond what I like to call “Hollywood snow” – the kind of snow that looks pretty when it’s falling but doesn’t stick to the roads – is a most unwelcome sight.

So you can imagine, then, that I was less than thrilled when, at this time last week, forecasters were saying there was a chance we could see six inches or more of that ugly white stuff the following Tuesday. Thankfully, they were proven wrong; while the northwest hills got a bit of a thumping, most of the state avoided any kind of significant snow. Oh, it still was an icy mess – winter is terrible, folks – but at least it wasn’t snow.

Still, snow is coming. Yes, we haven’t seen a ton of it in recent years, but even so, it’s nearly impossible to escape the winter without seeing a storm or two. So it’s best to, in the words of the Boy Scouts (as well as Scar from *The Lion King*), be prepared.

And that includes being prepared to help out your friendly neighborhood postal carrier. According to the United States Postal Service, any amount of snow can cause a dan-

gerous situation for mail carriers and others. Keeping a clear path to and around mailboxes will help mail carriers continue consistent delivery as well as keep them safe from potential slipping and/or injuries.

In an email sent to the *Rivereast*, the USPS asked for the public’s cooperation in keeping the mailboxes, steps, and sidewalks clear of snow and ice with the following tips:

- Clear enough snow from curbside boxes to allow mail trucks to approach the box, deliver the mail and to drive away from the box without danger of the need for backing.
- Clear walkways of snow and ice and allow enough traction to avoid slips, trips or falls.
- Steps should also be kept clear of ice and snow and in good repair so as not to cause injury to the letter carriers or others who visit the customer’s home.
- Overhangs should be clear and free of snow and ice to avoid injury.
- Paths and porches should be well lit to prevent unseen hazards.

Residents who receive delivery to roadside mailboxes also must keep the approach to, and exit from, the mailbox clear of snow or any other obstacles, like trash cans and other

Editor’s Desk continued on page 6

Bulletin Board

Many years ago, when my career path had yet to be established, I was attempting to maneuver a chair from one side of the dining room table to the other at a crowded family function. After observing my ineffectual struggle for what probably seemed like hours, my father shook his head (more in sorrow than impatience, as I recall) and remarked in the presence of all and sundry, “Well, I guess he’ll never be an engineer.”

Actually, my gift for inadvertently knocking elderly aunts in the head with a chair at family gatherings was probably the least of my engineering-related deficiencies considering my lack of math skills and complete disinterest in anything mechanical. (I guess I should amend that latter remark. I have always been very good at taking things apart, it’s putting them back together again that’s the problem.)

This was not for any lack of role models. Thanks to the demand for engineers at United Aircraft over in East Hartford, my boyhood neighborhood was full of the creatures. Apparently not content to leave their creative abilities at work, they spent their weekends building lavish tree houses for their kids and designing cutting edge aerodynamic model cars for Cub Scout Pinewood Derbies, among other enterprises. One dad even reportedly tested his kid’s derby entry in a wind tunnel at work.

(My own Pinewood Derby cars were basically a block of wood with wheels attached since my father, despite his high and holy career pronouncements, wasn’t all that handy himself it turns out.)

But I never worried about being pigeon-holed as unsuitable engineer material and I’ll tell you why. The fact of the matter is, your typical engineer (and I count some engineers as my friends, at least up to now) is just too compulsively obsessive for my freewheeling approach to the world.

What idiot, for instance, came up with the idea of putting headlights on a lawn tractor so you can mow the lawn at night? For that matter, who would even think of mowing their lawn at night when any reasonable person would be sacked out on the couch watching baseball on TV?

An engineer, that’s who.

Carefree individuals such as myself can drive around for weeks with a squashed bug obstructing the view through the car windshield. Why? Because we know that eventually it will rain and the problem will go away by itself.

By contrast, any engineer worthy of the name would feel compelled to respond to this obscene smear of bug guts by pressure-washing the entire car. Today. Like right now. At the very least, he’d immediately hit the windshield wiper spray button and wipe the mess away. (Being an engineer, he would have the windshield wiper fluid tank fully topped off, whereas I’m not entirely sure exactly where the thing is located, even assuming I could get the hood open.)

I will say that engineers tend to be fairly inoffensive on the whole. As someone who through the years has been periodically threatened with violence because I can’t seem to keep my mouth shut, I have found that unlike some segments of society—like oversensitive construction workers and inebriated sailors, for instance - guys with engineering degrees, while sometimes affecting a certain smugness, tend to be a pretty mild mannered bunch. I suppose even they have their limits - like if you inadvertently left a grease mark on the socket wrench from their personal tool box perhaps. However, since guys with engineering degrees never let anyone else use their tools, this almost never happens.

Even if by some fluke of nature an engineer wanted to hit you in the nose, you probably wouldn’t be in any imminent danger. He would first feel compelled to figure out the relative velocities, distances, angles, declinations and a thousand other details so that by the time he was prepared to actually launch his attack you would be home finishing dinner and looking forward to a piece of pie and a hot cup of coffee. Not that he’d probably mind. It’s my experience that guys with engineering degrees are generally more passionate about the process involved in solving the problem than with any immediate result. It’s the bean counters at the companies they work for that take the fun out of things by establishing deadlines and stuff.

I will concede that without engineers we’d probably be riding in wagons with square wheels and cooking over open fires. We would also be deprived of all those wonderful gadgets advertised on late night television—marvels such as pocket-sized fishing poles, weird exercise devices, magnets that cure rheumatism and those cunning little slicers guaranteed to transform an ordinary radish into a decorative rose.


But beyond all those contributions to civilization, we must also give engineers—despite their oddity as a species--credit for what may be one of the ten most significant inventions of our era as anyone who ever tried to open a beer bottle with his teeth will surely attest. I refer, of course, to the pop-top beer can.

I have my faults, but never let it be said that I am not magnanimous.

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.



Down on the Farm... Colchester Cooperative Nursery School thanked the Waterford Country School for a recent farm field trip. Students had a chance to meet farm animals, reptiles, and birds. They also learned about how to care for the animals.

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Public Comments Matter

To the Editor:

East Hampton voters were permitted to speak at the most recent Town Council meeting, on Nov. 25, and it made a world of difference. You may recall the Town Council chair, Dean Markham, did not let the public make comments at the Nov. 21st Special Meeting, regarding a proposal to formally oppose HB 8002, and to tell the governor to veto the bill. Markham said, “It’s a special meeting, and business of the council.” To which councilmember Ted Hintz Jr. asked, “You don’t think it’s the business of the taxpayers?” Markham replied, “That’s correct, this is business of the council tonight.” It’s not a coincidence the proposal wasn’t passed in the absence of pressure from the voters.

Just four days later, the proposal was re-considered, with some minor changes, and thanks to folks that spoke up at the meeting, the Town Council eventually passed the motion to oppose HB 8002, despite their figurative kicking and screaming.

Unfortunately, the delays kept the letter from being sent before the governor signed the bill. With that said, the letter should have still gone out, but as of this writing on Tuesday, Dec. 2nd, I’m told that letter has not been sent. Seeing as the letter was essentially already drafted, and only needed minor edits, why has it not gone out yet?

It’s my hope our town takes a stand and works with neighboring towns to oppose this legislation in defense of home-rule. Let’s keep the friendly pressure on our elected town officials and work to push back against state-level overreach.

Bryon Turner – East Hampton

Editor’s Note: The letter in question was mailed Wednesday, Dec. 3.

Coat Drive Thanks

To the Editor:

I would like to thank everyone who contributed to the Zion Lutheran Church coat drive this year. Thanks to your generosity, 255 coats were delivered to Amazing Grace to help those in need.

Kathleen Richards, President
Zion Lutheran Church Council

Turkey Drive Thanks

To the Editor:

Honor Rotary! A Foundation for Colchester, Inc. had a wonderful response to our recent Thanksgiving turkey drive. Through the community’s generosity we were able to supply 135 baskets to those in need. We also thank Noel’s and Westchester Market for participating in selling paper turkey legs and supplying the baskets, Liberty Bank for their partnership, Inishmor, and Colchester Cares for their donation.

We could not do what we do without your support!

Deb Martin, President
Honor Rotary!

A Great Success

To the Editor:

The Marlborough American Legion Post 197 Auxiliary would like to thank all of you who participated and attended the holiday craft fair. It was a huge success.

The funds raised will be used to purchase a Christmas gift cards to give to the 22 veterans who are presently reside at the Marlborough Health & Rehab.

Happy Holidays,
American Legion 197 Auxiliary

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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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Rich Irony

To the Editor:

So ironic to be instructed on proper flag etiquette by someone who hung a soiled American flag upside down regardless of weather, condition, darkness, or flag status conditions for four years.

Rich irony, indeed.

Amy Traversa – Marlborough

Dementia Talks No. 39

To the Editor:

‘Last week I touched on falls and possible trips to the ER. In that submission I also touched on “have paperwork” at the ready.

Think about what is asked during an ER visit, urgent care visit, or admission to the hospital. Typically, you are asked about your doctors, your medications (prescription and over the counter), history of surgeries. In the case of someone with dementia, if they are getting along in their journey, know who can make decisions on their behalf – there are legal documents that are good to have at the ready so that you can effectively advocate for your loved one; if you are their designee.

For my mom, I have a packet that contains her current doctors, medications, durable power of attorney, healthcare directives/healthcare power of attorney and DNR.

My mom and dad taught us well when it comes to legal documentation; and we are very lucky that they had all their paperwork in place when we were kids; and revised several times as they aged. Mom updated all her paperwork after dad passed and again after she moved back to Connecticut. We are insanely lucky for that, and I am forever grateful.

Friendly advice – if you are a parent reading this, please work to get your legal paperwork in place. Yes, it is uncomfortable, but necessary to reduce the stress for those that may need to use it. If you are an adult and don’t have children, still get your legal documents in place (we are in that situation).

If your loved one doesn’t have legal papers; see an elder attorney so that they can help you navigate the situation. Knowing who can make decisions (both financial and for healthcare) can help save time when there is an emergency (needing a long-term care community, ER visit, urgent care, etc.).

Know you are not alone.

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

Turf the Best Option

Hello Colchester Residents!

I am Chris Pianta; my family and I have lived in Colchester since 1998! I was a member of the Recreation Needs and Coordination committee and am on the Athletic Complex Building Committee for town recreational facilities. The committee is made up of horticulturalists, athletic field experts and experienced construction project managers.

After the committee reviewed field use hours, interviewed league presidents, users, clubs, toured school facilities and rec complex, balanced needs versus budgets, reviewed environmental and athlete impact studies, analyzing current conditions against short/long-term objectives of facility use, the committee determined that the best option to move forward is to use artificial turf for several field applications at Bacon and improving grass fields at the rec plex.

Grass fields have a limited capacity of use on a weekly basis, if those capacities are overwhelmed by excessive use, turf plants cannot recover before the next event. This impact does not address weather impact where rain-soaked fields are unusable for 24-48 hours or more, compared to an artificial field delay being 20 minutes or less. The Rec Plex has much less hourly use compared to Bacon.

This is not a natural-versus-artificial decision but a use capacity issue, a cost-over-time issue, and an opportunity to provide the community with a long-term sustainable facility at Bacon where fields have been unplayable and opposing varsity teams have refused to play on these fields due to their condition. The Rec Plex needed updating for tennis courts (being unplayable) adding pickleball courts and updating the splash pad facility.

Realistically the right option for our community – for both citizens and students, is this is a three-dimensional direction – community use, community cost, and long-term maintenance/sustainability for citizens and users. Our municipal facilities are overused and over worked.

Our committee (Athletic Complex Building Committee) presented to the Board of Selectpersons on 12/4, and will present to the BOE on

12/9, BOF on 12/10, and there will be a Public Hearing 1/7. Please attend these meetings with your questions. Our committee of Colchester volunteers has spent two years working to develop a plan and direction in the best interest of our community. With four great schools, a strong senior population and vision for the future, Colchester is prepared to provide our community with high-quality athletic facilities at the Rec Plex and schools, to benefit its citizens for decades to come.

Regards,
Christopher Pianta, Member
Athletic Complex Building Committee
Colchester

Moment of Truth

To the Editor:

Now is the moment for Colchester’s Democrats to prove their campaign message wasn’t just a slogan. For years we’ve heard about “bringing Colchester together,” about representing everyone, about rising above party politics. A vacancy on the Board of Finance now gives them a real chance to show those words meant something.

The seat must be filled by a Republican, as required by law, after Tim Vaillancourt’s move to the Board of Selectmen. Two Republicans have applied: Michael Dubreuil and former Board of Education member Donna Antonacci.

The facts here are not ambiguous. In the last election for the Board of Finance, Mr. Dubreuil was the highest-performing Republican. He was second overall for Republicans, right behind Art Shilosky. Donna Antonacci, meanwhile, couldn’t secure a nomination from her own party. She ran as a petitioning candidate and received barely a third of Michael’s votes. In fact, she finished dead last among all candidates on the ballot.

If “Bring Colchester Together” actually means listening to voters, respecting their choices, and honoring the democratic process, the path is obvious. Michael Dubreuil is the clear next-in-line Republican; Colchester voters already made that decision at the polls.

But this is where things get uncomfortable. Many incumbent and incoming Democrats simply do not like Mike. They like Donna. Mike asks tough questions. He challenges their decisions. He refuses to nod politely and disappear. Their objections are political, yes, but also deeply personal.

So the real test is this: Will they rise above those feelings and appoint the person residents clearly supported? Or will they ignore the voters and install someone who performed poorly but happens to fit better with their preferences and who won’t question their decisions?

This is where leadership becomes visible. For all my disagreements with Andreas Bisbikos, he at least had the honesty to say, out loud, that elections have consequences. He didn’t pretend his choices were anything other than political ones. He didn’t wrap them in feel-good language while doing the opposite, hoping nobody was paying attention.

Colchester deserves to know whether the new Democratic leadership truly believes its own message. This appointment is their first real chance to show it wasn’t just hollow lip service.

The town will be watching.

Jason LaChapelle – Colchester

Celebrating Connection, Adventure, and Healthy Aging

To the Editor:

As we enter the holiday season, the Portland Senior Center is buzzing with activity, museum outings, festive lunches, historic tours, holiday music programs, and so much more. December is one of our busiest and most joyful months, and each program reflects something deeply important to our mission: supporting healthy aging through connection, engagement, and community.

For many older adults, staying active is more than a pastime it’s a key component of overall well-being. Research consistently shows that getting out into the community, exploring new places, learning new things, and sharing meals with others strengthens cognitive health, reduces loneliness, and improves emotional well-being. Our trips to museums, cultural sites, and local restaurants are carefully planned with this in mind. They offer social interaction, enrichment, laughter, and a sense of belonging all vital ingredients in aging well.

We also recognize that not everyone has the ability to get out on their own. Transportation barriers can lead to isolation, especially for homebound individuals. That’s why we are proud to offer rides for those who need assistance so they can join us and experience the same joy and community as everyone else. No one should miss out simply because they cannot drive.

At the Portland Senior Center, we believe that healthy aging is built on shared experiences exploring together, learning together, and enjoying life together. This December, and throughout the year, we remain committed to creating opportunities that uplift, connect, and celebrate the older adults of our community.

We invite anyone interested in joining our outings or learning more about our programs to reach out. There’s always room at the table and always another adventure ahead.

Warmly,
Sarah Elliott-Caratasios, LMSW
Director of the Portland Senior Center and
Municipal Agent

Marlborough Residents Answer the Call

To the Editor:

As rumors of SNAP benefit disruptions swirled, the number of families turning to the Marlborough Food Bank began to rise. On a typical Tuesday, we welcome 80 families to shop. Within a week, that number grew to 90, then 100. And just as quickly, the Marlborough community responded. In only two weeks, nearly \$7,000 was raised to help fill the gap. Residents donated, the Lions Club and American Legion stepped forward, and the DTC and RTC joined together to host Election Day food drives. Many wonderful people volunteered their time. The show of empathy was heartwarming.

This year’s Liberty Bank Rotary Club Thanksgiving Drive was strengthened by this surge in donations. With the support of the East Hampton Rotary Club, Liberty Bank and the Community Foundation of Middlesex County, our match exceeded \$8,000.

The giving spirit is nothing new here. Our

heartfelt thanks go out to the neighbors and organizations who consistently show up and give of themselves to help others. There are far too many names to list, but please know how deeply appreciated your support is – by the families who benefit from your kindness and by the Food Bank volunteers who couldn’t do what we do without you.

To name just a few: St. John Fisher Church and the Knights of Columbus provided food from the community garden, monthly donations, warm coats, and over 100 Thanksgiving bags. Marlborough Congregational Church coordinated homemade meals at the Sunday Drive-Thru Cafés, while the Youth Team and Dorcus Society helped fund our food and fuel bank accounts. The Shops at Marlborough Barn continue to find creative ways to support our mission.

MES held a successful Spirit Week Donation Drive, and Boy Scout Troop #39 supported us through can drives and wreath fundraisers. Marlborough Health & Rehab Center, Marlborough Bakery, and Big Y employees delivered much-needed food just in time for Thanksgiving. Thanks to the RHAM Music Department, RHAM Girl Scouts, and Dr. Gallagher & Marlborough Family Dental, we distributed over 150 pies. Kevin Haggerty and Saddler’s contributed bushels of winter squash.

For the fifth year, The Hometown Foundation donated 68 turkeys through their HungerLESS Holiday program. Combined with contributions from CT Foodshare and individual donors, we provided nearly 100 families with full Thanksgiving meals.

From every volunteer at the Marlborough Food Bank: thank you. Your generosity fuels our work, lifts our spirits, and reminds us daily of the power of community.

Sincerely,
Dawn Tavolieri and David Pratt
Co-Directors, Marlborough Food Bank

Hebron’s New Town Council

To the Editor:

It is a new era in Hebron as we move from a Board of Selectmen to a Town Council. While the responsibilities of the Town Council remain the same, I believe the name change is an important recognition of all those that contribute to Hebron’s success. Words have power and clearly there has been many select-women that have played, and continue to play, a vital role in our town government. The name change to Town Council reflects a positive and inclusive mindset that can propel Hebron forward.

Fortunately, the mission of this governing body remains unchanged: “The Town Council, acting as stewards of the Town and agents of the people, will provide services that promote safety, an affordable healthy living environment; and through effective land use and town resources, and economic base that creates jobs and tax assistance to the community while preserving our rural historic character.”

I would like to congratulate Councilor Tiffany Thiele for being selected as the new Chair and Councilor Jan Lawrence as the new Vice Chair. I am confident both of these individuals are committed to fulfilling their roles to act “as stewards of the Town and agents of the people.” During

See Letters, page 6



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★ *Letters cont. from page 5*

their election campaigns, Ms. Thiele and Mr. Lawrence stated their dedication to education and responsible economic growth.

One crucial element of Hebron's future that can embrace both education and responsible economic growth is a forward thinking plan for the town owned property at 17 Kinney Rd., also known as the Horton property. This environmentally significant and deeply historic watershed remains in pristine condition, actively cultivated by local farmers as it has been for over 300 years. Three distinguished academic leaders, Professor Robert Thorson and Professor Elizabeth Jockusch from UConn, and Professor John Demos from Yale, have all confirmed the tremendous education potential for the property. The significant economic potential has been acknowledged by two independent preservation organizations, Preservation Connecticut and Joshua's Trust, with the potential to embrace the multibillion-dollar, and sustainable, sectors of outdoor recreation, eco-tourism and agri-tourism.

Embracing this educational and economic asset reflects the goals of healthy living, effective land use, tax assistance and preservation of our rural historic character clearly delineated in the Town Council's Mission. I look forward to working with the new Town Council in the months and years ahead to realize these laudable goals. For more information please visit Save Hebron Center on Facebook.

Sincerely,
Kevin J. Tulumieri – Amston

The Love on the Bus Goes Round and Round

To the Editor:

The effective political and administrative management of a town is essential for its overall functioning. Programs that foster social connections and provide a safety net are key to helping the community thrive.

Andover offers a variety of services for its residents, one of which is the Andover Transportation program. The town operates four vehicles, three of which are equipped with wheelchair ramps. We are fortunate to have four person-

able, professional, and trained drivers; Janice Bazzani, Roland Bricault, Ellie Skoog and Lane Pelton. On average, the program assists 40 residents with medical appointments, 65 with shopping and food pantry visits, and another 65 with various events organized by the Andover Community & Senior Center (ACSC). Just last week, our drivers picked up a dozen Thanksgiving dinners – including turkeys and all the fixings – from the food pantry and delivered them to local homes.

I was asked to coordinate the program last summer, and I didn't hesitate to accept. My fondness and appreciation for the program stem from personal experience. For many months, the program's drivers transported my husband, who was in the final stages of Parkinson's disease, to and from a nearby day program. The loving and supportive contributions of the drivers, who often shared ice cream treats, laughter, and stories, significantly enhanced the quality of life for both my husband and me.

The program was established in 1996 through the tireless efforts of Cathy Palazzi, then senior coordinator, along with dedicated volunteers. With the support of town staff, she secured grant funding and town financial support to purchase four vehicles and launch the transportation program.

This initiative nurtures the well-being of everyone involved. It's a heartwarming story where givers receive as much as they give, and those who receive express gratitude and warmth in return. In a small community like Andover, with approximately 3,000 residents, this program plays a vital role in knitting the community together, allowing people to look out for one another. The transportation service connects residents to the ACSC, where a variety of activities, led by director Tess Grous and Haley Proto, foster social connections – the glue that binds a community.

Community life flourishes with town services like this one. I'm honored to have been a recipient and now serve as a helper and witness to the collective kindness of the Andover Transportation!

Linda Derick
Andover Transportation Coordinator

Editor's Desk continued from page 2

vehicles. The carrier needs to get in, and then out, without leaving the vehicle or backing up, the USPS said.

For all of our sakes, I hope we won't need to make of those tips for a long time. But, at this time of year, you never know.

It's a little-known fact that Gillette Castle State Park, in nearby East Haddam, got its name as the result of a sponsorship deal with the Gillette razor blade company. Okay, so that's not exactly true, but regardless, the park and its namesake castle is truly something to behold – and this year, it's expanding its popular holiday program to allow for more visitors than ever before.

From now through Dec. 21, the castle will be open every Friday, Saturday and Sunday; previously, the only weekday it had been open was the day after Thanksgiving.

The castle – which is actually the century-old mansion of the late actor William Gillette – is all decked out for the holidays, and there will also be plenty of free outdoor offerings each weekend on the 122-acre park grounds.

The castle will be open for self-paced tours from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. Friday through Sunday. Each day's final tour starts at 3:30 p.m. Tickets are \$6 and may be obtained at the Visitor Center on the day of visit. To guarantee a slot, advance purchase is highly recommended. To reserve, guests can use the Reserve America website (tinyurl.com/4ty5e59p) under "Gillette Castle State Park Holiday Tours."

Also, volunteers will lead interpretive hikes at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. along William Gillette's historic narrow-gauge train trails. Information about the timing of these free activities will be posted on the Friends website at www.gillettecastlefriends.org.

Though the mansion itself is closed to the public on weekdays, the park at 67 River Road in East Haddam remains open and visitors may stroll about the grounds to view the external decorations during regular hours (8 a.m. until sunset daily year-round). The exterior decorations are expected to remain in place through early January.

Who exactly was William Gillette, you ask? He was the first actor to become internationally famous for his performances as Sherlock Holmes. He performed the role on stage more than 1,300 times over the course of 30 years, played the detective in a 1916 silent movie, and even voiced him in two radio plays. It's said that his portrayal of Holmes helped create the modern image of the detective.

The Hartford native died in 1937 after a long theatrical career, and the state eventually took over ownership of his home and surrounding estate.

Lastly, a Cobalt Lodge resident named Joyce Vaccarelli recently sent along some poems in the hopes I might publish a couple. So I thought it would be a nice way to close out the column this week. Here is the first, entitled "Fear is Not What It's Cranked Up to Be":

"Fear it seems has taken a hundred-year lease, oversized and rude. Fear is unwilling to share your heart with happiness. For all the noise it makes and the room it takes, fear does little good.

Fear never wrote a symphony or poem, or negotiated a peace treaty.

Sometimes it takes chaos for me to understand peace. When circumstances seem out of control or volatile, when I feel the stillness within my heart that allows me to know I'm in God's presence. I have the protection of his love. There's no denying. God's the giver of good things including hope to the possibilities with faith. The sun will come out tomorrow. In strength and majestic power he shakes the stronghold of foes, all the days of your life."

And here's another one, entitled "To Love and Be Loved":

"Turtle doves know their name, through stormy winds and blustery snow. With pitter-patter on window pane, in hues of color inscribe our names, like weeping willows will catch the flame, inscribed our hearts each other's name."

Thanks for the poems, Joyce!

See you next week.

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AHM News & Notes

AHM Youth and Family Services has announced the following items of interest. For more information or to register, visit [ahmyouth.recdesk.com/Community/Program](#).

Gingerbread House Making: Wednesday, Dec. 17, 6-7 p.m., for kids ages 4 and up; registration due by Dec. 6. This class will include hot cocoa, and all the supplies needed to build your own gingerbread house. Participants select DIY projects of their choice. Cost is \$10/person.

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.

Winter/Early Spring Program: Registration opens soon for AHM’s winter programs. There will be classes for all ages, including Yoga, Macrame, and Art with Audrey. Stay tuned on our socials and [ahmyouth.org](#) for updates and registration info.

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

★ Council Changes Mind, cont. from page 1

and not at a state level and oppose the bill. I would much rather go in that direction rather than create a committee that has no legislative authority.”

Fellow Republican council member Tim Feegel was more diplomatic.

“I want both,” he said. “I want to send the letter [urging the veto] and I think Karen’s idea [for a committee] is workable.” He also said that he liked the idea of finding language that the council could come together on, where all seven members could support a letter to the governor.

Planning and Zoning Administrator Juliet Hodge seemed to support Wanat’s idea of a committee working to develop a plan that would explore how to both comply with the bill and protect the town’s interests.

“I think what this bill is trying to do is force towns to look at it a different way,” she said, “and be proactive and demonstrate that they’re making an effort to make more housing, more affordable housing”

She pointed out that if any developments were contested in court, the town would likely be viewed more favorably if it did have a housing plan. She also pointed out that the bill had some potential benefits for the town.

“There are opportunities in this bill,” she said. “There’s funding,” including some that might make it easier for the town to redevelop existing brownfield sites, she said.

Council member Joelyn Leon, a Democrat, pointed out that legislation was often amended and revised in subsequent terms. She argued that sharing the town’s concerns with state lawmakers might make a difference, especially as other towns around the state likely would be doing the same.

In the end, the council voted to send a letter, and the revised version was finally sent the following week.

Among all the discussion of HB 8002, the council also managed to sneak in a few other issues. In particular, they considered a proposed change to the blight and nuisance ordinance. It was an opportunity for some across-the-aisle camaraderie, as Feegel and Wanat both shared concerns over the use of vehicles and vehicle parts in landscaping and expressed concern that the town would not be seeking to cite gardening projects like a tractor tire garden bed (in Wanat’s case) or a vintage tractor on the lawn or ’53 Chevy pickup converted into a waterfall (Feegel’s projects).

Cox listened to the concerns and said those projects did not seem like blight to him. He offered to change any language, and reminded the council that town employees always had to use discretion when evaluating code enforcement.

The issue will go to a public hearing at a later Town Council meeting in January.



Mighty Micros... On Nov. 16, the RHAM Rams Micro team won the SNEYFC Micros Championship against the Ellington Roadrunners. This is the first RHAM Micros championship in 23 years. The RHAM Rams came into the playoffs as the No. 2 seed, having lost only to Ellington in the regular season and having lost the Championship game in 2024. The Rams were eager for a strong victory. The Rams led at halftime, 13-6 and then held off a great Roadrunners offense to secure a 39-19 victory. Head Coach was Dave King and assistant coaches were Mike Riley, Mike Morales and Justin Knight.

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Senior Shoppers... Andover offers a variety of services for its residents, one of which is the Andover Transportation program. The town operates four vehicles, three of which are equipped with wheelchair ramps. On average, the program assists 40 residents with medical appointments, 65 with shopping and food pantry visits, and another 65 with various events organized by the Andover Community & Senior Center. Pictured here, after breakfast at Rye on Main before going shopping in Willimantic are, from left, Janice Bazzani (driver), Mary Duval, Lois Popoff, Ashley Roberts, Mike & Cathy Palazzi and Roxanne Hosking.

Holiday Gift Tree, Sign-Up

Andover families can sign up for gifts with Tess Grous, social services director, at the Community and Senior Center or by emailing tgrous@andoverct.org. Please include the following information: your name, telephone number, ages of children, whether boy or girl, items the children are requesting and sizes if asking for clothing. Anonymous tags will then be placed on the Holiday Giving Tree at the Community and Senior Center, for items that are requested. Gifts will be distributed the week of Dec. 22. Anyone interested in purchasing a special request item for an Andover child can come select a tag from the giving tree. See Grous before leaving with the tag.

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.

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 Barntique, 415 Route 6, Andover, as part of Artist Open Studios of Northeast CT. Artist open studio hours will be 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 6 and 7. There will be an artist reception Saturday, Dec. 6, from noon-3 p.m. For more information, visit aosct.org.

Vacancy on School Board

The Andover Board of Education will vote to fill a vacancy on Dec. 10 at its regularly scheduled meeting. Any candidate interested should send a letter of interest to either the town clerk or BOE chairperson Caitlin Greenhouse at greenhousec@andoverelementaryct.org. Due to charter representation rules, this seat can not be filled with a registered Democrat.

Holiday Food Drive

The Andover Volunteer Fire Department, located at 11 School Rd., will host a Holiday Food Drive Saturday, Dec. 13, from 9 a.m.-1 p.m., to benefit the Andover Food Pantry. The pantry is in need of the following holiday meal items: hams, turkeys, instant potatoes, gravy, stuffing, apple and cranberry sauce, canned pie filling and baking mixes (cookies, cakes, brownies). Monetary contributions will also be welcomed. Make checks payable to Andover Food Pantry.

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.

Christmas Fair & Bake Sale

Andover Congregational Church, 359 Route 6, will be hold its annual Christmas Fair & Bake Sale on Saturday, Dec. 6, from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. There will be vendors, raffle baskets, silent auction, baked goods, and Grandma's Attic items. If you have any questions, leave a message at the church, at 860-742-7696.

Homework Club

A Homework Club for students in grades 6-10 will be offered Tuesdays, 3-4:30 p.m., through 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.

Basketpalooza is Here!

All are invited to support the Andover Friends of the Library and the Andover Public Library this season in the fifth annual fundraiser Basketpalooza. Between now and Dec. 22, you can purchase tickets for a chance at winning any one of the 46 theme baskets, which are filled with toys, homemade jams, baking supplies and more. Tickets are \$1 each, \$5 for 6 tickets and \$10 for 13 tickets. Credit cards will be accepted using Square (\$5 minimum) for ticket purchases. One winning ticket for each basket will be drawn Monday, Dec. 22, at 5 p.m.; winners will be notified that evening.

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. **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 Willimantic on Dec. 16 and 30, and Manchester on 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 – Watercolor & Sea Glass:** Tuesday, Dec. 16, 6-8 p.m. Cost is \$35. Explore watercolor painting and create mixed-media pieces using sea glass and shells. All skill levels welcome. Space is limited. Supplies are provided; feel free to bring your own special pieces. To sign-up, call 860-742-7305 ext. 451. **Holiday Shopping at Evergreen Walk:** Friday, Dec. 12, 10:30 a.m. All are invited to this festive trip to Evergreen Walk in South Windsor. Enjoy a mix of holiday music drifting through the air, flavorful seasonal bites, cheerful shopping, and more. **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. **Christmas Carols with RHAM High School:** Monday, Dec. 22, 11:30 a.m. Enjoy classic carols, as well as a few surprises. Hot cocoa and sweet treats will be served. **Hair Care with Helen:** Monday, 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. **New Year's Eve Brunch:** Monday, Dec. 31, 11 a.m. Join the celebration with food, friends and fun, and a countdown to noon toast. Call the center to sign up.

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, at 860-742-7305 ext. 4218 or townclerk@andoverct.org, or Tess Grous, Social Services Director and Municipal Agent, at 860-742-7305 ext. 4510 or tgrous@andoverct.org.

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Dream Vacation... The Phillips family of East Hampton recently traveled to Turks and Caicos for their dream vacation—a true bucket list destination. Of course, they brought along a copy of the *Rivereast News Bulletin* to capture the memory. This once-in-a-lifetime trip was filled with sunshine, turquoise waters, and unforgettable moments, making it a vacation they will always cherish.

Where in the World is the *Rivereast*?

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



A Sojourn in Spain... George and Elizabeth Chrostowsky of Colchester visited the charming village of Port do Sant Miguel in Spain. There, they enjoyed paella and a traditional dish called bullit de peix, meaning boiled fish. It is a fish stew that combines the rich flavors of fish, spicy red peppers and a garlic-and-oil paste making this a dish to savor.



Seeing Sebastian... Fran DiPace of East Hampton brought the *Rivereast* with him on a recent trip to Sebastian, Fla. – home of Pelican Island as well as, according to the sign pictured, “friendly people and six old grouches”!



Rivereast in Amish Country... East Hampton resident Barbara Hahn brought along the *Rivereast* on a recent trip to Lancaster, Pa., to see Noah at the Sight and Sound Theater.

? Where in the World? ?

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

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

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From the Town Manager’s Desk

Every five years, the State of Connecticut requires local governments to perform a revaluation of all real property within their borders. The purpose of a revaluation is to ensure that all real property assessments reflect current fair market value as of the revaluation date, in compliance with Connecticut General Statutes. The Town of Marlborough contracted with EQuality Valuation Services of Waterbury, a professional revaluation firm.

EQuality established property values using recent sales of comparable properties within each neighborhood of Marlborough. The new values reflect the strong increase in real estate prices over the past five years.

On Wednesday, Dec. 3, EQuality began mailing Assessment Change Notices to all owners of property in Marlborough. These notices display the new 2025 assessed values for each property as determined through the revaluation process.

The notice also includes instructions on how to schedule an informal appeal with EQuality representatives. These informal appeal sessions will be conducted by telephone and are intended to give property owners an opportunity to discuss their new values, ask questions, and provide additional information if they believe their new assessment does not accurately reflect market value.

It is important for residents to understand that an increase in the assessed value of their property does not mean their taxes will increase by the same percentage. The mill rate is determined by dividing the Grand Levy (the total amount of taxes approved by voters at the annual budget referendum) by the Grand List (the total taxable value of all property in town).

Accordingly, when property values rise across the community, the mill rate (the tax rate) typically decreases to ensure that only those taxes approved by voters are levied.

Assessed values may rise substantially, but individual tax bills may see only modest changes once voters approve the new FY27 budget and the new mill rate is established.

David Porter
Marlborough Town Manager



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.

Free Breakfast with Santa

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

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

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

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

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.

Watercolor Workshop at Arts Center

Marlborough Arts Center, located at 231 N. Main St., is offering a 6 weeks series of watercolor classes on Thursdays, 10:30 a.m.-1 p.m., from Jan. 15-Feb. 19.

Entitled “Capturing the Essence,” this workshop is designed to help you express yourself in an impressionistic way. Topics include the fundamentals of composition, values, edges, shapes, color, perspective, proportions and more. A demonstration will be given each day where instructor Alan James will explain the composition and techniques he uses for each painting. Students will then create the same painting with hands-on instruction and guidance.

James is an award-winning watercolor artist

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.stjfcchurch.org.

Holy Day and Christmas Mass Schedule: Dec. 8, Celebration of the Immaculate Conception of Mary, Mass at 7 p.m., Wednesday, Dec. 24, Vigil Masses at 4 p.m. and 9 p.m., and Thursday, Dec. 25, at 9:30 a.m.

Advent Extended Reconciliation Schedule: Saturday, Dec. 20, 2-3:30 p.m. and Monday, Dec. 22, 5-7 p.m.

Advent Events Schedule: There will be a Christmas Pageant on Friday, Dec. 12, at 7 p.m. A Christmas Giving Program supporting six organizations will accept requested unwrapped gifts by Dec. 14, and there will be Caroling at the Marlborough Healthcare Center on Sunday, Dec. 14, at 2 p.m.

Regular 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

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.

Dec. 14 is the Second Sunday in Advent, with an Advent reading and the lighting of the Advent candles. The service will include a baptism and Joyful Blue Bluegrass Band leading parishioners in handclapping, sing-along holiday songs with a special musical piece performed by the group. The service will be led by Seaver with the sermon given by church member Beth Alves.

Nativity Festival: The community is invited to view the many nativity sets in the church meetinghouse Friday, Dec. 5, from 6-8 p.m. While there, sit and enjoy the music of harpist Jason Castaquay and an organist/pianist Ron Hughes. There is no charge but a free-will donation will go to World Central Kitchen.

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-perish-

Parks and Rec. Programs

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

Adult Programs: 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.

and teacher. His art graces the walls of many private and corporate collectors worldwide. James is the East Coast America host of the internet TV show *Colour in Your Life*. As of spring 2025, his work is literally on the moon, having been selected for a lunar module library featuring artists from around the world. More information about James and his art can be found at alanjamesart.com.

The series is \$360 for all six classes. To register and see class make-up policies, go to www.marlborougharts.org. Online registration is preferred but mail-in is also possible. For more information, call 860-467-6353.

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.

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. Bags with specific shopping lists are available at the Masses. Sandwich-making and collection continues the last Thursday of the month for St. Vincent de Paul in Middletown. Other scheduled service opportunities can be found in the weekly bulletin.

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

able 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 next church-sponsored Drive Thru Café, for Marlborough Food Bank clients and their families with tickets, will be Dec. 28. Operation Christmas Stocking, for youth ages 13 to 17 at Albert J. Solnit Children’s Center in Middletown, has begun. Handmade Christmas stockings with giving suggestions are available at the church. Filled stockings will be delivered the week of Dec. 15.

Stretch and Strengthen for seniors, led by certified instructor Barbara LaBlanc, is held Fridays at 9:45 a.m. upstairs in the lounge. The community is welcome. The weekly drop-in fee is \$25.

Second Blessings Thrift Shop is open for selling and donations Fridays from noon to 3 pm and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. The thrift shop rooms are filled with many new arrivals for the holiday season. Follow the shop through Facebook at Second Blessings Thrift Shop, Marlborough CT. The shop sells year-round through eBay at bit.ly/MCCebay.

General Information: Marlborough Congregational Church is an Open and Affirming faith community and all are welcome. The church does not pass a collection plate, but free-will giving boxes are found by the doors in the sanctuary. 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.

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★ Marlborough Sidewalk Project,, cont. from page 1

of Town Open Space adjacent to the school at the southern end.”

The town’s first sidewalk segment was constructed in 2007 along School Drive, connecting the library, senior center and school using STEAP grant funding. Since then, Hughes said Marlborough has continued to build the network incrementally, financed through a combination of state and regional grants.

“Since 2007, the town – through the combination of Connectivity, LOTCIP, STEAP and TRIP grant awards of approximately \$2,400,000 – has built the sidewalks,” he said. Marlborough has also made substantial local contributions, as they have funded the design work and made construction contributions “totaling approximately \$500,000” since 2007.

Major progress has been made on the western side of Lake Terramuggus, including a recent TRIP grant intended to finish the remaining gaps. “The TRIP Grant will complete the Lake Road sidewalk link to North Main Street to complete the west side sidewalks from Blish Park to the school, so now we are working on the east side sidewalk connection,” Hughes said.

The newly awarded CCG specifically targets that east side gap. According to Hughes, “The Connectivity Grant will extend the sidewalk connection 1,100 feet on the east side of Lake

11 Cheney Rd. to the southern intersection of Denler Drive and Cheney Road,” which will open up a “safer pedestrian alternative to residents on the east side of the lake.”

Public opinion on sidewalk expansion has historically been divided. The town’s 2020 Community Survey found residents nearly evenly split, with 45% considering additional sidewalks important and 43% opposing further expansion. But Hughes believes public usage patterns have shifted noticeably since the most recent construction.

“I can say the use has dramatically increased with the 2023 North Main Street extension to Lake Road,” Hughes said. “You see people walking their dogs ... walking in groups throughout the day and people meeting up in the parking areas taking advantage of a safe pedestrian environment.”

With funding now secured, the town expects to move into permitting, design finalization and bid preparation before construction begins. Hughes anticipates that work will occur sometime in 2026 or in spring 2027. Once built, the new sidewalks will bring Marlborough closer to realizing a fully interconnected town center walkway system – one that has been planned for nearly two decades and continues to see growing community use.

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A Beautiful Night of Music!... On Nov. 20, Marlborough Elementary School sixth-grade students had the opportunity to join Gustavo Fernandez, classical guitarist and Marlborough resident, for a special joint concert at the Marlborough Arts Center. Pictured are, back row, Donna Arseneault, Lila Yerukhimovich, Bridget Walsh, Cole LeBlanc, Tiago Fernandez, Gustavo Fernandez; middle row, Charlotte Trzcienski, Arya Bytautus, Gemma Stachelek, Julia Sabourin, Megan Seipt; front row, Nixon Gustafson, Joey Kovac, Owen Kaminski, Lily Ekstowicz, Martin Williams.

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 group is holding its annual holiday silent auction 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.

Nativity Festival Tonight

Marlborough Congregational Church will host its fourth annual Nativity Festival Friday, Dec. 5, from 6-8 p.m., in the meeting house of the church, 35 S. Main St.

All are welcome to view a collection of nativities shared by members of the church and community, while being serenaded with Christmas music on harp and organ by Jason Castonguay and Ron Hughes.

A free will offering will be donated to World Central Kitchen, an organization that has provided meals in response to humanitarian, climate and community crises since 2010. For more information, visit wck.org.

Dungeons and Dragons Fungeon: Tweens and teens (ages 10-16) are invited to enjoy a single-session *Dungeons & Dragons* game on Mondays, Dec. 8 and 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.

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 blankie.

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).

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 taught 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.marlborougharts.org. Online registration is preferred but mail-in is also possible. For more information, call 860-467-6353.

Senior Center News and Notes

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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.

Happy 23rd Birthday
Jayna Lynn!

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Popular Doo-Wop Band Features Two Local Residents

By Anne Lilburn

Jerry Fanfarelli started playing guitar when he was eight years old, sometime around 1963 or 1964. The Beatles were hitting the airwaves, he said, and that’s why he picked the instrument, but it was doo-wop music, with its vocal harmonies, that really captured his heart back then, and still does today.

“Doo-wop is all about falling in love, falling out of love, you fall in love again,” he says. “A lot of people still connect with it because they can identify with the music.”

Today, Fanfarelli is the founder and leader of the Jukebox 45 Show Band, a local doo-wop band that’s found success in Connecticut and throughout the northeast.

Fanfarelli grew up in New Haven and West Haven, and later went on to spend 25 years as a New Haven firefighter, but the current East Hampton resident said he never gave up on music, even when it wasn’t his day job – and he said he didn’t just continue to play, he remained a student, something he said he learned when he used to travel to New York City to watch guitar pioneer Les Paul perform at the Iridium jazz club. He said he and a group of regulars would occasionally share a beer with Paul afterwards.

Even as Paul entered his 90s, “he’d say, ‘I’m still an advancing guitar player,’” Fanfarelli noted. Fanfarelli said the same of himself, emphasizing that he is always learning.

These days, Fanfarelli is retired from his firefighting career, but his music career has become a full-time job. His band has become successful enough that they are booked up, particularly in the summer, with shows across the Northeast. Fanfarelli said sometimes people think they don’t know any doo-wop songs, but soon recognize the classics when they start singing. Among his favorites to perform, he says, is ‘The Five Satins’ hit “In the Still of the Night.”

Fanfarelli said that getting his band together took time, and the band members have changed over the years. One of the newer members in the

band is fellow East Hampton resident and tenor saxophonist Michael Buck. Fanfarelli and Buck happened to meet at a restaurant one morning in a completely chance occurrence. Fanfarelli said Buck, who is a Connecticut state trooper, noticed his firefighter’s hat and started chatting with him about his past work. It didn’t take long for the two men to realize that they weren’t both just first responders, but also musicians. Fanfarelli invited Buck to a rehearsal and the rest was history.

Buck said he first started playing saxophone as a kid growing up in Berlin, long before he enlisted in the military and later began his career in policing. He said a few years ago, he had just started “taking music out of my toolbox again for mental health purposes” and had been playing at home and performing at small shows when he ran into Fanfarelli.

Buck said he wasn’t super familiar with doo-wop, but he was familiar with the music of that era, since his father was a big Elvis Presley fan. Buck said he liked the nostalgia and the harmonies of the music.

“There’s always something about that style music that drew me in,” he said. “It’s not often you hear grown men harmonizing together like that, barbershop style.”

Buck said when he first met up with the band, he was impressed.

“I stopped in at a Wednesday rehearsal,” he recalled. “I had my saxophone and as soon as I got there, I realized that I was possibly in over my head, that these guys were really good.”

“I went home after the first rehearsal, and I said, ‘Man, I really want to be a part of this,’ and I hit the books and I updated myself on the style of music, and I listened to the solos and the songs that they play, and I learned it, so that by my second or third rehearsal, they were like, ‘Whoa, you know, this is different guy. Maybe he is going to work out.’”

He adds that he also had never sung before, but he said he studied that, too, and now feels he



The Jukebox 45 Show Band features East Hampton residents Michael Buck, second from right, and band founder and leader Jerry Fanfarelli, center.

can hold his own.

Fanfarelli and Buck are joined by New Britain residents Al Floyd on drums, Joe Carver on bass, and a new keyboardist, Miguel Vargas, who travels from New York to play with the band at their performances and weekly rehearsals.

While the band performs regularly, Fanfarelli’s biggest performance that he’s looking to promote these days is a local one coming up in April at East Hampton High School. It’s an event that Buck helped coordinate, as a former member of the Board of Education. The concert, which will happen on April 25, will be a fundraiser for East Hampton High School’s Project Graduation, an all-night celebration for graduates. The event

will also include The Royal Teens, who scored a hit back in 1958 with their song, “Short Shorts.”

Buck said he’s happy that he gets to use music for good causes and values the connection he gets with audiences.

“It’s a break to do something that brings people joy,” he says, “because my job description [as a state trooper] doesn’t often require me to be involved with somebody in a joyful moment, so this helps me. It helps me remember the good side of people.”

Tickets for the April show are already available for purchase at ehhsprojectgraduation.ludus.com. A 10% discount is available through Dec. 24.

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.

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

Upcoming Events: Trailblazers Walking Group: Monday, Dec. 8, 9 a.m., at Air Line State Park, 69 Smith St. All paces welcome.

Linefit Exercise Dance Class: Monday, Dec. 8, 2 p.m. This is a low-impact line dancing class. Instructor is Mariana Sigleski. Fee \$3 is monthly.

Digital Mike: Tuesday, Dec. 9, 10 a.m. Get

technical help with your devices from the Senior Center’s new volunteer Mike Crutchfield.

Card Creations with Donna: Wednesday, Dec. 10, 2:30 p.m. Cost is \$3.

Festivus Celebration: Wednesday, Dec. 10, 11:30 a.m. In true *Seinfeld* fashion, the senior center is bringing the quirky holiday of Festivus to life! From the Airing of Grievances to the Feats of Strength, it will be a lighthearted way to enjoy the season. There will be lunch, prizes and a few holiday surprises.

The Pretend Cooking Show: Thursday, Dec. 11, at 2 p.m. This is a no-cook, no-bake micro cooking class, featuring gingerbread energy. Class limited to eight participants. Led by center director Holly Marreo.

Bike Rides for Seniors: Friday, Dec. 12, 10 a.m., at Manhan Rail Trail in Massachusetts; the ride is 30-35 miles with a lunch stop. Call the senior center for information and to register.

Trips: 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.

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.

‘Unsung Heroes’ – An Original Epoch Arts Production

Epoch Arts’ teen theater company has written an original theater production, *Unsung Heroes*, and the play will be performed Friday and Saturday, Dec. 5 and 6, at 7 p.m. both nights, at Epoch, 27 Skinner St.

The play focuses on a variety of heroic people and their stories, and shows the traits that it takes to step up, face difficulties and make a difference. The cast members are taking on real life characters from different time periods, and play several different character roles throughout the production. Many of the stories have not been heard of, aren’t necessarily in history books and are not in the mainstream media.

The play tells the stories of heroes such as Mercy Otis Warren, a woman activist, poet and playwright who urged her fellow colonists to resist British rule; Stacey Bess, who taught children in homeless shelters; and Martin Couney, an advocate and pioneer for neonatal care for premature babies. Other unsung heroes’ stories are told throughout the play.

Tickets are \$12. Reserve tickets by emailing elizabeth@epocharts.org. For more information, visit www.epocharts.org.

Jingle Bell Craft Fair

Bethlehem Lutheran Church will host its annual Jingle Bell Craft Fair Saturday, Dec. 6, from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. It will be a day of handmade crafts and fresh baked goods, with all proceeds being donated to The Benny Fund and Connecticut Children’s Medical Center.

The East Hampton Police Department will also be there to collect new, unwrapped toys and games for their annual stuff-a-cruiser event.

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 friends@ehpl@gmail.com.



Powderpuff Fun... Sophia Snyder and Alivia Baier from East Hampton High School recently coordinated a Powderpuff game for their Senior capstone project. They spent months behind the scenes designing and ordering T-shirts for the seniors (pictured at left) and the juniors (pictured at right), meeting with the superintendent and principal and coordinating the event with students. Their intent was to raise money for the East Hampton Food Bank and bring a fun, spirited event back to EHHS to promote a sense of community among students. The bake sale and donations raised \$200 for the East Hampton Food Bank.



Powderpuff Fun... Sophia Snyder and Alivia Baier from East Hampton High School recently coordinated a Powderpuff game for their Senior capstone project. They spent months behind the scenes designing and ordering T-shirts for the seniors (pictured at left) and the juniors (pictured at right), meeting with the superintendent and principal and coordinating the event with students. Their intent was to raise money for the East Hampton Food Bank and bring a fun, spirited event back to EHHS to promote a sense of community among students. The bake sale and donations raised \$200 for the East Hampton Food Bank.

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Gingerbread House Decorating Contest

The Village Center merchants present the fourth annual Village Center Gingerbread House Decorating Contest. East Hampton Public Library is proud to once again support the effort by serving as the drop-off and display location and helping to promote the contest to the community.

Participants may drop off completed gingerbread houses at the library between Dec. 1–6. Community voting will take place Dec. 8–19, with winners announced Dec. 20. Prizes will be awarded in two age groups – under 15 and 16+.

The contest is made possible through local businesses, who contribute prizes ranging from restaurant and activity gift certificates to retail

merchandise and more. The collaboration between the merchants and the library helps spotlight these businesses during a key shopping season.

Space in the contest is limited and available on a first-come, first-served basis. Major guidelines include the use of edible materials and a maximum base size of 12” x 12”. A complete list of rules is available at www.EastHamptonPublicLibrary.org.

Families who would like to build their gingerbread creations at the library may join a special Family Gingerbread House Decorating Program on Saturday, Dec. 6, from 10:30 a.m.-noon. Registration is required for this program.

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.

Message Series: The message each Sunday will focus on the Advent topics of Hope, Peace, Joy and Love.

Christmas Pageant: The Children’s Christmas Pageant, telling the story of the birth of Jesus, will be held Sunday, Dec. 14, at 9 a.m.

Christmas Concert: The Christmas Concert, with Vocal Choir and musicians, will be held Sunday, Dec. 21, at 9 a.m.

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.

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

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, at 1 p.m. with caroling at Cobalt Health Center followed by a Christmas party 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.

Making Christmas Easier for Local Families

By Anne Lilburn

East Hampton is getting into the holiday spirit with two toy drives happening right now.

The East Hampton Police Department will be collecting donated new, unwrapped toys at Bethlehem Lutheran Church this Saturday, Dec. 6, from 9 a.m.-3 p.m., and in a separate effort, the East Hampton Food and Fuel Bank has its own toy donation drive underway at Liberty Bank.

Police Chief Dennis Woessner said the event at Bethlehem Church had become a tradition that the department looked forward to. He said the toys collected by the department at the event would be delivered to the town’s social services department, where staff and volunteers would separate the toys by age, gender and clothing size for distribution to families according to lists they provide.

“It’s a great community event,” said Woessner, “and a great event for officers to get out and interact with the community in a positive way.”

Social Services case worker Christine Wiessner said that the police department really took on the hardest work of the annual drive.

“It is 100 percent organized, and put on, and worked by the police department,” she said , adding, “I don’t have to stand out in the cold gathering toys.”

As for distributing the toys, she said the families that the Social Services Department serve come in all varieties, from traditional families, to single parents, to grandparents raising grand-

kids. Giving them gifts to provide for their kids, she said , takes the stress out of the holiday season, adding that families rely on this program each year.

Woessner added that the only reason the event was such a success was really due to the outpouring of support from the community, which he said is always exceptionally generous when it came to holiday giving.

“We get so many toys [most years],” he said , “that we joke that it’s not stuff-a-cruiser; it’s stuff-a-trailer.”

* * *

Also currently happening through the weekend at Liberty Bank (located at 2 West High St.), the East Hampton Food and Fuel Bank has a tree set up with tags on it indicating kids aged 1-13 who need presents this holiday season. People can come pick a tag, which indicates the child’s age and whether they are a boy or a girl, and purchase a new, unwrapped present to donate by Monday, Dec. 9.

The Food Bank is also accepting donations for some food items and household goods at Liberty Bank. In its Facebook post, the food bank said it is currently in need of toilet paper, paper towels, and laundry detergent, as well as mayonnaise, mustard, maple syrup, pancake mix, canned fruit and coffee.

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.

Republicans’ Holiday Gathering

On Tuesday, Dec. 16, at 6:30 p.m., the Republican Town Committee will host a holiday gathering at The Dublin, 42 East High St. Appetizers and desserts will be provided.

All are welcome; the committee will collect non-perishable food items to donate to the East Hampton Food Bank.

Pair of Parties at Epoch

There are two parties coming up next week at Epoch Arts, 27 Skinner St. For more information, visit www.epocharts.org.

Kids Christmas Party: Wednesday, Dec. 10, from 4:30-6:30 p.m., for students in grades 1-6. Kids will make a holiday painting with staff artists, creating a festive piece of art. After that, Epoch’s elves will be on hand to help decorate some Christmas cookies and have some crafty fun, followed by treats and good cheer in the café. Cost is \$25. Register online.

Ugly Sweater Party: Friday, Dec. 12, 7-9 p.m., for teens in grades 6-12. Wear your most festive outfit and play games, decorate gingerbread houses, watch movies and hang out with your friends. No registration needed. Cost is \$10.

NEW LOCATION!

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YOUR ATTORNEYS

“December: when your fridge is full, your schedule is fuller, and your patience is MIA.”—Unknown

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Stop in today to ensure your Car, Truck or SUV is READY FOR WINTER!

Get Prepared Early While many people truly start to prepare for the rigors of winter in December, it is ideal to make sure your car(s) are prepared for the winter in the early fall. By doing so, you give yourself time to make sure everything is ready – before it’s too late.

Consider Getting Snow Tires Snow tires are made of a softer rubber than all-season tires which allows them to retain flexibility, even in the coldest of cold. Tread patterns on these tires also allow for exceptional grip in the snow and ice.

Check Your Fluid Levels Working windshield wipers and a solid supply of wiper fluid will ensure that you and your customers have visibility in the worst of snowstorms. Wiper fluid will get used up quickly if a car is being driven during a snowstorm, for obvious reasons.

Change Your Oil and Find the Proper Viscosity Again, this winter car care tip seems rather simple, however it’s another tip that is easy to miss. The cold weather negatively affects oil’s effectiveness. The cold climates will make your oil thicker, reducing engine circulation.

Have Your Battery Checked It’s typically more difficult for a battery to operate in colder weather, therefore it’s important to make sure your battery is strong enough to last the winter.

Monday-Friday 8am-5pm
80 East High Street, East Hampton
860-267-7222

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Santa is Coming to Town

Santa Claus is coming to the Haddam Neck Community Tree-Lighting on Saturday, Dec. 6, from 4-6 p.m., with a rain date of Dec. 7. All are invited to attend.

This family event will be held in the church field at 17 Haddam Neck Rd. in East Hampton and will include a decorated tractor parade, Christmas tree-lighting, a visit with Santa and Mrs. Claus, a puppet show, Christmas carols, a

children’s craft table, and people can decorate Christmas cookies. This year there will also be a magician who interacts with the kids and also does balloon art.

Enjoy s’mores at the fire pits, popcorn, hot dogs, chili, hot cocoa and hot cider.

Please bring a donation of non-perishable food or personal hygiene items for the East Hampton Food Bank.

Free Breakfast with Santa

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

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

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

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

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.

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 donnaadubehryb@gmail.com for more information.

Local Potter to Hold 50th Annual Open Studio Event

Local potter John Macomber will celebrate a significant milestone this December as he hosts his 50th annual Pottery Open Studio at Greenleaf Stoneware. The event will take place over two weekends, Dec. 6 and 7 and Dec. 8 and 9, with hours from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. each day at 1 Aarons Way, East Hampton.

Macomber, known for his functional stoneware and distinctive glazes, began offering open studio weekends five decades ago as a way to welcome the community into his workspace and provide direct access to his handcrafted pottery. Over the years, the event has become a holiday tradition, drawing both longtime collectors and new visitors.

Guests attending the open studio will have

the opportunity to view a wide selection of handcrafted pieces, including bowls, mugs, serving ware, and decorative items. Visitors can meet the artist, tour the working studio, and learn about the techniques Macomber uses in his wheel-thrown and hand-glazed work.

The anniversary year holds special meaning for Macomber, whose pottery has been a fixture in the region’s arts community since the early 1970s. Many attendees return annually to purchase gifts, add to their collections, or support local craftsmanship during the holiday season.

The event is open to the public with no admission fee.

For additional information, call 860-528-6090 or visit greenleafstoneware.com.

EHVFD ‘Santa Runs’ Return

The members of the East Hampton Volunteer Fire Department have announced the schedule for this year’s annual “Santa Run” visits to various neighborhoods in town.

Santa’s visits to East Hampton begin on Friday, Dec. 5, with the East Hampton Recreation Department’s Jingle Bell Parade in the Village Center. Santa’s tours with the Fire Department begin Sunday, Dec. 7, with weekend routes starting at approximately 4 p.m. on weekends and at 5 p.m. during the week. The routes will be conducted in accordance with the schedule shown below and will follow the approximate order in which the streets are listed. A GPS tracker will enable children of all ages to locate Santa at any point along that evening’s route.

Important Note: For safety reasons, Santa will not be able to stop and greet people along the state-controlled roads in town. If you live along routes 16, 66 or 196, please consult the schedule below and arrange to meet Santa at a convenient nearby location.

Inclement weather or emergency calls could potentially result in curtailment or cancellation of a particular evening’s activities and cannot be rescheduled. Any changes or updates to the established schedule will be posted on the EHVFD Facebook page as soon as practicable.

These Santa Run events are sponsored, staffed and funded by the members of the fire department, which remains a 100% volunteer organization. No taxpayer or department budgetary funds are utilized to defray expenses; donations offered along the routes are accepted. The schedule is:

Dec. 5: Jingle Bell Parade/Village Center.

Dec. 7: Dziok, Dale, Harlan Place, Olde Flatbrook, Flatbrook, Tallwood, Waterhole, Deer Meadow, Salmon Run, Comstock Trail, Brookside Court, Tartia, Jacobson Farm, Tartia to end.

Dec. 8: No runs scheduled.

Dec. 9: Walnut, Smith to Flanders, Flanders to Lakeview, Bishop Hill, Bevin Blvd, Edgerton, Chatham Fields, Huckleberry, Sunset, Holly, Cedar Ridge.

Dec. 10: Barton Hill, Steepleview, Oak Knoll, Maple, Gov. Bill O’Neill, lower Barton Hill, For-

est Glen, Forest, Hyde Farm, Mary Ann Drive, Hayes, East Hayes, Childs Road (off Forest), Forest to end at Skinner.

Dec. 11: Childs Road (off 66), Abbey, Anderson, Flannery, Cone, Old Middletown Road, Depot Hill (lower), Oakum Dock, Grist Mill, Depot Hill (upper), Middle Haddam Road, Bates, High Point, Schoolhouse, Hurd Park Road, Keighley Pond, Long Hill.

Dec. 12: Edgemere Condos, Clark Hill, Waterview, Mountainview, Sunrise, Skyline, Highland Terrace, Starview, Midwood Farm, Grayson, Stonegate, North Cone, Tiffany Court.

Dec. 13: Smith, Dogwood, Royal Oaks area, Arch, Viola, Flanders, Quinn’s Way, Daly, Pe-causett, Portage, Bear Swamp, Peach Farm, Whispering Woods, Town Line Drive, Orchard View.

Dec. 14: Old Marlborough Road, Poets area, Lake Vista Drive, Edgewater Circle, Laurel Ridge, Indigenous Peoples’ area (Wangonk, etc.)

Dec. 15: Old Skinner, Old Chestnut Hill (lower), Carriage, Emily, Lena, Old Young, Taylor, Wildwood, Daniel Street, Wopowog, Brook Hill, South Main, Main Street to finish at Village Center.

Dec. 16: Old Coach, Old Middletown, Chestnut Hill, Michael, Hog Hill, William, Charles Mary, Terp, Hog Hill, Alden’s Crossing, Long Crossing.

Dec. 17: Hills Avenue, Fairlawn, Melburn, Laurel Glen, North Maple, Maplewood, Beech-crest, Sherry Drive, Spice Hill, Tarragon (upper), Nutmeg, Tarragon (lower), Curry, Saffron, Arden, Champion Hill.

Dec. 18: Lake Drive, Staeth, Aaron’s Way, White Birch, Ridgeview, Country Lane, Tam-mie Ann Drive, Berkshire, Chapman, Elmwood, Birchwood, Crestwood, Fernwood, Mott Hill, Brack Farm, Mott Hill to Lake Drive.

Dec. 19: Main Street (between Barton Hill and Route 66), North Main, Christopher, West Dr., Bellwood Court, Lake Drive, Lakewood, Candlewood, Raymond, Pocotopaug Drive, Auburn Knoll, Island View, Blue Heron, Eastham Bridge, Seven Hills Crossing.

Wreaths Across America

The public is cordially invited to attend Fowl-er-Dix-Park VFW Post & Auxiliary 5095’s 18th Wreaths Across America wreath-laying event Saturday, Dec. 13, at noon.

Wreaths Across America is a worldwide event honoring veterans with the laying of a wreath on their headstone or marker. East Hampton’s Wreath Across America ceremony starts with a short ceremony in the VFW Post Hall, located at 20 North Maple Street, and concludes across the street at the Book of Names Memorial.

17 wreaths are placed during the East Hamp-ton ceremony; one for each branch of the ser-

vice, a Prisoner of War/Missing in Action, one in memory of former Gov. William O’Neill, and one for each of the auxiliary’s “adopted” eight forgotten soldiers who are buried in the Middle-town State Veterans’ Cemetery.

The VFW Auxiliary said it wishes to thank each wreath sponsor, as their donation assists the VFW in placing wreaths at various soldiers’ gravesites in all 12 town cemeteries. As volun-teers place a wreath on a soldier’s grave, they repeat the soldier’s name aloud.

To learn more about Wreaths Across Ameri-ca, visit www.wreathsacrossamerica.org.

National Audubon Society’s Christmas Bird Count

The Mattabesek Audubon Society (MAS) will hold its 51st Annual Salmon River Christ-mas Bird Count on Sunday, Dec. 14 – and par-ticipants are welcomed.

This is part of National Audubon Society’s Christmas Bird Count, which is the longest-running community science bird project in the country. The data obtained provides informa-tion about bird populations over time and ul-timately helps to inform environmental policies on a national and international level.

MAS’s 11 captains will lead their teams into the field to count all individual birds and bird species they see. The society said it is always looking for new people to join us in this annual

tradition. The team captains enjoy sharing their wisdom with birders of all experience levels. There will also be binoculars that can be bor-rowed.

Even if you can’t go out into the field you can still help. Folks whose homes lie within the 15-mile count circle centered around the Comstock Covered Bridge in East Hampton are asked to keep track of the backyard birds throughout the day and night of Dec. 14, so that their data can be included in the society’s final tally numbers.

If you’re interested, visit www.audubon-mas.org or send an email to co-compilers Sharon Dellinger at rsdell@comcast.net or Doreen Jezek at dajeze@gmail.com.

Middle Haddam Public Library News

The Middle Haddam Public Library, 2 Knowles Road, Middle Haddam has announced the following. To register or for more informa-tion on any program, email middlehaddamli-brary@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 December: Phil Barlow, a watercolor artist. There will be a reception Fri-day, Dec. 12, from 4-6 p.m.

Holiday Gathering: Sunday, Dec. 7, 4:30 p.m. Bring an appetizer to share.

Mattabeset String Collective: Sunday, Dec. 14, 2 p.m. All are invited to hear an eclectic mix of bluegrass, blues, country and rock, all in a string band style. Call the library to register, as seating may be limited.

The Historic Middle Haddam Public Li-brary Tree-Lighting and Carol Sing will be held Thursday, Dec. 18, at 6 p.m. Warm up with cookies and holiday beverages.

Open Mic Night: Friday, Dec. 19, 6-8 p.m. Share your talent or just come and listen to some music. Performers, please call the library to register. Beverages and snacks will be avail-

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 easthamptonpublicli-brary.org.

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

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 by Dec. 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 li-brary website for contest rules.

Adult Programs: LibrarYoga: Tuesday, Dec. 9, 6:30 p.m. Yoga 200 Certified instructor Amie Meacham leads an hour of gentle yoga for adults in the library’s Community Room. All levels welcome; bring your own mat if you have one and wear comfy clothes.

Music in the Library: Foundry Saxophone Quartet: Tuesday, Dec. 16, 6 p.m. All are invited to this evening of seasonal music. Refreshments

Parks and Rec News & Notes

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

Wolf Pack Tickets Now Available: At Peo-plesBank Arena in Hartford (formerly XL Cen-ter) 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): 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.

provided by the Friends of the Library.

Tech Help: Thursday, Dec. 18, 2-4 p.m. Basic technology help for phones, laptops, tablets, and e-readers. No registration required; just bring your device with you.

Belldown Book Brunch: Friday, Dec. 19, 11 a.m. Meet to talk about what you are currently reading while enjoying coffee, tea, and a break-fast treat. Register or drop in.

Local Author Event: When Magic Happens: Wednesday, Dec. 10, 6:30 p.m. Local author and artist Mindy Maynard will share stories from her book, *When Magic Happens*, celebrating East Hampton and the holiday season, along with a showcase of her original artwork.

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

Magic: The Gathering (Grades 7-12): Satur-day, Dec. 13, 1-3 p.m. All skill levels welcome. Bring your own decks or use one of the library’s.

Children’s Programs: Read to a Therapy Dog: Grades K-3: Tuesday, Dec. 16, 4:30 p.m. Readers will be assigned a 15-minute time slot between 4:30-5:30 to read to Jovie, a certified therapy dog. This is an opportunity to read aloud in a comfortable environment.

DIY Days for Grades K-8: Saturday, Dec. 20, 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.

Holiday Storytime Presented by the Vil-lage Center Merchants: Saturday, Dec. 20, 2 p.m.; best for grades Pre-K through 3. Volun-teers (including Memorial School teacher Lily Cordeiro) will share festive holiday stories at the library. Winners of the annual Gingerbread House Competition will be announced follow-ing the storytime. Register or drop in.

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East Hampton High School Honor Roll

East Hampton High School has announced its honor roll for the first quarter of the 2025-26 school year.

High Honors

Grade 9: Aehan Amith, Alyssa Arnold, Samuel Bafumi, Landon Baillargeon, Brooke Bellemare, Chloe Brown, Jack Busher, Avery Cashin, Garrett Chretien, Georgia Clark, Gabriella Cooke, Wren Cuthbertson, Samuel D'Amore, Gianna Doll, Olivia Doolittle, Emma Egan, Alexandria Ellison, Brayden Flynn, Bennett Galovich, Hadley Galovich, Connor Guarino, Avery Guild, Derek Guiliano, Vitaliy Herasym, Aloma Johnson, Alexander Jovel, Grace Kasper, Emma Kissane, McKenna Landress, Lily LaPlant, Shannon Mahoney, Lila Malinka-Morgan, Logan Matte, Nathan McCormick, Aurora McMahon, Makayla Mikulski, Joaquin Moren, Ethan Mortimer, Jackson Moulthrope, Miya Nichols, Patrick Nunes, Dash Palmer, Lachlan Plante, Aoife Pont, Tristan Robinson, Sophia Rodrigues, Quinn Rurka, Kendall Sawyers, Logan Seaman, Summer Smith, William Supinski, Reid Wilk, Gianna Zadroga.

Grade 10: Alexis Bailey, Kylie Bigelow, Anna Bothamley, Noah Cahoon, Amelia Chrin, Samantha Coleman, Brandon Coppolelli, Leslieane Cruz, Olivia Currier, Noah Cyr, Anja Czaja, Charlotte Daniels, Giuliana DonAroma, Taylor Dudek, Cole Eighmy, Hadley Fazekas, Zoe Ferrigno, Gabriel Finn, Owen Flannery, Brett Gustavson, Brianna Gustavson, Abigail Hambidge, Sean Hargreaves, Emma Johnson, Kaitlynn Johnston, Addison Jump, Shonali Karkun, Aiden Kelly, Addison Kentzler, Jaxson Kentzler, Eli Kloeffer, Kenzie Lee, Alyssa Levenduski, Owen LoPresti, Alexander Maalouf, Trent Mackie, Jamin Martin, Addison Marzi, Hudson Milardo, Noah Miro, Peyton Moulthrope, Kaeden Owen, Addison Perkins, Alivia Peterson, Oliver Phillips, Bryce Pierson, Ava Ploszay, Travis Raines, Mason Rall, Emily Rawlinson, Ryan Reola, Cayden Schoonerman, Jakoby Stevens, Katelyn Stiles, Mackenzie Strickland, Brooklyn Thorpe, Avery Trombino, Annabel Tucker, Juliana Ware, Zoey Wilks, Riley-Jewel Wong.

Grade 11: Hailey Adams, Lucy Alford, Marlee Alston, Lee Barron, Raymond Basley IV,

Charlie Burr, Hailee Carlone, Azalea Cartier, Hunter Cashin, Andrew Christensen, Kota Cloutier, Macie Coleman, Coleman Miles, Olivia Correia, Madeline D'Elia, Sayla DeStasio, Abbie Dipace, Lilly Engel, Michael Farrell, Owen Fielding, Daniel Fields, William Finn, Grace Flannery, Ava France, Luke Garcia, Kellen Garvey, Pearl Gaston, Isla Gerrie, Kaelyn Gould, Kailyn Granatowski, Savannah Groeper, Hayden Gullickson, William Haslam, Aidan Kelley, Benjamin Kohler, Brian Kostoss, Dolan Krasnitski, Mineth Kulatunga, Colin Ladue, Hudson Lombardi, Ryan Lopes, Kelsey Lynch, Madison McGlynn, Emma Meleo, Madeleine Mohr, Eva Moren, Colin Neary, Kenji Nichols, Liam O'Connor, Paige Ottone, Braelyn Paddock, Peyton Paiva, Brett Paresi, Vanessa Perdition, Lillian Pinkleton, Devin-Patrick Preble, Scott Ribeiro, Danielle Riley, Axl Rostosky, Dempsey Russell, John Salafia, Zephra Sanderson, Daniel Sullivan, Kaylan Sullivan, Teagan Sullivan, Logan Supinski, Julia Uliszewska, Empress Valencia, Taylor VanBlaricom, Aubrey Varni, Mya Viveiros, Samantha Wermes, Josie Wilson, Jay Wisniewski, Sebastian Woodson, Ethan Worrall, Maria Zabroski, Caitlynn Zory.

Grade 12: Marian Andoh, Ava Archer, Sofia Aresco, Beckett Askar, Lila Babcock, Francis Barry, Michael Bellemare, Nicholas Borrelli, Lilah Butson, Dylan Carlson, Anastacia Cooke, Jack Cote, Tyler Crumb, Madelyn Daniels, Hannah DePino, Ethan Dewhurst, Hannah DePino, Izzy Dickinson, Matthew Drlik, William Faber, Andrew Fenton, Ryder Fijalkowski, Mia Flynn, Javier Garcia-Villa, Brielle Gay, Hailey Geoffrey, Aiden Gora, Madeline Griswold, Jocelyn Gustavson, John Haley II, Jaxon Hanson, Ava Jedziniak, Ashley Johnson, Logan Johnston, Dean Jump, Kendall Jump, Abigail Kiernan, Moon Knouse, Julianna Korczak, Adriana Kromish, Jonathan Le Moine, Jillian Leonardo, Mikah Levenduski,

Bethany Limmer, James Limmer, Sophia Long, Hannah Malinka-Morgan, Jacob Marchinkoski, Eryk Mitkiewicz, Noah Mokrzycki, Jake Morone, Mackenzie Mortimer, Aiden Niderno, Leah Norton, James O'Brien, Chase Palmer, Grace Pekar, Sophie Perron, William Potter, Samantha Pugo, Jaelynn Ray, Cheyenne Rodriguez, Jackson Rurka, Declan Russell, Landon Searles, Lucy Shogren, Aubrey Stevens, Grace Thrasher, Samantha Traino, Victoria Twiss, Sydney Vicino, Caleb Wagner, Evan Wagner, Amelia Wiesner, Madelyn Wilk, Jacob Woods, Marley Zinkerman.

Honors

Grade 9: Ayla Baklik, Matthew Balamucki, Addyson Bear, Arianna Blancato, Ryder Bonin, Luke Burr, Kailynn Cruz, Savannah Duplin, Layla Dwyer, Corbin Engle, Ryan Flannery, Nora Foster, Peyton Frucce, Giana Garuti, Brody Ghagan, Hayden Groeper, Meadow Hart, Aiden Hatcher, Garrett Heath, Tristan Hickey, Kylie Hull, Alayna Jensen, AmyAnne Jewart, Cara Johnson, Rehina Kotsur, Elsie Kovitch, Angelina LaFleur, Christian Landry, Aubrey Lisboa, Landen Lord, Paulina Lukaszczyk, James Marino, Mark Marozzi, Thomas McMahon, Molly McWade, Natalie Melendez, Ezechiel Mervil, Riley Millett, Mia Milton, Reagan Moquin, Samuel Morales Rivera, Garrett Neary, Hayden O'ryan, Daniel Peterson, Emma Riddell, Ava Riley, Wyatt Rosenfeld, Alexander Scanlon, Lili Shoenfelt, Ashton Shumbo-Jenks, Jasmyn Skinner, Emma Snyder, Ciaran Stanton, Mckayla Wanat, Donzel Williams.

Grade 10: Liana Anderson, Carmelo Aresco, Maddison Barnum, Forrest Bellucci, Thomas Bertelsen Jr., Lewis Bouffard, Brody Buckley, Aubrey Butler, Adalin Cardoso, Savannah Carington, Scarlett Cassell, Kailyn Crowley, Luke Davidson, Lauren English, Mariella Feliciano, Cassandra Franklim, Trenton Gagnon, Adriana

Garcia, Essio Giovanelli, Thomas Haslam, Sam Hopkins-Frank, Gradon Johnson, Eliana Kiernan, Brendan Kissane, Gavin Kloeffer, Hunter LaRose, Emily Le Moine, Sandra Markham, Preston McGrath, Leah Murphy, Vincenzo Niosi, Cassandra Owocki, Sadie Pinaud, Aidan Poston, Kayla Rau, Leonidas Ribeiro Neto, Raelyn Saucier, Reid Saucier, Rachel Straub, Rachel Strickland, Logan Thorpe, Peyton Wentworth, Elizabeth White.

Grade 11: Samantha Bagley, Rohnan Burke, Bryce Gagne, Shea Gaughran, Madison Grgas-Tucilo, Justin Hotchkiss, Joseph Jarzabek, Adrian Jeffers, Krystal Kozikowski, Julian Kramer, Bryn Parmelee, Alexandre Rodriques, Aubrey Root, Patrick Scott, Garrett Sharpe, Adelle Sylvester, Aiden Theriault, Nathan Tiano, Abigail Trinks, Zachary Zgorski.

Grade 12: Casey Anderson, Ayomide Bamgbose, Carli Blakey, Nicolas Borrelli, Vivienne Btaun-Fales, Aubrey Butler, Alexis Cardenas, Ava Carpenter, Klara Cygan, Daniel Green, Gunnar Green, Ethan Hall, Parker Hambidge, Collin Hicks, Lindsey Joy, Talor Lambo, Lillian Lord, Domenic Mangino, Colin Marshall, John Riley, Angel Rodriques, Logan Ruel, Shane Rugiero, Damon VanBlaricom, Ruger Wojchowski.

Police News

11/28: Kristin Jacobs, 36, of Jamesburg, N.J., was arrested and charged with risk of injury to a child, driving under the influence and failure to drive right, East Hampton Police said.

12/2: Christopher Scaplen, 41, of no certain address, was arrested and charged with three counts of sixth-degree larceny and three counts of criminal trespass, police said.

From Nov. 24-30, officers responded to 14 medical calls, four motor vehicle crashes and nine alarms, and made four traffic stops, police said.

Holiday Toy Drive

VFW Post 5095 is holding a Holiday Toy Drive, to support the dependents of currently deployed active-duty service members and veteran families in need.

The VFW is collecting toys for children and adults of all ages.

Drop-off locations: VFW Post 5095, 20 North Maple St. – hours are Monday-Friday from 4-9 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday from noon-7 p.m.; and The Dublin, 42 E. High St.

Final day to drop off: Dec. 20.

For more information, call the post at 860-267-8837.

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through
12/31/25

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Elijah Craig Bourbon 94°

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Smirnoff Vodka 80°

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Tanqueray Gin 94.6°

\$32⁹⁹_(1.75 L)

Woodford Res. Bourbon 90.4°

\$69⁹⁹_(1.75 L)

Fireball Whiskey 66°

\$26⁹⁹_(1.75 L)

WINE

Yellow Tail Wines

\$10⁹⁹_(1.5 L)

Meiomi Chardonnay

\$13⁹⁹_(750 mL)

Bota Wines

\$19⁹⁹_(3 L Box)

Zonin Prosecco

\$12⁹⁹_(750 mL)

Meiomi Cabernet & P. Noir

\$17⁹⁹_(750 mL)

Josh Cabernet

\$24⁹⁹_(1.5 L)

BEER

Busch & Busch Lt

12 oz., 30-pack cans

\$20⁴⁹

White Claw

12 oz., 2/12-pack cans

\$31⁴⁹

Sun Cruiser

12 oz., 8-pack cans

\$17⁹⁹

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RE12-5-25

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Color House Ornament Trail

This holiday season, The Color House Art & Pottery Studio is inviting the community to join in its first-ever Color House Ornament Trail. Running through Dec. 21, 100 handcrafted ceramic ornaments created by artist Tina Parsadanov and her team at The Color House will be hidden all around Colchester, from local parks to small businesses. Each ornament is unique, and free for whoever discovers it. Participants are encouraged to visit partici-

pating Colchester businesses to collect stamps in their Ornament Trail Digital Passport. Even if an ornament has already been found at a location, visitors can still stop in to scan the business's unique stamp. For every five stamps collected, participants will earn an entry into grand prize drawings featuring gift cards, wine baskets, pottery and other prizes. Visit www.cohoct.com/ornamenttrail for more information and to register.



Pyrogy Sale

St. Mary Ukrainian Church in Colchester will have a Pyrogy Sale on Saturday, Dec. 13. To place your order, call Brenda at 860-365-0281 no later than Dec. 7.

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.

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.

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Chicken Marsala Sautéed with mushrooms, shallots in a marsala wine sauce	
Balkan Meatballs Beef meatballs sautéed with scallions, roasted red peppers, grape tomatoes in a marsala cream sauce	

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Abundant Life Church News & Notes

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Garden Club Poetry Contest for Kids

The National Garden Club is taking entries for its 2025 Poetry Contest. The contest is open to all students in grades K-12.

The theme of this year’s contest is “Plant America for the Next 100 Years.”

Entries are due Dec. 15. Stop by Cragin Memorial Library’s children’s department for entry forms.

For more information, email melissajdea-con@gmail.com.

Christmas Events at Westchester Church

Westchester Congregational Church, located at 98 Cemetery Rd., will celebrate Christmas with these events:

Sunday, Dec. 14: Children’s Christmas Pageant during the 10 a.m. service;

Sunday, Dec. 21: Choir Cantata, entitled “Bethlehem Joy,” during the 10 a.m. service.

Sunday, Dec. 24: Christmas Eve service at 5 p.m.

For more information, visit www.westshes-tercongchurch.org or email westcongchurch@gmail.com.

Christian Life Chapel News

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

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?

Ahavath Achim Schedule

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

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

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

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

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Holiday Homecoming Returns Dec. 6

The Colchester Parks & Recreation Department invites all to its annual Holiday Homecoming, taking place Saturday, Dec. 6, beginning at 4 p.m., on the Town Green.

This event will feature: Santa's Grand Arrival on a fire truck at around 4:30 p.m.; the annual Tree-Lighting Ceremony at 5 p.m.; live holiday music from the Bacon Academy Chorus; Family Activities: Letters to Santa, ornament sales, and a toy drive; Seasonal Treats: Cookies, cider, and hot cocoa; and a bonfire and caroling under the winter sky.

This event is free and open to all ages. In case of severe weather, updates will be posted on our website and social media channels.

For more details, visit www.colchesterct.gov/recreation-department or call 860-537-7297.

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.

Ukrainian Catholic Church News

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

For more information, call the church at 860-537-2069.

Holly Fair Dec. 6

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

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

All are invited to stop by.

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, 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: Wednesday, 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.





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Santa’s New Sleigh Shines in Colchester

By Toriana Williams

Colchester’s Town Green will soon glow with cheerful lights, music and the warmth of community as residents gather for the annual Holiday Homecoming – a beloved tradition dating, by town records, to around 2011.

Each December, families bundle up and step into a small-town winter wonderland filled with carols, cocoa and anticipation. But this year, excitement is building even earlier than usual. Santa Claus will arrive in style – and for the first time, in a brand-new, hand-built sleigh crafted lovingly by members of the Colchester Hayward Volunteer Fire Company.

For 25 years, Ralph Watson has donned the red suit as the town’s Santa during the tree lighting. Alongside him for the past five years has been his next-door neighbor, Jill Lageman, who plays Mrs. Claus. This year felt like the perfect moment, she said, to recognize the people who make the magic happen.

For decades, the pair arrived atop a fire truck, waving down to children and greeting families who couldn’t make it to the green. But when the fire department got new trucks, they had to ride inside the vehicles instead.

“We had to sit inside the trucks and couldn’t wave,” said Lageman. “People couldn’t see us. ... They enjoyed waving and stuff like that.”

A few firefighters noticed. And they decided to fix it.

“They said, ‘This is no fun. Let’s make Christmas better,’” Lageman recalled. The men took it upon themselves to build Santa a sleigh. A real one. “They put like 250 hours at least into this thing,” she said. “It was just a work of the heart.”

The sleigh, built entirely through donated materials and volunteer labor, is now a centerpiece of the 2025 Holiday Homecoming – which takes place tomorrow, Dec. 6, starting at 4 p.m., on the Town Green. It will sit atop a trailer so it can be pulled around town, and even include a space for a small heater to keep Mr. and Mrs. Claus warm.

One firefighter who worked on the sleigh, and who asked to remain anonymous, said the idea came from neighboring towns with similar traditions.

“Santa wasn’t very well seen the last time we

brought him in a fire truck,” he said. “So we needed to make it so that Santa could be seen. So, the kids know we actually do have Santa.”

Dozens of local businesses pitched in – they donated wood, lights, decorations, paint, tires and more. The Gilbert family provided workspace and helped build much of the sleigh itself. “They town really came up and showed up to help,” the firefighter said. “This is a town event... Everybody in town donated everything to the trailer.”

So how did Santa react when he finally saw his new ride? “Santa loves it,” the firefighter said. “Santa thinks it’s the best thing in the world.”

The sleigh will make its debut when Santa arrives on the green to greet children at around 4:30 p.m. The fire department will still decorate one of its trucks – and one “lucky kiddo,” selected in advance, will ride with Santa on the way in.

Across the green, the Holiday Homecoming will offer everything residents love: the bonfire, the lighting of the town Christmas tree at 5 p.m., warm treats and the hum of carols carried on cold air. The Bacon Academy carolers will lead singing around the fire, while the Colchester Continentals Fife and Drum Corps will play as crowds await Santa’s arrival. The Leo’s Club will provide cookies and cider, cadets from Colchester Fire & EMS will give out free hot cocoa and Ray’s Catering will offer food for purchase. Children can drop letters into the big red mailbox – and, as always, they’ll receive a reply from Santa before Christmas.

Parks and Recreation Director Tiffany Quinn said the collaboration behind the event is one of its most meaningful aspects. “Together with the fire department, we sponsor it,” she said. She added Santa will stay “as long as kids are there to talk to him.”

Many local organizations contribute to making the night festive, she said, from decorations to refreshments to music.

Recreation Supervisor Lindsay Warfield helped coordinate the performers and ensure the tree is at its most dazzling. She loves the big moment - the swirl of sounds and color when the fire truck loops around the green. “I love the enthusiasm of the crowd and the fire truck is



Santa will ride in style this year thanks to the Colchester Hayward Volunteer Fire Company. It rings in the beginning of a jolly good time at this year’s Holiday Homecoming on the town green.

pulling up,” she shared. “They’re so well decorated... It’s a really good lead-up. It’s exciting, it’s fun.”

For many families, Holiday Homecoming marks the true start of the season. Warfield said it’s more than tradition - it’s about community. “Seeing our community all gather in one place for something that’s positive and fun... It’s really joyful,” she said. “People really look forward to kicking off the holiday season.”

Now, thanks to the dedication of volunteers and the generosity of local businesses, Santa’s arrival will shine a little brighter. The sleigh – built quietly, lovingly and without a desire for recognition – is a gift not to any one person, but to the entire town.

“This event,” the anonymous firefighter said, “is all about the town and the kids in town... The community always pulls together and helps everybody out.”

On Dec. 6, as the bonfire crackles and music rings out across the green, that spirit will be on full display – a warm, glowing reminder of what makes Colchester’s holidays magical.

DeCaprio to Host Food Drive

State Rep. Mark DeCaprio (R-48) will hold a Colchester Food Drive this Saturday, Dec. 6, at Stop & Shop, 99 Linwood Ave., from 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

DeCaprio will collect food and household supplies for those who are in need. Those interested in donating are asked to consider canned foods, and other non-perishable food items. All proceeds will benefit the Colchester Food Bank’s commitment to their community.

“I really admire the job that the Town of Colchester and their food bank does for fam-

ilies in the community who need assistance especially during the holiday season,” said DeCaprio. “Over the last few years, the residents of Colchester have been very gracious and supportive at these events. To see the everyone has turned out for their friends and neighbors in need is great to see. I want to send a special thank you to Stop & Shop in Colchester for being a partner these last several years, as well.”

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The Bacon Academy Board of Trustees will launch a new annual holiday tradition, the Festival of Lights, tonight, Friday, Dec. 5. All are invited to come bid on a variety of handmade artisan trees and wreaths – Including this lovely tree with lots of cardinals.

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, champagne punch, 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. On Saturday, Dec. 6, from 4-6 p.m., during Holiday Homecoming on the Town Green, the Trustees will host an open house and share the plans for the building. All are invited. Tickets may be purchased by emailing info@baconacademytrustees.org or visiting baconacademytrustees.org/festivaloflights.html.

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.



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Senior Center Upcoming Trip

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.
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rope: 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 <http://gateway.gocollette.com/link/1346389>.

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.

Senior Center News & Notes

Colchester Senior Center, 15 Louis Lane, has announced the following. **Unless noted, registration is required for all programs.** For full program descriptions and to register, call 860-537-3911, email csc@colchesterct.gov, or for a full list of activities, visit www.colchesterct.gov.senior-center.
Monday, Dec. 8: 9 a.m., COA Meeting, Making Memories, Exercise w/ Anne; 10 a.m., Sittercize, Yankee Swap Bingo; 11 a.m., Learn to Sign; 11 a.m.-noon, fitness orientation by appointment; 12:30 p.m., Mah Jongg, Bridge, Setback.
Tuesday, Dec. 9: 9 a.m., Making Memories; 9:45 a.m., Tai Chi; 10:30 a.m., Ombudsman Meeting, Garden Club Holiday Craft; 12:30 p.m., Pinochle; 1 p.m., Cornhole; 1:15 p.m., Bingo; 4-8 p.m., Wellness Nights; 7 p.m., SCBC Meeting.
Wednesday, Dec. 10: 9 a.m., Making Memories, Walking Group; 9 a.m.-3 p.m., Reflexology by Appointment; 10 a.m., Adult Coloring, Hand and Foot Card Game, Sit & Be Fit video; 1 p.m., Sew-cial Time today; 1:30 p.m. and 2:30 p.m., Cardio Drumming; 2:30 p.m., Senior Center Staff Meeting.
Thursday, Dec. 11: 9 a.m., Exercise w/ Anne; 10 a.m., Sittercize, Wii Bowling; 10:30 a.m., Shopping Trip; 11 a.m., Yoga; noon, Benefits Counseling; 12:05 p.m., Chair Massage; 12:30 p.m., Dominoes; 1 p.m., Knit & Crochet; 4-8 p.m., Wellness Nights.
Friday, Dec. 12: 9 a.m., Social Service Hours, Open Art Studio; 10 a.m., Sit & Be Fit; 10:30 a.m., Choral Group; 10:45 a.m., Blood Pressure Clinic; 11 a.m., Yoga; 11:15 a.m., CHD Mental Health; noon-3 p.m., Tech Time with Harry; 1:15 p.m., Bingo.
Mingle & Jingle Holiday Luncheon: Wednesday, Dec. 17, 11 a.m. Celebrate the holi-

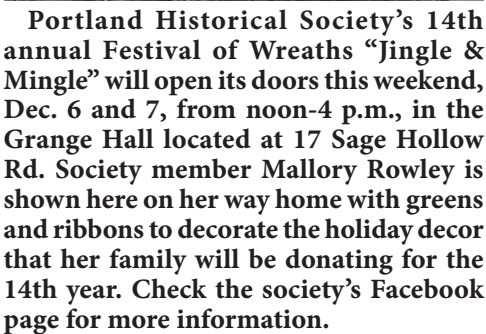
days with the festive sounds by Judy Pancoast, along with a dinner of prime rib, garlic roasted potatoes, squash with peppers and carrots, dinner roll, assorted holiday cookies and apple juice. Tickets are \$10 per person and space is limited.
Hanukkah Celebration: Thursday, Dec. 18, 10 a.m. Celebrate the Festival of Lights with Rabbi Ken Alter from Ahavath Achim Synagogue, sing songs, learn about the traditions, play the dreidel, and enjoy some potato latkes. Open to people of all faiths. Register by Monday, Dec. 15.
Carols, Cookies & Cocoa: Friday, Dec. 19, 10:30 a.m. The senior center's choral group the "Senior Serenaders" will share the music of the season. Holiday cookies and cocoa will be served. Register by Tuesday, Dec. 16.
Middle School Chamber Choir Performance: Monday, Dec. 22, 9 a.m. Students from the William J. Johnston Middle School Chamber Choir will walk over to perform some holiday classics. This is a free program, and holiday cookies will be served.
New Year's Eve Brunch & Bash: Wednesday, Dec. 31, 10 a.m. Colchester's own Bobby C will provide entertainment and have people dancing til the new year – or at least til the countdown to noon. Menu will include broccoli, bacon & cheese quiche, turkey sausage patties, home fries, fruit salad, orange juice, pastries and a mock-champagne toast, right as the clock strikes noon. Tickets are \$10 per person. Space is limited.
New Evening Events at Senior Center: Holiday Teacup Floral Arranging: Tuesday, Dec. 16, 6 p.m. Bring your favorite teacup and make a beautiful flower arrangement for the holidays. Cost is \$7.
Oil Painting with Brianna: Thursday, Dec. 18, 5:30 p.m. This is an opportunity for artists of all skill levels to join. Supplies will be provided and you will be walked through the process step by step, and finish an entire painting during this single class. Cost is \$20.
Pizza & A Movie: Tuesday, Dec. 23, 5:30 p.m. Jingle Bell Heist is a romantic comedy about two people who team up to rob a posh London department store on Christmas Eve. Cost is \$7.



Order of Christian Initiation of Adults: OCIA
meetings started Sept. 28 in the Parish House. The sessions are open to adults who wish to join the Catholic Church, Catholic adults who have not yet completed the Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Holy Eucharist and Confirmation), and Catholic adults who wish to learn more about their faith. Contact the parish office (ext. 105) or email ocia@goodshepherdct.org for more information and to register.

Festival of Wreaths is This Weekend

All proceeds from this event will be used to preserve Portland history and to fund educational programs for the community.



Also, a select number of handcrafted book-art ornaments are available to help you deck

A variety of Christmas cookies will be packaged by the half dozen. Other sweets including gingerbread men lollipops, Christmas-themed pretzels, and assorted candy will also be avail-

The Holiday Store is in the corridor to the Mary Flood Room at the library. All proceeds support the Friends in continuing to bring programs for all ages to the library, fund the museum pass program, and enhance the media collections enjoyed by many.

For more information, call the church at 860-342-3244.

Service Projects: This season, the community is collecting monetary donations to assemble gift bags filled with goodies and a gift card for older children in DCF care. The church is also gathering diapers in support of the Episcopal Church in Connecticut's annual diaper drive. Also, the church is partnering with Streetfire Ministries to help offset the cost of filling 100

Christmas Calm: A Service of Music, Reflection and Remembrance: Wednesday, Dec.

Adult Programs: Community Narcan Training: Wednesday, Dec. 10, 6 p.m. Free training includes: learning how to recognize the

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

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

Weekly Knifty Knitters Group: Saturdays, 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Adults of all experience levels are welcome. No registration required; simply drop in. Come chat with the crafters who created the flock of emotional support chickens which will be auctioned off this month to benefit the Friends of the Library.

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

For more information, go to www.portlandexchange.org.



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Festive Events Usher in Holidays This Weekend

By Anne Lilburn

Portland residents looking to get into the holiday spirit will have a couple options this weekend, with the town’s annual tree-lighting and holiday parade taking place on Saturday, and the Portland Historical Society’s festival of wreaths happening at the Hemlock Grange Hall throughout the weekend.

The holiday parade and tree-lighting will take place Saturday, Dec. 6. Andy Dionne, director of Portland Parks and Recreation, said that the event was co-hosted by his organization and Portland Youth and Family Services. He said that festivities would begin around 4:30 p.m. at Brownstone Intermediate School, with free hot

chocolate from Sarah’s on Main and candy canes handed out by volunteers. At 5 p.m., the parade, complete with Santa, will start at Town Hall and travel with fire trucks and local community groups over to Brownstone School, where the tree lighting will happen.

Dionne added that Portland High School’s band and chorus would also be performing.

“It’s just a great event for everybody,” said Dionne, who added that there would also be raffle tickets that kids or parents can purchase.

“Santa Claus picks out the lucky raffle ticket winner and that kid gets to turn the Christmas tree on for everybody,” he said. “It’s pretty great.”

The tree lighting will also have donation boxes set up, Dionne said, with any donated toys being given to the Portland Food Bank.

Also in Portland this weekend, the Portland Historical Society’s Festival of Wreaths will take place Dec. 6 and 7 from noon to 4 p.m. at the Hemlock Grange Hall, located at 17 Sage Hollow Road.

Visitors will be able to bid on over 30 wreaths that will be raffled off, with tickets going for \$1 each, and can do some holiday shopping as well. Some of the featured items for sale include bell ornaments made by Bevin Bells in East Hampton and reprints of an Arrigoni Bridge photo taken by local resident Joe Gowac.

The event promises entertainment, with live music from Portland High School’s a cappella group at 3 p.m. on Sunday before they head over to the parade and tree lighting. The wreath festival is also kid-friendly, with warm cider and cookies, and even take-home reindeer food available for children to sprinkle outdoors in order to let Santa and Rudolph know where to go. Wreath raffle winner names will be drawn

and winners notified after 4 p.m. on Sunday, and winners will have until 6:30 p.m. on Sunday night to claim their prizes.

Historical society trustee Deb Ellsworth said this was the 14th year of the event, and the second at their current location at the Grange Hall. She has been a part of it for all 14 years.

Ellsworth said that she looked forward to seeing the wreaths each year, with some staying traditional and others venturing into creative territory. She said one year there was a kid-focused one featuring Legos, while another year one was targeted towards cats with catnip and pet toys. Last year, she said, a standout entry was made by a member who covered the wreath in small toys and included a scavenger hunt book to go along with it.

While the historical society does occasionally gain some members and raise some money via the event, Ellsworth said that was never their main goal.

“We did it to build community spirit,” she said. “Fundraising isn’t the goal; the goal is more about bringing the community together.”

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 Sundays of each month 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.

St. Mary Church News & Notes

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

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

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

Bereavement Support Group: All are invited to attend. The group meets each month on the second Monday at 6:30 p.m. in the church hall and every fourth Tuesday at 2 p.m. in the rosary

room. Call Susan Bongiorno at 860-685-1966 for additional information.

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

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

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

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

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

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.

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.

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RE11-14-25

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Adult Used Coat Collection

Toys for Tots

Pictures with Santa

Garden Club Sale of Holiday Planters

For more information, call 959-231-9630.

Service of Lessons and Carols

Enjoy a reception and fellowship following the service.

A black and white photograph of three men standing together and smiling. The man on the left is wearing a flat cap and a vest over a collared shirt, with a name tag that reads "Chris". The man in the center is wearing a checkered button-down shirt and a name tag that reads "Y...". The man on the right is wearing a suit, tie, and glasses. They are all holding a white certificate or document together. The background shows a wooden wall and a decorative metal piece.

Donation for Camp... The Portland Exchange Club recently presented a \$2,000 donation to the Portland YMCA Camp Ingersoll Director Ben Silliman (center) to aid in supplying children access to summer camp. The funds were raised from the Exchange's Chairty Golf Tournament earlier this year. Presenting the check are Dave Gilbert (left) from the Tournament committee and Exchange Club President Tim Welsh (right).

Town-Wide Moment of Prayer


individuals or with someone. Use a favorite prayer, a simple prayer of your own words, or use this one, which is verse 7 of the Advent hymn “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”: “O come, desire of nations, bind in one the hearts of all humanity; bid that our sad divisions cease, and be thyself King of Peace.”

Vocal Chords Holiday Concert

The MHVC will perform “Light One Candle”


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

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by George M. Mantikas, DMD

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Fear about pain during dental procedures is common, but for some, the anxiety is so profound that they delay necessary procedures. People with odontophobia (severe dental fear) often need help with anxiety management during dental appointments. Medical interventions include anti-anxiety medications that can be taken an hour before a procedure to promote relaxation. Nitrous oxide ("laughing gas") is a type of conscious sedation that can be administered as needed during a procedure. General anesthesia (unconscious sedation) is also an option for severe anxiety during more invasive procedures. Non-medical anxiety management options include relaxation techniques such as deep breathing and meditation, stress-relieving tools like a squeezable ball or fidget toy, and listening to music or a podcast on headphones.

Today's anxiety management strategies are the result of years of research by professionals dedicated to making dental care as painless as possible, effective, efficient, and long-lasting. For compassionate dental care, including complete restorations, cosmetic dentistry, and regular cleanings, our primary goal is to treat our patients with the best, most up-to-date, gentle dentistry possible. Office hours are by appointment at our office, a very pleasant place to get a new smile.

P.S. Cognitive behavioral therapy can help change negative thoughts and actions and can serve as a long-term option for managing dental fear and other phobias.

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RE12-5-25





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Rivereast Standout Athletes of the Week

By Josh Howard
Here are the *Rivereast* Standouts of the Week for the week of Nov. 24 - 30:

Ellie Ballard - RHAM High School (Cross-Country): Ballard, a senior, added her name to the record boards at RHAM High School, running a 19:44 at the State Open finals at Wickham Park in Manchester on Nov. 3. Her time was the fourth fastest in program history, behind only Chrissy Bendzinski (18:24 in 2013), Monique Berry (19:14 in 1997), and Stephanie Eldridge (19:33 in 2008). Ballard's time and finish qualified her for the New England Regionals in Vermont and then she capped her cross-country career at RHAM by running in the Northeast Regionals in New York on Nov. 22.

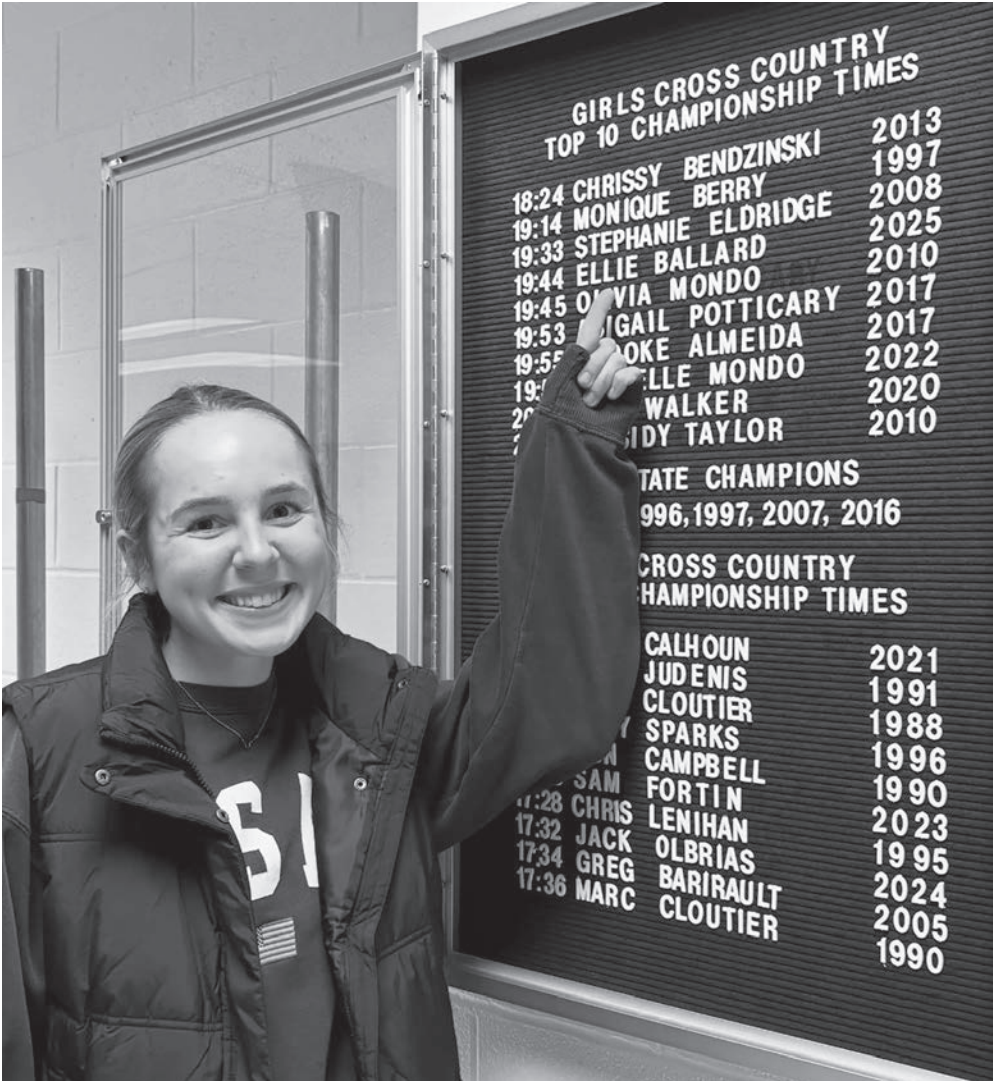
Troy Johnson - Bacon Academy (Soccer): Johnson, a senior co-captain, was named Class M All State after helping the Bobcats reach the state tournament quarterfinals. Johnson, a first-team all-conference selection, led Bacon Academy in goals and was tied for second on the team in assists this fall, earning him his second straight All-Eastern Connecticut Conference

honor. He was also a conference Sportsmanship Award winner.

Colin Marshall - East Hampton High School (Soccer): Marshall was named Class S All-State after helping power the Bellringers to 10 total wins this season. Marshall, a senior, was also selected as All-Shoreline Conference (SLC) first-team and has committed to play soccer for the Warriors at Eastern Connecticut State University (ECSU), starting next fall.

Michael Sitaro - Cromwell/Portland (Football): Sitaro, a senior from Cromwell High School, tallied five touchdowns (three rushing and two passing) as the Cromwell/Portland football co-op defeated Rocky Hill, 40-16, in the Shunpike Showdown on Nov. 26. Sitaro led the Panthers to a 9-1 record in the regular season, rushing for 23 touchdowns and throwing 21 more, as the program qualified for playoffs for a fifth straight season.

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.



RHAM High School senior Ellie Ballard earned a spot on the program all-time leaderboard following her performance at the State Open this fall.

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 ac-

countant 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.

Senior Bowling League to Start

Calling all seniors in the nine *Rivereast* towns! The Monday Morning Senior Winter Bowling League is now forming and will start Jan. 5. Based in East Hampton, the league is designed for those who have not bowled in over 30 years.

ontact Jack Anderson for more info. 860-882-3752 or jackande52@aol.com.

MARLBOROUGH CONSERVATION COMMISSION NOTICE OF ACTION

The Marlborough Conservation Commission, at their regular meeting on December 1, 2025, took the following action:
APPLICATION APPROVED:
APPLICATION #05-25 – Jeffrey Popham and Jennifer Carini (Application/Owner) 11 Old Cider Mill Lane. Addition and walkway with conditions
APPLICATION #06-25 -Town of Marlborough – South Road culvert replacement, adjacent to #258 South Road
YVONNE BOLTON, CONSERVATION COMMISSION CHAIR

1TB 12/5

TOWN OF COLCHESTER CONSERVATION COMMISSION LEGAL NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The Colchester Conservation Commission will hold a Public Hearing on December 10, 2025, beginning at 7:00 PM in the Colchester Town Hall Meeting Room 2 at 127 Norwich Ave, Colchester, CT, to hear and consider the following application:
A. W2025-3132 - 124 Wall St & 111 Old Hartford Rd; Center Village Development LLC - Applicant/ Owner; Assessor's ID 10-00/011-000 & 15-00/061-000, Proposed sewer line extension with direct impacts to a wetland.
At this hearing, interested persons may be heard and written communications received. A copy of this application is located in the Land Use Department and Town Clerk's Office, Town Hall, 127 Norwich Avenue, and may be inspected during regular business hours (8:30 AM - 4:30 PM, Monday through Friday). Application materials are also available on the Colchester Conservation Commission webpage at <https://www.colchesterct.gov/colchester-conservation-commission>.
Conservation Commission
Falk Von Plachecki, Chair

2TB 11/28, 12/5

Legal Notice Andover Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission

The Duly Authorized Agent of the Andover Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission **APPROVED** the following application on December 1, 2025:
• Application **#IWWC 25-17: Sokol Koni, 280 Route 6.** Clearing, grading, landscaping for construction of a residential house within the Upland Review area of an unnamed watercourse and its associated wetlands.
The above decision may be appealed to the Andover Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission pursuant to Section 12.2 of the Town of Andover Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Regulations, available at www.andoverconnecticut.org.
Questions: If you have any questions regarding the above notice, please contact the Andover Wetlands Agent at 860-742-7305 x4221 or email wetlands@andoverct.org, or buildingadmin@andoverct.org

1TB 12/5

LEGAL NOTICE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION HEBRON, CONNECTICUT

The Hebron Planning and Zoning Commission will hold a Public Hearing at a meeting scheduled for Wednesday, December 10, 2025, at 7:00 P.M., to be held virtually through the GoToMeeting Platform, on the following:
I. Petition 2025-23: Petition of Stephen Kowalski, owner, for Special Permit to construct an accessory structure exceeding 900 square feet (2,592 sq. ft.) on a lot less than 5 acres (4.34 acres) in size in accordance with Section 2.E.8 of the Hebron Zoning Regulations at 389 Martin Road, Residence-1 District. **Continued from 11-19-2025.** Petition 2025-23 Kowalski Barn
Planning and Zoning Commission
Dec 10, 2025, 7:00–10:00 PM (America/New_York)
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<https://meet.goto.com/install>
Dated at Hebron, Connecticut, this 21st day of November 2025.
Frank Zitkus, Chair

2TB 11/28, 12/5

TOWN OF PORTLAND ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS LEGAL NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Notice is hereby given that the Portland Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a Public Hearing on Thursday, December 18, 2025 at a meeting to start at 6:00 p.m. in the Buck Foreman Room (2nd Floor), 265 Main Street, Portland, CT.
Application #25-02: 381 Gospel Lane. Request for a variance from Zoning Regulation Table 3.17.C for the minimum distance from the street for a pool with a setback of 50 feet where 75 feet is required. Application and property of Alicia and Parker Strong. Assessor's Map 68, Lot 10-18. Zone R-25.
At this hearing interested persons may appear and be heard and written communications will be received. A copy of this application is available for public review in the Portland Land Use Department.
Dated at Portland, CT this 2nd day of December 2025.
Kurt Peterson, Vice Chair

2TB 12/5, 12/12

TOWN OF COLCHESTER PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION LEGAL NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The Colchester Planning & Zoning Commission will hold a Public Hearing on December 17 2025, beginning at 7:00 PM in the Colchester Town Hall Meeting Room at 127 Norwich Ave, Colchester, CT to hear and consider the following application(s):
PZC2025-014 Linwood Development, LLC Regulation change application to amend Section 8.8.9.c of the Land Development (Zoning) Regulations to add "or two-family" to the existing language.
At this hearing, interested persons may be heard and written communications received. A copy of these applications is located in the Land Use Department and Town Clerk's Office, Town Hall, 127 Norwich Avenue, and may be inspected during regular business hours (8:30 AM - 4:30 PM, Monday through Friday). Application materials are also available on the Colchester Planning & Zoning Commission webpage at <https://www.colchesterct.gov/planning-zoning-commission>.
Planning & Zoning Commission
Joseph Mathieu, Chair

2TB 12/5, 12/12

TOWN OF PORTLAND PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION LEGAL NOTICE OF DECISION

At the November 20, 2025 meeting, the following actions were taken:
Approved Application #25-04: 94 Ames Hollow Road. Proposed 2 lot resubdivision. Application and property of Marth and Jay Swanson. Map 41 Lot 4-2. Zone R-25.
Approved Application #25-06: 956 Glastonbury Turnpike. Proposal to convert existing detached garage into accessory dwelling unit. Application of Kristen Champoux and property of William DeYoung. Map 127 Lot 12. Zone R-25.
Approved Application #25-07: 862 Portland Cobalt Road. Request for special permit for wellness spa. Application of Jessica Blancato and property of Realejo Properties LLC. Map 31 Lot 23. Zone B-2.
Dated at Portland, CT this 1st day of December 2025
Robert Ellsworth, Chairman
Planning & Zoning Commission

1TB 12/5

LEGAL NOTICE TOWN OF MARLBOROUGH ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS PUBLIC HEARING

The Marlborough Zoning Board of Appeals will hold the following public hearing On Wednesday, December 10, 2025, at 7:00 P.M. in the Marlborough Town Hall, 26 North Main Street.
APPLICATION #ZBA-01-25 – Anne Amodeo (Applicant/Property Owner) 92 Lakeridge Drive - is seeking variance of Article Three A.1, Minimum Requirements, Article Three A.3 Conformity of Buildings & Land, Article Three A.5 Reduction of Lot Areas or Minimum Required Yards, Article Three A.9 Minimum Required Yards, Article Six D.2 a Side Yard Setback, in order to construct a house with a Front Yard Setback of 6.3 feet where 15 feet is required.
Interested parties can review the application materials in the Land Use/Building Department during normal Town Hall hours. Written testimony should be sent at least 24 hours ahead of the public hearing date to building@marlboroughct.gov, and oral testimony may be given during the public hearing. 2TB 11/28, 12/5

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TOWN OF ANDOVER

The Town of Andover currently has openings for the following positions: Assistant Assessor, Treasurer and Town Administrator. Please see the town's website Andoverct.org for more details.

Public Works Maintainer II (Full-time)

The Town of East Hampton is seeking a motivated, safety-minded, and dependable individual to fill the position of Public Works Maintainer II.

The Public Works Maintainer II performs a variety of semi-skilled and skilled tasks in the maintenance, construction, and repair of Town infrastructure—including roads, sidewalks, bridges, catch basins, and parks. Responsibilities also include operating trucks and heavy equipment, and snow, ice and debris removal. Must possess a CDL with class B (air brake endorsement) license or the ability to obtain one within 6 months of hire.

This is a full-time, bargaining unit position with benefits that include health, dental, vision, 401, life insurance and PTO. \$24.17 per hour. 40 hours per week, plus OT as necessary. The applicant should have a clean driving record and be in good physical condition.

Interested candidates should submit an employment application by 12/29/2025, to the Town of East Hampton, Department of Human Resources, 1 Community Drive, East Hampton, CT 06424, or by email to lseymour@easthamptonct.gov. A job description and employment application may be found at www.easthamptonct.gov. EOE/AA/M-F.

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