

News Bulletin

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East Hampton Remembers Nikki O'Neill

By Anne Lilburn

East Hampton is mourning Nikki O'Neill, one half of a legendary local power couple who sat at the top of Connecticut state politics for all of the 1980's. She was 90 years old.

As most East Hampton residents know, O'Neill was the widow of former Democratic Governor William "Bill" O'Neill, who grew up in East Hampton and began his political career in town. Bill O'Neill moved to East Hampton as a child, and after serving in the U.S. Air Force during the Korean War, returned to his hometown to run the family tavern. He began his state-level political career as a state representative in 1967 and rose up in state politics from there, serving first as lieutenant governor, and then eventually as governor, beginning in 1980 and ending in 1991. Bill O'Neill died in 2007.

Nikki O'Neill was born Natalie Damon in 1936 in Leominster, Mass. A career educator, she earned a bachelor's degree at the University of New Hampshire and later furthered her education at several other graduate-level institutions. She married Bill O'Neill in 1962 and taught for 21 years in East Hampton Public Schools.

O'Neill was remembered fondly by many locals, including both Democrats and Republicans.

Melissa Engel, chair of the East Hampton Republican Town Committee, said "the lake and our community will be less interesting without her."

"Nikki was an interesting woman," Engel said. "She was politically savvy and motivated many aspiring politicians — including myself. I was honored to have her vote. Her advice was sound

and she shared it freely no matter what party you represented. Right to the end, she wanted to be kept up to date on the issues."

Engel said that she would remember Nikki O'Neill as a dedicated community member who loved engaging with the public.

"Nikki's home was open to anyone," said Engel, "and she enjoyed company as well as a good poker game. From her deck overlooking the lake she would wave to boaters or invite them to dock for a visit."

Town Council Chair Dean Markham, a Democrat who formerly served in the state House of Representatives, echoed Engel's sentiments about the O'Neills' support for local candidates. He said they had supported him early on in his political aspirations.

"I certainly considered Bill my political mentor," he said, "and Nikki was the power behind



Nikki O'Neill

the throne, so I listened to her as well."

He recalled the O'Neills maintaining local friendships even during their time in Hartford. In East Hampton, "he was still Billy," Markham said, and the town was "a retreat that they could come home to."

In return, he said, "there was a great sense of pride" in a local guy making it to the governor's mansion.

"The people of East Hampton had a real admiration and respect for Bill and Nikki," he said, "and it wasn't a Democrat or Republican thing."

With that said, Markham noted that Bill and Nikki had different personalities.

"I kind of say it with a chuckle, but there wasn't a parade that Bill didn't want to march in," he said. On the other hand, while Nikki O'Neill enjoyed her role as First Lady, Markham said, and the chance it gave her to make a difference, "she didn't march in parades."

Democratic Town Committee chair and longtime East Hampton educator Kevin Reich said he remembered the first time he met Nikki O'Neill. He was starting his first teaching job in East Hampton, as a fourth grade teacher at Center Elementary School, where O'Neill taught fifth grade, and O'Neill was one of the first fellow teachers he met.

"I was very impressed with her style of teaching and how she worked so well with the students and wanted them to do the best they possibly could," he said.

Reich also said he remembered her continuing to teach, at least for a time, even after her husband's election as governor, leading to some humorous situations.

"When her husband got elected, she still remained teaching," he said, "and even while she was teaching, I fondly remember her having the state policeman, who was there to guard her, come into her classroom and help her with correcting papers and reading to the children."

He continued, "The patrolman would come in and he'd be there helping her out in the classroom. She said, 'We might as well keep him busy!'"

Reich said that above all, he remembered O'Neill as a loyal community member who loved her town and supported her husband's political career wholeheartedly. He said she remained involved in local politics her whole life.

"She always had a smile, was always willing to greet people, and just loved living a life that one

See Nikki O'Neill, page 24

Trestle Tree-Climbing in Marlborough

By Toriana Williams

Bright yellow and blue mats covered the floor of the Marlborough Elementary School gym. Orange bars stretched across the room like bridges suspended over lava. Cargo nets swayed between towering red frames. Students balanced, climbed, crawled and swung while the theme music from Pirates of the Caribbean echoed throughout the gym.

At the center of it all was the school's one-of-a-kind Trestle Tree program.

To health and physical education teacher Trafford Underwood, the climbing course is not any ordinary obstacle course. It is a carefully designed learning experience that teaches movement, confidence, teamwork, creativity and problem-solving.

"What I love most about it is that the students who aren't necessarily your typical phys ed student — they have trouble with dribbling a basketball, throwing a ball — they can find their niche here," Underwood said. "It's truly individual in nature, and that's really what I'm trying to do as a phys ed teacher, is just get students moving."

The Trestle Tree, sometimes called "whittle

equipment," is made up of A-frames, ladders, balance beams, cargo nets, rings, rope swings and climbing elements connected throughout the gym. According to Underwood, the equipment is designed for "movement education" and helps students build balance, muscular strength, flexibility, endurance and safe climbing skills.

But after watching students move through the course, it was obvious the lessons go far beyond physical fitness. On this particular day, Underwood's students were not simply climbing — they were pirates.

Before students began to play, Underwood explained the setup. "We are going to start Pirates of the Caribbean, which is our theme game that we'll play on the trestle tree," he said. He also reviewed safety rules, reminding students how to fall correctly and to move in a way that feels comfortable.

"If something feels too high, avoid it or stay low," he said. "If something feels too nerve wracking to walk across, choose a different way to go across."

The rules were strict, but the atmosphere was

incredibly energetic and playful.

Students climbed across narrow beams, ducked under ladders, swung from ropes and carefully stepped from platform to platform. Some quickly scrambled across while others took slower, more cautious steps.

Underwood then gathered the students again to explain the pirate game.

"The big difference now is what happens when you make a mistake," he told them. "If you touch down to the floor, you're overboard the ship."

Students who fall have to sit and wait for help, she noted. Other students can rescue them by tossing life rings across the gym. "If you drop the ring, you are still overboard, and that ring is lost at sea," Underwood explained.

The game transformed the gym into a giant pirate ship where students had to work together to survive.

"With the older grade levels, I introduce the Kraken as well, which is our sea monster," Underwood said with a smile. "I try to think

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Andover Speaks at Town Budget Meeting

By Toriana Williams

Town officials presented on May 12 the revised proposed town budget of \$13,512,673 for the 2026-27 fiscal year according to the budget proposal, a 4.8% increase over the current year. The revised proposal came after voters rejected earlier budgets and put town officials back to work.

The Andover Elementary School budget is now a proposed \$5,013,651, which is a 9.82% increase over the current year compared to the nearly 11% increase previously rejected.

The RHAM school district budget was also revised after the referendum. The new budget totaled \$32.8 million, a modest 0.65% increase. Andover's share, just over \$4 million, will decrease by \$84,030 after RHAM officials discovered an accounting error that resulted in the district returning money to its three member towns.

The new proposed mill rate is 32.23, a 3.02% increase.

The previous spending plan that was soundly rejected at Andover's first referendum was a proposed \$13.7 million overall operating budget, a 6.1% increase over the current year. It failed by a 451 to 331 vote. The previously rejected education budget was around \$5.1 million while RHAM's was \$33.16.

The referendum is scheduled for May 26 at Town Hall from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Residents Debate School Budget

Board of Finance Chair Robert England, a Democrat, said the revised proposal included modest cuts and additional state aid. "The budgets failed," England said. "They felt the budgets were too high."

England explained that the BOF reduced town operating costs by about \$16,400 and cut another \$50,000 from the school budget before

using \$100,000 from the town's unassigned fund balance to lower taxes.

Even with those reductions, tension filled the room at AES as residents questioned rising taxes, superintendent pay, school spending and communication between town boards.

A recurring point of discussion centered on Superintendent of Schools Valerie Bruneau and an 11% salary increase included in the budget. The increase would bring the salary for the part-time position from \$90,000 to \$100,000.

Resident Georgette Conrad criticized the raise and questioned whether it was appropriate for a small town.

"I feel since the Board of Education gave her that raise, they should find the difference in their own budget instead of making the town taxpayers pay for that raise," Conrad said. "I'm sure she's worth it, but not in a small town like Andover."

Bruneau quickly pushed back and said critics were relying on inaccurate salary comparisons generated by AI searches. "When you put that into AI, it doesn't give you superintendent of schools salaries by district," Bruneau said. "It is still the lowest salary in the state."

BOE Chair Caitlin Greenhouse defended the raise and argued that the town needs competitive salaries to attract qualified leaders.

"She's phenomenal. She's a great superintendent," Greenhouse said. "It's also about our town being competitive when and if we have to hire another superintendent."

Even so, many residents still struggled with the size of the increase.

Resident Kathleen Barrett questioned whether most residents had ever received raises of that

size. "When was the last time we had an 11% raise in our salary?" Barrett asked. Speaking as a former school counselor and professor, Barrett then said she worried about shrinking enrollment, classroom sizes and growing division in town.

"I hate the division that this has created in our town," Barrett said. "I hate the attitude that all of us who are elders who might voice opposition ... are enemies."

The room remained tense as residents debated special education services and the role of the school psychologist position included in the budget.

Resident Michelle Lorentz passionately defended the need for special education services.

"Special education is not a joke," Lorentz said. "You are denying not only the children in this town, you are denying my children the right to an equal and equitable education."

The discussion later shifted to broader frustrations between town officials and school leaders.

First Selectman Jeff Maguire, a Democrat, openly criticized how the budgeting process in his opinion has been handled in recent years.

"I have never had anyone come to me and give me a budget that I just passed through," Maguire said. "The Board of Finance has sat there and taken what the school has asked for and sat there and passed it right through."

BOF member William Desrosiers, a Republi-

can, immediately rejected that accusation.

"We labor for hours trying to make sure we understand every single thing in that budget," he said sharply. "We never pass anything through."

Resident Ashley Johnson, who recently moved from Texas to Andover, reminded everyone that nearly every person in the room cared about both the town and its schools. "We're all on the same side," Johnson said. "We're all just trying to figure this out together."

BOE member Gerard Cremé, a Democrat, said he understood concerns from residents on fixed incomes because he shares them himself. "I am a senior citizen on a fixed income," Cremé said. "But that's okay."

He then strongly defended Bruneau's leadership. "She was the best decision I think I've made in my 71 years of living," he said. "She's done an outstanding job."

Toward the end of the meeting, residents and officials continued to debate over how school grants, capital expenses and state funding should be presented in future budgets. Several speakers called for better documentation and more collaboration between boards to avoid confusion and mistrust.

Resident Bob Hamburger urged officials to create clearer records supporting budget decisions. "We can post it on our website," he said. "I think it would cut down tremendously on the amount of friction that we see back and forth."

Caregivers Support Group to Meet

The Andover Caregivers Support Group will meet Thursday, May 28, at 7 p.m., at the Andover Public Library on Route 6. The meeting will run for one hour.

The public is invited to attend and hear from our guest speaker, Sarah Elliott-Caratasios – author, social worker, and Senior Services Administrator/Municipal Agent for the Town of Portland.

Elliott-Caratasios' personal journey caring for her parents and in-laws while raising her four children inspired her book, *When Love Becomes Care: Real Talk for the Sandwich Generation*. Her work explores the emotional, physical, and spiritual realities of caregiving, especially for those balancing the needs of aging parents and growing children.

When life asks you to care for everyone else,

who takes care of the caregiver?

Elliott-Caratasios' memoir and guidebook offer insight, honesty, and support for anyone navigating the challenges of being a caregiver.

The meeting will conclude with its usual "Show and Tell" segment, where participants are encouraged to share handy tips, tools, or gadgets that assist in caregiving.

This support group is meant for individuals who are navigating the challenges, stresses, and rewards of caring for loved ones. Whether you have recently stepped into the role of caregiver or have been providing care for years, this group aims to foster a sense of community, reassurance, and encouragement.

For more information, call co-host Dianne Grenier at 860-742-3033 or Cathy Palazzi at 860-916-6122.

Community & Senior Center Happenings

The Andover Community and Senior Center (ACSC), located at 25 School Rd., is open Monday-Thursday from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. and Friday from 9 a.m.-noon. All are welcome. For more information, call director Tess Grous at 860-742-7305 ext. 4510 or at 860-798-6862.

Special Upcoming Events: Bring a Friend Program: For May, bring a friend to your current fitness or art class and they attend free. One free pass per class type. Registration is required. Call the center for more information.

Shopping Trips: Tuesdays, 8:30 a.m. Shop Manchester 5/26 and Willimantic 5/19. Transportation is available.

Travel In Time Club: Friday, 5/22, 3 p.m. Students and seniors will work on stories and interviews. Call the center to join or for more information.

Casino Trip: Friday, 5/29, 10 a.m. Hop on the bus for a trip to Mohegan Sun. The bus will return at 3 p.m. Space is limited. To reserve a seat, call 860-498-2326.

AARP Driver's Safety Class: Saturday, 5/30, 9 a.m.-1:30 p.m., at the center. Cost is \$20 for

AARP members, \$25 for nonmembers. To register, call the center or 860-647-9196. Completion may save you money on insurance premiums.

The Summer Scoop! A Passport to Ice Cream: Friday, 6/5, to Kloter Farms in Ellington. Call the center to register and pick up your passport.

Senior Garden Club: If you would like to garden, call the center. Plants in the Senior Beds are now in the ground. Weed, water, repeat until harvest.

Senior Art Class with Kim (BAF): Thursday, 6/11, 10 a.m.-noon. Cost is \$15. Focus – Watercolor Book student choice. This class is perfect for all skill levels. Space is limited. Supplies are provided. To register, call the center.

Afterschool Program at Library

On Thursday, May 28, children are invited to join Library Friend Ellen Repay for a Summer Creatures-themed storytime and craft activity at Andover Public Library.

This program will be held after school (3:10 p.m.). Call the library with any questions at 860-742-7428.

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The "East of the River" Real Estate Report

What Buyers Notice in the First 30 Seconds

When buyers walk into a home, it usually does not take long for them to form an opinion. In many cases, the first 30 seconds set the tone for the entire showing. That first impression can influence how buyers feel about the property, how they perceive value, and even how willing they are to make a strong offer. So what are buyers actually noticing right away?

Cleanliness is one of the biggest factors. A clean home immediately feels more cared for and move-in ready. Dust, odors, clutter, overflowing countertops, or visible maintenance issues can create negative impressions almost instantly. Light and brightness matter as well. Dark rooms or closed-off spaces tend to feel smaller and less inviting. Opening blinds, turning on lights, and creating a brighter atmosphere can dramatically change how a home feels when buyers first enter. Buyers also notice space — or at least how space feels. Furniture placement, clutter, and layout all affect perception. Overcrowded rooms can make homes feel smaller than they actually are, while open sightlines often make spaces feel larger and more functional. Condition stands out quickly. Peeling paint, worn flooring, outdated fixtures, or deferred maintenance are often noticed immediately. Buyers may start mentally calculating future costs the moment they walk through the door. Smell is another major factor. Homeowners often become accustomed to odors that buyers notice instantly, whether from pets, smoke, cooking, or moisture issues. And finally, buyers notice emotion. A home that feels warm, bright, clean, and well cared for tends to create a stronger emotional connection. That emotional response often impacts how buyers value the property. The reality is that buyers begin forming opinions before they ever reach the kitchen or bedrooms. For homeowners preparing to sell, the goal is not perfection — it is creating a strong first impression that encourages buyers to feel comfortable, confident, and excited about the home.

Market Snapshot – Past Week

Hebron, Andover, Marlborough, Colchester, East Hampton & Portland	
Single-Family Homes	Condos
• 7 homes sold	• 1 sold at an average of \$445,000
• Average sale price: \$639,500	• Sale-to-list ratio: 99%
• Average sale-to-list ratio: 108%	• Days on market: 8 days
• Average days on market: 6 days	Results vary by price point, condition, and pricing strategy.
• Median days on market: 3 days	



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Committee Looks to Fill Vacancies

The Andover Community Fund at the Greater Hartford Gives Foundation (formerly Hartford Foundation for Public Giving) is accepting applications to fill vacancies on its Community Fund committee – and the deadline to apply is June 1.

The Andover Community Fund Committee is responsible for selecting and distributing funds awarded by Greater Hartford Gives to local nonprofits to assist in projects that will help enhance and benefit the residents of Andover.

For more information, email the committee at andover@greaterhartfordgivescf.org.

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.

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From the Editor's Desk

Observations & Ruminations

By Mike Thompson

I freely admit that, until I began working here, I had never heard of the Civilian Conservation Corps, or CCC. But then I learned about it and – wow, what a story.

The CCC began March 31, 1933 under President Franklin D. Roosevelt's "New Deal" to relieve the poverty and unemployment of the Great Depression. The U.S. Army supervised the camps, which had approximately 200 men each.

Single and unemployed men age 18-25 (with fathers on relief) enrolled for six months and worked a 40-hour week for \$30 per month. The government sent \$25 of that each month home to their parents and the men had \$5 per month of spending money. Enrollees received food, uniforms, shelter and medical care all for free, however.

Now, \$30 per month might not seem like much. But in today's dollars that computes to \$768 per month.....which, ok, still isn't much. But for families stuck in the throes of the Depression, wondering when or even if they'll have food again, it was a tremendous lifeline.

For that money, CCC workers built trails, roads, campsites and dams; stocked fish; built and maintained fire tower observer's cabins and telephone lines; fought fires; and planted millions of trees.

Okay, so why am I telling you all this? Be-

cause in the first year of the camps, there were 13 located in Connecticut – and one of them was in Cobalt. In subsequent years, additional camps were added in East Hampton and Portland.

The CCC ultimately disbanded in 1942, due to the need for men in World War II – but it was never forgotten.

Next Monday, May 25, a reunion of CCC alumni, family and friends will meet at 1 p.m. at the Historical Museum of the CCC, located at 166 Chestnut Hill Rd. (Route 190) in Stafford Springs.

The reunion will celebrate the 93rd anniversary of the founding of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) by sharing their stories, pictures and memorabilia of the CCC camps.

At the reunion, East Hampton resident Marty Podskoch, author of *Connecticut Civilian Conservation Corps Camps: Its History, Memories and Legacy of the CCC*, will give a brief history of the CCC camps in Connecticut. Then CCC alumni, family and friends will share their stories of their CCC camps, both in Connecticut as well as other states. Families will receive a copy of Podskoch's Connecticut or Rhode Island CCC book.

All who are interested in the CCC are welcome to attend. Refreshments will be served.

Editor's Desk continued on page 9



Riding in Style... On Monday morning, Colchester Fire & EMS brought Jack Jackter Intermediate School's fire prevention poster winners to school! Chief Steven Hoffmann and Lt. Blake Baillargeon escorted fourth-grader Landon Johnson and fifth-grader Aubrey Gwiazdowski to JJIS aboard Truck 128. Landon is a student in Meghan Flynn's class, and Aubrey is a student in Vincent Federici's class. They were the two New London County Fire Prevention Poster Contest winners from JJIS. This annual contest is made possible with the guidance of Assistant Chief/Fire Marshal Sean Shoemaker and local teachers.

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

Bulletin Board

My wife came home the other afternoon to find me scrolling industriously through my computer.

"What's up?" she said.

"I'm trying to figure something out, but it's confidential," I said.

She raised an eyebrow.

"Okay," I confessed. "I thinking of starting my own nonprofit."

"Nonprofit what?"

"That's what I'm trying to figure out."

"You don't know?"

"No."

She waited.

"Okay, it's got to be something that makes a lot of money."

"That's doesn't sound like it would be nonprofit."

"It will be after I take my salary."

"Oh," she said, clearly disapproving. "And here I thought nonprofits were intended to invest most of their money to helping people. You know, to further their charitable mission."

"That's what they say, anyway."

"That's awfully cynical."

"This may come as a surprise to you, but apparently nonprofits can be highly lucrative if you know how to play the game."

"I really don't like the sound of this at all."

"We're talking big money here. Just a month or so ago I was reading in the newspaper how these nonprofits in Hartford got millions of dollars in state funds. Millions!"

"So?"

"So, it looks like when they got done paying their administrators, there wasn't anything left for services. Or else the services were basically bogus. And that doesn't include a \$350,000 wire transfer that just disappeared into thin air. Anyway, they got all this money and there's nothing to show for it. Unless somebody got a house out of the deal, or a trip to Hawaii or something. I mean, who knows?"

"That's terrible."

"Terrible? It's brilliant."

"Yeah, if you're a dirtbag with no morals. You're not a dirtbag with no morals, are you?"

"I prefer to think of myself as an entrepreneur with a passing interest in public service," I said stiffly.

"Isn't anybody going to do anything about this?"

"Oh sure. Our state legislators are outraged. The same guys who handed out all this money are now falling all over each other, saying the system has to be fixed."

"But that's a good thing."

"It's theater. I mean, who's the real problem here? Somebody had to put these organizations into the budget. Now, suddenly, nobody seems to know anything about it. Believe me, nobody's lining up to say they put some group like Jeep Enthusiasts of America up for a bunch of money. Gee, how did that get in there? Nobody has the foggiest idea. The crickets are deafening."

"Oh."

"These legislators are saying they didn't even know what many of these nonprofits did or anything about them. Some of them weren't even registered with the state, according to the newspaper."

"At least they admit it. The legislators, I mean."

"My guess is they think pretending they're stupid is preferable to considered corrupt."

"You know," she said. "There are a lot of nonprofits out there that do a tremendous job with dedicated underpaid staffs. They actually save the state money. Just because somebody might be corrupt or took advantage doesn't make all the others corrupt, too. Or ineffective. Don't go tarring everybody with the same brush."

"Yeah, yeah, yeah," I said, turning back to my computer.

"I'm serious."

"Maybe I should do something that deals with children," I mused. "Or puppies."

"How about political reform?"

"Yeah, right. I'm not going to attempt the impossible. How about a nonprofit that tries to teach fish how to read?"

Jim Hallas

Deadline Still Tuesday

The *Rivereast* offices will be closed next Monday, May 25, for Memorial Day. However, the news copy deadline for next week's issue, dated May 29, will remain **noon on Tuesday, May 26**. All letters to the editor, press releases, event listings, etc., must be submitted by this time.

No exceptions will be made.

Support Progress

To the Editor:

As we approach the referendum date of June 2, please look to the past and see that the proposed budgets and parking lot reconstruction, will keep East Hampton moving forward into the future. We will be keeping all funding for current programs and projects for both the town and BOE.

This was no small task, but with proper planning, major CIP improvements will be able to be accomplished in conjunction with scheduled paving to save money in the future, the reconstruction of the middle school parking lot. The TC, BOF and BOE have brought forward responsible budgets that will move East Hampton in the right direction for continued success. I urge you to vote 'yes' on the three questions, at the Town Hall on June 2.

Rick Wanat - East Hampton

Flower Sale Thank You

To the Editor:

Boy Scout Troop 72 would like to thank all the wonderful people who purchased Mothers Day flowers during our very rainy Mother's Day flower sale. All the scouts and parents who participated were pleased to see how much support the community provides to Troop 72.

Each year we see many returning customers and are pleased by the comments we hear regarding the quality of the flowers. For those people who have asked, flowers are locally grown in Lebanon by Jeff Drucker of Caldru Growers and Kristen's Country Greenhouses, Sisson Road, Lebanon. The means your purchases also support local agriculture.

We often get visits from past troop members and are happy to hear how they have grown into new careers and about new families and adventures.

All proceeds that were earned will go to support scout camping and youth training activities for the coming year. Troop 72 has been serving Colchester since 1939.

If you have a scout-aged youth, girl or boy (11-17), who would benefit by joining our Troop outdoor camping high adventure trips and community service programs, please visit Troop 72 Monday nights. We meet Mondays at 6 PM at the Colchester Federated Church in the down stairs stage room.

Thank you for your support, now and in the future.

Al Letendre, Troop 72 - Colchester

RIVEREAST

News Bulletin

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

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

(860) 633-4691 — bulletin@glcitizen.com

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.

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

Did You Know?

To the Editor:
Did you know that it costs \$110,003.39 per day to fund the Board of Education? This calculation is based on their proposed 2027 budget of \$40,151,328 and 365 days per year. Or another way of looking at it is, \$40,151,328 divided by 180 school days is a mere \$223,062.93 per day! Yikes! Think about it. Then decide.

**Sincerely,
Alison Walck – East Hampton**
Note: Walck is a member of the East Hampton Board of Finance.

Memorial Day

To the Editor:
Memorial Day is the day Americans set aside to honor those brave men and women who met tragic ends during times of war. We must use this day to honor their sacrifices, to pray for their families, and to bow our heads in recognition of their service. We must never forget. You have seen their faces, heard their names, and maybe even heard their voices – those who gave the ultimate sacrifice during all wars.

This Memorial Day, American Legion Auxiliary Unit 95 members would like to invite Hebron residents to join us in remembrance of our nation's fallen heroes. The American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) is the world's largest women's patriotic service organization, with nearly 800,000 members and 9,000 units in communities across the nation. The American Legion Auxiliary serves nearly 1 million veterans every year right here in Hebron we continue to help mitigate the challenges our veterans face and deliver upon our mission by organizing multiple events throughout the year to support veterans and their families in civilian life. I invite you to pause today to remember those who have fought for our freedom.

American Legion Auxiliary members have dedicated themselves for nearly a century to meeting the needs of our nation's veterans, military and their families both here and abroad. They volunteer millions of hours yearly, with a value of nearly \$2 billion. As part of the world's largest women's patriotic service organization, Auxiliary volunteers across the country also step up to honor veterans and military through annual scholarships and with ALA Girls State programs, teaching high school juniors to be leaders grounded in patriotism and Americanism. To learn more about the Auxiliary's mission or to volunteer, donate or join, visit www.ALAforVeterans.org.

**Darlene Opcensky, President
American Legion Auxiliary Unit 95**

Hebron, It Is One Scoop

To the Editor:
It is time to pass the Town of Hebron budget referendum on Tuesday May 26. The Council and the Board of Education have been responsive to the first vote and have cut budgets. In my opinion, the Board of Education has been forced to cut too much. However, I urge my fellow residents to pass this budget. The estimated tax increase is less than the cost of a single scoop of ice cream per household per week - surely our town is worth that.

Let us now move forward together. Please join me next Tuesday and vote 'yes.'

**Yours faithfully,
David Rose - Hebron**
Note: Rose is chair of the Hebron Board of Assessment Appeals but is writing as an individual.

Celebrate Patriotic Conservatism

To the Editor:
Please join the Hebron Republican Town Committee on Wednesday, May 27, from 6-8 p.m., at Blackledge River Tavern in Hebron. Your November Republican candidates will be in attendance to share their thoughts, experience, and mission. This all-star lineup includes Ryan Fazio, Jason Guidone, George Austin, Matt Corey, John Bolton, and Peter Lumaj, with Michael Meadows as the Master of Ceremonies. We welcome conversations, new viewpoints, and solution mindedness. Join us to be civically engaged in the community you live in and love. Democracy thrives on dialogue and the exchange of ideas strengthens democracy.

Delicious hors d'oeuvres will be served and a cash bar is available. Advance individual tickets are \$30 individual and couples are \$50. Or purchase at the door for individuals at \$40 and couples for \$60. Students are free, but should RSVP at hebronrepublicans@gmail.com. Use the link to make a "donation" for tickets (www.hebronrepublicans.org). We look forward to conversations with you. This fundraiser is approved and paid for by the Hebron Republicans.

**Kim Hills, Vice Chair
Hebron Republican Town Committee**

Water Safety Tips

To the Editor:
The official start of summer is nearly here, and many boaters are preparing for a season of recreation and relaxation. The following are 10 safety tips to ensure a fun-filled boating season on the water.

- Obtain the current weather forecasts and water conditions.
- Familiarize yourself with the intended body of water, including known dangers.
- Tell someone where you are going and when you expect to return.
- Ensure each person wears a properly fitted PFD that is in good condition.
- Check your boat, trailer, and bilge for unwanted invasive plants.
- Have at least one fully-charged, properly rated fire extinguisher on board.
- Carry several communication devices including phones, radios, horns, flares, flags, etc.
- Conduct a pre-departure run-through to confirm all equipment is in working order.
- Operate at safe speeds, and obey all laws and signage.
- Enjoy the day!!!!

**Dan Dupre
Marlborough Lake Advisory Commission**

Change to Marching Sequence

To the Editor:
Greetings, Hebron Memorial Day participants. Please note a change to the marching sequence. This Memorial Day, the RHAM High School band has been requested to immediately follow the last military personnel and/or vehicle. The band will be setting up on the driveway directly across from the ball field to the building. All other marchers set up as in the past (parallel to the tennis courts).

As parade monitor, great thanks for self-aligning without any incident. Please note this is a tribute to all military members who made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom.

Be well, stay safe! God bless the USA.
R. A. "Bob" Mangillo – Hebron

Memorial Day Flags

To the Editor:
St. Patrick Church Guild in East Hampton has placed American flags at the gravesites of veterans buried in St. Patrick Cemetery. This Memorial Day we remember the men and women who have served our country by defending and preserving our freedoms.

Thank you to all the volunteers who helped with this project.

**St. Patrick Church Guild
East Hampton**

School Budget Debate

To the Editor:
As our town once again debates the school budget, it's important to remember that questioning spending is not the same as questioning our commitment to children. There's an old saying: "People who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones." I think of this often when residents accuse others of "attacking education" simply because they ask for fiscal responsibility. Wanting accountability is not an attack — it's common sense.

Many longtime residents grew up budgeting out of necessity. Choosing between steak and chicken wasn't a philosophical exercise; it was daily life. They learned to live within their means without blaming their neighbors for the limits of their own budgets. Today, some who haven't had to make those same hard choices may feel personally targeted when asked to cut back. But this isn't personal. It's responsible stewardship of our shared resources.

In the last referendum, Andover voters turned out in record numbers and clearly chose to reduce the budget. That vote was a message — one our elected boards should have taken seriously. In fact, the Board of Finance had previously agreed that the Board of Education should bring its budget down to a 7.5% increase, and they even voted to request that reduction. But the Board of Education chair rejected that directive outright of her own accord. Instead of standing firm on behalf of taxpayers, the Board of Finance acquiesced and accepted the higher number anyway. This is not the accountability residents were promised.

On top of that, the Board of Finance has now returned with essentially the same budget voters already rejected, using supplemental aid and refunds from past over payments to make the increase appear smaller. Residents deserve transparency, not accounting maneuvers.

Overspending today limits our ability to invest in the future. As someone serving on the Economic Development Committee, I hear constantly that there are not enough funds to support the projects that would grow our tax base and reduce the burden on residents. These are opportunities we cannot afford to miss.

On Tuesday, May 26, your vote is needed to remind our boards that fiscal responsibility, honest budgeting, and respect for the will of the voters matter. I also encourage you to attend upcoming meetings and make your voice heard.

Together, we can protect Andover's long-term financial health and ensure a stronger future for our town.

Marcie Miner – Andover

Note: Miner is a member of the Andover Board of Education but said she is speaking as a taxpayer.

The Math Mr. Hintz Doesn't Want to Do

To the Editor:
Ted Hintz is a CPA. He should understand numbers — which is precisely what makes his letters so troubling. He squeezes complex, mandated public finance systems into a household budgeting analogy that collapses the moment anyone applies real math. A household can skip a vacation. A school district cannot skip federally mandated services, state-required transportation, or contractually obligated salaries.

Since Mr. Hintz prefers household analogies, let's use an honest one. Responsible families — including the many who chose East Hampton for its fiscal conservatism and community values — know that when expenses rise and income falls short, you don't pretend the gap doesn't exist. You find new revenue. You don't redefine shortfalls around necessities as sound management and move on. And if families in this town are genuinely struggling with necessities

See Letters, page 6

Members of the public are invited to

**CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF
TRANSPORTATION**

VIRTUAL PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING

State Project No. 0172-0529

Removal of Retaining Wall No. RW-108-012-001 in Plainfield
Replacement of Retaining Wall No. RW-112-017-001 in Portland
Removal of Retaining Wall No. RW-163-203-001 in Windham

Wednesday, May 27, 2026, 6:30 p.m.

Register and Learn More: portal.ct.gov/DOTProject0172-0529

The purpose of this meeting is to provide the community with an opportunity to learn about the proposed project and allow an open discussion of any views and comments concerning the proposed improvements. A Question and Answer (Q&A) session will immediately follow the presentation.

The purpose of the project is to address the deficiencies of the three retaining walls and to accommodate safe travel for all roadway users.

Right-of-way impacts are expected to include slope easements, partial acquisitions, and temporary construction easements.

Construction is expected to start spring 2028, depending on funding, right-of-way acquisition, and permits. The estimated cost is \$4 million, with 100 percent State funds.

The public can submit comments and questions during two-week public comment period following meeting. Direct comments and questions by Wednesday, June 10, 2026, to **DOTProject0172-0529@ct.gov**, (860) 594-2020, or Francisco Fadul at **Francisco.Fadul@ct.gov** or (860) 594-2078. Please reference the respective town and Project No. 0172-0529 in the email or voicemail.

ACCESSIBILITY

Non-English language closed captioning will be available on Zoom. The recording will also be posted following the meeting in CTDOT's public meeting playlist at **portal.ct.gov/ctdotVPIMarchive**.





For limited internet access, call (877) 853-5257 with Meeting ID 845 7681 6802. Project information can be mailed within one week by contacting Francisco Fadul at **Francisco.Fadul@ct.gov** or (860) 594-2078.

For hearing/speech disabilities, dial 711 for Telecommunications Relay Services (TRS). Request language assistance from CTDOT's Language Assistance at (860) 594-2109 at least five business days before meeting.

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★ Letters, cont. from page 5

ties, that is not an argument for doing less — it is precisely the reason to grow the town's revenue base so the burden on those families decreases. That is responsibility.

His claim that "a smaller increase is not a cut" only holds if you ignore inflation, insurance hikes, special education obligations, and negotiated salaries. In the real world, a budget that fails to keep pace with required costs is a reduction in operational capacity. A CPA who advised clients to ignore rising costs when evaluating financial health would be committing malpractice.

Mr. Hintz advocates development restrictions so severe they erode the tax base, then he'll watch his base be surprised when the math stops working. Campaigning on lower taxes while actively blocking the tools that make lower taxes possible is not conservatism — it is a contradiction that delivers nothing for taxpayers except decline dressed up as discipline.

Rather than address a single cost driver, he accuses the Board of Education of "fear-based messaging." That is tone-policing, not governance. Translating budget arithmetic into real consequences for families is called transparency. Pretending a flat budget is compliance on every consideration a school must have is misleading.

Words matter, as Mr. Hintz himself says. The word for a budget that cannot meet mandated expenses is cut. The word for blocking revenue solutions is stagnation. The word for redefining problems instead of solving them is failure.

East Hampton deserves leaders with solutions. Every resident — in and out of those classrooms — will eventually feel the difference between leadership that acts and leadership that only objects.

Joan N. Scott – East Hampton

Plant Sale Thank You

To the Editor:

It was a perfect sunny day for shoppers to come out for our Garden Clubs Plant Sale on Saturday, May 16. We are truly grateful for everyone who supported our annual plant sale and helped to make it a wonderful success! Thanks to your generous purchases, our garden clubs can continue to grow and support community gardening projects, educational programs, and beautification efforts.

We would like to give special thanks to: the club members who gave their time and energy to make this a profitable fundraiser, the non-

club members who donated plants, the teen helpers Emma and Erin for their helpfulness at the sale, the *Rivereast* for helping us publicize the event, and the Town of Portland for the use of the Town Green.

Leftover plants from the sale were donated to the Brownstone Quorum for the further beautification of the Riverfront Park.

With sincere gratitude and great thanks,
Sue Anderson, President of
The Portland Garden Club
Diane Bascom, President of
The Portland River Valley Garden Club

Hebron – Vote 'Yes'

Dear Hebron Residents:

The budget process is sometimes a long road to travel. The town presented an original mill rate increase of 1.94 mills. And we heard, loud and clear, that it was too high for many of you. That's okay – sometimes, we don't always get it right on the first try. I appreciate the information provided in the advisory questions as well, as that helped guide the decision-making process of the Town Council and the Board of Finance.

It's a time of empathy and there's enough to go around. There are so many of us struggling with high energy costs, gas prices, and grocery costs brought about by an anemic national economy. I hear all of you, and I am also impacted by it. The Board of Finance took a direct approach in addressing this by making a \$200,000 cut to the Town budget and a \$300,000 cut to the Hebron Board of Education budget.

Those cuts, however, come with difficult decisions. And we need empathy for those too. As I headed into the Hebron Board of Education's meeting on Thursday, May 14th, I turned the corner and saw teachers struggling with the repercussions of administrative restructuring. I took a moment to comfort them. These are real people impacted by the reality of budget cuts, and they deserve our empathy too.

I was also pleasantly surprised that the RHAM Board of Education made significant adjustments in their budget as well, coming in now at a 0.65% increase. Concerns may linger over the developments of the budget season, which is understandable; however, I am confident that new board members are up for the task of ensuring greater transparency and accountability. It is a budget I will support.

As it stands now, the new budget increase is at .46 mills. I supported our first budget, and I am supporting this one as well. It's a budget that

preserves services for our town and students as best as it can and incorporates the approximately \$267,000 in additional state funding to offset the mill rate. Any further cuts will go deeper. As a resident, I don't want to see that for our students or residents, and I hope you'll join me in saying you don't want that either. Vote 'yes' on May 26th.

Sincerely,
Tiffany V. Thiele – Hebron
Note: Thiele is the chairwoman of the Hebron Town Council but said she is writing as an individual.

Do Your Job

To the Editor:

Info that the BOE/Board of Selectmen failed to use knowing of a possible \$5 million "misappropriation":

The BOE can fire a superintendent of schools who is under contract for mismanagement of health funds, but it generally requires termination "for cause." Such action is deemed a breach of fiduciary duty and contract obligations. While superintendents are protected by contracts, these agreements almost always contain clauses allowing for termination if the employee is found incompetent, negligent, or involved in financial misconduct.

Thus we need to see his contract!! Furthermore, Dennler last Wednesday claiming all his knowledge of a year ago; why not step up and do your job? He clearly stated funds seemed to be mismanaged soooooo..... why did he not recommend termination instead of contractual extension?

When the mismanagement of health funds likely falls under several common "for cause" termination clauses:

*Neglect of Duties: Failure to properly oversee the district's financial health.

*Incompetence or Inefficiency: Mismanaging funds in a way that violates professional standards.

*Conduct Unbecoming/Immorality: Violation of public trust through unethical handling of funds.

*Breach of Contract: Specifically violating fiduciary duties to properly administer employee benefit plans.

Sullivan's \$5 million shortfall has to fall under at least one of these!

An awful lot of people are either hiding something, lying, or flat out are not doing their jobs in the best interest of us the taxpayers!

Joseph Fraulino – Colchester

'Yes' for Students

To the Editor:

I encourage all East Hampton residents to join me in voting 'yes' on the budget referendum on June 2. For me, it's a simple decision. We have an excellent education system in this town, and I'd like to see it continue that way.

We have great educators in our schools. They are the most important resource we can invest in to ensure that our students succeed. As a community, I believe it is our responsibility to produce learners who are well-rounded, ready for the challenges of today and the future, and eager to make their way in the world.

The proposed education budget is a modest increase over last year, but when considering inflation, rising costs of products and services, and the expense of special education, it's not that hard of a decision. I trust our educators to make the most of the resources the town provides. I also know that it costs more now for the same services than it did last year, and I'm not going to vote against education as a result.

East Hampton residents, I look forward to seeing you at the polls on June 2. Let's pass this budget on the first try.

Sincerely,
Terry Latimer – East Hampton

Note: Latimer is a member of the East Hampton Democratic Town Committee, but is speaking as an individual.

Stop Sewer Expansion

To My East Hampton Neighbors:

When faced with a challenge, too much time is spent worrying about it. It is now time to get started to try and solve it. Help stop Sewer Expansion. The POCD Visioning Session is scheduled for June 10, just three weeks away. This is the time and place to state your opinion.

We are not alone, we are in this together, we are the cavalry, The combined opposition from us, can create a moment. Democracy requires participation. The WPCA could not control itself. We the people must place the guardrails in place. This is a marathon; it is not over.

The "Future Use Land Plan" must have sewer avoidance locked in.

We elected representatives to do a job; it's time to stop tolerating poor performance.

Living through the WPCA crisis is remarkably easy to ignore, hoping it will go away, not believing what was being proposed.

Know that we are the cavalry. Please get involved. Stay informed. Bring others along.

Douglas Mackeown – East Hampton

Support East Hampton Budgets

To the Editor:

East Hampton is highly variable when it comes to wealth disparity. While we have many residents living comfortably, we also have pockets of poverty and families who are living paycheck to paycheck.

Regardless of circumstances, the proposed East Hampton budgets for operations and education are responsible plans that support the needs of the town. With modest increases, they accomplish the services that our residents deserve without gauging taxpayers.

On the education side, leveling the playing field between the haves and have-nots is one of the most important purposes of public schools. Everyone attending our schools should be afforded pathways to success, regardless of personal finances.

Our education system is a bargain. We have extraordinary teachers who see the best in each child, and that should be celebrated. Yet every year, we tell them to do more with less. When we make things more difficult through higher class sizes, overcrowded schedules, and lack of programming, we sell short the people who are making the difference and the students who need them.

As for the town, public services like reliable safety and improved infrastructure serve everyone in East Hampton. A successful community requires investment and a willingness to push through the status quo to make things better.

There are factors that are outside of our control that are generating concern through the community. I understand that. It's a reevaluation year and that is going to impact the bottom line. Inflation is out of control and the cost of everything is up. It's forcing tough decisions in personal budgets as well as public spending, and everyone feels it.

But these spending plans are responsible, fairly fund the priorities within our control, and support the needs of East Hampton. Please join me in voting 'yes' on June 2.

Sincerely,
Joelyn Leon – East Hampton

Note: Leon is a member of the East Hampton Town Council, but she is writing as an individual.



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Andover Budget Vote

Fellow Andover Residents, and Common-Sense Thinkers:

Who does the Andover Board of Finance actually serve? Is it Andover as a whole, or something/someone completely different? I urge you to start paying attention!

These days it seems that the Board of Finance only serves the superintendent, the Board of Education, and no one else...let's break it down a bit.

At our Board of Finance (BOF) meeting early in the budget process, the BOF seemed to agree that AES' 11% budget increase would not pass the town's scrutiny; so they voted and agreed to ask the BOE to lower their increase to 7.5%. So what happened to that?

After a firm 'no,' and year after year of failed budget referendums, while stripping more services from the town budget...year after year, the BOF voted to lower the AES budget just one whole percent. Isn't that a huge slap in the face to all of us in Andover? Wouldn't you agree?

Seems like the BOF's loyalties lie not with the taxpayers of Andover, but rather with the AES administration!

I'll be voting 'no' to the AES budget, Tuesday, May 26th. It's time to save Andover!

Warm regards and God bless America!

Andrew Halidis - Andover

Why I Am Voting 'Yes'

To the Editor:

As a kid, I went to my local public schools. We had art and music and Spanish. We had sports. We had a library, not huge but well stocked, and a great librarian. We had competent and caring teachers. Taxpayers funded my school.

When my kids were growing up, their schools provided new opportunities with technology and after school clubs, as well as all the above. Taxpayers funded their schools.

Now it is time to step up and fund good education for our current generation. It is called paying it forward. You and I benefitted in the past from folks who paid their taxes and made sure our schools could provide us with a good rounded education including culture, the arts and physical activity. Now it is our turn.

So let's pass this budget. The increase to each of us individually is minor but the benefit to our youth is long term. Great schools mean a strong housing market. They attract people to move here and pay their taxes which lessens the impact on the rest of us.

Every time we have to hold another referendum, it costs the town, that means you and me, another \$5,000. Let's get this done.

Mary J. Rose - Hebron

Note: Rose is a member of the Hebron Democratic Town Committee, but is writing as an individual.

A Worthy Investment

To the Editor:

The East Hampton budget referendum is set for June 2, and just like every year prior, the voices are getting loud on both sides trying to persuade you to vote yes or no. I have been a resident of this town for decades, and it's the same pattern every time. Unfortunately, it feels now like it's harder for the two sides to reconcile once the referendum concludes.

There are some key factors that will have me voting 'yes' for both the education and operations budgets. First, the obvious. As a veteran educator who worked decades in our local school system, I can say from experience that investing in our students and families matters greatly. The cost of education is rising, but part of our lives isn't getting more expensive at this point? Why should funding our schools properly be the breaking point while we accept that it's just the way everything else is going to be?

I'm voting yes because while education is expensive, it is not wasteful in East Hampton. A modest budget increase is not going to result in mass hirings or new programs. It's going to hold the line amid rising costs and allow our educators to do the incredible work they do with all their students.

My second reason for supporting this budget is because like so many of my fellow residents, I am a senior citizen. I do not live an extravagant lifestyle, and I pay careful attention to my spending. But our budgets are an investment in sustaining and improving our town. I want good public safety and better roads. Our senior center should be able to offer excellent programming to residents. I am going to support a budget that accomplishes those goals.

Please join me in voting 'yes' on June 2. Afterward, let's continue to be neighbors a community united.

Sincerely,
Kevin Reich, Chair
East Hampton Democratic Town Committee

Support Continued Success

To the Editor:

Today, our town faces an important decision about the future of our community. I strongly support the proposed budget and encourage residents to vote 'yes.'

For many years, Hebron has operated with little to no budget growth. Over the past two decades, we have seen some years of zero increases and some of only modest increases. While keeping costs down may have seemed beneficial in the short term, we are now seeing the long-term effects. Buildings, infrastructure, and services that our residents rely on are in need of maintenance, repair, and investment.

I understand that the everyday cost of necessities has increased severely in the last year and a half and many families are feeling financial pressures. I recognize that these rising costs have created challenges for many households. However, we must also consider what is best for the long-term future of Hebron.

I do not believe it is in our town's best interest to continue reducing this budget. Doing so will only keep us stagnant and prevent us from moving forward as a community. Continually cutting or reducing investments does not strengthen a town, it delays progress and often creates larger and more expensive challenges in the future which is where we are now.

We all want a town that remains strong, well-maintained, and able to meet the needs of current residents and future generations.

This budget is about making responsible investments in our community and preserving the quality of services and facilities we all depend on.

If the budget passes, the increases will be as follows: below median home increase, \$5.75 a month; median home increase, \$9.58 a month;

above median home increase, \$13.41 a month.

I encourage residents to look beyond the immediate impact and consider the long-term health and future of our town. Please join me in voting 'yes' at our referendum on May 26th and supporting the continued growth and success of our community.

Cris Lawrence - Hebron

Note: Lawrence is chair of the Hebron Democratic Town Committee but is writing as an individual.

Town Meeting(s)

To the Editor:

I attended the recent town meeting to forward the annual budget to referendum. As expected, it was a somewhat raucous affair, in a good way. Of course, there were proponents and opponents. Per statute and protocol, citizens were given the opportunity to speak. Several did, in an irregular succession of raised hands, calls to close the debate, and poor acoustics. There were murmurs among the crowd and occasional shouts. Small town democracy in action!

One impression I took away was that there was an amazing collection of experts, clairvoyants, conspiracy theorists and other exceptional people in attendance. It has always amazed me that some apparently regular people (laborers, white-collar workers, mid-level managers, etc.) are natural-born legal and constitutional scholars, macroeconomists, sociologists and authorities on all manner of public governance. With this wealth of intellect and reason in our midst, I propose that the town let 12 of these extraordinary folks appoint themselves to manage our town impeccably. No doubt they would select the prime of the prime fairly and sagaciously. A dozen Solomons!

With their collective wisdom, they will un-

doubtedly make every correct decision at every level, producing perfect budget after perfect budget. I'm sure that each of them is supremely principled and could never mislead or exploit their fellow citizens. Their leadership would bring a Golden Age of universal happiness and satisfaction to Colchester ... perhaps ultimately to the nation!

This may sound audacious, but like the bar sign says, "Tequila may not be the answer, but it's worth a shot!"

John Barnowski - Colchester

Note: Barnowski is a member of the Colchester Democratic Town Committee, but said he is writing as a private citizen.

Arguments Ring Hollow, Belltown

To the Editor:

There have been a couple of familiar refrains that budget opponents like to push around referendum time: enrollment is declining and reductions to increases are not cuts. Right on cue, as soon as East Hampton set its referendum for the operations and education budgets on June 2, we hear the same song.

Let's start with enrollment. While East Hampton has seen declining school enrollment over the past decade, the population of students with special needs has gone way up. It's a credit to our school system that special education is taken seriously, and we have talented and dedicated teachers and staff. That kind of care is both required and expensive, far outpacing any savings East Hampton would experience from reducing payroll to match enrollment.

The people who are loudest about enrollment know that education costs have gone through the roof. It's just an easy argument to try to

See Letters, page 8

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★ *Letters, cont. from page 7*

make. Any research into true education costs reveals just how hollow an argument it really is. Additionally, we now see enrollment figures in town plateauing and expected to rise over the next decade.

As for the second familiar refrain, let's look at what the 2.75% increase to last year's budget meant to our school system. On paper, it seems like an increase, but when you account for inflation, rising healthcare costs, special education, transportation, and other factors, it was below what the schools needed to offer the programming that families expect.

It's hard to qualify that the budget wasn't cut when it resulted in the reduction of 14 positions across the district, as well as rises in pay-to-play, and other programs. Any time you have to reduce staff, it is a cut.

Looking ahead to June 2, the school budget's increase is very modest at 3.58%. That maintains the status quo and does not bring back any of the cut positions. Few local towns are seeing that low an increase, especially with massive spikes in health care premiums. The town side is a bargain as well.

Let's dispense with the usual hollow arguments. Please vote 'yes' on June 2 and preserve what is great about our schools and our town.

Sincerely,

David Caterisano – East Hampton

Note: Caterisano is a member of the East Hampton Board of Finance, but said he is writing as an individual.

Thank You, Colchester Lions

To the Editor:

The Colchester Garden Club would like to thank the Colchester Lions Club for the generous donation we received at the recent "Lions Night of Giving." We are honored to be among the deserving community organizations recognized that night.

This donation will support our 2026 Native Plant and Pollinator program which includes public educational programs, youth activities, signage, and informational materials all designed to encourage the support of pollinators by planting native plants, eliminating invasive plants, and the adoption of sustainable gardening techniques.

This Native Plant and Pollinator program will also help the Town of Colchester to earn points toward the next level of certification from Sustainable CT.

Thank you again to the Colchester Lions. We appreciate your continued commitment to the community through not only your numerous acts of service but also through your support of other organizations.

**Mary Spalter, Co-President
Colchester Garden Club**

Vote 'Yes' for Hebron

To the Editor:

I ask all residents of Hebron to please vote 'yes' on May 26th for the town budget, which includes the budget for Hebron Public Schools. Supporting this budget preserves the quality education that makes Hebron an attractive town to buy a home and raise children, while responding responsibly to voter feedback that resulted in a \$300,000 reduction to the Board of Education after the first referendum.

It was difficult to cut anything from an already lean budget. This was particularly true as parents testified to the positive impact that current class sizes and enrichment opportunities have on their children's growth. However, the economic reality in which our schools must operate cannot be dismissed. The board was responsive and transparent when discussing additional cuts that spread across central office, administration, and classrooms, with the goal of limiting the impact felt by students and classroom teachers. These cuts included: eliminating a principal, reducing the contractual cost of living increase for central office staff, reducing one full-time music teacher to part-time, eliminating an unfilled speech pathologist language assistant position, approving a leave of absence and receiving a grant.

Voting 'yes' preserves current class sizes. Voting 'yes' preserves a robust music experience in both band and chorus for kids in grades 4-6. Voting 'yes' preserves challenge & enrichment opportunities for all students without placing additional demands on our teachers.

This is not the year in which I anticipate a no vote will result in an increase to the town or education budget, so please vote 'yes' on May 26th to protect class sizes and programming for our kids, which maintains home values and quality of life in Hebron.

Sera Coppolino – Hebron

Note: Coppolino is secretary of the Hebron Board of Education but is speaking as an individual.

Decisive Response

To the Editor:

The Hebron Town Council and Boards of Finance and Education have listened and acted decisively. So has the RHAM Board of Education. Each group heard the message voters expressed at the May 5 referendum. The proposed budgets have been reduced significantly. The proposed bottom-line budget is a 3.55% increase. The total amount needed to be raised from taxes is an increase of \$556,264 which is a 1.66% increase. That's right, a 1.66% tax increase. If approved, the mill rate for real estate/personal property will increase from 36.85 to 37.31; a change of .46. The mill rate for motor vehicles remains unchanged. I commend the boards for their collective response. Thank you.

The taxpayers were heard. Our volunteer elected officials, friends and neighbors, responded appropriately and decisively. The revised proposals deserve our support! I will be voting 'yes' on all the questions without reservation on Tuesday, May 26. I encourage all voters to do the same.

Ray Purtell – Hebron

Reach for Civility

To the Editor:

At the recent Andover budget meeting on May 12th, I voiced my concerns about the divisiveness that has come to characterize our budgetary process and gatherings, and its enormously negative impact on our community. It sets up school and community supporters as if opponents instead of as one community, and it impairs our ability to work collaboratively.

Echoing the sentiments of a letter writer in the last issue: in approaching a new budgetary year the goal – either of the school or town – should not be to get as much as they think they can, but it should be to their use their skills to strategize about ways that either expenses can be best reduced or income generated. If we worked more effectively together we'd be better able to think outside the box and perhaps even find new solutions and bring everyone closer to their goals. That builds community and trust.

At town meetings and individually, I would ask that we reach for civility when we gather – on both sides – and that we agree that the scowls and the angry stomps to the microphone, and dismissive or disrespectful communications just function to divide us further. It gets in the way of people feeling comfortable speaking.

We have to rise above that – because importantly, our children are watching how we work things out and they rely on us to offer a better and more respectful model for managing differing perspectives.

Kathleen Barrett – Andover

Better Options Than Rodenticide

To the Editor:

After finding yet another wild animal, this time a hawk, dead, lying in an open area, I am compelled to try to spread the word that rodenticides are not the answer to protecting homes and cars from mice or other rodents.

What does work and is much more humane are the following:

- Sealing openings to the outdoors, even with steel wool or copper mesh
 - Contraceptive for mice / rodents (Evolve made by Contrapest, sold by Amazon)
 - Botanical repellents (such as mint or balsam fir, which smell great to us, but block rodents' ability to smell possible predators)
 - Ultrasonic plus strobe light for such areas as stored vehicles (Mouseblocker or Mouseblocker Pro)
 - Having a cat in the house repels rodents
- Utilizing multiple methods of the above is more effective.

Rodenticides, on the other hand, poisons a rodent who, weakened and dying, is easy prey for natural rodent predators, such as hawks, owls, fox, and more. Even skunks or possums will predate a weakened rodent. Then, they also are poisoned. Much wildlife is killed by rodenticides. Further, since rodents have many babies, poisoning a few does not eliminate the problem of having rodents where you don't want them.

Also, it's good to know that white footed deer mice are voracious predators of spongy moth (formerly gypsy moth) larvae. These mice greatly reduce the numbers of spongy moth caterpillars, which are very destructive to our forests, orchards, and yard trees.

So, please help keep wildlife alive, keep mice outside and know they are a useful part of our ecosystem, and use humane methods of keeping rodents away from homes, cars, etc. Thank you for reading and considering this.

**Sincerely,
Ann Zitkus – Hebron**

Reservations with Weir

To the Editor:

I am writing with concern over Representative Weir's vote on May 2nd against roughly \$630,000 in new state aid to the five towns of the 55th House District.

In a year where municipalities in the 55th have been struggling with very challenging municipal budgets, voting against the opportunity to shift the tax burden away from the property of residents seems uniquely short-sighted. This aid was split between K-12 school aid and general municipal grants and reflects an increased awareness that the property tax burden is increasingly untenable for many residents of our region.

I have profound reservations about the dissonance between this vote and the fiscal realities within the 55th district.

Sincerely,

Baird Welch-Collins – Marlborough

Note: Welch-Collins is a member of the Marlborough Democratic Town Committee, but is speaking as an individual.

Hard Decisions Must Be Made

To the Editor:

Some have been accused of not supporting education or the kids of our town because they support a reduced increase in the town's education budget. On the contrary, most think the kids deserve the best education we, the taxpayers, can afford. The problem is that most of us can't afford what the Board of Education (BoE) is asking for.

Property taxes are too high to begin with, and every year we're asked to pay more. But this year is different. After revaluation, many of us are facing significant increases to our property assessments. Adding another large budget increase has many of us facing the perfect storm when it comes to satisfying the tax collector while also making ends meet.

Some get emotional about these issues, and rightly so. On one hand, we want to give the kids everything that the school system is asking for. On the other hand, we all have limited resources and our own personal financial responsibilities that must be dealt with, and that requires us to keep more of our own money than some would like.

Others have criticized calls for smaller budget increases by calling them personal attacks on members of the BoE and Board of Finance, which is a ridiculous attempt at silencing citizens with legitimate concerns. Taxpayers have every right to give feedback to their elected officials; after all, they work for us.

Inevitably, some will ask, "Well, tell us what you think we should cut from our kids' educations?" Or others will ask, "If you think you know so much, why don't you run for office?" These are just more attempts at silencing taxpayers.

It's not our job as taxpayers to tell them what to cut, and we don't need to run for an elected position to voice our opinions. It's the job of the BoE to make hard decisions and put together the best budget they can, with what the taxpayers can afford, not with what they wish we could afford.

Bryon Turner – East Hampton

Note: Turner is a member of the East Hampton Republican Town Committee, but said he is writing as an individual.

Goodbye, Steve Weir

To the Editor:

In a republic, we vote for people to represent us in government. When those representatives consistently vote "the party line" instead of the spirit of bipartisanship, most voters are disenfranchised. A representative who frequently votes in opposition to the majority of their party in favor of the "party line," especially when the party votes in a bipartisan manner, accomplishes nothing. The constituents are not being heard.

The 55th District of Connecticut is losing its voice in what happens in Connecticut. Steve Weir has voted against the majority of the Republican Party 98 times! His own party! Ninety-five of those occasions he voted to the right of the majority of Republicans. In 2024, Weir was the only Republican voting 'no' on a bill to enforce boating laws on waters near CT borders, while 52 Republicans voted 'yes.'

There are 18 bills where the Republican majority (85% or higher) voted 'yes,' while Mr. Weir voted 'no.' Among those were a bill to recognize and honor Connecticut military veterans, a bill establishing a Parkinson's disease research account, a bill making it a deportable offense to assault a law enforcement officer, a firefighter, or other first responder, and a bill to redefine "animal," to regulate breeding kennels, provide certain procedures controlling rabies and make other minor changes to domestic animal related statutes. All of these bills became law. No thanks

to Steve Weir.

The Connecticut Constitution requires legislative ratification of contracts negotiated by the executive branch and state employee unions. There were six times when Steve Weir voted against ratification when the vast majority of Republicans voted 'yes.' Weir is a ranking member of the Labor and Public Employees Committee. His 'no' votes have been consistently been more anti-labor than other available options while the majority of Republicans vote yes.

Steve Weir is not representing the 55th District of Connecticut. Weir frequently opposes his own party. How can Weir represent Republicans in our district with a record like that? With many Connecticut Republicans working with Democrats on bipartisan legislature, we are left with a representative who leaves us with a voice not heard.

The cry of "Taxation without Representation" was a driving force in the American Revolution. It was about laws being passed with no say from the colonies. Weir, by voting to the extreme right, is leaving the 55th District with no voice. It is time to say goodbye to Mr. Weir.

Sincerely,

Russell Salvador – Marlborough

Note: Salvador is a member of the Marlborough Democratic Town Committee, but said he is writing as an individual.

Vote 'Yes' on Hebron Budget

To the Editor:

Over the past several months, those of us working on the town budget have been actively pursuing a budget that protects vital town services — the schools, public safety, roads, and programs that our community depends on every day. At the same time, we have heard loud and clear from our voters that this is an extraordinarily difficult year for household finances. Unprecedented inflation in the cost of gas, groceries, and everyday necessities has placed a very real burden on Hebron families, and we took that message seriously.

In response to that feedback, meaningful reductions were made across the board. The Board of Finance set target cuts of \$200,000 from the town budget and \$300,000 from the Board of Education budget. Those targets were met. These cuts were painful and difficult and I want to acknowledge the fantastic teachers and staff we have at Gilead Hill and Hebron Elementary and hope to find additional support in the future from the state to lower the burden on our local property taxes and at the same time support our teachers, paraprofessionals and the programs that our students and their parents value.

It is also worth recognizing the efforts of the RHAM Board of Education, which made its own additional cuts to further reduce their budget increase and substantially lessen the burden on Hebron taxpayers. For a full accounting of those reductions, I encourage residents to visit the RHAM website, where the details of those cuts have been made available.

The result of that collective work is a revised budget with a mill rate increase of .46 mills. We believe this represents a responsible balance: maintaining the services Hebron residents rely on while acknowledging the financial realities so many of us are facing.

Hebron citizens can also visit the town website where an estimated breakdown of what this budget means for your specific property can be found. Knowing the actual dollar impact can help make an informed decision at the polls.

Please make your voice heard. Vote 'yes' on the Hebron town budget this Tuesday, May 26th. Every vote counts, and your participation in this process is what makes our town strong.

Thank you for your time and for your continued commitment to our community.

Sincerely,

Jan Lawrence – Hebron

Note: Lawrence is vice chair of the Hebron Town Council, but is writing as an individual.

We Love Hebron

To the Editor:

Thank you for your involvement in the budget process. We are all volunteers. After the long and late meetings we go home, hope to get there in time to put our kids to bed and have to get up and go to work in the morning. We are being involved in how our taxes are spent to best support our whole community.

We love Hebron. We want the best for our children in our schools, safe roads, quality youth athletic fields, upkeep of buildings, a quality plan for the DPW facility and more! It is a balance.

I can only speak for myself and I want people to know that every decision made is calculated, weighed, and processed. None of the decisions we have to make this budget season are easy or

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

ideal.

The budget season started in the fall of 2025. It is important that community members are involved at the start. It is over the course of this eight-month journey that changes can be made before the ultimate decision comes at referendum. The decision is very important at referendum; however, looking forward, getting involved early and often will have the most impact.

I read every email I receive. I am thankful that community members reach out. It is most helpful to hear viable solutions along with what is not preferred. Solution minded input has the most positive impact on reducing the budget in realistic ways that limits direct student impact. Community members should feel empowered to respectfully email concerns and ideas to the Board of Education at boe@hebron.k12.ct.us. We are on the same team and the process should support each other and do what is best for our community.

A vote 'no' on May 26th could result in further reductions. If you vote 'no' for the town and education budget the follow-up question will provide insight on why. Too high, too low, just right. That data will be helpful for the Board of Finance; however, they may still decide to reduce the education and town budget. You can access a copy of the May 26th ballot on the Hebron town website to preview the questions and prepare for your vote.

Thank you again for the input, feedback, and for voting on May 26th to support our community.

Kim Hills – Hebron

Note: Hills is a member of the Hebron Board of Education, but is speaking as an individual.

Difficult Choices Require Honest Priorities

To the Editor:

Last week I wrote about the Minimum Budget Requirement (MBR) and the fact that state law recognizes there are circumstances where education funding should not automatically continue increasing regardless of changing conditions. Declining enrollment, efficiencies, and cost reductions are all recognized as legitimate reasons to reevaluate spending.

The discussion surrounding the proposed reduction to the pre-kindergarten program highlights exactly why those conversations matter.

For generations, families made decisions about preschool and childcare based on their own circumstances and resources. Parents selected private providers, relied on family support systems, or made arrangements that fit their needs and budgets. Those providers also serve an important role in our community by creating jobs, paying taxes, and contributing to our local economy.

Increasingly, however, we continue moving toward government-funded programs that shift responsibilities traditionally handled by families and the private sector onto taxpayers. Supporters often point to state funding as justification for continuing programs like this, but taxpayers should understand that the full cost is not being covered. The state contribution is approximately \$75,000, not the total operating cost. As salaries, benefits and expenses increase, those additional costs increasingly become the responsibility of East Hampton taxpayers.

I also worry that discussions surrounding programs like this can shift from honest budget discussions into emotionally driven messaging that creates fear among parents. Budget reductions are sometimes portrayed as being against children rather than legitimate discussions

about priorities and affordability. Parents deserve complete information and an honest discussion of costs and alternatives.

We also need an honest discussion about responsibility. Raising and providing for children has traditionally been a responsibility of families, with government serving as a safety net rather than the first solution. If every challenge becomes something government is expected to provide, taxpayers will continue carrying larger burdens. That reflects a growing socialist mindset that increasingly looks to government instead of individual responsibility, family decisions, private enterprise, and local solutions.

We should also explore alternatives, such as encouraging another high-quality preschool provider to establish itself in town, increasing options for parents while supporting local businesses.

Supporting this reduction does not mean eliminating a valuable educator. Those skills could be reassigned elsewhere in the district where support is needed.

Responsible budgeting requires difficult choices and priorities.

Respectfully,

**Ted Hintz, Member
East Hampton Town Council**

Blooming Through Healthy Aging

To the Editor:

There is something deeply healing about getting your hands in the dirt.

At the Portland Senior Center, we are excited to introduce our new Bloom Therapeutic Gardening Program, a program designed not only to teach gardening skills, but to support healthy aging, emotional wellness, connection, and purpose through nature.

Gardening is far more than planting flowers or vegetables. Research continues to show the incredible physical, emotional, and cognitive benefits gardening can have for older adults. Time spent outdoors and connected to nature can reduce stress, anxiety, and feelings of isolation. Gardening encourages movement, fine motor skills, problem solving, socialization, and mindfulness. It gives individuals something to nurture and look forward to, while also creating a sense of accomplishment and joy.

As we age, maintaining purpose, connection, and overall wellbeing becomes incredibly important. Therapeutic gardening offers all of these things in a gentle and meaningful way. Sometimes healing does not happen in a doctor's office. Sometimes it happens while planting seeds beside a friend, feeling the warmth of the sun, or watching something grow because you cared for it.

The Bloom Program at the Portland Senior Center is about more than gardening. It is about fostering community, encouraging healthy aging, reducing isolation, and creating opportunities for older adults to continue learning, growing, and thriving.

We often underestimate the power of simple things. Fresh air. Soil. Flowers. Connection. Purpose. Yet these are often the very things that help people feel alive again.

Healthy aging is not only about adding years to life, but life to years. Programs like Bloom help do exactly that.

We welcome the community to continue supporting programs that encourage wellness, dignity, engagement, and connection for older adults here in Portland.

**Sarah Caratasios, LMSW Director/
Municipal Agent, Portland Senior Center**

the poem turned out and had initially tossed it, his fellow soldiers retrieved it – and it quickly became one of the most famous war poems of all time. Here in the U.S., it's widely quoted on both Veterans Day and Memorial Day.

So I thought a fitting way to end the column this week would be to share the poem:

In Flanders fields, the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.
We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie,
In Flanders fields.
Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

Debunking Budget Myths

To the Editor:

The approaching June 2 budget referendum in East Hampton is spurring familiar myths and misinformation, especially over school funding. Whether it's been town meetings, letters to the editor, or the social media centrifuge, it's the same arguments we hear annually.

Rather than let half-truths and hearsay spread, let's consider the reality:

1. Enrollment is down, so costs should be down.

In theory, this makes sense. However, special education costs are skyrocketing. Insurance premiums require much higher percentages from school districts. East Hampton pays the tuition for many outplacements, including some that exceed six figures per student.

So yes, enrollment may have gone down over the last decade, but obligations have far outpaced potential savings.

2. East Hampton schools are top-heavy with administrators.

This is simply false. East Hampton has four schools with a total of seven building administrators. Central office has fewer professionals than our comparable districts, including neighboring towns. We have excellent administrators throughout and all of them are handling overwhelming amounts of responsibility.

3. Budgets are not being cut if they are also increasing.

This one is particularly misleading. The proposed school budget increase in East Hampton is 3.58%. That figure simply adjusts what is needed to provide the same quality of education as last year. Aside from a kindergarten teacher, there are no new hires, and the school system is not seeking to bring back the 14 positions lost last year.

Again, everything costs more now. Inflation has increased by 3.8% (more than the proposed increase) since last year, and that forces towns to pay more for the same service. Most of this is caused by federal government, but we won't go down that road in the *Rivereast*.

4. East Haddam has a flat increase. East Hampton should too.

Again, great idea on the surface. But look at

the facts at East Haddam versus East Hampton. The former has one of the smallest public schools systems in the state, fewer schools, and an annual \$300,000 endowment for education. The town is also home to an airport and two major tourist attractions in Goodspeed Opera House and Gillette's Castle, bringing in considerable external revenue from visitors.

East Hampton would happily accept an annual endowment to offset education costs, if anyone feels so generous.

More to come next week. Please vote 'yes' on June 2 and ensure that budget myths don't derail our school system.

Sincerely,

Matt Engelhardt – East Hampton

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

Witness Hebron History

To the Editor:

What a thrill to read the announcement for Hebron's Witness Stones program and the recognition of the integral role of 17 Kinney Road in a historic collaboration. Scheduled for Saturday May 30th, from 4-6 p.m. at St. Peter's Church, the Witness Stones program empowers RHAM Middle School students to engage in valuable research and explore a deeper understanding of our unique past.

This year's Witness Stones are dedicated to Martin Powers and Cesar Peters, Jr., both of whom were born enslaved but would become part of a thriving free Black community in Hebron in the early 1800s. Their efforts shaped the fields at 17 Kinney Road and remain one of the most significant moments in Hebron history. The fact that these fields are still in active agriculture and have changed little since Martin and Cesar, Jr. toiled there is a powerful connection to their life and times.

As noted in last week's *Rivereast*, "As a skilled farmer, Martin Powers was employed by Governor John S. Peters of Hebron to construct the laneways on his farm, now the town-owned property at 17 Kinney Rd. Cesar Peters Jr. was two months old when John Mann and his son

See Letters, page 25

Members of the public are invited to

CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

VIRTUAL PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING

State Project No. 0172-0541

Eastern Connecticut Accessible Pedestrian Signal Upgrades

Monday, June 1, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

Learn More & Register: portal.ct.gov/DOTEasternCT0172-0541

The purpose of this meeting is to provide the community with an opportunity to learn about the proposed project and allow an open discussion of any views and comments concerning the proposed improvements. A Q&A session will immediately follow the presentation.

Meeting accessibility and traffic control requirements, these features are expected to enhance pedestrian usage at traffic signals and is intended to reduce crashes between pedestrians and vehicles.

Right-of-way impacts are expected to be minimal around new pedestrian equipment and sidewalks at some project intersections.

Construction is expected to start in spring 2028, depending on funding, right-of-way acquisition, and permits. The estimated cost is \$6 million, with 90% federal funds and 10% state funds.

The public can submit comments and questions during two-week public comment period following meeting. Direct comments and questions by Monday, June 15, 2026, to Balazs Szoke at DOTProject0172-0541@ct.gov or 860-594-2020.

ACCESSIBILITY

Non-English language closed captioning will be available on Zoom. The recording will also be posted following the meeting in CTDOT's public meeting playlist at portal.ct.gov/ctdotVPIMarchive.

For audio access, call 877-853-5257 with Meeting ID 852 7784 2505. Project information can be mailed within one week by contacting Balazs Szoke at DOTProject0172-0541@ct.gov or 860-594-2745.

For hearing/speech disabilities, dial 711 for Telecommunications Relay Services (TRS). Request language assistance from CTDOT's Language Assistance at (860) 594-2109 at least five business days before meeting.

Editor's Desk continued from page 4

After the May 25 reunion, the museum will be open every Saturday and Sunday during the spring and summer, from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. each week, until Monday Oct. 12.

For further information, contact Podskoch at 860-267-2442 or podskoch@comcast.net, or visit www.martinpodskoch.com.

In addition to being the day of the CCC reunion, next Monday is of course also Memorial Day. All of the *Rivereast* towns will be holding commemorative parades and ceremonies – some on Sunday, some on Monday – and I encourage you to check one of them out.

If you do attend a ceremony, you may well hear "In Flanders Fields" recited by one of the speakers. The poem was written during World War I by Canadian physician Lt. Col. John McCrae. McCrae was inspired to write it on May 3, 1915, after presiding over the funeral of friend and fellow soldier Lt. Alexis Helmer, who had died during a battle in Belgium.

While McCrae was dissatisfied with how

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From the Committee on Solidarity

Portland's Committee on Solidarity is tasked to work with our townspeople to stand Portland-Strong against racism, bigotry, prejudice and violence. We invite you to celebrate two events with us in June that celebrate DEI.

June is Gay Pride month and we welcome Portland residents to join us in the parade or cheer us on from the crowd on Saturday, June 6, at 1 p.m., at Middletown's PrideFEST. The event runs from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. and features the parade, a rally, an outdoor concert, food and vendors. Sign up to march with Portland at PortlandPrideRSVP.com.

It took many years for our country to change from treating gay people as criminals with mental illness to citizens with equal rights. In 1969 the Stonewall Riots in Greenwich Village led to the first Gay Pride Parade the following year. Now gay pride parades are held every year to support equal rights for LGBTQ+ individuals. Pride reminds us that when LGBTQ+ people are free to live openly and authentically, it encourages all of us to take pride in who we truly are and to build a community rooted in acceptance, dignity, and belonging.

The Committee on Solidarity invites you to our annual Juneteenth Celebration on Saturday, June 20, from noon to 5 p.m. at Portland Middle School. This marks the eighth year the Portland community has hosted this meaningful and joyful event, and we hope you'll be a part of it!

Juneteenth commemorates the end of slavery in America. On June 19, 1865 a Union Army general informed over 250,000 enslaved Black people in Texas that slavery had been abolished at the end of the Civil War. They learned that two and a half years before, Abraham Lincoln had issued the Emancipation Proclamation.

To honor this important day, we've planned an afternoon full of community, culture, and fun. The celebration will begin at noon in the auditorium with powerful speakers. There will be live music by the band At Last, and a variety of vendors from Black-owned businesses. There will be plenty of delicious food to enjoy, and free ice cream for a sweet treat. Families are encouraged to bring their kids, who can enjoy games and other activities. We hope to see you there!

We welcome the public to join us for our monthly meetings on the second Tuesday of every month at 7 p.m. You can join us either in person at the Waverly Senior Center or online at www.portlandct.org/zoom, Zoom B (ID: 352 700 8408, password: 113ct). Agendas, minutes, and general information can be found at portlandct.org/solidarity-task-force. If you are interested in the committee, you do not have to be a member to participate! To learn more about the committee and its workgroups, email portlandctsolidarity@gmail.com.

Portland Committee on Solidarity

Portland Fair Planning Underway

Planning is underway for this year's Portland Fair, which will return to its "new" location at Chris Cote's Driving Range on Oct. 2, 3 and 4.

Crafts and Community Tent: This year, the Crafts and Community Tent continues its theme of Reduce, Reuse and Recycle while leaning into celebrating America's 250th birthday. The popular Trashion Show will return on Friday night. Another returning event is the Triple Crown of Baking held in partnership with the Guilford and Durham fairs. Melissa Kelley, chairperson for the tent, is seeking donations of leftover scrap fabrics for a community weaving project which will culminate in a banner for the tent.

Donations Welcome: The Friends of the Fair campaign continues through June 15. Dona-

tions of \$25 receive a two-day pass to the fair, while a \$40 donation receives a three-day pass. Support helps fair organizers continue to improve the grounds.

Chicken Barbecue: This third annual fundraiser will be held July 20 at Portland Riverfront Park. This event is being held in partnership with Portland Fish and Game Club. All are invited for dinner and musical entertainment. Tickets are \$30 for adults and \$10 for children.

Volunteers Wanted: Volunteers are always welcome. There are open positions for a volunteer coordinator and ribbons/trophies coordinator. If interested in volunteering, email info@portlandfair.com.

Annual Juneteenth Celebration Returns

Portland's Committee on Solidarity/Juneteenth invites all to the annual Juneteenth Celebration on Saturday, June 20, from noon-5 p.m., at Portland Middle School. This marks the eighth year the Portland community has hosted this event.

Juneteenth commemorates the end of slavery in America. On June 19, 1865 a Union Army general informed over 250,000 enslaved Black people in Texas that slavery had been abolished at the end of the Civil War. They learned that two and a half years before, Abraham Lincoln had issued the Emancipation Proclamation, declaring that "all persons held as slaves...henceforth shall be free." In 1979, Texas was the first state to make Juneteenth an official holiday; several others followed suit over the years. In June 2021, Congress passed a resolution establishing Juneteenth as a federal holiday.

The celebration will begin at noon in the auditorium with presentations from Barbara Shaw, from Voices of Portland; Eric Grant, the

first and only Black police officer in Portland; and Robert Jefferson, from the Black History in Middletown project. There will be live music by the band At Last, and a variety of vendors from Black-owned businesses. There will be food to enjoy, and free ice cream for a sweet treat.

Families are encouraged to bring their kids, who can enjoy games and other activities.

This event is proudly co-sponsored by the Portland Historical Society, Portland Public Schools, Portland Library, Liberty Bank, Middlesex County NAACP, McClam Funeral Home, and Del Printing.

Holiday Closing

The Portland town offices will be closed Monday, May 25, in observation of Memorial Day.

The annual Memorial Day parade will be held, rain or shine, Sunday, May 24, at 2 p.m.

Honor Those Who Fell: Wear a Poppy

Members of the Portland American Legion Auxiliary will offer Memorial Day Poppies this month.

High School volunteers will assist Auxiliary members and will also line the parade route on May 24th, seeking donations for the poppies – which are made by veterans in veterans' hospitals.

Funds collected from the poppy donations are used for the rehabilitation of veterans; for the welfare of families of veterans; to help pay

for some expenses for the hospital and field service volunteers (such as uniforms and transportation); and other items and services benefiting veterans, particularly those in the VA hospitals.

The poppy was made the memorial flower of the American Legion Auxiliary at the 1921 National Convention in Kansas City. All are encouraged to wear the poppy as a personal tribute to the deceased veterans and to honor the living veterans as well.

Quarry Celebration, Makers Fair

The Brownstone Quorum and Portland Parks and Recreation Department are hosting the 2026 Quarry Celebration Day & Makers Fair on Saturday, May 30, at Portland's Riverfront Park, 284 Brownstone Ave. The event will run from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Sunday, May 31, is the rain date.

This year's event will feature over 80 artisan craft vendors selling their products, musical entertainment on the park stage headlined by the

Steve Donovan Trio, 10 exhibiting civic groups including Nordic Spa previewing the soon-to-be-open spa, and five food trucks with a variety of meals.

Parking and admission are free. Handicapped parking will be available.

All proceeds go toward further improvements to the Riverfront Park and surroundings.

Legion Changing Flag Displays

American Legion Ormont Post 69 has announced changes to when, and for how long, American flags will be displayed at veterans' graves.

American Legion members and volunteers will place American flags on each identified veterans' gravesite in Portland, so they are present the Saturday before Memorial Day and before Veterans Day each year, and will remove the flags the following Saturday. (Weather permitting.)

In the past, American flags were put in before Memorial Day and removed after Veterans Day. However, Post 69 being exposed to the elements for over 160 days takes a tremendous toll on the flags to the point that none are reusable for a second year and many are torn and damaged that they should have been removed (or replaced) earlier.

Lions Club Roars Again

The Portland Lions Club will hold its third annual "Lions Roar Cycling for Our Community" event Saturday, June 20, with registration at Brownstone Park on Brownstone Avenue and Bransfield Park on Rose Hill Road, depending on the route you plan on riding.

Riders from across Connecticut participate in this event. One hundred percent of the funds are used for supporting charitable projects such as childhood cancer, hunger, disaster relief, diabetes, vision, hearing and more. To register for the ride, go to bikereg.com/lions-roar.

To make a donation in support of the Lions Club please send them to P.O. Box 283, Portland, CT 06480.

Bereavement Support Group

St. Mary Church, located at 45 Freestone Ave., invites all to attend the Bereavement Support Group. The evening session meets the second Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m. and the afternoon session meets the fourth Tuesday at 3 p.m. – both in the church hall.

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

No Parking Notification

During the Memorial Day parade on Sunday, from 2-5 p.m., there will be no parking on Waverly Avenue, East Main Street or Fairview Street.

The parade will be passing down Waverly Avenue and East Main Street and Fairview Street, ending at Veterans' Memorial Park (Portland Town Hall).

Portland Police will have signs posted as a reminder.

Sports Hall of Fame

Portland Parks and Recreation is partnering with the Portland Sports Hall of Fame to accept nominations for the class of 2026.

Nominations can be submitted to the Parks and Recreation Department digitally through its website, portland.recdesk.com (look for the Sports Hall of Fame entry in the program listings), or in person at the office, located at 265 Main St.

Nominations are due July 15.

Exchange Club Seeks New Members

The Exchange Club of Portland is looking for new members.

The club started in 1945 and, through such projects as the Exchange Club Golf Tournament, Touch-A-Truck, Bingo Nights, the "Give a Kid a Flag" program, and food concessions at the Portland Fair, it is able to help various charities and awareness programs. These include Middlesex Hospital Family Advocacy, New Horizons Domestic Violence Prevention Group, Portland Food Bank, Middlesex Hospital Hospice, Portland Fuel Bank, and scholarships for Portland students.

If interested in joining, and for more information, visit portlandexchange.org.

President's List

Portland residents James Amodio and Ashley Leclerc made the spring 2026 President's List at Southern New Hampshire University in Manchester, N.H.

Trinity Church News

Trinity Episcopal Church, 345 Main St., invites the community to worship each week. Services are on Sundays at 9:30 a.m., and Bible Study starts at 8:30 a.m. each Sunday. The schedule can always be located at www.trinitychurchportlandct.org.

Trinity is open for prayer and meditation and our church office is open from 2-4 p.m. each Friday. All are invited to join the Anglican Prayer beading sessions at this time too.

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

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Cemetery and Patio Pots for Memorial Day

Americana Geraniums \$5.29 each or \$50 per dozen

4" Pots of Perennials, Annuals \$5.49 each or \$65.00 for a flat of 15 pots

We have a large selection of annual flowering and vegetable plants that were recently transplanted. All trays \$1.69 each or \$16.99 for a flat of 12 trays.

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TJ Nuccio of the Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity & Opportunity; state Rep. Christie Carpino (R-32) and Ashley McClain of Linked Autism Safety Project are pictured, left to right, at the recent Yellow Envelope event at Portland Library.

Carpino Hosts Yellow Envelope Event

State Rep. Christie Carpino (R-32) recently hosted TJ Nuccio of the Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity & Opportunity, and Ashley McClain of Linked Autism Safety Project to share information about Connecticut's Yellow Envelope program.

This event helped to bring awareness to the program and the importance of safety for both first responders and those with disabilities, making sure both feel comfortable if ever needing to interact in what could be a high stress situation.

"The Yellow Envelope is a voluntary program that helps drivers and passengers with physical disabilities or cognitive impairments communicate with first responders, reducing miscommunication and sharing vital information in quick and safe ways," said Carpino.

The Yellow Envelope should be kept in an in location that is easy to access in the vehicle. In

the event there is an interaction with first responders, the Yellow Envelope can be shared, and it will contain important information about the individuals involved, how to improve communication, and key medical information the individuals want to share.

In 2025, Carpino supported the Yellow Envelope Law, helping it to move through legislation.

"Safety and preparation matter at every stage of life. In my work with older adults, I see how having important medical information readily available helps first responders act quickly when every second counts," said Sarah Elliott-Caratasios, LMSW, director of the Portland Senior Center.

Carpino added, "I want to thank Sarah Elliott-Caratasios and the Portland Senior Center for their partnership and willingness to help get information about this important program to community members in Portland."

First Congregational Church News

All are welcome to First Congregational Church, 554 Main St., for worship each Sunday at 10 a.m. Pastor is the Rev. Judith Cooke.

This Sunday, May 24, is Pentecost Sunday, and Cooke will preach on the topic "Pentecostal."

Also, at 10 a.m., elementary aged children

will meet for Church School in the newly renovated classroom, and the middle school class will meet in the youth room. Infant through Pre-K children will enjoy playtime and an age-appropriate lesson.

For more information, go to firstchurch-portlandct.org or call 860-342-3244.

Red Cross Blood Drive

Portland Lions Club is sponsoring a Red Cross blood drive Wednesday, June 3, from noon-5 p.m., at the Waverly Senior Center, 7 Waverly Ave. You may register by calling 1-800-733-2767.

Portland Lions Club is a civic organization of volunteers, part of a district of an international organization. Lions serve youth. Their community projects support youth through scholarships. The LEOs program provides youth with an opportunity for personal development through volunteering. The Portland LEOs are high school students; they have raised funds for disaster relief, and collect eyeglasses to donate to those in need, among other charitable activities. New local Lion chapters include a Connecticut River Environmental club and another chapter supporting mental health.

Also, watch for information on a June 20 biking event to raise funds for the Portland Lions charitable account. The club supports efforts to treat and cure childhood cancer, diabetes, and treatment for persons with hearing and/or vision impairment. Portland Lions have donated to Portland Food Bank, among other local donations including books for the public library and soon, a bench for Riverfront Park. The club also holds annual vision screenings in Portland for young children.

Murdercycles Rodeo

Murdercycles MC will hold its 10th annual rodeo Saturday, July 11, at the Exchange Club Fairgrounds, 1348 Main St.

The event will feature the famous Thunderdome, as well as biker games, food, a minibike throw-down, live music, vendors, inflatables, and more.

Admission is \$20; children under 13 are free. Murdercycles said it reserves the right to refuse anyone.

Memorial Day Veterans Activities

American Legion Ormont Post 69 has announced its Memorial Day plans.

On Saturday, May 23, there will be a Veterans Breakfast, starting at 0730 and serving until 1030 or when the food runs out, whichever occurs first. The menu, includes baked omelets (ham, cheese, or plain), creamed beef on toast, bacon, sausage, toast, grits, coffee, tea, and orange juice. The breakfast will be served at the American Legion Hall, 12 Freestone Ave. There is a suggested donation of \$12 per person, or \$8 for children under 10.

The next day, on Sunday, May 24, the American Legion Ormont Post 69 honor guard will visit and render honors at each of the cemeter-

ies in Portland in remembrance of local veterans, starting at approximately 1230 at St. Mary's Cemetery. Following this, the American Legion Ormont Post 69 honor guard will lead the Annual Portland Memorial Day Parade, which kicks off at 1400 from the corner of Victoria Road and Main Street. Following the parade, there will be a Memorial Day Ceremony at the Veterans Memorial Park, behind the Town Hall, 33 East Main Street.

Any Portland veteran interested in marching in the parade or being a part of the honor guard can contact American Legion Post Commander Tim Dickerson at ormontpost69@gmail.com.

Portland Library News & Notes

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

Hours: Monday through Thursday, 10 a.m. - 8 p.m., - Friday 10 a.m. - 5 p.m., - Saturday 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. **Holiday Closings:** The library will be closed on Saturday, May 23, and Monday, May 25, for Memorial Day. **Special Closing:** The library will be closed Friday, May 29, and Saturday, May 30, for staff training.

Children's Programs: Storytime Mini-Sessions: Space is limited, and registration is now open. Schedule: Mother Goose on the Loose for Toddlers and Tots (ages 0-2): Wednesday, May 27, 10:15 or 11:15 a.m.

Drop-In Playdates: Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m., June 3-17. Kids birth to 5 years and their caregivers and invited to drop into the Wagner Room for some open play with library toys. No registration required.

Drop-In Crafting: Thursdays at 3:30 p.m., May 21 and 28, for grades K-5. This is a drop-in program and no registration is required.

Summer Reading Volunteer Training: Wednesday, June 10, 3:30 p.m., for students going into grades seven and up. Stop by the library or visit the teen page of the library website to sign up for the Summer Reading Volunteer program. Volunteers will not be able to sign up for volunteer shifts unless they have attended this or another mandatory training session.

Coming Soon! Cook Up an Adventure Summer Reading Program: Visit the library on or after June 22 to pick up your reading log, or visit the Summer Reading portal on the library website to track your reading electronically. Each day you read 20 minutes or more counts towards your summer reading goal. Earn prizes each time you reach five days.

Summer Reading Kickoff: Michael Oj: Wednesday, June 24, 6:30 p.m., at Portland Middle School auditorium. This is a family-friendly magic show featuring audience participation and comedy. Registration requested, but not required. Registration opens on Monday, June 1, at 10 a.m.

Tasty Tales: Mondays at 10:30 a.m. June 22, July 6, 13, 20, 27, Aug. 3. Come to the Mary Flood Room to enjoy stories, rhymes and songs about some favorite tasty treats. A craft project will be offered at the end of each program. Registration is required and begins Monday, June 1, at 10 a.m.

Cooking Around the World: For kids going into grades K-2. Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m. June 24, July 8, 15, 22, 29, Aug. 5. Travel around the world as you learn about different cultures through cooking and crafts. Registration opens Monday, June 1, at 10 a.m.

Cooking Academy: For kids going into grades 3-5. Tuesdays at 10:30 a.m. June 23, July 7, 14, 21, 28, Aug. 4. Take a new food-themed adventure each week, focused on science experiments, art projects, and cooking. Registration opens Monday, June 1, at 10 a.m.

Red, White and Blue Tye-Dyed Tees: For kids going into grades 6-up. Thursday, June 25, 3 p.m. Come to the library flagpole to tie dye a red, white and blue T-shirt just in time for the Fourth of July, and then cool off with some red,

white and blue Rocket Pops. All materials will be supplied. Space is limited; registration opens Monday, June 1 at 10:00 a.m.

Adult Programs: Book Clubs: Talk About Books: Tuesday, June 2, 1 p.m. *Three Days in June* by Anne Tyler will be discussed. **1st Thursday Night Book Club:** Thursday, June 4, 6:30 p.m. *The Traitor's Wife* by Allison Pataki will be discussed. **Mystery Lovers Book Club:** Tuesday, June 9, 1 p.m. *Murder Takes a Vacation* by Laura Lippman will be discussed.

Movie: Wednesday, June 10, 1 p.m. *The Housemaid* (2025; rated R) will be shown. Run time is 131 minutes.

Adult Craft Night: Ribbon Flag: Wednesday, June 10, 6 p.m. Create an American flag out of ribbon to display in your home to celebrate America's 250th anniversary. Space is limited.

Photo Exhibit Reception: Thursday, June 11, 5:30 p.m. This is a reception for "Photo Mural of Main Street Portland Connecticut 1995, 2005, 2015, 2025," by Bob McDougall. Portland Public Library and the Portland Historical Society present the next chapter of Bob McDougall's panorama photography project, a decades-spanning visual journey tracing four decades of change along a single street. This exhibit is running from now through June 27.

Adult Summer Reading Program: Cook Up an Adventure: When you sign up for the 2026 Adult Summer Reading Program, you receive a coupon for a free book/books (up to \$2 in value) from the Friends' ongoing book sale & another coupon when you log 2,000 pages. On June 22 register for summer reading and start logging the pages you read. For every adult who joins the reading program and reads at least one book this summer (including audiobooks and graphic novels) the Friends of Portland Library will donate \$3 towards two musical instrument rental scholarships for the 2026-27 school year for two students at Brownstone Intermediate School.

Intergenerational Drumming Circle: Monday, June 22, 6:30 p.m. Gather on the Waverly Town Green for a West African-inspired drum circle led by Mark Zarrillo, knowledgeable in West African music, culture and with 40 years drumming wisdom. Drums will be supplied.

The Full Rise - Sourdough Bread Demonstration: Tuesday, June 23, 6 p.m. This educational presentation that walks through the basics - what sourdough is and how it works. Each participant will bring home a 20g sourdough starter, a starter care card and a classic sourdough recipe. Space is limited; registration opens Monday, June 1, at 10 a.m.. This project is made possible in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act, administered by Connecticut State Library.

Adult Craft Night: Wire & Sea Glass Jewelry: Monday, June 29, 6 p.m. Local crafter Laurie-Lynne of Creative Girl Studios will teach different techniques to make wire wrapped sea glass jewelry. Each participant will leave with a completed pendant necklace. Registration opens Monday, June 1, at 10 a.m. Space is limited.

Weekly Knifty Knitters Group: Every Saturday, 10 a.m. -12:30 p.m. Adults of all experience levels are welcome to drop in, share ideas, get helpful knitting tips and enjoy chatting with others who enjoy knitting and crocheting. Please note: There is no meeting May 30, as the library will be closed.

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Local AARP 40th Anniversary and Luncheon

The next meeting of the Colchester-area Chapter 4019 of AARP is on Tuesday, June 2, at Papa Z's, 713 Middletown Rd. The gathering starts at 12:30 p.m., with lunch being served at 1 p.m.

At the meeting, the Colchester-area chapter will celebrate its 40th anniversary as a local chapter of AARP, observe the 250th anniversary of the country, and install its officers for 2026-

27. In addition to the luncheon, there will be a trivia game and door prizes.

The cost for the luncheon is \$30 and includes meal, tax and tip. Any senior in the Colchester area is invited to attend. Send an email to irene-norm@comcast.net to obtain information about where to mail a check in order to be able to attend, or with any questions.

Summer Book and Bake Sale

The Friends of Cragin Memorial Library will hold its Summer Book and Bake Sale at Cragin Memorial Library, 8 Linwood Ave., from June 5-10.

On Friday, June 5, from 4-7 p.m., there will be a pre-sale admission charge of \$5 to pick the "cream of the crop." There is no admission charge from Saturday-Wednesday. The schedule is:

Saturday, June 6, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.; Sunday, June 7, 11 a.m.-3 p.m.; Monday, June 8, and Tuesday, June 9, 10 a.m.-8 p.m.; and Wednesday, June 10, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

There will be a Monday-Wednesday special: fill a box or bag for \$5.

The Friends will have many books, including large-print books and audiobooks. The Friends will also have music, movies, puzzles, and games.

Also at the sale, the Friends will celebrate America 250th by offering an accessible table with books and media related to America during the Revolutionary period.

Baked goods will be for sale, and will be individually wrapped.

The Friends said that while it cannot accept debit cards or credit cards, an ATM is close by.

All proceeds support library programs that benefit the patrons of Cragin Memorial Library.



Kim Talarczyk, co-founder of Colchester Cares (center), presents a check for the Bacon Academy track and field team to Bacon Academy seniors Michael Dickey (left) and Lorelei Romasanta (right).

Colchester Cares Makes Donations

Colchester Cares, a giving group that supports various causes in Colchester, recently made its second quarter donations totaling \$5,500.

The group voted to give \$1,833 each to the Bacon Academy track and field team to support expenses due to a shortfall in fundraising because of the Bacon Academy Athletic Complex renovations; the Historic Bacon Academy restoration for continued work to make this landmark fully ADA compliant; and the Colchester History Museum gardens renovation for the purchase of new three-season plants and shrubs.

Colchester Cares members, who commit to

donating \$100 a quarter, present current needs in town and then vote on where to send the group's collective donations. The group was established in 2020 and since its inception has donated over \$80,000 to Colchester causes.

Colchester Cares always welcomes new members. You can be a member without having to attend meetings; suggesting worthy causes, voting, and donating can all be done online. The next quarterly meeting will be held Wednesday, July 15, at 7 p.m., at the Carl Guild Community Room, 392 South Main St. For more information, visit www.colchestercares.org or follow the group on Facebook.

See More Colchester News, Section 2, page 8

Youth Services Summer Programs

Summer is almost here—and so are Colchester Youth Services summer programs.

Registration is now officially open, and spots are already filling up fast. Most of the programs are designed for youth entering grades 4-12, with a variety of activities planned all summer long.

To secure a spot, and for more information, visit colchester-youth-services.jumbula.com/home.

Fundraiser for Giving Garden

The Colchester Giving Garden has started its 14th season of growing and donating fresh vegetables to help feed those in need in the community – and a fundraiser to support its mission is coming up.

The garden is all-volunteer, and all are welcome to join in. No gardening experience is necessary. The open work time is Tuesdays at 5 p.m. at the garden. The garden is located at 95 Norwich Ave.

On Monday, June 1, from 5-9 p.m., Mel's Downtown Creamery, 32 Norwich Ave., will donate a percentage of its sales to the Colchester Giving Garden.

For more information about the garden, email Colchestergivinggarden@gmail.com or look for the garden on Facebook.

Ladies Guild Offering Trip to See Joshua

The St. Andrew Ladies Guild is sponsoring a trip from Sept. 16-18 to Lancaster, Pa., to see Joshua.

In addition, the Ladies Guild will have dinner with an Amish family, travel through the Amish countryside, visit Kitchen Kettle Village, and visit the Seltzer's Smokehouse.

Trip cost is \$699 for a double room, or \$849 for a single. Transportation will be on a deluxe motorcoach. For more information, contact Barbara Gozzo at 860-208-4121 or barbgozzo@gmail.com.

Pre-Sale Bracelets for Lions Carnival

The Colchester Lions Club will hold its annual Carnival on the Green from Wednesday, May 27, through Saturday, May 30.

Hours are Wednesday and Thursday, 6-9 p.m.; Friday, 6-10 p.m., and Saturday, noon -9 p.m. Weather conditions may affect operating hours.

Pre-sale ride vouchers can be purchased from Dime Bank, Noel's Market, Mel's Downtown Creamery, and Westchester Marketplace all located in Colchester. Prices are \$32 in advance and \$35 day of the event.

There will also be an expanded variety of food to enjoy this year.

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The Bacon Academy robotics team won the state championship May 17. Pictured from left are, front row, TJ Crowell, Aidan Bisi, James Mattison; back, Cindy Praisner, Lenny Vigianni, Rylee Perry, Savanna Healy, Chelsea Boothroyd, Captain Eli Banks, Captain Miles Vigianni, Dustin Paquette, Tom Praisner. Missing are Charlie Ringuette, Evan Lovegrove, Chris Lovegrove, Seth Crampton, Brad Graham, Jason Belding, Alan Mocksfield, Brian Reas.

Robotics Team Wins State Championship

The Bacon Academy robotics team rose to the top at the CAS-CIAC FIRST Robotics State Championship on May 17. The team from Colchester was one of the top 28 teams across the state that competed at the championship held at Glastonbury High School. During qualification matches, they conquered match after match, ranking first with an undefeated record for the day. The Robocats invited Team 195 from Southington and Team 2170 from Glastonbury to join their alliance,

with their eyes set on the title. During the finals, despite heavy defense and strong opponents, Bacon Academy and its two alliance members defeated the defending champions in the finals to take home the trophy. It was the Robocats' second state championship in three years, having previously won in 2024 with Southington. Along with the team win, Captain Eli Banks also earned a spot on the 2026 Robotics All-State Team.

The Robocats thanked Dominion Energy, Connecticut Manufacturing, The Gene Haas Foundation, Pratt & Whitney, ABB, Trueflow, Light Metals Coloring, Tsunami Tolutions, Fox Hill Swiss, All Waste, and The Plum Tomato for their support this season.

Garden Club Plant Sale

The Colchester Garden Club plant sale will be held Sunday, June 14, during the Colchester Business Association's Tag Sale on the Green. The club will sell houseplants, annuals, perennials, herbs, shrubs, and garden/plant related items from 9 a.m.-2 p.m. on the Colchester Town Green.

Rain date is June 28. Purchases support our community beautification efforts, public education programs, youth activities, and senior center programs. For more information about the Colchester Garden Club contact colchestergardenclub@yahoo.com.

Vendors Sought for Tag Sale

The Colchester Business Association is looking for vendors for its annual Colchester Tag Sale event. The event will be held on Town Green on Sunday, June 14, from 9 a.m.-2 p.m. A rain date will be scheduled for June 28.

The CBA plans to have over 100 vendors selling products and tag sale items. There will also be food vendors. Spaces for tag sale and non-business are \$35.

For applications, visit Colchestercba.com or email info@colchesterctbusiness.com.

President's List

Colchester residents Samantha Kinsey, Christopher Dileo and Eric Glettenberg made the spring 2026 President's List at Southern New Hampshire University in Manchester, N.H.

Congregational Church News

The Congregational Church of East Hampton, 59 Main St., welcomes all to Sunday worship at 10 a.m., with the Rev. Robin Bloundon providing the sermon. Coffee hour and fellowship are provided directly after the service.

This Week's Happenings: Saturday, May 23, Spring Market, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., featuring plants, vendors and food; Sunday, May 24, Pentecost Sunday worship at 10 a.m., AA Meeting at 7 p.m.; Monday, May 25, Memorial Day; Tues-

day, May 26, Scouts, 7-8 p.m.; Wednesday, May 27, Women's Fellowship Potluck Picnic at Sears Park; Thursday, May 28, Yarners at 10 a.m. (new yarners are always welcome), Bell choir rehearsal from 6-7 p.m., and choir practice from 7-8 p.m.

For more information, visit cc-eh.org. Office hours are Monday and Wednesday, 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

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.

Pentecost: Pentecost will be celebrated during the May 24th service.

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

Returnable Cans and Bottles: All are asked to place donations in the cans by the shed. Note: It would be very helpful if glass bottles and aluminum cans could be separated prior to drop

off. **Bible Study:** Contact Bobette Reed Kahn at bobette@khan.com if you are interested in participating. Bible Study takes place via Zoom at 6 p.m. Wednesdays.

June 7: Sunday, June 7 is the last day for choir and Sunday school. Maggie Labinski will preach and co-preside at the service.

Church Picnic: Will be held Sunday, June 7, at Dick and Linda Napolitano's home on Lake Pocotopaug. A sign-up sheet will be available at church. Call Linda for more information.

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

Haddam Neck Covenant Church News

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

Chicken BBQ: The drive-thru Chicken BBQ will be held Saturday, June 13, from noon to 5 p.m., at the church field. The meal includes a leg/thigh chicken quarter, baked beans, cole slaw, dinner roll and water bottle for \$15. Call or email the church with your order and pick-up time.

Baby Bottle Drive: The Baby Bottle Drive to benefit the ABC Women's Center will end on Father's Day, June 21. Bottles are available at the church.

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.

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

Adult Bible Study: Sundays at 10:15 a.m. in the chapel. The next study will resume in the fall.

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.

Middle Haddam Public Library News

The Middle Haddam Public Library, 2 Knowles Road, Middle Haddam has announced the following. To register or for more information on any program, email middlehaddamlibrary@gmail.com, visit middlehaddamlibrary.com or call 860-267-9093. Mailing address: P.O. Box 123, Middle Haddam, CT 06456.

Library Hours: Mondays and Thursdays, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.; Tuesdays and Fridays, 3-6 p.m.

Featured Artist for May: Maureen Girard, a Connecticut-based painter. Her paintings may be viewed at the library throughout the month.

Foundry Saxophone Quartet: Saturday, May 23, 2 p.m. Enjoy an afternoon of folk, jazz, and modern standards. Let the library know if planning to attend. There is no charge to attend, but donations are accepted.

Chatham Community Chess Club: Wednesdays, June 3 and 17, 6-9 p.m. All ages and skill levels welcome; lessons available. For more information contact pjhoffman1@juno.com.

Mahjong: Mondays, 10:30 a.m. All levels of experience welcome. Contact the library for more information.

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

Yoga with Erin Day of Ten Summit Yoga: Mondays and Saturdays at 9 a.m., and Tuesdays at 7 p.m. Cost is a \$17 drop-in fee. To register, email tensummitst@gmail.com or call 860-262-0246.

Resident Graduates

Allison Williams of East Hampton recently graduated from Salve Regina University in Newport, R.I.

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.

For more information, call 860-267-1248 or visit www.facebook.com/BethlehemEH or www.bethlehemeh.org.

Police News

5/13: John Grimshaw, 60, of East Hampton, was issued a summons for operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license, operating an unregistered motor vehicle and operating a motor vehicle without insurance, East Hampton Police said.

5/15: Kristina Janssen, 38, of Litchfield, was arrested and charged with interfering with an officer, possession of narcotics and possession of drug paraphernalia, police said.

5/17: Genesis Infantas, 26, of Hebron was arrested and charged with driving under the influence, operating a motor vehicle without an ignition interlock device, and failure to drive right, police said.

From May 11-16, officers responded to 24 medical calls, four motor vehicle crashes and four alarms, and made 30 traffic stops, police said.

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Resident Still Trying to Challenge Courtney After Convention

By Anne Lilburn

Aspiring Democratic congressional challenger Kyle Gauck says he's still trying to get on the ballot for the state's Democratic primary, even though he failed to hit that goal at the state's Democratic Party nominating convention.

Gauck, an East Hampton resident, Army veteran and aerospace industry employee who is attempting to challenge incumbent Joe Courtney for Connecticut's second congressional district, said he was disappointed in the results from the nominating convention.

At the Second Congressional District Convention, which took place May 11 at Rockville High School in Vernon, 356 delegates met to cast votes for their preferred candidates. Each town's Democratic Town Committee brings delegates to the event. Per the Connecticut Democratic Party's rules, a candidate must secure at least 15% of the total delegate vote in order to get on the ballot. Gauck received only 10% of the delegate vote — a surprise for him, he said, given the support he believed he had from the towns.

Gauck now embarks on a sort of "Plan B" for those who don't get on the ballot at the state convention. He now must secure signatures from two percent of the registered Democratic voters in the district to earn a spot on the Democratic primary ballot.

"According to the rules, I need 2,882 valid signatures," Gauck said, before nothing that he wants to play it safe, aiming for 5,000 signatures, in case some get disqualified. It's a big challenge in a large, rural district.

In order to petition his way onto the ballot, all the signatures must be gathered prior to June 9. That means voters may see him — and signature gatherers working for his campaign — out and about over the next few weeks, knocking on doors as they attempt to collect enough signatures.

Gauck said that while his method for attempting to get on the ballot may have changed, his reasons for wanting to be on it have not. He said that, while he may line up with Courtney on some topics, other things that Courtney has done "don't fall in line with my moral compass."

He noted Courtney's vote in support for a day of remembrance for Charlie Kirk, and said that he and Courtney diverge on several key issues, including support for Israel's military actions in Gaza. Gauck also said he would be more aggressive on climate change issues.

As for his own priorities, Gauck's website boasts "No AIPAC, no corporations," emphasizing his aggressive stance against lobbying by both pro-Israel lobbying group AIPAC (the American Israel Public Affairs Committee) and

by pro-industry groups. Gauck also said he supports universal healthcare and wants a full ban on stock trading for members of Congress.

Gauck said he knows some see him as less experienced than Courtney, but he claims he can hold his own with Courtney in some key areas. For example, he said he knows that Courtney may be celebrated for his ability to bring business to Connecticut defense contractors, including Electric Boat, but that he himself has extensive experience working on aerospace industry contracts and believes he too can get things done in that area.

Gauck said it was important to him to run as a Democrat, particularly in the current political environment, adding that, while he believes he is the better choice for the congressional seat, he wouldn't want to run as an independent and run the risk of stealing votes from Courtney in a general election against a Republican challenger. That risk, he said, was too big.

"I'm a humanitarian first, and what the Republican Party is doing is so immoral that I can't risk pulling votes away from the Democratic Party," said Gauck. "As much as I feel like the Democrat Party is centrist and corporate driven

and not doing everything they should, they're at least not actively working to hurt the American people."

Gauck said he wants to sell people on his ideas and is happy to share his opinion on a wide range of issues, but added that he also wants voters to know that those who sign his petition won't be actually casting a vote or even committing to supporting him as a candidate. All that is further down the line, he said. The petition would merely attempt to get his name on the ballot for the Democratic Party primary against Courtney. Voters will weigh in on that primary choice on Aug. 11, before eventually voting in the general election in November.

"We just want a chance to have a free and fair election. We want to bring our politicians to the table and we want to hold them accountable for the votes that they've made," he said. "And at the end of the day, you can still choose to choose Courtney, but we want to bring Courtney to the table and we want to have a debate. We want to bring everything Courtney's done to light and then people can take a position on who's best for the district."

Parks & Rec. News and Notes

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

Golf Tournament: At Blackledge Country Club in Hebron Thursday, June 4. There is a 10 a.m. shotgun start. This is a four-person scramble format. Lunch/dinner and two drink tickets are included for every golfer. Not a golfer? Register just for dinner (\$50), Sponsorship options available as well. There will be a fundraiser raffle, on course contests and prizes. The tournament benefits Sears Park playground, Seamster Park playground and the Jefferey Leith Memorial scholarship. Cost is \$140.

Decoupage Shell Keepsake Dish: Monday, June 1, 6:30-8 p.m., at Town Hall. All are invited to this relaxed coastal-inspired evening of creat-

ing your own elegant keepsake jewelry dish.

Beginner Pickleball Clinic: Saturdays, June 6-20, 10-11:30 a.m., at the East Hampton High School tennis courts. Fee: \$110/residents, \$115/non-residents.

Junior Golf Clinic: With instructor Gerry D'Amora, golf pro, at Portland West. D'Amora will focus on teaching the fundamentals of the game starting with teaching the proper grip, alignment and swing. Grades K-2 are Thursdays, 4-5 p.m., June 4-25; grades 3-5 are Saturdays, noon-1 p.m., June 6-27; and grades 6-8 are Wednesdays, 4-5 p.m., June 10-July 1. Fee is \$120 per person.

Golf Clinic for Ladies: With instructor Gerry D'Amora, golf pro, at Portland West. Tuesdays, 5:30-6 p.m., June 10-July 8. Fee is \$150 per person.

EDC Training Workshop Open to Others

The East Hampton Economic Development Commission invites members of local boards, commissions, organizations, business groups, and anyone interested in economic development topics to attend a free workshop on Tuesday, May 26 at 5:30 p.m. at East Hampton Town Hall.

The session will feature a training consultant from Community Resource Management (CRM), a firm recently engaged by RiverCOG to provide on-call economic development and

related services to area towns. The event will cover a variety of topics. Discussion topics may include: Business retention, attraction, and creation strategies, Brownfield project planning, grant advisory assistance, capacity-building services and economic development support tools.

The workshop is open to anyone interested in strengthening local economic vitality, supporting businesses, and exploring opportunities for community growth and revitalization.

Memorial Day Weekend Ceremonies

The FowlerDixPark Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post 5095 Honor Guard, Firing Squad, and Auxiliary will conduct a series of solemn Memorial Day weekend ceremonies to honor deceased veterans at cemeteries and memorial sites throughout East Hampton

Continuing a longstanding tradition, the VFW Honor Guard will perform threevolley rifle salutes, accompanied by the playing of "Taps" and "Echo," in tribute to veterans of all wars. East Hampton's cemeteries hold the remains of service members dating back to the American Revolution.

Sunday, May 24 Honor Patrol Schedule: 9:30-9:45 a.m., White Birch Cemetery; 10:25-10:35 a.m., Waterhole Cemetery; 10:40-10:50 a.m., Tartia Cemetery; 10:55-11:05 a.m., Skinnerville Cemetery; 11:10-11:20 a.m., Old Young Street Cemetery; 11:25-11:35 a.m., Selden Yard Cemetery; 11:40-11:50 a.m., Hog Hill Cemetery.

Memorial Day Parade (Monday, May 25)

Schedule: 8 a.m., Parade assembly at East Hampton High School parking lot, 9 a.m. There will be a Remembrance Ceremony in front of VFW Post 5095 (across from the high school), featuring a rifle salute and Taps, followed by parade step-off. Mid-Parade Stop: Lakeview Cemetery for a prayer, rifle salute, and Taps. Final Ceremony: East Hampton Congregational Church lawn.

After Parade Honor Patrol Schedule: Noon, VFW Post Home, located at 20 North Maple St.; 12:10-12:15 p.m., Lakeview Cemetery; 12:25-12:35 p.m., St. Patrick Church Cemetery; 12:45-12:55 p.m., Union Hill Cemetery; 1 p.m., Middle Haddam Veterans Memorial.

At each stop, the Honor Guard will conduct traditional military rites to remember and honor all veterans interred in East Hampton. Members of the public are encouraged to attend and observe these ceremonies as the town comes together in remembrance this Memorial Day weekend.

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Bellringers Hardball Halt Highlanders on the Diamond

By Josh Howard

Playing under a blazing sun at East Hampton High School, Bellringers baseball scored four runs in the second inning before holding on for a 7-4 victory over the Highlanders from Portland High School on Monday.

The victory was East Hampton's third in a row and ninth overall.

Following a third straight win, East Hampton head coach Trent Dillon expressed that he likes how his team has competed as the regular season comes to a close.

"We're a gritty team when it comes down to it," stated Dillon. "We've been getting timely hits and we've been playing really good defense as of late."

Sophomore Travis Raines powered the Bellringers in the home victory, earning the win from the mound after striking out five in four innings of work. He also finished with three RBIs, connecting on a single that drove in Ben Kohler and Joseph Jarzabek during the team's four-run second inning.

Kohler finished with a pair of runs, while Evan Wagner scored twice and drove in a run.

Wagner and Jackson Hanson are team's senior captains this spring.

Dillon, who is in his third year leading the program, noted that his Class of 2026 members — which includes Beckett Asklar and Caleb Wagner — have helped him put his stamp on the program.

"They've led by example on the field and in the classroom, and have mentored the younger guys," added Dillon.

After missing out on the state tournament a year ago, the Bellringers lost the first five games this spring before turning their season around by winning five of seven to get back into post-season contention.

A dramatic 4-3 victory over Bolton, in which Raines scored the winning run after stealing home, punched their ticket to the state tourney.

On Tuesday, the team fell to Hale Ray to finish the regular season with a record of 9-11.

Next is the Shoreline Conference (SLC) tournament where the Bellringers will travel to take on top-seed Cromwell on Saturday, May 23 at 11 a.m.



Sophomore Travis Raines earned the win on the mound and had three RBIs as East Hampton High School baseball beat Portland on Monday.

Following the conference tourney, East Hampton will turn their attention to the Class S state tournament, set to begin on Monday, June 1.

Highlanders Eye Strong Finish

Coming into the contest at EHHS, Portland had won four of seven, but the loss dropped the Highlanders to 5-14 with one game left in the regular season.

Portland had the bases loaded with the go-ahead run at the plate but were unable to capitalize, leaving all three runners stranded.

"They were a better team today; they played better than we did," head coach Rick Borg said following the defeat. "We waited until the top of



Aaron Ciarleglio, a senior from Portland High School, fires a pitch at East Hampton High School on May 18. Ciarleglio and the Highlanders will close out the regular season by taking on the Raptors at RHAM High School today (May 22).

the seventh to put any pressure on them, so that was too little too late."

Connor Doyle had a pair of hits and scored a run to lead a lineup that also got runs from Nick Johnson, Joe Angersola, and Cody Christensen.

Johnson, Gerry Hall, and Ethan Wells have been Borg's three team captains. The trio — along with fellow seniors Aaron Ciarleglio and Cade Modon — helped steer the ship in the right direction after the team lost 10 of their first 11 games this spring.

Consecutive wins over Coginchaug and St. Bernard highlighted a second half turnaround that also featured another win over Coginchaug and a 6-5 come-from-behind victory over Haddam-Killingworth last Wednesday (May 13) in which the seniors delivered.

Wells had three hits, including a two-RBI triple in the fifth inning that scored Johnson and

Doyle.

Johnson then sent home Jaxon Figueroa on a sacrifice fly for what turned out to be the decisive run in the sixth inning.

Ciarleglio struck out seven over five innings and Hall earned the win after allowing only one hit over the final two innings.

"We've been playing better lately, but we've lost a lot of close games this season and just haven't been able to get over the hump," noted Borg.

Narrow losses have been the team's downfall this spring as the Highlanders have dropped a half dozen one-run games.

The Highlanders will look to end on a high note when they close out the regular season with a trip to RHAM High School to take on the Raptors today (Friday, May 22). First pitch is 3:45 p.m.

See More East Hampton News, Section 2, page 1

COA Grows Senior Center, Seeks Volunteers

By Anne Lilburn

East Hampton's Commission on Aging held an annual meeting on May 6, where they provided the community with an update on its "accomplishments over the past year, and plans for the future across several areas that the COA is involved in," according to the press release.

The meeting included updates on a wide range of topics, including the expansion of services at the senior center and continued discussion about the potential construction of a new Senior Center.

In a conversation with the *Rivereast*, Commission on Aging Chair Dr. Eric Rosenberg said that the commission's focus over the past year has been to "improve the quality of what the senior center can deliver," including setting long-term goals, like buildings and facilities plans, and also short-term goals, like getting an additional staff member to help Senior Center Director Holly Marrero with her work.

That proposed position, which has been discussed on several occasions at town council meetings over the past year, is included in the proposed 2026-27 budget that residents will vote on at the June 2 budget referendum. If the budget does not pass, said Rosenberg, they will advocate for that position to not be a part of any cuts.

Marrero said the senior center continued to grow, both in its community and its services, adding 238 new members this past fiscal year. The center recently reduced its minimum age requirement to 55, allowing more community members to partake of its services.

"The Senior Center continues to grow as more older adults in the community take part in the programs, services, and activities offered each day," said Marrero. "From social events and meal programs to transportation and wellness support, the center has become an important place for connection, support, and community engagement."

Rosenberg said that that continued growth fueled new demand for different types of programming, including different types of fitness programs and hours that would accommodate members who were still working. An additional staff member who could cover extended hours, he said, would help make that work possible.

The commission continues to prioritize senior community members' housing needs,

members said, including supporting the East Hampton Housing Authority's senior housing goals, and also by helping to support seniors who want to age-in-place. The commission hosted a successful and well-attended home and health expo last year that had a strong focus on issues related to aging-in-place, and at a more recent regularly scheduled May meeting after the annual community update, discussed planning and zoning changes that could help seniors with Town Planner Juliet Hodge, including reducing restrictions on ADUs (accessory dwelling units).

Such units, often housed in garages or basements, can allow for more flexible multi-generational living situations, allow caretakers to live on site, and increase affordable housing opportunities for seniors.

At the annual update meeting, the commission shared that the East Hampton Housing Authority had recently made upgrades to its senior housing, with solar panels on the community center, digital locks on the front and rear doors to prevent lockouts, new water heaters, and new heat pump systems with air conditioning in all units.

The Commission on Aging's Transportation Working Group said they were advocating for the purchase of an additional van to support the senior center's van service. At the later meeting, they celebrated the continued state funding for the Xtramile ride-hailing program that makes local transportation easier for seniors who may no longer be driving.

One program that the Commission sought to further publicize was its Community Cares program, where community members have the opportunity to volunteer on a flexible basis in a range of different ways. Volunteers in the program provide services to seniors in need by donating "deeds," which may range from providing rides, helping with groceries and household chores, or even just providing companionship.

Currently, the program has 48 volunteers and 70 members receiving services. In the past year, 183 deeds were performed. The program is free to join and open to anyone who is either aged 70 and up, or else disabled and over the age of 18. Rosenberg said that anyone who was interested in volunteering or finding out more could reach out to him at COAChair@easthamptonct.gov.

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Riley Stolzman delivered from both the mound and the plate as Bacon Academy softball beat RHAM last week.

Rivereast Standout Athletes of the Week

By Josh Howard

Riley Stolzman - Bacon Academy (Softball): Stolzman hit a three-run home run to center field in the fifth inning and earned the win from the hill during the Bobcats 17-4 victory over RHAM on May 15. Stolzman, a junior, finished with four RBIs and scored two runs, along with striking out five in six innings of work. The win improved Bacon to 14-3 overall and they are slated to close out the regular season by welcoming Windham Tech to Bacon Academy tonight (Friday, May 22). First pitch is 4 p.m.

Aiden Currie - Portland High School (Track & Field): Currie, a junior, won the 100 meter race at the Shoreline Conference Novice Invitational at Valley Regional High School on May 13. He finished the race with a personal-best time of 12.07, besting runner-up Wyatt Parker (12.23) of Old Saybrook and the other 25 competitors in the race. Currie also teamed with William Coleman, Colin Fitzgibbons, and Levi Srb as the Highlanders 4x400 relay team won with a time of 3:59.13.

Chase Palmer - East Hampton High School (Golf): Palmer finished atop or near the top of the leaderboard in all three matches last week as

the Bellringers downed a trio of Shoreline Conference (SLC) opponents, improving to 11-1-1 overall this spring. Palmer, a senior, shot a 38 at Quarry Ridge Golf Club in Portland in a (161-168) victory over Cromwell on May 12. The following day, Palmer shot an even-round 36 to tie atop the leaderboard with senior teammate Jacob Woods at Clinton Country Club in a (150-171) victory over Morgan. Palmer closed his productive week with by shooting a team-best 39 at Lyman Orchards Golf Club in Middlefield in a win (164-177) over Coginchaug on May 15.

Brendan Connolly - RHAM High School (Baseball): Connolly, a junior, delivered in back-to-back games as the Raptors won a pair of games on consecutive nights last week. On May 11, Connolly had two hits, scoring two runs and driving in another as the Raptors beat Windsor 14-4. He then pulled double duty, racking up three RBIs on a pair of hits and scored a run, while also earning the win on the mound during an 11-9 victory over E.O. Smith on May 12.

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.



East Hampton Public Schools Top Ten Students of the Class of 2026

The East Hampton Board of Education is pleased to announce the Top Ten students in the graduating Class of 2026. The Valedictorian is **Madelyn Daniels**. The Salutatorian is **Sofia Aresco**.



Madelyn Daniels Valedictorian



Madelyn Daniels, daughter of Carlin Daniels and Peter Daniels, is the valedictorian of the Class of 2026. Madelyn was inducted into the National Honor Society as a junior and has served as treasurer for the past two years. A dedicated member of the SAVE Promise Club, she has led the organization as president in her junior and senior years. Madelyn has also demonstrated strong commitment to her class, serving as vice president for three years. She supports students across all grade levels as a student ambassador and peer tutor and contributes to the broader community as the Family Liaison and Literacy Specialist in the preschool program. She is also a five-year volunteer for the Special Olympics. Madelyn's accomplishments extend to athletics as well. She has competed as a gymnast for ten years at Dunne's gymnastics and currently performs at the XCEL Diamond level. In track and field, she has participated as both a hurdler and sprinter, earning team captain honors and all-conference recognition in her junior year. Additionally, Madelyn has been involved in cheerleading for seven years as a tumbler and flyer. Her achievements as a cheerleader include serving as team captain, earning all-state and all-conference honors four times each, and being named Shoreline Conference Cheerleader of the Year for both the 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 seasons. Her dedication across academic, athletic, and extracurricular involvement has earned her both the Superintendent's Award of Excellence and recognition as a CAS-CIAC Scholar-Athlete. This fall, Madelyn will attend the University of Connecticut, where she will participate in both the Honors program and Cheer team, and will major in English and secondary education and minor in business-marketing.

Sofia Aresco Salutatorian



Sofia Aresco, daughter of Giovanni Aresco and Sarah Aresco, is the salutatorian of the Class of 2026. Throughout her high school career, Sofia has taken the role of student leader and student athlete very seriously. Sofia has played on the East Hampton High School Girls volleyball team in grades 9 through 12 as a right-side/middle hitter. Her love of volleyball has extended past the walls of EHHS with her participation on the Homefield Hawks volleyball travel team. Sofia served as class secretary all four years and on the advisory committee in grades 11 and 12. She has shown care and compassion to her community by participating in both the service-based Interact Club and the SAVE Promise Club, a student-led group designed to empower youth to strengthen school culture and keep their community safe. Additionally, Sofia has worked as a volunteer at Colchester Community Theater summer workshops in grades 9 through 11, and she plans to return this summer to volunteer once again. It's easy to see why Sofia was inducted into the National Honors Society as a junior. When asked what her greatest accomplishment throughout her East Hampton High School career has been, Sofia referenced the fact that she has been able to balance all of these activities, maintain exceptional grades, and still be able to take two classes at Wesleyan University. Taking classes on a college campus, especially a college such as Wesleyan, was a bit outside of her comfort zone, but she is grateful for the experience and the growth she made because of it. Sofia plans to attend the University of Connecticut this fall and has been accepted into their Honors Program. She plans to pursue a degree in political science with the ultimate goal of becoming an attorney.

Ashley Johnson



Ashley Johnson, daughter of Catherine Johnson and Alex Johnson, is ranked third in the Class of 2026. She is a versatile individual whose interests span the sciences, athletics, and music. As a junior, Ashley was inducted into the National Honor Society and received the Rochester Institute of Technology Computing Medal, recognizing her as a student of distinction with regards to knowledge and experience in computing. She also served as vice president of the Environmental Club during her junior year, collaborating with fellow students to promote environmental conservation within both the school and the broader community. Ashley's commitment to service is further demonstrated through her role as treasurer of the Interact Club, of which she has been an active member all four years of high school. She has also contributed to the French Club, serving as Turkey Plunge chair during her freshman and sophomore years. Athletically, Ashley has been a member of the tennis team since her sophomore year and is an avid rock climber. In addition, she devotes significant time to music both in and out of school. At EHHS, she serves as vice president of the Tri-M Music Honor Society and is a four-year member of the school's cappella group Voices, where she sings soprano. Outside of school, Ashley has participated in the Hartt Community Division since her freshman year as both a violinist and flautist, performing with the highly competitive Connecticut Youth Symphony and chamber music ensembles. Notably, she served as concertmaster of the Connecticut Youth Symphony during her freshman year. This fall, Ashley will attend Cornell University, where she plans to major in biomedical engineering.

Jillian Leonardo



Jillian Leonardo, daughter of Kerri Leonardo, Darin Hurne, Roger Leonardo, and Jennifer McCarthy, is ranked fourth in the Class of 2026. As a junior, Jillian received the Rochester Institute of Technology Humanities and Social Sciences Award and was inducted into the National Honor Society. Jillian has demonstrated exceptional dedication to the performing arts through her four years in the drama club as both an actor and playbill coordinator, two years in the cappella group Voices, eight years as a dancer, and two years on the flag team. She has also worked as a stage crew member for the East Hampton Center School musicals, worked backstage for the East Hampton Middle School musicals, and spent a summer as a set designer for YPCCA. This year, her commitment to the arts earned her an induction into the Tri-M Music Honor Society. Last year, she received the Connecticut Halo Award for Best Female Lead in a Musical for her role in Newsies. Beyond the performing arts, Jillian serves as an executive producer for The Bellringer News and was nominated for a Fox 61 Student News Award. She is also deeply committed to community service, serving as a member and Holiday Chair of the Interact Club, a member of the SAVE Promise Club, and a tutor through the Ringer Writing Center. Jillian further distinguishes herself as a leader through her roles as an advisory committee member, student ambassador, and class treasurer. This fall, she will attend Eastern Connecticut State University, where she has been accepted into the Honors Program. She plans to study communication, film, and theater with the goal of becoming either a theater technician or a broadcast journalist.

Aubrey Stevens



Aubrey Stevens, daughter of Ashley Stevens and John Stevens, is ranked fifth in the Class of 2026. As a junior, Aubrey received the Clarkson Achievement Award and was inducted into the National Honor Society. An involved member of her school and community, Aubrey is a four-year member of the Interact Club, an original member of the No Place for Hate Committee, and a four-year member and secretary of the Environmental Club. An impressive athlete and fitness enthusiast, she has trained in CrossFit for more than five years and achieved international recognition by advancing to the quarterfinals of the global CrossFit Open and placing 47th in the United States. She also participates in Weightlifting Club and competes on the varsity indoor and outdoor track teams. Specializing in the pole vault, Aubrey qualified for the 2025 CIAC Outdoor Track State Open and earned the title of 2026 Shoreline Conference Champion in the indoor pole vault. Aubrey is a member of Unified Sports, where she collaborates with fellow athletes in an inclusive environment and shares her enthusiasm for physical fitness. This fall, Aubrey plans on attending the University of Hartford, where she was accepted into the Barney School of Business Honors Program. She will study business with a minor in environmental science and plans to focus on environmental sustainability in the business world, particularly within hospitality and travel. Aubrey is proud to have been chosen as one of just ten students nationwide to receive the highly competitive University of Hartford National Honor Scholarship, which covers full tuition.

Julianna Korczak



Julianna Korczak, daughter of Sylwia Faucher and Krzysztof Korczak, is ranked sixth in the Class of 2026. As a junior, Julianna received the Rensselaer Medal, awarded to a student who excels in advanced math and science courses while demonstrating meaningful involvement in extracurricular activities—an honor that reflects Julianna's various achievements. Julianna has distinguished herself through sustained leadership and service and was selected this year for the DAR Good Citizen Award by faculty for her various commitments to the community. She was inducted into the National Honor Society as a junior and now serves as its historian. Julianna has also been the Spanish Club's secretary since 9th grade and has volunteered for the Special Olympics since 8th grade. A significant focus of Julianna's high school experience has been mental health advocacy. She has served as president of Bring Change to Mind—a club dedicated to mental health awareness and substance use prevention—all four years of high school. In this role, she has coordinated an annual Wellness Day for the entire school, featuring guest speakers, wellness activities, and a community resource fair. Outside of school, she has raised funds for the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention through annual walks since 8th grade and works as a teen peer advocate. In addition to these commitments, Julianna has spent many hours babysitting, further reflecting her sense of responsibility and care for others. This fall, Julianna will attend the University of South Carolina, where she plans to study nursing with the goal of becoming a nurse anesthetist.

Jocelyn Gustavson



Jocelyn Gustavson, daughter of Jonathan Gustavson and Christine Gustavson, is ranked seventh in the Class of 2026. As a junior, Jocelyn was the recipient of the Rochester Institute of Technology's Art and Design Award, recognizing outstanding achievement, innovation, and creativity in art and design. While an incredibly talented artist, her greatest passion throughout high school has been her involvement in athletics. Jocelyn has participated in cross country and indoor track since freshman year and outdoor track since sophomore year. Jocelyn has distinguished herself across all sports seasons. In cross country, Jocelyn qualified for the CIAC State Open twice and won during her junior year. As an indoor and outdoor track distance runner, she qualified for the CIAC State and Shoreline Conference Championships in all of her events, and even advanced to the state open once for indoor track. Her dedication has earned her the Most Valuable Runner Award every year in cross country and the Most Valuable Track Athlete Award every year in indoor track. Jocelyn's perseverance, leadership, and integrity make her a strong leader as well, and she was named team captain for all three sports. Beyond athletics, Jocelyn is active in her community through her involvement with Interact Club, Special Olympics, and her church. This fall, Jocelyn will be attending Canisius University, where she has been accepted into the Honors Program. She will continue her running career at the Division 1 level as a member of the cross country, indoor track, and outdoor track teams and plans to major in digital media arts with the goal of becoming a graphic designer.

Beth Limmer



Beth Limmer, daughter of Amy Limmer and Jim Limmer, is ranked eighth in the Class of 2026. As a junior, Beth received the Rochester Institute of Technology Women in STEM Award in recognition of her outstanding achievement in science, computing, robotics, and mathematics coursework. For the past three years, Beth has served as both a founding member and president of the Technology & Engineering Club. Beth has also proudly mentored both the Center School LEGO Lions First LEGO League Team and the East Hampton Middle School PantherBots VEX IQ Team, helping inspire younger students to pursue STEM opportunities. Beth has also been an active member of the Environmental Club for the past four years and has supported the school community as an IT intern for the past two and a half years. Outside of STEM, Beth is also an accomplished musician. She has participated in the East Hampton school band program for the past nine years as both a flute and piccolo player. Beyond school, she is a member of the Colchester Continentals Fife and Drum Corps and the Marlborough Junior Ancient Fife and Drum Corps, where, after seven years of dedication, she now serves as a Fife Sergeant. Beth's leadership and commitment, both in and out of school, earned her induction into the National Honor Society and the Tri-M Music Honor Society during her junior year. She currently serves as Secretary of the Tri-M Music Honor Society. This fall, Beth will attend Central Connecticut State University, where she plans to continue pursuing her passion for STEM by majoring in mechanical engineering.

Matthew Drlik



Matthew Drlik, son of Christina Drlik and Vaclav Drlik, is ranked ninth in the Class of 2026. As a junior, he received the Rochester Institute of Technology Business Award, recognizing excellence in business coursework, innovative problem-solving, community service, and leadership. Inducted into the National Honor Society, Matthew has actively participated since his appointment, including stepping up as committee chair for Teacher Appreciation Week. He was also elected class president during his junior year. A member of East Hampton High School's DECA chapter, Matthew has participated in various school events, such as the Club's Bingo Night, and also competed in the DECA State Competition in his junior year, where he was a finalist. Outside of the classroom, Matthew is also a dedicated athlete. He has been a member of the track and field team since his freshman year, qualifying for the Shoreline Conference Championship each year, and even competing in the CIAC State Championship during his sophomore and junior seasons. In the winter months of his junior and senior year, Matthew played for Husky Volleyball as a middle blocker. Matthew is not only a great team member athletically, but he is also committed to his community. Most notably, he is a member of St. Bridget's Church, where he performs altar service every Sunday. This fall, Matthew will be attending the University of Connecticut, where he plans to study within the School of Business, with the goal of one day starting and running his own company.

Aiden Niderno



Aiden Niderno, son of Bethany Niderno and Aaron Niderno, is ranked tenth in the Class of 2026. In his junior year, Aiden was the recipient of the Rochester Institute of Technology Science and Math Award, a recognition that he earned based on the excellence he has consistently demonstrated in both subjects. Aiden has distinguished himself as both an exceptional student and a dedicated leader within the school community. He is an active member of the National Honor Society and a founding member of the Ringer Writing Center, where he supports his peers in developing their writing skills. Aiden is a talented and dedicated three-season athlete, competing and serving as captain of each varsity team he represents. He plays defense on the soccer team, forward on the basketball team, and takes on multiple events in track and field, focusing primarily on the high jump, long jump, and hurdle events. Aiden was recognized as an all-conference athlete for basketball and was one of two students chosen as a 2026 CAS-CIAC Scholar-Athlete award winner for East Hampton High School. Beyond athletics, Aiden has been involved in EHHS's DECA chapter and is an active member of Bethlehem Lutheran Church. Aiden takes great pride in his ability to balance the demands of academics, athletics, and leadership. This fall, he will attend the University of Connecticut, where he plans to study electrical engineering. He aspires to build a career with a technology company, focusing on power systems or semiconductor design.



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Jr. Ancient Fife & Drum Corps Looking for Members

For over 60 years, the Marlborough Jr. Ancient Fife & Drum Corps has been a professional performing entity representing the town and keeping the “ancient traditions” of fife and drumming alive. Comprised of marchers and musicians ages 8 to 18, this award-winning unit is currently recruiting new members from Marlborough and surrounding towns to join, particularly now with the nation approaching its semiquincentennial (250th anniversary).

The Corps operates as a “connected learning” environment where youth pursue work as a team and are supported by older peers to achieve goals together, building important life skills.

The corps meets Tuesdays, 6:30-8 p.m., at Marlborough Elementary School. In the summer, rehearsals will move to Marlborough Congregational Church.

By joining the corps, kids will have a chance to visit and perform at significant historical

To learn more or to fill out an interest form, visit MarlboroughJrAncients.com, or stop by a rehearsal in May.

RHAM Referendum Next Week

The second RHAM budget referendum will be held Tuesday, May 26 – and Marlborough voters can cast ballots at Marlborough Elementary School, located on School Street. The polls will be open from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m.

To check your voter status, visit the secretary of the state’s office at voterregistration.ct.gov or contact the registrar’s office at 860-295-6206.

Memorial Day Parade Monday

American Legion Post 197 has announced the Memorial Day Parade will be on Monday, May 25, at 1:30 p.m.

The parade route is South Main Street, to the town green at the corner of North Main Street, and East Hampton Road, after the parade there will be a ceremony on the town green honoring our fallen veterans. This is a special year for this event being the United States 250-year birthday.

In the event of inclement weather, the ceremony will be held in the Malbrough Elementary School.



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Lions 'Round the Lake 5K

The Marlborough Lions will hold their 42nd annual 'Round the Lake 5K Road Race on Sunday, May 24. The race will utilize electronic timing with computerized race results. The race starts promptly at 10:30 a.m.

The entry fee is \$30 and runners must be registered by the day prior to the race. Shirts will be guaranteed for those who pre-register by May 15 with additional shirts provided to runners as available. There is also a \$60 package price for groups of immediate family members participating in the race. Same day registrations need to be signed in by 10 a.m. Runners will start near the entrance to Blish Park on Park Road and will proceed on a course, which circles Lake Terramuggas.

To register, for more information, or if you're

a business looking to sponsor the event (the sponsor's information will be printed on shirts handed out to runners), call Jean Paul Bolduc at 860-798-2054 or Ken Hjulstrom at 860-490-9116. You can register online at RunSignUp.com and search for Marlborough Lions.

Fishing Derby Results

Marlborough Parks and Recreation held its annual Kids' Fishing Derby on Saturday, May 2nd at Blish Park. Parks and Rec. saw 15 kids participate, and enjoy a morning of fishing at Lake Terramuggas.

On the day, Jason Mizesko won First Fish Caught, and Lincoln Stone won Smallest Fish Caught, Biggest Fish Caught and Most Fish Caught.

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Volunteer Opportunity to Run Food Bank

The Marlborough Food Bank is seeking a dedicated volunteer or volunteers to help support and run the Food Bank, which is a local nonprofit organization.

This position entails not only organizing food donations, stocking shelves, and distributing food to clients, but also ordering from Connecticut Food Share, enlisting student volunteers to assist the stable cadre of volun-

teers, and soliciting new volunteers as needed.

The Food Bank is open each Tuesday of the week and set up for clients takes place on Monday mornings. Some lifting of light to moderately heavy boxes may be necessary during the Monday set up.

For more information, contact David Pratt or Dawn Tavolero via email at marlborough-foodbank@comcast.net.

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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.

Sunday, May 24 service will be led by worship assistant Gwen Lawson. There is no Sunday School or childcare on Memorial Day Weekend.

279th Annual Program Meeting: Sunday, June 7, in the meetinghouse at 11:15 a.m.

AA: The church sponsors three weekly meetings: Wednesdays at noon and Thursdays at 5:30 p.m. in the Youth Room and Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. in the Community Fellowship Hall. ACA meets Tuesdays at 7 p.m. in the Youth Room.

Outreach: The church collects non-perishable food items year-round for Marlborough Food Bank with a basket located in the narthex for Sunday worshippers to bring donations. The next church-sponsored Drive Thru Café, for Marlborough Food Bank clients and their families with tickets, will be May 31. The "Serve the Lord" luncheon for residents at Florence Lord

Housing will be on Saturday, May 23. Second-quarter mission-giving will go to the AHM Mental Health Fund.

Second Blessings Thrift Shop will be closed Memorial Day weekend, May 22 and 23. It will reopen Friday, May 29, from noon to 3 p.m., and Saturday, May 30, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Follow the shop through Facebook at Second Blessings Thrift Shop, Marlborough CT for updates. The eBay shop is open year-round at bit.ly/MCCebay.

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



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(1hour guided tours @ 10, 10:30, 11, 11:30)

Re-enactors take you through key people and events in Marlborough's history. This tour is mostly outdoors and will walk from the church to the library & cemetery.
Marlborough Congregational Church

Marlborough's Top Dog Competition 6/7, 1pm

Register by May 30. Awards include Top Dog/Founder's Best Friend for best behavior, Most Unique Talent/Declaration of Independence, & Liberty Look-Alike (owner/dog dress-up).
Richmond Memorial Library

Patriotic Displays on the Town Green June 26-28

Create a patriotic display to decorate the Town Green! Entry is \$10 per family, business, or group. Win prizes! Register at the library or online.

July 4th Party at the Park and Lake Parades 7/4, 10am-dark

Patriotic boat parades at 10am & 1pm, music under the Pavilion, a bonfire, and more! Gather with neighbors, bring hot dogs and s'mores, and watch the skies as the evening ends.
Blish Park

Money in the US Colonial and Confederation Period 7/19, 1pm

Discover how money worked in early America—from colonial trade to the first U.S. coins.
Marlborough Arts Center

Framing American Democracy- Radical Roots 8/1, 2pm

Take a virtual tour of the Wadsworth's exhibit and explore CT's role in America's story through art. Led by docent Christi Moraga.
Marlborough Senior Center

Marlborough Day 8/23, 10am-4pm

Marlborough Pride! Join neighbors for a day of activities, food trucks, train rides, and more.
Blish Park

Marlborough Jr. Ancient Fife & Drum Corps Parade & Muster 9/19, 11am

Fifes & Drums from across New England will march down N Main, led by Marlborough's own. Parade route covers Pettingil/N Main St. to Blish Park

250th Anniversary of American Beer 9/24, 6:30pm

Join illustrator & author Em Sauter for a lively look from Plymouth Rock to modern craft brews.
Richmond Memorial Library



Gathering on the Green 12/5, sunset

Marlborough's annual Holiday tradition! See the decorated fire truck parade, visit with Santa, and watch the fireworks.
Town Green

Celebrating Community, Then and Now

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Senior Center News and Notes

Marlborough Senior Center, 17 School Drive, is open for activities. For more information about any senior center program, or to register, call 860-295-6209 or email socialservices@marlboroughct.gov. Also contact the senior center for a list of regularly occurring weekly and monthly programs, such as billiards, chair massage, the Cookbook Club, Parkinson's Disease Exercise Class, blood pressure screenings, and more.

Senior Center Hours: Monday-Thursday, 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.; Friday, 8 a.m.-3 p.m. **Holiday Closing:** The center will be closed Monday, May 25, in observance of Memorial Day.

Events: Birthday Club: May birthdays will be celebrated May 26 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.

Caregiver Guide to Fall Prevention: Wednesday, May 27, noon-1 p.m. Join the rehab director of the Visting Nurses of the Lower Valley in this informative hands-on presentation on falls. Learn practical ways to reduce the risk of falls, common causes, etc.

What I Need to Know About My Electric Choices: Friday, May 29, 11 a.m. AARP will present on how to read your bill, where to go for reliable electric rate information and more. Bring your bill. Low-income discount available for those who qualify.

FABBS Exercise: Flexibility, Agility, Better Balance and Strength workout class. Movement and exercises are drawn from body building, yoga, ballet and more. June session dates: 6/4, 6/11, 6/18, 6/28, 5-7 p.m..Fee: \$40/residents, \$48/non-residents. RSVP by 6/1.

Agging Vocab: Tuesday, June 2, 5-6 p.m. Come learn the aging medical lingo with Marlborough Healtand Rehab and Addison Place. Light refreshments provided.

MES Band Practice: Wednesday, June 10, 10 a.m. Students from the fifth grade band will perform a practice show. Coffee will be served.

Classical Guitarist to Perform at Arts Center

American classical guitarist Nick Cutroneo will perform Friday, May 22, at the 4th Friday @ the Arts Café, hosted by the Marlborough Arts Center, 231 North Main St.

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

For more information, visit www.marlbrougharts.org, email info@marlbrougharts.org or call 860-467-6353.

Resident Graduates

Stella Henderson of Marlborough recently graduated from Stonehill College in Easton, Mass.

AHM Grandparent Class: Are you a new grandparent or feel out of touch with this generation? Come join the conversation on Friday June 12th at 11 a.m.

Lunch and Tour of the Residence at Glastonbury: June 16; call the senior center for more information. Transportation available.

Friendship Tours: Lighthouse Cruise: Aug. 12, \$156pp, 18+, open to all towns. Prior to cruise, enjoy brunch at Quonset 'O' Club. 10:15 a.m. departure, 7 p.m. return. RSVP by July 10.

Transportation: Rides to medical appointments, employment, essential services, the Senior Center and recreation activities are available to seniors and people with disabilities. Transportation is available Mondays and Tuesdays only. Rides must be reserved two business days in advance. Call 860-295-6209 for more information. Visit www.marlbroughct.gov for the complete transportation policy.

Homeowners Elderly/Disabled Tax Relief Program: Property tax credits are available to qualified households 65+ or disabled. For more information, call the assessor's office at 860-295-6201; for application assistance, call the senior center. Deadline to apply: May 15.

Energy Assistance and Eversource Discounts: Income-based. Contact the center for an appointment. For energy assistance, the application deadline is May 29.

RTC To Host Bingo

The Marlborough Republican Town Committee will host a night of bingo Friday, May 29, at the American Legion, 128 East Hampton Rd. Doors open at 6 p.m., and bingo starts at 6:30 p.m.

There will be cash and gift prizes, and Tea Cup raffles. Food, snacks, and refreshments will be provided.

Advance tickets are \$20; tickets at the door are \$25.

For more information or to reserve your spots, call or text Zina at 860-798-6038.

Parks and Rec. Programs

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

Youth Programs: Netto Summer Day Camp: For grades K-7. June 22-Aug. 14, at Blish Park. Campers will enjoy camp games, arts & crafts, swimming, sports, field trips and special events. All campers are supervised by counselors and lifeguards trained in CPR/First Aid. Fee per week is \$185/resident, \$195/non-resident.

Swim Lessons: Begin the week of June 29. All lesson levels are offered. All lessons are held at Blish Park. Fee is \$65/resident, \$70/non-resident.

Lego - Radical Rides: June 23-27 at Marlborough Elementary School. Ages 5-7 are 8:30-11:30 a.m., and ages 7-12 are noon-3 p.m. Fee is \$155/resident, \$160/non-resident.

Safe Sitter: Saturday, June 27, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., at Marlborough Senior Center. Designed to prepare students in grades 6-8 to be safe when they're home alone, watching younger siblings or babysitting. Fee is \$140/resident, \$145/non-resident.

Skyhawks Basketball Camp: June 22-26, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., at MES. For boys and girls ages 7-12. Fee is \$185/resident, \$190/non-resident.

Skyhawks Camp (Soccer, Baseball and Basketball): June 29-July 2 at MES. Mini-Hawk, for ages 4-6, is 9 a.m.-noon, and Multi-Sport, for ages 7-10, is 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Fee is \$130/residents,

\$135/non-residents.

Horseback Riding Lessons: Ages 5 and up, English or Western style instruction. The lessons are private and are an hour in length. The lessons days and times are flexible. The instructor will contact you upon registration to set up lesson day and time. Fee is four lessons for \$175/residents, \$180/non-residents.

Adult Programs: Beginner and Intermediate Tai Chi: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1-2 p.m., at Marlborough Senior Center. Fee is \$40/resident, \$45/non-resident.

Beginner Tai Chi: Tuesdays, noon-12:45 p.m., at Marlborough Senior Center. Fee is \$40/resident, \$45/non-resident.

Zumba: Thursdays, 6:30-7:30 p.m., at Marlborough Senior Center. Fee is \$50/resident, \$55/non-resident, or a \$10 drop-in fee. Class instruction provided by Anna Boose.

Adult Drop-In Volleyball: Thursdays, 8-10 p.m., at MES. Fee is \$5 per week. Session runs until June 2.

Pickleball: Mondays, 5:30-7:30 p.m., and Tues/Thurs, 9-11 a.m., at Blish Park. Open to all levels of play. Registration is free.

Trip: Boston Red Sox vs. New York Mets: Saturday, July 11, 4:10 p.m. game at Citi Field in New York. Trip includes: a charter bus, ticket to the game, cookout at the stadium, games and prizes on the bus. Fee is \$185 (400-level seating), or \$255 (lower-level seating). Bus picks up/drops off at Putnam park and ride in Glastonbury.

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 at stjoh-fisher30@yahoo.com. The church website is www.stjfcchurch.org.

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

Faith Formation Programs: Vacation Bible School will be Aug. 3-7, from 9 a.m.-noon daily. The theme is "Armour of God." Details may be found on the church website. Cindy Bryan, Eileen Gilles and Helena Thomas lead the programs for grades K-10, to include a high school youth group. Registration for the new academic year will be during the summer. Stay tuned on the church website with further information.

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. The annual church picnic is on Sunday, June 14, from noon-3 p.m.

Community Outreach and Service: The Community Giving Garden is starting up and meets Mondays at 5 p.m. The garden yields fresh produce delivered weekly to the Marlborough Food Bank. All May, the church is holding a baby shower to support Caring Families in Willimantic and a fundraiser supporting Birth-Right in East Hartford. On Saturday, June 6, from 9 a.m.-3 p.m., the church will host a drive for Journey Home, where gently-used household goods, new bed pillows and gently used furniture are accepted for those who are transitioning to sustainable housing; see details on the church website. 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).

**LEGAL NOTICE
MARLBOROUGH ZONING COMMISSION
PUBLIC HEARING**

The Marlborough Zoning Commission will hold the following Public Hearing Thursday, June 4, 2026, at 7:00 PM at the Town Hall, 26 No Main Street

APPLICATION #Z-02-26-Zoning Amendment Committee

1. Article Six F.4c.2 floating zone minimum road frontage
2. Article Six F 4.C.4 Floating Zone minimum lot size
3. Article Six F.4.C.9 Floating Zone open space
4. Article Six F.4.C. 13 Floating Zone permitted user DMR, ALD, & PRRD - minimum land area per unit

Written testimony will be received at the public hearing and written testimony can be sent to the Building/Land Use Department at the Town Hall ahead of the public hearing.
ERIC COLANTONIO, ZONING COMMISSION CHAIR
2TB 5/22, 5/29

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Gilead Congregational Church News

Gilead Congregational Church, an Open and Affirming Congregation located at 672 Gilead St., has announced the following. For more info, visit gileadchurch.ucc.org, church, email gcc@gileadchurch.net, or call the Parish House at 860-228-3077. The church office is open at the GCC Parish House Monday-Thursday, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Worship: Sunday worship is at 10 a.m., followed by coffee hour at 11 a.m. Services can also be viewed online at YouTube at www.bit.ly/GileadChurchUCC and on Facebook at tinyurl.com/GileadChurchUCC.

This Week's Scheduled Events/Meetings: Saturday, 5/23 – Wise Warrior Yoga at 9:30 a.m. (Fellowship Hall); Sunday, 5/24 – Gilead to Go Meals Planning Meeting at 11:30 a.m. (Fellowship Hall Classroom); Monday, 5/25 – Church Office Closed in Honor of Memorial Day (No Bible Study); Tuesday, 5/26 – AA Meeting at 7:30 p.m. (Fellowship Hall); Wednesday, 5/27 – Wise Warrior Yoga at 9:30 a.m. (Fellowship Hall); Wednesday, 5/27 – Book Group at 10:45 a.m. (Fellowship Hall); Wednesday, 5/27 – Choir Practice at 7 p.m. (Gilead Church's sanctuary)

Upcoming Events and General Announcements: **Wise Warrior Yoga:** The group will re-

convene Saturday, May 23, at 9:30 a.m., in Gilead's Fellowship Hall.

Confirmation Sunday: At worship this Sunday, May 24, at 10 a.m., the church will celebrate the confirmation of several of Gilead's youth. All are welcome.

Children's Sunday: Worship on Sunday, June 14, at 10 a.m., will celebrate the participation and accomplishments of the youth in Gilead's Sunday School and Youth Group programs throughout the year.

Summer Hours to Start: On Sunday, June 21, the church will transition to its summer hours, with worship at 9:30 a.m. and Coffee Hour at 10:30 a.m. Watch for dates for the once-monthly outdoor worship summer services.

Card-Making with Gayle: Sunday, June 28, 11:30 a.m. Create one-of-a-kind seasonal cards for \$15, with a portion of proceeds benefitting the Connecticut Food Bank.

Summer Potluck and Prayer Gatherings: All are invited for two special evenings of food, fellowship, and prayer this summer. Just bring a sweet or savory cookout dish to share. The first gathering is Wednesday, July 22, at 6 p.m.

See More Hebron News, Section 2, page 5

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★ *Tree-Climbing, cont. from page 1*

about how I could put my own spin on it," he said. "Engaging pop culture or something along those lines to hook the students in."

Underwood first discovered Trestle Tree equipment while student teaching in Mansfield nearly 10 years ago. "When I was student teaching ... my cooperating teacher had all of this equipment," he explained. "And I saw it as a great opportunity when I got into a position to bring this to a school."

When Underwood arrived at MES, the setup was much smaller. "It started as just a few of these yellow and red trestles," he said. Over time, the program grew piece by piece.

As funding became available through the school's PTO, grants and physical education budget, Underwood continued to expand the course. "The eventual goal is to get this completely across the gym," he said. "Like a New York City grid system."

The school purchases equipment through Gerstung International, a Maryland-based company that specializes in movement education. "We have had large truckloads of equipment come in," Underwood said. "The owner of the company drove equipment here himself from Maryland when shipping costs have gotten too high."

The project has become one of the school's most exciting programs. "The students look forward to this all year long," Underwood said. For many students, the course becomes a chance to overcome fears.

"I do have students from year to year who struggle with the idea of getting up and climbing," he explained. Instead of forcing students into difficult obstacles, he works with them step by step. "We work on just simple movements that can help them advance," he said. Students who feel nervous about climbing high can begin with lower equipment closer to the floor.

"We're a foot off the floor on that green triangle," Underwood said, pointing to a nearby set up with an obstacle only a bit off the ground. "Can you just move in a triangle around that one-foot bar, just to get accustomed to being off the floor?" Then comes the next challenge. "Okay, now that you can do that, can you go one step further?" he asked. Over time, confidence grows.

"Some of my most fearful young students are my best climbers years down the road," he shared. "Because they're accustomed to this, and they feel so comfortable now."

The Trestle Tree program is designed around

both movement goals and "mind goals." Students learn balance, flexibility, muscular endurance and safe movement. But they are also challenged to think creatively and solve problems.

Underwood often asks students to figure out multiple ways to move through the same obstacle. "Avery could crawl across this ladder, but she could also go under," he explained. "She could also walk across. She could sit and scoot or straddle and scoot across."

The climbing course also teaches communication. Because only two students are allowed on each piece of equipment at one time, students must cooperate constantly. "If there were another student here, they would have to think about, okay, who's going first, who's going second?" he said.

Students share space, help one another and communicate strategies. These lessons even connect to academics.

"There are correlations and connections between academic performance and when students are moving," Underwood said. During state testing season, he noticed students became more focused after climbing.

"There's such a high level of focus that's required for this," he said. "You have to be extremely engaged in what you're doing, similar to the way you have to be engaged in what you're doing in the classroom."

The Trestle Tree program would not exist without strong community support from Marlborough. Underwood credited the Marlborough PTO for helping fund the project year after year. "The PTO has been amazing," he said. The school's annual fun run raises thousands of dollars that are reinvested into student programs.

"The fun run in recent years has raised as much as \$35,000," Underwood explained. Each year, the PTO works with Underwood to determine which parts of the program need expansion.

"One year, I said I was looking for more A-frames and implements," he said. "The next year, I said if I really want to go east and west rather than north and south, now we need more mats."

The support from families and administrators has allowed the program to continue growing.

"Without the partnership of the PTO, our administration here, who's been extremely supportive of this, the students who come in and look forward to this every day – that's what makes this our crown jewel," Underwood said.

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RHAM Referendum Next Week

By Toriana Williams

Voters in Andover, Hebron and Marlborough will return to the polls next Tuesday, May 26, to again cast ballots on a proposed 2026-27 RHAM Board of Education budget.

A virtual-only annual meeting will be held on May 25 at 9:30 a.m. to officially move the budget to referendum. The referendum is scheduled for May 26 at Hebron Elementary School, Marlborough Elementary School and Andover Town Hall. In all three towns, voting will take place from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m.

The revised proposed 2026-27 budget now sits at \$32,832,558, a 0.65% increase over current year spending. The revised plan includes a \$32,501,251 operating budget and a \$331,037 capital budget.

Combined, the new budgets are down nearly \$840,000 from the previously rejected \$33,661,483 budget, which was a 3.19% increase.

Budget Reductions Total \$839,837

Superintendent of Schools Colin McNamara said district officials worked quickly after the failed May 5 referendum. At that referendum, voters in the three RHAM towns rejected a proposed \$33.16 operations budget by a 2,723 to 1,258 tally, and also sent packing a proposed \$500,000 capital budget by a 2,400 to 1,385 vote.

"We want to make sure that we have a budget that can be supported by the community," he said.

The largest reductions to the previously-proposed increase came from staffing changes. The district cut \$450,358 from personnel costs, which included two high school English teacher positions, one high school science teacher position and one special education paraeducator position. The district also reduced substitute staffing, temporary custodial help and unemployment line items.

McNamara said three of the teaching cuts happened through retirements or resignations, which allowed the district to avoid layoffs. He also said the special education paraeducator position may need to be reconsidered in the future.

"It was a position that we can give up for

the time being. It might be one that we have to come back for," he said.

The district also reduced non-personnel spending by \$22,516. Those cuts included \$92,141 from special education tuition and services, \$70,350 from special education transportation, \$52,025 by pre-purchasing maintenance equipment and repairs using current-year funds and \$6,000 from general supplies.

Changes were also made to the capital budget. The district's loading dock replacement project increased in cost from an estimated \$424,235 to \$507,737. To lower the impact on taxpayers, officials recommended using \$235,000 from the district's reserve fund for education expenditures. That reduced the revised capital budget from \$566,037 to \$331,037.

The revised budget also included adjustments to revenue projects. Officials reduced expected excess cost reimbursement funding by \$26,280 but then increased tuition revenue by \$15,638. This is due to an additional student from Columbia attending RHAM.

Hebron's town levy share is \$17,575,269, an increase of \$629,142; Andover's town levy share is \$4,153,318, a decrease of \$84,030; Marlborough's town levy share is \$11,103,971, a decrease of \$332,626.

Hebron Led Budget Opposition

At the May 5 referendum, the proposed budget fared worst in Hebron, where the operating budget fell 1,855 to 548 and the capital budget was rejected 1,722 to 682. In Andover, the operating budget narrowly passed, 390-379, while the capital budget failed 395-377. Meanwhile, in Marlborough, both budget proposals passed; the operating budget by a 320-289 tally and the capital one by a 326-283 vote.

The referendum came less than two months after RHAM officials revealed a financial error involving money that should have been returned to the three towns beginning in 2020. The district said the mistake caused its assigned fund balance to grow more in \$1.7 million.

For reimbursement including interest, Andover is expected to receive \$258,876, Hebron \$861,120 and Marlborough \$608,617.

From the Superintendent's Desk

I am writing to provide an update to the RHAM community regarding the Region 8 budget for the 2026 - 2027 fiscal year. At a special meeting held on May 12, the Region 8 Board of Education approved approximately \$840,000 in further reductions to the budget that had initially been adopted on April 6 and subsequently did not pass at referendum.

With these most recent reductions, a total of approximately \$2.2 million in equipment, supplies, personnel, and services has been removed since the budget development process began in early October 2025. The revised 2026 - 2027 budget is now \$32,832,558, which reflects a 0.65% increase over the current year. Factoring in the credit offset applied, each member town will have a reduced levy compared to the current year. Andover's levy would decrease by approximately \$342,906. Hebron will realize a decrease of \$231,978, and Marlborough's levy would decrease by \$941,243.

Throughout this budget process, Region 8 has worked to be responsive to the fiscal challenges facing each of our three member towns. The Board of Education and district leadership have carefully considered areas for reduction while striving to preserve the core elements of our educational program. This approach reflects a continued commitment to both fiscal responsibility and the delivery of a high-quality educational experience for our students.

Even with these adjustments, the proposed budget continues to provide resources and support necessary for students and staff to be successful. It also maintains a broad range of course offerings designed to ensure that all students have acquired the Skills and Dispositions of a RHAM Graduate and are well prepared for whatever life brings beyond high school.

The next referendum on the revised budget will be held on Tuesday, May 26, and we extend our appreciation to the residents of Andover, Hebron, and Marlborough for their continued support of the students and staff at RHAM.

Colin McNamara, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools
Regional School District 8

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★ *Nikki O'Neill, cont. from page 1*

could live in East Hampton," he said.

In a statement, Congressman Joe Courtney, a Democrat representing Connecticut's second congressional district, which includes East Hampton, called her passing "sad news" and noted her strong ties to East Hampton.

"She was truly the life partner of former Governor William O'Neill," Courtney said, "and touched the lives of thousands and thousands of our state's residents."

Courtney noted that, after leaving office, Bill and Nikki O'Neill returned to East Hampton, saying they "lived a modest, down-to-earth lifestyle that every towns person appreciated and was proud of. Their example and Nikki's gregarious, sharp wit will be sorely missed but never forgotten."

Rep. John Larson, who represents Connecticut's first district, also issued a statement on her

passing.

Larson, who was a state senator during her husband's time as governor, remembered working with Nikki O'Neill directly.

"I was proud to work hand-in-hand with Nikki during my time in the state senate to uplift Connecticut residents and support communities across our state," he said.

Larson added that O'Neill "had a great appreciation for the arts and literature, opening the doors of the Governor's Residence to artists and filling the library with books by Connecticut authors. Most of all, she led with grace and dignity, and she will be greatly missed."

Though Nikki O'Neill may not have been a political candidate herself, Markham noted, "she became a very good politician in her own right," and moreover, she was always, he said, "a friend – a friend to everybody."

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★ *Letters, cont. from page 9*

Nathaniel attempted to kidnap and sell his family in order to settle a debt the Manns owed to the Rev. Samuel Peters. Cesar Peters Jr., his father Cesar Peters and brother Henry Peters were also employed by Gov. Peters to work his farm at 17 Kinney Rd. At least six African American households living in Hebron Center found employment by Hebron's farmers living around Hebron Green, as skilled farm workers."

The connections between Martin Powers, Cesar Peters Jr. and Governor John S. Peters contain so many levels of suffering, effort, intrigue, perseverance, and success. The foresight of Governor Peters and other wealthy Hebron center land owners, including Judge Sylvester Gilbert, to engage with the free Black community was groundbreaking and unique to Hebron history. That the stone wall laneways, corn fields, hay field, and ancient oak trees and stately hickory trees still stand is a testament to these endeavors. As a community Hebron can preserve this historic site for the benefit of present and future residents.

I encourage all residents to come and learn about these historic individuals and support the great work of the RHAM Middle School Inquiry Academy. For more information on 17 Kinney Rd., please visit Save Hebron Center on Facebook.

Sincerely,
Kevin J. Tulimieri – Amston

Thanks, But 'No'

To the Editor:

Sometimes the State of Connecticut trips over its own feet when it decides to do something. When it tries to distribute tax money for our school system to add an additional pre-k teacher, it causes more problems that it helps. It would make \$75K available for this additional position but, with salary, benefits and costs, this is half of what would cost to fund another position. Then, when it is included in next year's budget, we are stuck paying more for the full amount.

This additional would be added when our enrollment is hundreds of students less than previous years. Thank you, but 'no.'

Richard Brown – East Hampton

Note: Brown is a member of the East Hampton Republican Town Committee.

MBR is What They Didn't Tell Mr. Hintz

To the Editor:

Mr. Hintz's recent letter invites the MBR enrollment formula to the table to argue East Hampton's school budget should be cut. That argument has a problem: Mr. Hintz has fundamentally misread what the MBR is.

The MBR is a legal floor — the absolute minimum the state will legally allow a district to spend. It exists to prevent towns from gutting education funding. It is not a budgeting target, a benchmark, or a strategy. Treating it as one is like being told you're allowed to skip a mortgage payment and calling that financial planning — so why would we entertain that? Why would you lead people to believe that is a good idea?

For a community leader to advocate for the MBR floor as a spending goal isn't fiscal responsibility. It's an abdication of it — and one that carries real, documented consequences.

Districts that chase the MBR floor learn quickly how fragile that position is. Small miscalculations put towns in violation of state law, triggering intervention, legal disputes, and costly special meetings. Ansonia and Columbia have been through it. It usually ends up costing more than the savings — wonder why?

There's also no such thing as freezing costs at the floor. Salaries, benefits, utilities, and materials rise every year. Cutting to the MBR in one cycle makes the following year harder to absorb — and risks falling below the floor again despite spending the same or a little more. Add the complete absence of any cushion for the unexpected: an emergency repair, a spike in special education needs, an enrollment shift — not to mention the rising cost of everything in 2026. What happens then?

Scrutiny of school budgets is healthy and warranted. But there's a meaningful difference between scrutiny and advocating for a strategy built around the lowest legal threshold — especially when the person advocating for it appears unfamiliar with how that threshold actually works, potentially walking the BOE and the town into legal risk.

The MBR tells us the least East Hampton can legally spend on its schools. It says nothing about the least it responsibly can. That floor is built on an outdated, inflation-blind foundation. Districts are trading water at best in most cases.

So, what I am being told by you is some strategic plan using some real data selectively but never mentioning other big-ticket items of costs to manufacture a narrative that some are very desperate to hear. Your most powerful move is the invented \$2.7 million figure — that number will live in readers' minds long after the nuance is forgotten.

Our kids, our families, and our staff — from the janitorial team to the teachers — deserve more than the lowest legal benchmark.

Katrina Ruggiero – East Hampton

Vote 'No' on East Hampton Board of Education Budget

To the Editor:

Once again, the BOE leadership is asking for more budget funds while not being overly transparent. Evidently, the \$198,000 "reduction" is partially funded by unused funds from 2025. The BOE continues to use misleading language to enrage parents such as "cut" when it really means "reduction" in requested monies. If the *Rivereast* readers will recall, Chairman Philhower of the prior TC wrote to *Rivereast* in 2022 and stated quite clearly much the same comments that Mr. Hintz wrote in the 5/8/26 and 5/15/25 editions. So, once again nothing has changed. The superintendent and Mr. Engelhardt immediately go to cutting staff and programs as the only options for smaller budgets.

And if there is a surplus as the superintendent claims, along with anticipated state funds, then why do they need an increase? The superintendent has plead in prior budget discussions to "give me chance to do the work.," as taxpayers, we should expect that "work" would include some out-of-the-box thinking, not just emotional extortion and threats of "harmful cuts" to the students. And for the record, the proposed budget once again gives the lion's share of the scare dollars to BOE, leaving the rest of town to suffer.

The ongoing narrative espoused by the leadership at the BOE continues to be misleading and unfair to the residents of EH. It would also interest the readers to know that during the TC meeting on 4/28, questions were raised citing the fact that the email list for "public communication" by BOE is primarily directed at the 36 percent of residents with children in the school system, not a town-wide communication vehicle. Since communications by the BOE are directed at a selected audience and not at the larger public, one can only assume that the information provided is one-sided and paints a misleading narrative designed to enrage the parents of school children. When the estimated 64 percent of the taxpayers are not privy to the BOE's communication and thus uninformed, it makes it difficult to compel the BOE to act responsibly. Which means that 64 percent needs to show up at the referendum vote to say 'no.'

I hope the voters without children, Town Council, and the BOF think about the entire town, say 'no' to the BOE in no uncertain terms. We voters are obligated to stop the culture of wanton disregard for the overall financial health of the entire town of East Hampton.

Bob Yenker – East Hampton

Preserving What Matters Most

To the Editor:

Hebron's schools faced a required \$300,000 reduction this year, and that reality shaped every decision the Board of Education had to make. Much of the district's budget is tied to state and federal mandates or to contracts that cannot simply be reduced. That means cuts cannot come from special education services, required supports, or core staffing. Those obligations remain regardless of how the budget vote turns out.

Because so much of the budget is fixed, only a small number of areas were realistically available for reduction. Some residents have asked why more cuts weren't made in central office. Public information shows that the Board did make a significant structural change by consolidating two principals into one and replacing two deans with assistant principals, eliminating an administrative position while maintaining building-level leadership. Beyond that, deeper administrative reductions would have reached into mandated functions the district is legally required to maintain.

The remaining options were difficult. Two of the possibilities under consideration would have increased 6th grade class sizes to 24 students or eliminated Challenge & Enrichment, a program that supports widely celebrated opportunities like Future Problem Solvers, Math Enrichment, and Invention Convention. Eliminating C&E would have meant losing an entire program, not modifying it.

The reduction of a halftime music position

has understandably drawn strong reactions. I grew up in a public school band program, and music shaped my confidence and sense of belonging. I understand why families are upset, and I feel that disappointment too. But the change preserves the heart of the program — band, chorus, and general music remain in place. What changes are some of the enhancements many of us value, but that could not be sustained under this year's financial constraints.

One point feels especially important for the community to understand: Voting 'no' on the budget does not restore the parttime music position. A failed budget simply forces deeper cuts, including reductions to areas that were protected this time. A "no" vote does not change how funds are allocated — it only increases the size of the cuts the Board must make.

My hope, speaking as a fellow resident, is that we can support our students through this transition and continue working together to strengthen the programs that make Hebron a place families are proud to call home.

Anne Thibeault – Hebron

Note: Thibeault is a member of the Hebron Board of Education, but is writing as an individual.

Vote 'Yes' for Schools, Community

To the Editor:

On May 26, our community has an important opportunity to come together and invest in the future of our schools, our children, and our town. Following the last referendum, the Board of Education listened carefully to voters, heard community concerns, and worked thoughtfully to make significant reductions in response to the requested \$300,000 budget cut.

These decisions were not easy, but they reflect a genuine effort to be responsive while continuing to prioritize students. The revised budget includes:

- Elimination of a principal position
- Reduction of Superintendent, Business Manager, and central office COLA increases from 3% to 2% while employees will also increase their health insurance contributions
- Reduction of one music teacher position to part-time while still keeping intact chorus and band for grades 4-6, jazz band, hawkapella and the 6th grade musical
- Elimination of a new speech-language pathologist assistant position
- Additional budget adjustments through a teacher leave approval and a federal grant awarded on April 13th

These are meaningful sacrifices, and they demonstrate the commitment to balancing fiscal responsibility with maintaining the strong educational foundation our students deserve.

Now, we have the chance to move forward together.

Supporting this budget means protecting essential student services, preserving important educational opportunities, and helping maintain class sizes within Board of Education guidelines so every child can continue to receive the support and attention they need to thrive. Further reductions could place greater strain on classrooms, student programs, and critical services that benefit our entire school community.

Strong schools are one of the best investments a town can make. They strengthen property values, attract families, support local growth, and prepare the next generation for success. When we support our schools, we support the future of our entire community.

This referendum is about thoughtful investment, shared responsibility, and protecting the progress we've made.

Please vote 'yes' on May 26th.

Heather Petit – Hebron

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

Vote 'Yes' for AES

To the Editor:

Andover voters, please vote 'yes' for the Andover Elementary School (AES) budget on Tuesday, May 26th, which will be separate from the Town's budget.

Do not fall prey to all of the misinformation that is spreading throughout town. Superintendent Bruneau has provided all of the information that she is legally allowed to provide to the Board of Finance (BOF) and the Board of Selectmen (BOS). The information regarding AES' very successful preschool program, for example, is provided on a monthly basis for the Board of Education (BOE) meetings, but those who are critical of the program don't want to believe the factual information that is provided! And, why focus on the preschool program, which is not part of AES' budget because it is self-funded?

Why are the first selectman and certain members of the BOF so critical of AES' budget, especially when the town has not provided important information about the town's financial resources. I believe that it is largely to deflect from the fact that the town has more than \$1.5 million in earmarked accounts for various projects and town departments and more than \$2.1 million sitting in an unallocated bank account and still is proposing a 5.6% budget increase; and this after receiving a 16% increase 2-3 years ago!

Instead of raising taxes in this difficult financial time to address the critical funding that AES requires for this upcoming fiscal year, the BOF and the BOS would prefer to continue to fund the earmarked accounts and to keep more than \$2.1 million in reserve. The town soon will receive some \$80,000 from the State that is required to be used for educational purposes. AES returned \$50,000 to the Town from a prior budget and the BOF cut the proposed AES budget by \$50,000 during its May 6th meeting. Instead of a 10.9% AES budget increase, therefore, the actual proposed budget increase is more like 7.5%; AES would require a 4% increase solely to meet its contractual obligations.

Trust that the elected members of the BOE and the superintendent proposed a budget that meets their legal obligation to AES' students and nothing more. They know the current and future needs of the students and the budget required to meet those needs. Thank you for your support!

Best,

Shannon O. Loudon – Andover

Note: Loudon is vice chair of the Andover Board of Education but is writing as an capacity.

Substance Over Form: Andover's Preschool

To the Editor:

A recent writer praises Andover's first selectman for "due diligence" on the preschool. Then he writes a letter that demonstrates he hasn't done any himself.

Due diligence would have meant reading the public record before declaring it a bad investment. The audit. The comptroller's payment ledger. The Board of Education's monthly financial reports. The collective bargaining agreements. The school's published enrollment policies. All public. All on the internet.

I read them. They tell a consistent story across every independent source:

The preschool saves Andover taxpayers about \$108,000 a year.

The preschool brings in about \$436,000 a year in tuition and state grants. It costs about \$528,000 a year fully loaded, including the employee benefits the BOE doesn't allocate at the program level. That's a \$92,000 operating gap.

But the district is required by federal law (IDEA Part B Section 619) and state law (CGS §10-76d) to provide special education to children ages 3 to 6 with disabilities, whether the preschool exists or not. Meeting that obligation by outplacement or a standalone special-ed program would cost the town at least \$200,000 a year — roughly twice what the preschool costs in net.

The same writer complains the superintendent is hiding "an undisclosed or overlooked source of money." There is no such source. The one figure not publicly broken out is the employee benefits allocation — and the superintendent is not allowed to publish it. Federal regulations under FERPA (34 CFR §99.3) and HIPAA (45 CFR §164.504(f)) both prohibit her from disclosing aggregate information about a group as small as eight staff when their roles can be linked to specific student needs. That's not her opinion. It's the law. She would be derelict to do otherwise. The first selectman has been told this repeatedly. He keeps demanding it anyway, and his admirers keep treating her refusal as obstruction.

That letter accuses the superintendent of having "no regard whatsoever" for taxpayers and praises the first selectman as a steward of our resources. The actual stewardship record: the superintendent runs a program that saves the town six figures a year. The first selectman put out a flyer suggesting this program is costing us money — without checking. That's form. The numbers above are substance.

Full report, with full sourcing, at andoverct.info/reports/aes/preschool-funding.

I would humbly suggest that anyone writing about Andover's school budget might read it first

Scott Sauyet – Andover

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

Obituaries

East Hampton

Richard Cardillo Sr.

Richard Cardillo Sr., affectionately known as Rick, Dad, and Poppy, passed away unexpectedly at the age of 73 following a brief but aggressive illness at St. Francis Hospital.

Rick was born in Hartford on Jan. 21, 1953, to William J. Cardillo Sr. and Dolores M. (DeGruttola) Cardillo of Wethersfield.

He was a longtime resident of East Hampton, where he lived for more than 50 years. Rick graduated from Wethersfield High School in 1971 and began his career working in masonry with the family business, Cardillo & Sons Company. He later became a firefighter with the City of Hartford Fire Department, proudly serving his community for more than two decades. Where he retired due to becoming the recipient of a liver transplant, one of his proudest accomplishments. Giving him 27 more years with his loved ones.

Rick is survived by his devoted wife, Kathleen Cardillo of East Hampton, Connecticut; his children who he'd go to the ends of the earth and back for, Richard Cardillo Jr., Leah VanBlaricom and her husband Timmy VanBlaricom Jr., Bethany Cardillo (Jason Tupper), and stepdaughter Martina Martucci. One of Rick's greatest joys was being a grandfather to his beloved grandchildren: Chelsy, Andrew, Anthony, Kydance, Hailey, Camron, Taylor, Jordan, Jayla, Savannah, Mackenzie, and Cali. He cherished every moment spent with them and took great pride in watching them grow.

Rick is also survived by his brother Thomas Cardillo.

Rick found happiness in life's simple pleasures. He loved spending days at the beach, listening to the rhythmic crash of the waves, winters spent in Florida, and treasured the time he shared with his lifelong best friend, Andy Dindari, and his favorite cousin, JJ. He was an exceptional cook who delighted family and friends with his famous chicken cutlets, meatballs and sauce, and antipasti. Always eager to stay active and engaged, Rick enjoyed following the stock market and spending time day trading.

A dedicated member of the East Hampton Senior Center, Rick rarely missed a Thursday gathering, where he enjoyed playing cards and sharing stories with friends. He was known for his generosity and willingness to help others, often providing transportation for fellow members to and from the library. Rick also made a lasting impact through his involvement with SMART Recovery in Hartford, where he served as a mentor and source of encouragement to people from all walks of life.

Rick will be remembered for his kind heart, unwavering generosity, quick wit, and deep love for his family and friends. His presence brought comfort, laughter, and strength to those around him, and his memory will be cherished by all who knew and loved him.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the American Cancer Society.

A celebration of life will be held to honor Richard Cardillo in the coming weeks.



Amston

Daniel John Hogan

Daniel John Hogan, fondly known as Dan/Danny, of Amston and Fort Myers, Fla., passed away on Saturday, May 9, unexpectedly, surrounded and supported by his loving family. He was 74 years old.

Dan was born Aug. 27, 1951, in New Haven, the son of John and Mary (Moriarty) Hogan. On Aug. 4, 1973, he married the love of his life and high school sweetheart, Pamela Viviani, with whom he shared 53 wonderful years of marriage.

Dan and Pamela moved frequently in their early years before ultimately settling in Norwich, where they raised their family. He took great pride in his home and was an avid gardener with a true green thumb, especially when it came to flowers and shrubs.

Dan was deeply committed to education, both as a student and throughout his professional life. He earned his bachelor's degree from Central Connecticut State University, went on to earn his master's degree from the University of Connecticut, and later completed his sixth-year degree from Saint Joseph College. He also made history as the first male to graduate from Saint Joseph College.

Dan devoted 39 years to a distinguished career in education. He began as a special education teacher, then a kindergarten teacher, and went on to serve as an administrator and Director of the Webb Kindergarten Center in Wethersfield. His dedication to students and families left a lasting impression on the community. In recognition of his contributions, Dan was honored as the Wethersfield Man of the Year.

In his youth, Dan embraced life with a sense of adventure and curiosity. He attended the historic Woodstock Music & Art Festival in 1969, an experience he often spoke of with great fondness. Immersed in the music, camaraderie, and spirit of the era, Woodstock reflected Dan's lifelong love of connection, joy, and celebration — qualities that remained evident in the way he lived his life and brought people together.

Dan lived life fully and joyfully. He was a longtime member of the Elks Lodge in Willimantic, where he formed many lasting friendships that became an important and supportive part of his life. He also loved traveling to Florida after his retirement and built a wide circle of friendships during that time.

He will be remembered as a devoted and loving family man, a loyal friend, and someone whose heart was larger than life. Known for his unique sense of humor, Dan had a way of bringing laughter to every room and was truly the life of the party. He will be deeply missed but forever remembered with love.

In addition to his parents, Dan was predeceased by his in-laws, Joseph and Mary (Cassano) Viviani, as well as many beloved aunts and uncles from the Hogan, Viviani, Moriarty, McKeon, and Pyne families.

He is survived by his beloved wife, Pamela; his sons, Jonathan Hogan and his wife Kristen



of Colchester, and Christopher Hogan of Colchester; his grandchildren, Chase Hogan, Kaitlyn Hogan and her husband Quentin Duperry, and Amber Bennard; and his great-grandchildren, Carter, Cooper, and Mackenzie. He is also survived by his brother and sister-in-law, Michael and Andrea Hogan of Northford and their son Justin; his sister, Maureen (Hogan) Roth and her husband Paul of Bethany and their children Meghan and her husband Marc, and Eric and his wife Kristin; along with many extended family members and dear friends.

Funeral services will be held at the Aurora McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester, on Saturday, June 6. Calling hours will take place from 2-5 p.m., with a memorial service at 4:30 p.m. at the funeral home. A Celebration of Life reception will follow at 5:30 p.m. at the Elks Lodge, 198 Pleasant St., Willimantic, for all to attend.

For online condolences or to share a story of Dan that we could read aloud at the memorial service, please visit www.auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

East Hampton

Donna Quast

May 29, 1934 – May 15, 2026

Donna (Hillmann) Quast, a beloved mother, nurse, and devoted member of Cheshire Lutheran Church, passed away peacefully on Friday, May 15, just two weeks before her 92nd birthday. She was born and raised on a small farm in Hector, Minn., where her family's deep Lutheran faith and proud German heritage shaped the woman she would become.

Donna attended high school in Fairfax, Minn., and went on to train as a nurse at Northwestern Hospital in Minneapolis. An adventurous spirit, she traveled extensively before marriage — touring Europe for three months and exploring Mexico, Oregon, Arizona, and California. In 1963, she and her high school friend David Quast were married at Emanuel Lutheran Church in Wellington Township, Minn., and began a life together in New York.

Donna worked as a registered nurse throughout the New York area, from Manhattan to Long Island to Cortland Manor. She and David welcomed two sons, David and Carl, and eventually settled in Cheshire, where they found a warm home at Cheshire Lutheran Church — a congregation she remained devoted to for the rest of her life.

A woman of quiet generosity, Donna served as PTA president, volunteered with the YMCA, worked local elections, and was a cherished presence at church events and the summer Vacation Bible School program. She loved gardening, reading non-fiction, classical music, and cheering on her beloved New York Mets.

Donna was predeceased by her husband, David Quast, and her son, Carl Quast. She is survived by her son David Quast and his wife Kelly; and her three grandchildren, Liam Quast, Olivia Quast and her partner Graeme Stasynchyn, and Miranda Quast and her partner Jacob Cannavale.

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

Amston

Claire Wever Bracaglia

Claire Wever Bracaglia, of Amston, passed away Thursday, May 7, at the Portland Care & Rehabilitation Centre in Portland. She was 84 years old. Claire was born in Manhattan, N.Y., on Jan. 19, 1942. She was the daughter of the late George DeWolf Wever and Jane (Becker) Wever, both of Manhattan, N.Y.

Claire earned a bachelor's degree in art history from Vassar College and worked as an assistant curator at the Metropolitan Museum in New York. She married Bartolomeo Bracaglia from Rome, Italy in 1966, subsequently relocating to London, England and then Rome, Italy where she lived for 25 years. Claire raised her four beloved children Angela, Daniele, Gabriella, and Francesca Romana there in Rome.

Claire treasured her youth years spent between New York City and Onteora Club nestled in the Catskill Mountains in Tannersville, N.Y. She loved her Catskill Mountains so very deeply and created lifelong memories and friendships over the years. After living in Italy, she returned to the United States in 1992 with her children and settled in upstate New York, first in Albany, N.Y., and then back in her beloved Catskill Mountains. During this time, Claire worked as a secretary for the Ten Broek Mansion in Albany, N.Y., and then for the Greene County Council of the Arts in Catskill, N.Y.

In 2005, Claire moved to Colchester and then to Amston to be closer to family, and has resided with her daughter Angela Leshak and her family in Amston since 2014. While in Connecticut, Claire worked as membership coordinator and secretary at the Webb Deane Stevens Museum in Wethersfield and also as parish secretary for St Peter's Episcopal Church in Hebron. Claire's 20 years at St Peter's Episcopal Church allowed her to create deep friendships across the parish community, including with Father Ron Kolanowski. She treasured her bond with Father Ron, who was a great support for her particularly during her final months.

Claire was an avid gardener and passionate supporter of animal rescues throughout her lifetime. Claire treasured the companionship of many of pets over the years and in her



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Obituaries

last months looked forward to being reunited with her four beloved dogs (Clover, Tina, Annie, Suzette) and three cats (Zughi, Edwina, and Micky) who have all predeceased her.

Claire will be missed dearly by all who knew her, especially by her children and their spouses: Angela Leshak and her husband Stephen of Amston; Daniele Bracaglia and his wife Virginia Rubey of Selkirk, N.Y.; Gabriella Bracaglia of Yonkers, N.Y.; Francesca Romana Bracaglia and her partner Karina Cascante of Phoenicia, N.Y.; and by her five grandchildren: Derek Leshak of Boston, Mass.; Christina Leshak of Amston; Francesco, Enrico, and Giovanni Bracaglia, all of Selkirk, N.Y. She also leaves several extended family members, including three stepsons and three nieces.

In addition to her husband and parents, Claire was also predeceased by her sister, Melissa Wilson of Terre Haute, Ind.

The family also wishes to extend a particular thank you to the wonderful community of Portland Care & Rehabilitation Centre who cared for her during her last four weeks of life. At Portland, Claire was supported by many amazing medical professionals and staff who showed true compassion and loving care.

Services were held Wednesday, May 20, at St. Peter's Episcopal Church, 30 Church St., Hebron, preceded by calling hours that morning, also at St Peter's Episcopal Church. Following the services, there was a small reception in the church hall. Later in the summer, Claire will be buried in the Catskill Mountains in the Onteora Club Cemetery in Tannersville, N.Y., at a date yet to be determined.

In lieu of flowers, donations in Claire's memory may be made to the Tomten Farm & Sanctuary (www.tomtenfarmandsanctuary.org) or to the Rosemary Farm in South Kortright, N.Y. (www.rosemaryfarm.org)

Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester has been entrusted with care of arrangements. For online condolences, please visit www.auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

East Hampton

Patricia Parsons Fales

Patricia Parsons Fales, better known as Patsy, was born in Damariscotta, Maine, on July 25, 1932. She was the youngest of three children to Dr. Neil and Marion Parsons, who were known as the three Ps: Peggy, Polly and Patsy.



Patsy had many fond memories of growing up in Damariscotta. She would accompany her father on doctor visits to patients in their homes, including the surrounding islands of the area and enjoy the hustle and bustle of having a doctor's office in the house. The family lived in the house which is now Best Thai restaurant. At that time there was a barn behind the house where they had a pet pony named Tony and a monkey named Pinky.

Patsy attended the Castner Grammar School and graduated from Lincoln Academy in 1950. Patsy enjoyed sports which included serving as the captain for Lincoln Academy's women's basketball team. She played center and celebrated winning a championship game with the team in 1950.

Patsy enrolled in the University of Maine at Orono and earned a degree in home economics in 1954. While at UMO, Patsy met Robert Fales while he was bartending at a Phi Gamma Delta banquet. Little did she know this was the start of a long life together.

Patsy graduated one semester prior to Robert and started working at G. Fox & Company as a sales representative in Hartford. They stayed in touch with each other and when Robert started working for Southern New England Telephone company in 1955 he proposed to Patsy.

The two were married at St. Patrick's Church in Newcastle, Maine, on June 4, 1955. They settled down in East Hampton, in a beautiful 1850 Greek Revival farmhouse. The four sons that followed enjoyed growing up on a hilltop surrounded by stone walls, fields, streams and deep woods.

Patsy enjoyed being a homemaker, but eventually decided to go back to school and get her master's degree in teaching. She worked as a home economics teacher at Cromwell High School from 1978 to 1993. She expanded the home economics curriculum to offer other courses including 'Independent Living' to teach students the basics of living on your own after high school. She would bring visitors in to teach the students on how to live on a budget, start and manage a bank account, how to interview for a job and even how to invest in stocks. She enjoyed being a teacher and would recount numerous stories of teaching and helping students. Having summers off allowed Patsy to take

her four sons back to Damariscotta to a cottage her parents had given her on the river. This allowed Patsy to stay in touch with her parents and siblings as well as catch up with her Lincoln Academy buddies. Bob would come up for a few weeks and on weekends to take the family out on fishing trips and enjoy life on the Damariscotta River.

Upon retirement, Patsy and Bob returned to Maine and built a home adjacent to the cottage. They enjoyed themselves and took the opportunity to travel, continue with boating excursions, canoeing local lakes, take crafting classes and have an all-around good time. One thing that Patsy became adept at was investing in and following stocks. It was an event to watch her announce which stocks went up or down, but mostly up, while reading the previous day's stock prices in the newspaper.

Patsy went to live at the Lincoln Home in September of 2021. Patsy was well liked at the home by everyone. The residents and employees enjoyed listening to Patsy tell stories of early Damariscotta life and her teaching experiences. Patsy was known for wearing very striking and well-coordinated outfits. Patsy passed away peacefully at the Lincoln Home on Dec. 14, 2025.

Patsy is predeceased by her husband Bob and her sisters Peggy and Polly. She is survived by her four sons & their families, Dr. Robert E. Fales, his two daughters, Zoe and Libby of Lyme; James P. Fales and his wife Carmela of Nobleboro, Maine; Patrick A. Fales, his wife Mimi, and his four children Spencer, Grace, Gabrielle and Vivienne of East Hampton Neil E. Fales, his wife Renee and their daughters Heidi and Caroline of East Boothbay, Maine; her sister Rebecca "Becky" Parsons and brother Neil Lehan "Lee" Parsons.

Patsy will be fondly remembered by all that she touched.

Colchester

Joann Wallowitch

Joann Wallowitch of Groton, formerly of Waterford, passed away Sunday, May 17, at the Groton Regency where she had recently been residing. She was 87 years old.



Joann was born in New London on Jan. 30, 1939, a daughter of the late Walter and Mildred (Surovick) Joskiewich. After high school, she worked briefly as a legal secretary. She raised her family in Salem and was a communicant of St. Andrew Church in Colchester. Joann was also a volunteer at the Colchester Senior Center where she made many friendships and enjoyed participating in events there. Joann loved growing vegetables, which she shared generously with family and friends alike.

Known as Mom, Mama, Josie, Gramma, and Aunt Joann, she will be sadly missed but always remembered with love by all who knew her, especially her children Susan and her husband, Steven Peabody of Ledyard, Debra Wallowitch, and Linda Wallowitch of Hartford; four grandchildren, J'Naya, Dominic, Eva, Amaya; and extended family members and friends.

A visitation and memorial service will be held on Friday, May 22, beginning at 10:30 a.m. at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. A burial will follow at St. Mary's Cemetery in New London at 1 p.m.

For online condolences, or to share a story of Joann, please visit www.auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

East Hampton

Eugene Nichols II

Eugene "Gene" Nichols II, 90, of East Hampton, widower of Janet (Crawford) Nichols, passed away peacefully Wednesday, May 13, at Marlborough Health Care. Born Feb. 6, 1936 in Hartford, he was the son of the late Marshall and Veronica (Cook) Nichols.



Gene graduated from UConn (with his high school sweetheart, Janet) before proudly serving his country in the U.S. Army. He then became a technical writer at Pratt & Whitney and an executive at International Aero Engines until his retirement. Gene was a lifelong resident of East Hampton and a member of the Belltown Sportsmen's Club. He was an avid outdoorsman, car enthusiast, and a devoted family man.

Gene is survived by his sons, Scott Nichols of Lebanon, Eugene Grant Nichols III (Jennifer) of Marlborough; daughters, Kimberly McCarthy (Patrick) of Conway, Mass., Karen Nichols (James) of Middletown, Kathleen Bradley (William) of Marlborough, his sister, Virginia (Tom) Gorin of Storrs; his 11 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

He was predeceased by his son Caleb Nichols, who passed at one year old.

Friends called at Spencer Funeral Home on Wednesday, May 20, with a funeral service occurring that morning in the funeral home. Burial followed in the family plot in Lake View Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, contributions to Literacy Volunteers of Central CT (literacycentral.org) or Belltown Sportsmen's Club at belltownsportsmen.org (Markham Road, East Hampton, CT 06424) are suggested.

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



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, May 28, 2026 at a meeting to start at 7:00 p.m. in the Buck Foreman Room (2nd Floor), 265 Main Street, Portland, CT. Application #25-04: 311 Main Street. Request for a variance from Zoning Regulation Table 5.5 for minimum required lot area to reduce the area of the parcel by 1,301 ft to 18,662 ft. Application and property of Miller Street Properties LLC. Assessor's Map 29, Lot 255. Zone B-3. 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 12th day of May 2026. Kurt Peterson, Chairman

2TB 5/15, 5/22

LEGAL NOTICE of PUBLIC HEARING BOARD OF SELECTMEN Town of Portland, CT June 3, 2026 at 5:20 P.M.

The electors and those persons eligible to vote in town meetings of the Town of Portland, Connecticut, are hereby warned and notified that pursuant to Chapter XII Section 1203.4 and Chapter V Section 503 of the Town Charter, a Special Town Meeting will be held by the Board of Selectmen on Wednesday, June 3, 2026 at 5:20 P.M. in the Public Library, 20 Freestone Avenue, Portland, CT for the following: NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Selectmen approves of the Portland Board of Education to enter into a Lease Agreement with Saybrook Reading & Educational Specialists, LLC, a Connecticut limited liability company having a business address of 251 Main Street, Old Saybrook, Connecticut 06475, to lease 1700 square feet of space known as classroom 110 and 111 and offices located within classroom 110, located in the Portland High School, 95 High Street with the terms and conditions set forth in the Agreement. Dated this 20th day of May 2026 Attest: Michael A. Pelton, First Selectman

1TB 5/22

MARLBOROUGH CONSERVATION COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING

The Marlborough Conservation Commission will hold the following public hearing on Monday, June 1, 2026, at 7pm in the Town Hall, 26 No Main Street APPLICATION #04-26 - Town of Marlborough - Quinn Road Culvert Replacement Written testimony will be received at the public hearing and written testimony can be sent to the Building/Land Use Department at the Town Hall ahead of the public hearing. YVONNE BOLTON, CONSERVATION COMMISSION CHAIR

2TB 5/22, 5/29

HEALTHCARE SERVICES

Better Dental HEALTH A Practice For Optimal Dental Fitness
by George M. Mantikas, DMD

PREGNANCY GINGIVITIS
During pregnancy, hormonal changes (increased estrogen and progesterone) make a woman more susceptible to gingivitis, or gum disease. Gingivitis is inflammation of the gums, which can cause soreness and bleeding. According to the CDC, pregnancy gingivitis affects as many as 75 percent of pregnant women. Hormonal changes can lead to gum inflammation because of the body's decreased ability to fight plaque bacteria coupled with increased blood flow to the gums. While there's no evidence that shows mild gingivitis is harmful to the fetus or causes premature birth or miscarriages, ignored gingivitis does lead to periodontitis (advanced gum disease), which has been linked to preterm birth and low birth weight. It can also lead to tooth loss if not treated.

As part of their healthcare team, we encourage our patients to make the commitment to do what it takes to keep their teeth and gums in the best of shape. Questions about pregnancy and dental care? Problems with your oral health? Turn to our dental team for comprehensive care, from an assessment of your existing oral condition, to restorations, cosmetic dentistry, and suggestions for at home dental-care regimens. Whatever dental care you need, you'll find it here, where all dental problems are dealt with efficiently, effectively, and compassionately. Hours are by appointment.

PS. Dental X-rays during pregnancy are considered safe for the unborn child if the proper precautions are taken to shield the baby.

George M. Mantikas, DMD, PC
The Ridge • 142 East High Street • East Hampton, CT 06424
860-267-6666 • www.DrMantikas.com

The early stages of communication disorders are easier to spot when you know the signs.

IDENTIFY@SIGNS
Early detection can improve treatment and quality of life. For more information visit: IdentifyTheSigns.org.

LEGAL NOTICE of SPECIAL TOWN MEETING June 3, 2026 at 5:45 PM Public Library-Mary Flood Room, 20 Freestone Avenue, Portland, CT 06480

The electors and those persons eligible to vote in town meetings of the Town of Portland, Connecticut, are hereby warned and notified that pursuant to Chapter XII Section 1203.4 and Chapter V Section 503 of the Town Charter, a Special Town Meeting will be held by the Board of Selectmen on Wednesday, June 3, 2026 at 5:45 P.M. in the Public Library, 20 Freestone Avenue, Portland, CT for the following: NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Selectmen approves of the Portland Board of Education to enter into a Lease Agreement with Saybrook Reading & Educational Specialists, LLC, a Connecticut limited liability company having a business address of 251 Main Street, Old Saybrook, Connecticut 06475, to lease 1700 square feet of space known as classroom 110 and 111 and offices located within classroom 110, located in the Portland High School, 95 High Street with the terms and conditions set forth in the Agreement. A copy of the complete resolution to be voted on is available for public inspection in the Town Clerk's Office and on the Town's website at www.portlandct.org. Dated this 20th day of May 2026 Attest: Michael A. Pelton, First Selectman

Stuart L. Jablon, D.P.M.
"BOARD CERTIFIED" Podiatrist - Foot Specialist
Our Office Is Now A ConnectiCare, United Healthcare, Aetna, Harvard Pilgrim Healthcare, Blue Cross / Blue Shield, Cigna Participating Provider.

"MEDICARE ASSIGNMENT ACCEPTED"
Complete Medical & Surgical Treatment of the Foot

- Sports Medicine • Geriatric Foot Care • Diabetic Foot Care • Arthritic Feet
- Skin Conditions • Flat Feet • Heel Pain • Fractures/Dislocations • Sprains/Strains
- Bunions • Hammertoes • Infections • Fungus Nails • Plantar Warts

By Appointment Only: (860) 295-8791
9-B South Main Street, Marlborough, CT
www.stuartjablondpm.com

**LEGAL NOTICE
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
Town of Hebron
RFP 2026-14**

The Town of Hebron is accepting proposals for General Plumbing and Related Repairs. All proposals must be submitted in accordance with Town specifications and on forms supplied by the Town. Forms and specifications are available by contacting the Office of the Town Manager, 15 Gilead Street, Hebron, Connecticut, or at <https://hebronct.com/bids/>. Proposals will be received until and read publicly at 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, June 10, 2026. The Town of Hebron reserves the right to reject any or all submissions.

Donna Lanza
Interim Town Manager

1TB 5/22

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

Notice is hereby given that the East Hampton Planning and Zoning Commission will hold a Public Hearing at their meeting on Wednesday June 3, 2026 at 6:30 p.m. at the East Hampton Town Hall – 1 Community Drive, Room 107 and via ZOOM to consider: PZC-26-005: Lakewood Estates, LLC, Amendments to Sections 6.3 G, and K of the Zoning Regulations relating to acreage and open space requirements for a Housing Opportunity Development.

The file is available for viewing in the Land Use Office and Town Clerk's office 860 267-7450.
Ray Zatorski, Chairman

2TB 5/22, 5/29

**LEGAL NOTICE
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
Town of Hebron
RFP 2026-15**

The Town of Hebron is accepting proposals for General Electrical and Related Repairs. All proposals must be submitted in accordance with Town specifications and on forms supplied by the Town. Forms and specifications are available by contacting the Office of the Town Manager, 15 Gilead Street, Hebron, Connecticut, or at <https://hebronct.com/bids/>. Proposals will be received until and read publicly at 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, June 10, 2026. The Town of Hebron reserves the right to reject any or all submissions.

Donna Lanza
Interim Town Manager

1TB 5/22

**TOWN OF COLCHESTER
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
LEGAL NOTICE OF AGENT DECISION**

Notice is hereby given that on May 19, 2026, the Duly Authorized Agent for the Colchester Conservation Commission made the following decision:
W2026-3141 - 66 Colchester Commons; Anthony Tarnowski - Applicant/ Owner; Assessor's ID 06-02/01A-000/0-066. Proposed deck replacement within 75' Upland Review Area. - **APPROVED WITH STANDARD CONDITIONS**
Dated May 19, 2026
Conservation Commission
Falk von Plachecki, Chair

1TB 5/22

**TOWN OF COLCHESTER
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
LEGAL NOTICE OF AGENT DECISION**

Notice is hereby given that on May 19, 2026, the Duly Authorized Agent for the Colchester Conservation Commission made the following decision:
W2026-3139 - W2026-3140 - 48 Stone Ridge Rd; William Butcka - Applicant/ Owner; Assessor's ID 03-20/017-24A, Proposed addition to a home within 75' Upland Review Area.
APPROVED WITH STANDARD CONDITIONS
Dated April 21, 2026
Conservation Commission
Falk von Plachecki, Chair

1TB 5/22

**LEGAL NOTICE OF ACTIONS
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
HEBRON, CONNECTICUT**

The Hebron Planning and Zoning Commission took the following action at their Regular Meeting, which was held on Wednesday, May 13, 2026 at 7:00pm on the following:
Petition 2026-07: Petition of Kim Latshaw for Change of Use to a Retail Store, pursuant to Section 3.B.2.1.1 of the Hebron Zoning Regulations, 30 Main Street, MS District.
The video recording of the Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting can be seen using the following link:
<https://transcripts.gotomeeting.com/#/s/2ccce9903b805f7d347c655fa7d4f04ed42e7c3f42c52cf3e15c9040dc161b8>

1TB 5/22

**LEGAL NOTICE of SPECIAL TOWN MEETING
June 3, 2026 at 6:45 PM
Public Library-Mary Flood Room, 20 Freestone Avenue, Portland, CT 06480**

The electors and those persons eligible to vote in town meetings of the Town of Portland, Connecticut, are hereby warned and notified that pursuant to Chapter XII Section 1203.4 and Chapter V Section 503 of the Town Charter, a Special Town Meeting will be held by the Board of Selectmen on Wednesday, June 3, 2026 at 6:45 P.M. in the Public Library, 20 Freestone Avenue, Portland, CT for the following:
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the Board of Selectmen hereby approves a supplemental appropriation from the General Fund fund balance in the amount of \$234,250. The allocations of transfers for the General Fund are increases to 01-093-000-90012 Transfer Out-Cap Non Rec Town by \$234,250. The funds will be transferred to Fund 8 with an increase to estimated revenue of 08-141-000-00501 Transfer in-General Fund by \$234,250 and increases to expenditures lines in Fund 8 as follows:

Account Number	Department Code	Account Description	Explanation	Amount
08-141-000-89080	Police Department	Equipped cruiser replacement	Vehicle replacement	\$64,250
08-141-000-89040	Fire/Fire Marshal Departments	ATV replacement /forest suppression	ATV replacement	\$60,000
08-141-000-89050	Grounds Maintenance	Replace Infield Groomer	Equipment replacement	\$55,000
08-141-000-89090	Public Works / Office of the Director	Replace Director's vehicle	Vehicle replacement	\$55,000
Total:				\$234,250

A copy of the complete resolution to be voted on is available for public inspection in the Town Clerk's Office and on the Town's website at www.portlandct.org. Dated this 20th day of May 2026
Attest: Michael A. Pelton, First Selectman

1TB 5/22

YOUR PLACE IS HAPPY

CARL GUILD & ASSOCIATES
THE FUTURE OF REAL ESTATE

H

JIM HARRINGTON
860-966-9966
JIM@HARRS.COM

FEATURED:
31 NORTH MAPLE STREET, EAST HAMPTON

HARRINGTON REAL ESTATE

**LEGAL NOTICE of PUBLIC HEARING
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Town of Portland, CT
June 3, 2026 at 5:55 P.M.**

The electors and those persons eligible to vote in town meetings of the Town of Portland, Connecticut, are hereby warned and notified that pursuant to Chapter XII Section 1203.4 and Chapter V Section 503 of the Town Charter, a Special Town Meeting will be held by the Board of Selectmen on Wednesday, June 3, 2026 at 5:55 P.M. in the Public Library, 20 Freestone Avenue, Portland, CT for the following:
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the Board of Selectmen hereby approves a supplemental appropriation from the General Fund fund balance in the amount of \$234,250. The allocations of transfers for the General Fund are increases to 01-093-000-90012 Transfer Out-Cap Non Rec Town by \$234,250. The funds will be transferred to Fund 8 with an increase to estimated revenue of 08-141-000-00501 Transfer in-General Fund by \$234,250 and increases to expenditures lines in Fund 8 as follows:

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08-141-000-89040	Fire/Fire Marshal Departments	ATV replacement /forest suppression	ATV replacement	\$60,000
08-141-000-89050	Grounds Maintenance	Replace Infield Groomer	Equipment replacement	\$55,000
08-141-000-89090	Public Works / Office of the Director	Replace Director's vehicle	Vehicle replacement	\$55,000
Total:				\$234,250

Dated this 20th day of May 2026
Attest: Michael A. Pelton, First Selectman

1TB 5/22

DOUBLE UP See Answers, page 29

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13					14				15		
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61					62				63		
64					65				66		

CREATORS NEWS SERVICE By Neil Manauasa

ACROSS

- 1 Farm machine
- 6 Computer symbol
- 10 Four
- 13 Animated
- 14 Marlin and Coral's offspring
- 15 Tree trunk
- 16 Edible fungus
- 17 1968 Broadway musical
- 18 "Hawkeye"
- 19 No matter what
- 21 More arid
- 22 Rich dessert
- 23 Hot felonies
- 24 Set a price
- 27 Immediately!
- 28 ___ may look at a king
- 29 Clark's lady
- 31 Quilt style
- 35 Islamic deity
- 37 Tea quota?
- 38 Deep divers
- 40 Completed negotiations
- 43 Thailand's neighbor
- 44 Expensive
- 45 Not Rep. or Ind.
- 47 Map abbreviation

DOWN

- 1 Vols rival
- 2 A place to build
- 3 Turkey's currency
- 4 Might be special
- 5 Have confidence in
- 6 Displeasing the boss
- 7 ___ and desist
- 8 Leave out
- 9 Creed word
- 10 Place for loose papers
- 11 Standish rival
- 12 Chicago team
- 15 Tippler's place

ACROSS

- 20 Riding whip
- 21 Southern speech pattern
- 23 Hamburg interjection
- 24 ___ king
- 25 Empty house sign
- 26 2.2 pounds, roughly
- 28 Belonging to an unfeeling person
- 30 Beach pest
- 32 Amer. Airlines 2001 acquisition
- 33 Wander
- 34 Tie tight
- 36 Cads
- 39 Leaking air sound
- 41 24 hours
- 42 Diffuse
- 46 Conquer
- 48 Reach the top
- 49 Mind the alarm
- 50 Challenged
- 51 Chest material
- 52 Explain grammatically
- 54 Honshu port
- 55 Franklin's flyer
- 56 Hot times in Lille
- 57 Withered
- 59 Use a straw

**Solicitation Number: 36918
Florence S. Lord Senior Housing Renovations
Invitation to Bid (ITB)
Elderly Housing Management Inc
May 18, 2026 - June 16, 2026**

36918 Procurement State of CT - DAS

No. 36918
Title: Florence S. Lord Senior Housing Renovations
Type: Formal Invitation to Bid (ITB)
Who can see this bid?: Everyone
Start Date: May 18, 2026 at 11:00:00 AM EDT
End Date: June 16, 2026 at 2:00:00 PM EDT
Vendor Q&A Start Date: May 18, 2026 at 11:15:00 AM EDT
Vendor Q&A End Date: June 05, 2026 at 4:00:00 PM EDT
Estimated Total Value:
Who can respond to this bid?:
Description: All Vendors
Renovation of an existing 24-unit apartment building. Property will be partially occupied during construction. Interior renovations of units and common spaces including kitchens, bathrooms, finishes, mail/package areas, door hardware, lighting, HVAC systems, and electrical systems. Building exterior work includes additional insulation, rough carpentry, siding & trim, windows, joint sealants, and driveway milling and paving. Funding for the project is from the Department of Housing (DOH) and being administered through CHFA State Sponsored Housing Improvement Program (SSHIP). A mandatory pre-bid walkthrough will be held on Wednesday, May 27th at 2:00 pm. 2 Copies and 1 PDF copy of sealed bids delivered via mail, overnight courier, or messenger labeled: Bid for Florence S. Lord Senior Housing Renovations will be received by Elderly Housing Management Inc. (owner/agent), Attn: Sophia Rosa, 127 Washington Ave, Fifth Floor East, North Haven, CT 06473, up until 2:00 pm on June 16th, 2026.

Justification:
Delivery Terms: Free On Board Destination
Payment Terms: Vendor Specified
Contact Information: Elderly Housing Management Inc
Sophia Rosa
127 Washington Avenue 5th Floor EAST North Haven CT, 06473
United States
Tel: 860-335-9995
Fax:
srosa@ehmchm.org
If you have any questions, please contact:
Sophia Rosa
127 Washington Avenue 5th Floor EAST North Haven CT, 06473
United States
Tel: 860-335-9995
Fax:
srosa@ehmchm.org

Contact Details:
Selected Categories: Residential building construction services (72110000)
Multiple unit dwelling construction services (72111100)
Apartment remodeling service (72111106)

1TB 5/22

LEGALS

LEGAL NOTICE of PUBLIC HEARING BOARD OF SELECTMEN Town of Portland, CT June 3, 2026 at 5:50 P.M.

The electors and those persons eligible to vote in town meetings of the Town of Portland, Connecticut, are hereby warned and notified that pursuant to Chapter XII Section 1203.4 and Chapter V Section 503 of the Town Charter, a Special Town Meeting will be held by the Board of Selectmen on Wednesday, June 3, 2026 at 5:50 P.M. in the Public Library, 20 Freestone Avenue, Portland, CT for the following:
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Selectmen hereby approves a supplemental appropriation from General Fund fund balance in the amount of \$122,000. The allocations for the General Fund are increases to the snow removal budget line item #01-038-000-13002 Overtime \$86,000 and increase 01-038-000-65001 Road Materials \$24,000, and to the Grounds Department budget 01-036-000-13002 Overtime \$12,000.
Dated this 20th day of May 2026
Attest: Michael A. Pelton, First Selectman

LEGAL NOTICE of SPECIAL TOWN MEETING June 3, 2026 at 6:30 PM

Public Library-Mary Flood Room, 20 Freestone Avenue, Portland, CT 06480
The electors and those persons eligible to vote in town meetings of the Town of Portland, Connecticut, are hereby warned and notified that pursuant to Chapter XII Section 1203.4 and Chapter V Section 503 of the Town Charter, a Special Town Meeting will be held by the Board of Selectmen on Wednesday, June 3, 2026 at 6:30 P.M. in the Public Library, 20 Freestone Avenue, Portland, CT for the following:
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Selectmen hereby approves a supplemental appropriation from General Fund fund balance in the amount of \$122,000. The allocations for the General Fund are increases to the snow removal budget line item #01-038-000-13002 Overtime \$86,000 and increase 01-038-000-65001 Road Materials \$24,000, and to the Grounds Department budget 01-036-000-13002 Overtime \$12,000.
A copy of the complete resolution to be voted on is available for public inspection in the Town Clerk's Office and on the Town's website at www.portlandct.org. Dated this 20th day of May 2026
Attest: Michael A. Pelton, First Selectman

CLEANING

**CHRISTINE'S
CLEANING**
COMMERCIAL/RESIDENTIAL
Building Maintenance
Services. Economical Rates
& Prof. Skills. New Customer
Discount Available.
860-798-7961

MARLBOROUGH PLANNING COMMISSION NOTICE OF ACTION

The Marlborough Planning Commission at their meeting on Tuesday, April 28, 2026, took the following action:
MOTION CARRIED:
#P-02-26 Amendment to Subdivision Regulations:
1. Section 6.1 Dedication of Open Space changes from 20% to 10% for conventional subdivision
2. Section 5.2.8 Open Space changes from 20% to 10% for conventional subdivision
3. Delete Section 4.14.10 minimum buildable area
4. Delete Section 4.16.21 minimum buildable area
5. Amendment Section 5.21 minimum requirements
Set Public Hearing date, May 26, 2026
MARK PAUL, PLANNING COMMISSION CHAIR

LEGAL NOTICE of PUBLIC HEARING BOARD OF SELECTMEN Town of Portland, CT June 3, 2026 at 5:40 P.M.

The electors and those persons eligible to vote in town meetings of the Town of Portland, Connecticut, are hereby warned and notified that pursuant to Chapter XII Section 1203.4 and Chapter V Section 503 of the Town Charter, a Special Town Meeting will be held by the Board of Selectmen on Wednesday, June 3, 2026 at 5:40 P.M. in the Public Library, 20 Freestone Avenue, Portland, CT for the following:
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Selectmen hereby approves an increase in estimated revenue for State Grants in #08-141-000-00214 in the amount of \$39,638.34 for School Security Grant Program and a supplemental appropriation to #08-141-000-89010 – Board of Education-System Wide BOE-Security Upgrades (including doors) for \$39,638.34.
Dated this 20th day of May 2026
Attest: Michael A. Pelton, First Selectman

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, May 27, 2026 at 7:00 P.M., to be held virtually through the GoTo-Meeting Platform, on the following:
I. Petition 2026-05: Petition of the Hebron Lions Agricultural Society for the sale of beer and wine during the Hebron Harvest Fair from September 10 through September 13, 2026, pursuant to Section 5.O.3 of the Hebron Zoning Regulations, 347 Gilead Street, R-1 District.
II. Petition 2026-06: Petition of the Hebron Lions Agricultural Society for the sale of beer and wine at a secondary location on the fairgrounds during the Hebron Harvest Fair from September 10 through September 13, 2026, pursuant to Section 5.O.3 of the Hebron Zoning Regulations, 347 Gilead Street, R-1 District.
Planning and Zoning Commission
May 27, 2026, 7:00 – 10:00 PM (America/New_York)
Please join my meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone.
<https://meet.goto.com/274541669>
You can also dial in using your phone.
Access Code: 274-541-669
United States: +1 (646) 749-3122
Get the app now and be ready when your first meeting starts:
<https://meet.goto.com/install>
Planning and Zoning Commission
<https://meet.goto.com/install>
Dated at Hebron, Connecticut, this 14th day of May 2026.
Frank Zitkus, Chair

LEGAL NOTICE of SPECIAL TOWN MEETING June 3, 2026 at 6:15 PM

Public Library-Mary Flood Room, 20 Freestone Avenue, Portland, CT 06480
The electors and those persons eligible to vote in town meetings of the Town of Portland, Connecticut, are hereby warned and notified that pursuant to Chapter XII Section 1203.4 and Chapter V Section 503 of the Town Charter, a Special Town Meeting will be held by the Board of Selectmen on Wednesday, June 3, 2026 at 6:15 P.M. in the Public Library, 20 Freestone Avenue, Portland, CT for the following:
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Selectmen hereby approves an increase in estimated revenue for State Grants in #08-141-000-00214 in the amount of \$39,638.34 for School Security Grant Program and a supplemental appropriation to #08-141-000-89010 – Board of Education-System Wide BOE-Security Upgrades (including doors) for \$39,638.34.
A copy of the complete resolution to be voted on is available for public inspection in the Town Clerk's Office and on the Town's website at www.portlandct.org. Dated this 20th day of May 2026
Attest: Michael A. Pelton, First Selectman

LEGAL NOTICE of SPECIAL TOWN MEETING June 3, 2026 at 6:00 PM Public Library-Mary Flood Room, 20 Freestone Avenue, Portland, CT 06480

The electors and those persons eligible to vote in town meetings of the Town of Portland, Connecticut, are hereby warned and notified that pursuant to Chapter XII Section 1203.4 and Chapter V Section 503 of the Town Charter, a Special Town Meeting will be held by the Board of Selectmen on Wednesday, June 3, 2026 at 6:00 P.M. in the Public Library, 20 Freestone Avenue, Portland, CT for the following:
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Selectmen approves of the Portland Board of Education to enter into a Lease Agreement with NAICED, LLC, a Connecticut limited liability company having an address of 423 Center Street, Wallingford, Connecticut 06492, to lease 259 Main Street (Map 29, Lot 258) for the educational purpose of providing a facility for a Post-Secondary Transition Program, commencing August 1, 2026, for a 36-month term with the terms and conditions set forth in the Agreement.
A copy of the complete resolution to be voted on is available for public inspection in the Town Clerk's Office and on the Town's website at www.portlandct.org. Dated this 20th day of May 2026
Attest: Michael A. Pelton, First Selectman

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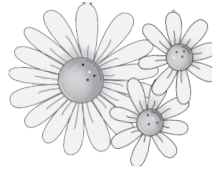
WANTED TARGET SHOOTING PERMISSION: on private 3-10 min acre. Pay \$100/day 3 days summer. Former USMC Officer, Mark 860-982-7164.

WANTED: Individual firearms, collections & estates including, military & related items. Federally licensed firearms dealer. Appraisal. Richard Pleines. 860-663-2214.

WANTED TO BUY: All antiques; toys, military, watches, advertising, jewelry, coins, clocks, signs, all musical instruments, guitars, saxophones, keyboards, trumpets, amplifiers, accordions, vintage electronics, hi-fi stereo, amplifiers, pro-audio, radios, ham equipment, tube type equipment, plus more. 1 item or entire estate. Call 860-707-9350.

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RE 5-22-26

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CT19-5-24

Vacancy-Assistant to the Community and Senior Center Director (PT)

The Town of Andover is now accepting applications for the part-time position of Assistant to the Community and Senior Center Director. Completed applications, along with resumes and cover letters must be sent to following address no later than May 26, 2026:
Town of Andover, Administrative Assistant 17 School Rd Andover, CT 06232 OR emailed to adminassistant@andoverct.org Full job description is available at andoverct.org

2TB 5/15, 5/22

Accounting Coordinator

Finance Department
Town of Portland, CT (EOE)
Wage Range: \$57,577 - \$70,811
Deadline: 6/12/2026 or until filled
Send resume and Town application: First Selectman's Office, P.O. Box 71, Portland, CT 06480-0071 [Email: mceppaglia@portlandct.org]
Full-time Non-Exempt, 35 hours weekly (7 hours M-W-Th, 10 hours Tuesday, 4 hours Friday); starting salary \$57,577; MEUI Clerical union; fringe benefits. Subject to pre-employment drug/alcohol testing and background check. All qualified applicants will be considered for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.
Qualifications: Associate's degree in accounting + 2 years progressively responsible bookkeeping or accounting record keeping experience involving the use of a computer (i.e. MS Word, Excel), or an equivalent combination of education and qualifying experience.

1TB 5/22



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RE5-8-26

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REB-15-24



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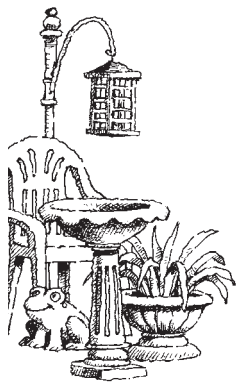
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Legal Notice
Town Of Hebron Connecticut
Water Pollution Control Authority
Public Hearing(Virtual)
June 9, 2026
6:00 PM

Notice is hereby given, pursuant to the provisions of Section 7-250/7-255 of the Connecticut General Statutes, that the Water Pollution Control Authority for the Town of Hebron shall hold a Public Hearing on June 9, 2026 at 6:00 PM. This hearing will be to adopt the budget for year 2026-2027 and to set the annual sewer use charge at \$698 per Equivalent Dwelling Unit (EDU). Dated at Hebron, Connecticut, this 14th day of May, 2026
Chris Hemberger
Chair, Town of Hebron W.P.C.A. 2TB 5/22, 5/29

MIDDLE HADDAM HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING THURSDAY, May 28, 2026 6:30 P.M. AT TOWN HALL LEGAL NOTICE

Public hearing will be held to consider the following: Application 624 for a Certificate of Appropriateness for David Giroux of 20 Keighley Pond Road, Middle Haddam, to replace eight windows with white vinyl double-hung windows with no grills. Replace front door with a Masonite/fiberglass door with textured glass. The foregoing application is available for public review at the East Hampton Town Hall. At this hearing interested persons may be heard and written communications will be received. 1TB 5/22

LEGAL NOTICE of PUBLIC HEARING BOARD OF SELECTMEN Town of Portland, CT June 3, 2026 at 5:30 P.M.

The electors and those persons eligible to vote in town meetings of the Town of Portland, Connecticut, are hereby warned and notified that pursuant to Chapter XII Section 1203.4 and Chapter V Section 503 of the Town Charter, a Special Town Meeting will be held by the Board of Selectmen on Wednesday, June 3, 2026 at 5:30 P.M. in the Public Library, 20 Freestone Avenue, Portland, CT for the following:
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Selectmen approves of the Portland Board of Education to enter into a Lease Agreement with NAICED, LLC, a Connecticut limited liability company having an address of 423 Center Street, Wallingford, Connecticut 06492, to lease 259 Main Street (Map 29, Lot 258) for the educational purpose of providing a facility for a Post-Secondary Transition Program, commencing August 1, 2026, for a 36-month term with the terms and conditions set forth in the Agreement.
Dated this 20th day of May 2026
Attest: Michael A. Pelton, First Selectman 1TB 5/22

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TAG-SALE, 80-OLDE-STAGE-RD: Glastonbury. May 21-24, Friday-Monday, RAIN/SHINE (8-2). Antiques/collectibles/furniture(3 rockers/ side table)/Quoizel-Abigail-Adams-Milk-Glass, 3-Way Pendant-Light/linens/samplers/hand tools/books/stereo/45 records/oil-lamps/jewelry/HH/kitchenware/small appliances/rugs/s/mirrors/sports/pets/electronics incl blu-ray player/car dvd/games/toys/beanie babies/clarinets/Classroom-Printer-Rubber-Stamp-Set and much more.

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Dinner with the President... On May 1, Fowler-Dix-Park VFW 5095 was given the honor of hosting a Department Dinner for VFW National President Lois Callahan. Pictured are CT National Council Member Stanley Borusiewicz, Department President Cheryl Costello-Pelkey, National President Lois Callahan, Auxiliary President Kelly Ezold, and Post Commander Ted Turner.



The Bass Bros... Despite the cold rain and overcast skies, anglers gathered at Sears Park Pavilion on Saturday, May 9th for the annual Lake Pocotopaug Bass Fishing Tournament. The catch-and-release tournament brought together outdoor enthusiasts of all ages. East Hampton Parks and Recreation thanks all participants, volunteers, and sponsors – including Zah's Bait & Tackle – for helping make this year's tournament another successful community event. Pictured at Sears Park pavilion are, from left, third-place winner Matthew Wojchowski, first-place winner Dennis Jenks, and second-place winner Joseph Kawasnick.



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Plaque Dedication
Ceremony

The Board of Directors of the Middle Haddam Public Library invites all to a Dedication Ceremony of Memorial Plaques on Sunday, June 7, from 2-4 p.m., at the library, 2 Knowles Rd.

The plaques are in honor of Leonard Nelson Blake and Dr. Gerald Alan Peterson & Dr. Cynthia Wyeth Peterson.

Light refreshments and beverages will be provided, and a string quartet to perform.

All are invited to come celebrate the library's new porch addition and celestial garden armillary.

Garden Club Plant Sale

The Belltown Garden Club is holding its annual Perennial Plant Sale in conjunction with the East Hampton Congregational Church's Open-Air Market, on Saturday, May 23.

There will be a variety of perennial plants – all dug from members' gardens, so they are happy to live in East Hampton soil.

The plant sale will officially be from 9 a.m.-noon, although club members will be there after noon cleaning up – and will also sell then as well.

For more information, text Hollye at 860-986-1240. Unsold plants are donated to East Hampton Public Library, which in turn will sell to help its fundraising efforts.

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Register At Glenbrookekidscamp.com

For more info contact Rose at **860-682-8265** or **roseviola66@gmail.com**

IN PERSON SIGN UP is also available at TANKWORKS, 360 East Center St., Manchester.

Please call ahead for sign up 860-646-3348

Glenbrooke is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization

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Goff House Donations Welcome

Donations to the 2026 Joseph N Goff House Gazebo Concert Series are still being accepted.

All concerts are held in the East Hampton Village Center Gazebo on Thursdays at 6:30 p.m., starting June 18 and running through Aug. 6 (except for Old Home Days week). Concerts will feature a different local talent each week.

Donations, which are tax-deductible, help pay for the bands and promotional materials.

Checks made out to Joseph N. Goff House Inc. can be mailed to P.O. Box 337, East Hampton, CT 06424. Any amount is appreciated, or donate by level:

Special Grants or Awards, Over \$250; Maestro, \$250; Soprano, \$150; Alto, \$100; Tenor, \$50; Bass, \$25.

For further information, call Melissa Pionzio at 860-993-5311.

Absentee Ballots for Budget Vote

Absentee ballots for the upcoming June 2 East Hampton budget referendum are available at the town clerk's office, located at Town Hall, 1 Community Drive.

Office hours are Monday, Wednesday and Thursday, 8 a.m.-4 p.m.; Tuesday, 8 a.m.-6:30 p.m.; and Friday, 8 a.m.-12:30 p.m. The office will be closed Monday May 25, for Memorial Day.

All registered voters and individual property owners with an assessment of not less than

\$1,000 on the 2025 Grand List are eligible to obtain an absentee ballot for this referendum. For more information, call 860-267-2519.

The budget referendum will also include a vote to appropriate funds from the Capital Reserve Fund for the Middle School Parking Lot Repaving project.

The 2026-27 referendum will be held at Town Hall Tuesday, June 2. Voting will be between 6 a.m. and 8 p.m.

East Hampton Library News & Notes

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

Hours: Monday - Wednesday, 10 a.m.- 8 p.m.; Thursday - Saturday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. **Holiday Closing:** Monday, May 25, due to Memorial Day.

Adult Programs: Herb Your Enthusiasm: A Cookbook Club Event: Tuesday, June 2, 6:30 p.m. Bring a dish where herbs are a key flavor. Sample and discuss recipes and take home an herb from the library's Mini Herb Planting Station. Also, welcome special guest Michele Valley from Wildcraft Herb Shoppe. Bring a prepared dish and 12 copies of the recipe to share. Food should arrive ready to eat; the library will provide plates and forks. Register or drop in.

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

Teen Programs: Exam Prep & Plan: Tuesdays, May 26-June 17. There will be snacks, study supplies, and surprise perks for exam

prep. Powered by the library's Teen Advisory Board.

Magic: The Gathering (Grades 7-12): Saturday, May 30, 1-3 p.m. Whether you already know how to play the card game or want to learn, come together and play with people of all skill levels.

Middle Grade D&D: Create a Character! For Grades 5-7: Monday, June 8, 6-7:30 p.m. Learn to create a character for *Dungeons & Dragons*. Beginners and returning players welcome. All supplies provided; incoming fifth-graders welcome.

Children's Programs: Lego at the Library: Grades K-6: Tuesday, June 2, 4:30-5:30 p.m. All Lego bricks provided.

Drop-In Sensory Play: Wednesday, June 3, 10:30 a.m.-noon. Drop in for a sensory play time where children can explore water play, themed sensory bins, and a variety of textures, materials, colors, and tools. Caregivers and children are invited to move at their own pace.

DIY Days: K-8: Saturday, June 6, 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.

Middle School Honor Roll

Honor Roll students for the third quarter of the 2025-26 school year at East Hampton Middle School are:

Grade Eight

High Honors: Anabela Amarel, Pranud Anthony, Wade Aresco, Daniel Arndt, Nicholas Bagley, Cassandra Bombaci, Charlotte Burgin, Colton Burgin, Ryley Cohen, Abigail Coleman, Alexa Colwell, Ella Conforto, Abigail Coyne, Natalie Dean, Kayleigh Doll, Mia DonAroma, Tyler Drzata, Kayla Engelhardt, Grace Fagan, Mason Ferguson, Evelyn Fielding, Brayden Formigilo, Clara Foulis, Lucas Gionfriddo, Cayden Guite, Sofia Haley, Jackson Hall, Lennox Hanna, Brooke Hawes, Madison Herman, Nolan Hilton, Callahan Hines, Mira Hogan, Zoe Holzer, Gabriel Hunt, Taylor Karabetsos, Adriana Karas, Michael Kauffman, Thomas Kellogg, Isabella Kiernan, Owen Killian, Keegan King, Chanuk Kulatunga, Zackary Lavender, Emilia Luparia, Olivia Luparia, Sara Maalouf, Isabella Mackie, Josslyn Marrero, Cameron Marzi, Natalie Maxwell, Cole McCarthy-Nowak, Charles Montalbano, William Muzzy, Grayden O'Hearn, Carter Pattison, Tiffany Pinzon, Joseph Ploszay, Bryson Rall, Mia Ricciardelli, Emma Roberge, Tyler Roman, Isabella Secondo, Luca Serra, Kayla Spitzmacher, Emily Stiles, Jacob Sylvester, Trevor Ushchak, Sophia Vargas Mendez, Devin Werme, Lukas Werme, Jackson Wilks, Harper Woodson, Zachary Zabroski.

Honors: Juliana Aresco, Whimsy Brand, Pierce Drobiak, Nicholas Dudek, Aubree Dunneils, Cody English, Alexander Farrell, Tobias Finn, Daniella Garcia, Elijah Kramer, Brayden Landry, Graysen Loan, Gabriella Munoz, Quinn Paiva, Sophie Roy, Noah Salamone-Martinez, Abigail Tinney, John Zarate.

Grade Seven

High Honors: Bridget Adams, Gianna Baio, Anthony Balamucki, Mitchell Bombaci, Jayden Caliskan, Michael Cerreta, Connor Chretien, MariAnna D'Amore, Hudson D'Elia, Allie Dipace, Emmie Dugan, Hunter Ellis, Audrey Embacher, Emma Emery, Anabia Fahd, Lucas Farias, Isabelle Fromme, Avery Gelineau, Olivia Gianinoto, Dylan Gionfriddo, Brayden Goodwin, Alex Gora, Owen Grendzinski, Cecilia Guest, Kennedy Hall, Autumn Hatcher, Gabriella Hill, Grace Holman, Gracie Johnson, Benjamin Kennedy, Thomas Kokus, Alice Kowalewski, Ava Kroeber, Gavin Ladue, Mat-

thew Lessard, Elaina Matte, Leah McCormick, Kaylani Melendez, Kaylee Melendez, Blake Milardo, Kayla Mitkiewicz, Liam Mutters, Riley O'Connor, Bryson Paddock, Ashley Phillips, Aaron Pierson, Aiden Pierson, Ella Ploszay, Blake Rau, Max Rawlinson, Bryanna Ray, Sonoma Rembish, Savannah Russo, Maiya Sadowski, Joseph Salafia, Mason Seaman, Ryker Shumbo-Jenks, Alexandria Smith, Josie Tiano, Lukas Vai, Brayden Valli, Alessia Vargas Mendez, Philip Vincuilla, Maria Vitiello, Scarlett Ware, Katherine White, Dyani Williams, Lionel Wilson, Evan Yacono, Veda Youngs.

Honors: Calan Bengtson, Walker Briere, Kadyel Cardona, Tyler Claude, Kendall Hill, Lillian Jewart, Collin Kloepfer, Eli Mitchard, Gabriella Morbidelli, Ainsley Mortimer, Aleksa Niosi, Kaiden Shakir, Kade Sheehan, Arthur Skinner, Wyatt Tomkus, Jeffrey Walitynski.

Grade Six

High Honors: Blake Aresco, Charlotte Arnold, Jarek Barillaro, Ivy Caselli, Colby Christensen, William Clark, Taelyn Colwell, Fiona Coyne, Islay Danaher, Violette DeSimone, Henry Distin, Michelle Drlik, Rylan Ellison, Avery Fagan, Sawyer Farrell, Whitney Fielding, James Finn, Colin Fitzgerald, Benjamin Foulis, Lucas Granatowski, Kayla Hawk, Aria Hinds, Natalie Kellogg, Brennan King, William Krotky, Connor LaBonia, Eli LaPlant, Charliz Lemire, Gabriella Martino, Aiden Mathieu, Quinn Mathieu, Charles McCarthy-Nowak, Oliver McCarthy-Nowak, Sawyer McCarthy-Nowak, Cash McGlynn, Ashlyn McWade, Colin Meier, Francis Mezzatesta, Lorenzo Milardo, Camden Montalbano, Dalton Neary, Bennett Niderno, Isabelle Nunes, Ivy O'Brien, Cooper O'Hearn, Jordan Ortuso, Megyn Perez, Owen Phillips, Brody Pinney, Marjorie Pratt, John Reis, Scarlett Remele, Claire Roberge, Jonah Robinson, Darren Royce, Jeremy Royce, Brooke Scanlon, Peyton Schoonerman, Lorenzo Secondo, Marco Serra, Bodhi Shumbo-Jenks, Violet Smith, Hans Smutz, Nora Venetianer, Melania Wiesner, Harper Wilcox, Ian Williams, Joel Zavattero, Nolan Zavattero.

Honors: Amelia Bennett, David Burgh, Noah Faucher, Mason Gorra, Quinn Gould, Hailey Guithen, Jillian Meacham, Benjamin Munoz, Evelyn Nilsen, Abriana Parente, Landon Santos, Ava Silva, Addison Trombino, Mekhi White.

0.5K Extreme Endurance Challenge

The Rotary Club of East Hampton will hold its first-ever 0.5K "Extreme Endurance Challenge" Sunday, June 7, at 11 a.m., at Sears Park, finishing at Lakeside Bar and Grill.

The event will feature a 0.31-mile trek that is almost entirely flat (4" curb elevation). All participants who successfully cross the finish line will receive a commemorative medal and 0.5K oval car decal.

Participants are encouraged to wear their most creative outfits, with prizes awarded for the best dressed.

At the finish line, all participants will receive a snack and ticket for a beverage provided by Lakeside Bar and Grill.

Tickets are \$30 for adults, \$15 for kids and \$5 for dogs (on a leash), and include a race T-shirt, a 0.5K sticker, a hot dog, a doughnut, and a beverage ticket for Lakeside. Sign up online through the Rotary's website (www.easthamptonrotary.org) or in person the day of event at Sears Park. (A \$5 "day of" fee will be assessed for those who don't pre-register.)

Proceeds directly benefit the East Hampton Rotary Club's local initiatives, including community service projects that support East Hampton and Marlborough.

Contact Tracey Gardiner at Cladall24@hotmail.com or 401-556 8172.

Senior Center Upcoming Trips

East Hampton Senior Center, 105 Main St., is offering the following coach trips with Friendship Tours. Advance registration is required. For more information or to register, stop by the center or contact the center at 860-267-4426 or seniorcenter@easthamptonct.gov.

Fairytales Lunch at Pickity Place, Mason, N.H.: Thursday, May 7. Visit this 1786 cottage for lunch followed by time to stroll the grounds and shop, explore the herb shop, gardens and greenhouse. Also, visit the Cathedral of the Pines in Rindge, N.H., for a guided tour. Explore the sanctuary, sacred spaces, monuments and burial grounds built as a memorial to those who have fallen in service to the nation. Cost is \$167.

On the Hunt, Moose & Gems, Bethel, Maine: May 27-29. Spend two nights at Sunday River Resort, and visit Maine Mineral and Gem Museum, Moose Safari, Conway Scenic Railway. Cost is \$769 double/triple occupancy.

Newport Flower Show "Pearl of Newport": Friday, June 19, departing the Stop & Shop

parking lot at 8:30 a.m. Rosecliff Mansion is the backdrop for the Newport Flower Show where participants can stroll the first floor of the mansion and the grounds filled with floral arrangements, shop the marketplace and have free time in downtown Newport. Cost is \$136.

Boston Tall Ships: Tuesday, July 14, departing from Stop & Shop at 9:30 a.m. Experience the fleet of international tall and military ships in Boston Port as part of Sail250; lunch at Jimmy Buffets' Margaritaville; browse Faneuil Hall then board the Charles I for a narrated cruise. Cost is \$183.

Twin Lobsters and a Show at the Student Prince, Springfield Mass.: Tuesday, Aug. 25, departing Stop & Shop at 9:45 a.m. Enjoy a lunch of twin lobsters or prime rib at this charming restaurant in the heart of downtown Springfield and a show with Freddie Marion performing hits by Wayne Newton, Kenny Rogers, Sammy Davis Jr. and more. After lunch, spend time at the MGM Springfield Casino. Cost is \$149.

Early Bird Tickets for Haddam Neck Fair

Early Bird tickets for the 2026 Haddam Neck Fair are now on sale.

Celebrating its 114th year, the Haddam Neck Fair will return Sept. 4-7. For a limited time, Early Bird tickets will be available at a discounted rate, giving attendees the opportunity to experience everything the fair has to offer while saving money and avoiding lines at the gate.

The four-day fair features classic fair foods,

agricultural exhibits, live entertainment, competitions, family-friendly activities, and more.

Early Bird tickets will be available until July 31, and can be purchased at bit.ly/HNFTickets26.

For more information about the Haddam Neck Fair, including event details and updates, visit www.haddamneckfair.com.

CDHR to Host Car Show

All are invited to the fourth annual Horsepower Car Show, hosted by the CT Draft Horse Rescue on Saturday, June 6 (rain date is June 7) at Powder Ridge Mountain Resort, 99 Powder Hill Rd., Middlefield.

There will be live music by Beth & the Boys, raffles, games, food/drink, and trophy awards. There will also be a special appearance by Sam and Pete, the CDHR ambassador Clydesdales.

Cars arrive from 9-11 a.m., gates open at 11 a.m., and awards will be given at 2 p.m. Car entry fee is \$20, and no pre-registration required. General admission is \$5 per person.

Senior Center News & Notes

East Hampton Senior Center, 105 Main St., announces the following. **Advance 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/easthampton-senior-center for more information and a list of regular weekly and monthly activities, including games, quilting, Bible study, tap dance, monthly men's and women's groups, and more.

Holiday Closing: The center will be closed Monday, May 25, for Memorial Day.

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.

Linefit: Every other Monday from June 1 through Aug. 18, at 2 p.m. Drop-ins welcome for \$5.

Trailblazers Walking Group: Monday, May 25, 9 a.m., on the Air Line Trail, 69 Smith St.

Café Conversations with the Coordinator: Tuesday, May 26, 12:15 p.m. Chat with center director Holly Marrero and share ideas/provide feedback on center programs.

Wednesday Film Fun: Wednesday, May 27, 1 p.m., featuring *Song Sung Blue with Hugh Jack-*

man and Kate Hudson. Registration required. Please note the new day for films.

Live Well with Diabetes Health Workshop: Thursdays, May 28 through July 2, from 1-3:30 p.m. This free six-week workshop is on how to better manage your diabetes. Learn what to eat, low and high blood pressure, what to do when feeling sick, dealing with stress, and more. Call 860-214-0308 to register.

The Script Society: Thursday, May 28, 2 p.m. Join actress and director Val Bozzi for this monthly interactive program where participants bring stories to life by reading and exploring a variety of scripts together.

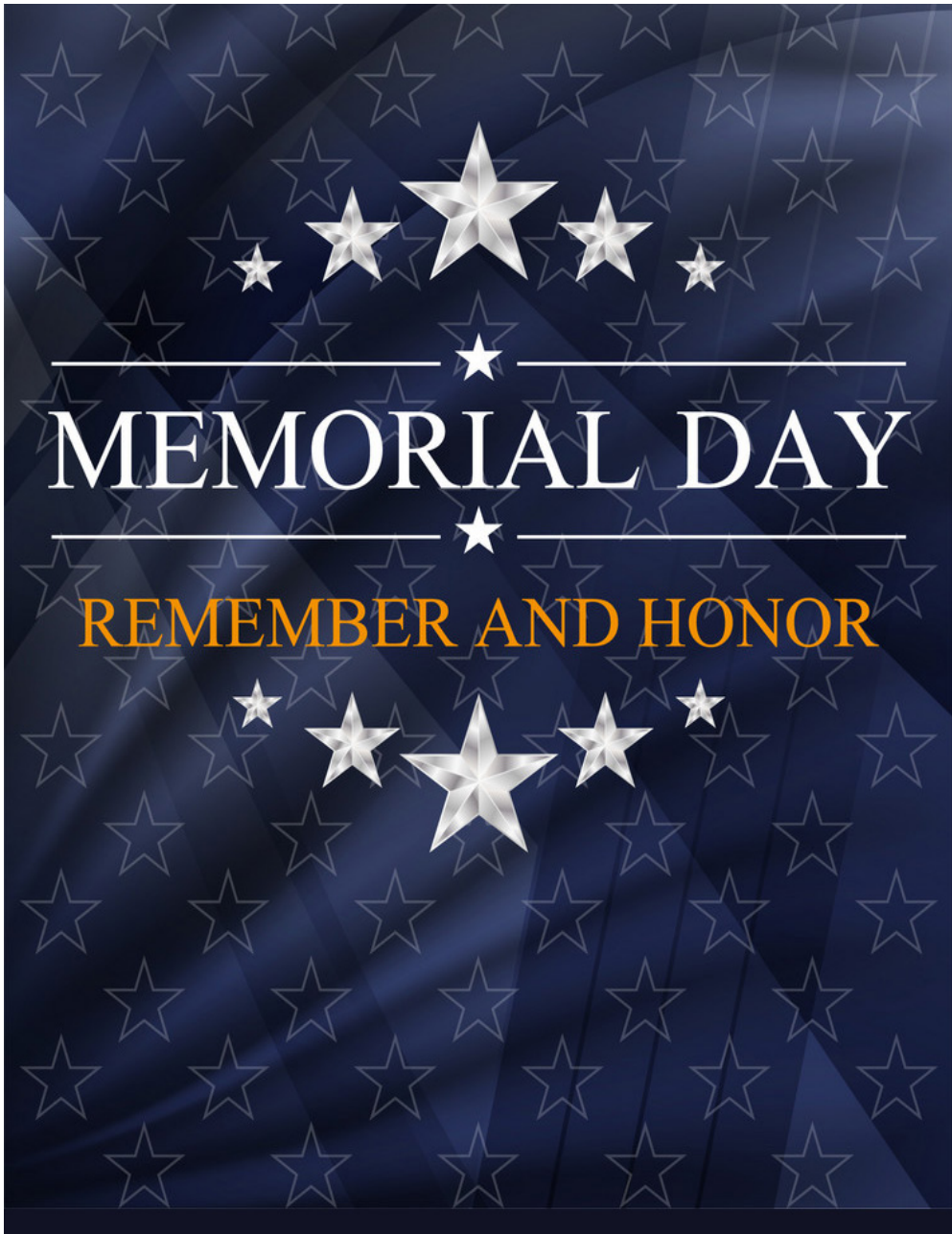
Bike Rides for Seniors: Friday, May 29, 10 a.m. Ride at the Manahan Trail, Millside Park, 2 Ferry St., Easthampton, Mass. Stop for lunch. Bring your bike, helmet and water bottle. Call 860-267-4426 for ride information and to register.

Save the Date! A planning meeting for the East Hampton Senior Center Old Home Day Float will be held on Friday, June 5, at 11 a.m. Bring your ideas. This year's theme is "Bells, Boats and Birth of Our Nation," for America 250. Float riders needed; the parade date is Saturday, July 11.

Opportunities: Do you or a loved one need assistance with grocery shopping? The East Hampton Senior Center has volunteers ready to help. Each week staff will consult with you on a shopping list and a volunteer will do the shopping and deliver it to your home. Call the center to sign up.



New Flag Pole... A new flag pole was recently installed overlooking Lake Pocotopaug at School House Bay in honor of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. The flag pole was a donation from the Katie Morris family to the people of East Hampton. A formal dedication is being planned as part of East Hampton's 250 celebration.



Help Keep Lake Pocotopaug Healthy

Homeowners who live both on Lake Pocotopaug and in the watershed can take advantage of the town's LakeSmart Program to help keep the lake clean.

The LakeSmart program offers advice on things homeowners can do to their properties – such as limiting use of fertilizers (especially bad ones with high phosphorus or nitrogen contents). Homeowners can learn about things to do to prevent water runoff, such as adding plantings on downhill slopes, creating permeable pathways, and the proper use of gutters and downspouts on houses.

The Friends of the Lake Association also offers a \$100 reimbursement (with receipts) to any homeowner in the Lake Pocotopaug watershed area who has consulted with the LakeSmart Program and uses their specific recommendations to make improvements to their property.

For more information or to set up a no-cost appointment with members of the Conservation Lake Commission, call John Purple at 860-416-2992 or Shawn Mullen at 860-267-7300.

YPPCA Taking Registrations for Summer Theater Camp

The Young People's Center for Creative Arts (YPPCA) is now accepting registrations for its 2026 Summer Theater Camp for students entering grades 6–12. The four-week program will run Monday through Friday, from 8:30 a.m. to 2:45 p.m., June 29 through July 26, and will be held at East Hampton High School.

Fee is \$775 per child; additional children in a family are \$725. Scholarships are available for

families with demonstrated financial need.

In Summer Theater Camp, mornings are devoted to skill-building workshops, and afternoons are dedicated to rehearsals for the camp's mainstage production – which this year will be Disney's hit musical *Frozen*.

For more information or to register, visit www.yppca.org or email info@ypcca.org.

Epoch Arts Accepting Tag Sale Donations

Epoch Arts is accepting donations for its annual September Two-Weekend Tag Sale.

A small group of volunteers will sort, clean and price the donations. Items not accepted: recliners, couches, headboards, mattresses, bed-frames, high chairs, cribs, car seats, computers, printers, keyboards, TVs, VCRs, exercise machines, textbooks, encyclopedias, old-style phones, large toys, doors, ironing boards, strollers, single chairs, paint and cleaners, file cabinets, office chairs, large dog beds, lighting that can't be plugged in, medicine, animal diapers

and fish tank pumps.

Drop-off times are 8 a.m.-2 p.m. on the following dates: May 23, June 13 and 27, July 11 and 25, Aug. 1 and 8. Drop-off is located at the lower end of the building in the garage area by Helping Hands, 27 Skinner St. Please do not drop off your donations at the main entrance to the building or on any other drop off days.

Tag Sale 2026 is Sept. 11 and 18, noon-5 p.m., and Sept. 12, 13, 19 and 20 from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. For more information, visit www.epocharts.org.

Belltown Spring Sprint

The Belltown Spring Sprint 2M Run & Walk is scheduled for Tuesday, June 2, at East Hampton High School on North Maple Street.

Onsite registration and check-in open at 5:30 p.m. followed shortly by the Kids Race on the high school track at 5:45 p.m. The main two-mile walk and run kicks off at 6:15 p.m., taking participants through the flat neighborhoods surrounding the school.

This annual event helps raise funds for the East Hampton High School Project Graduation to provide a safe, substance-free celebration for graduating seniors.

To sign up or for more information, visit runsignup.com/Race/CT/EastHampton/EastHampton5K. The first 100 people to register for the two-mile event will receive a free pair of custom socks.

EHHS Class of '67 Reunion

Members of the East Hampton High School Class of 1967, take note! The '67 Bellringers will get together Saturday, Sept. 12, from 2-5 p.m., at the Dublin. As usual, order off the menu and pay as you go. Call or text 860-682-2067 to reserve your spot.

Anyone for Tennis?

The East Hampton Recreation tennis program for adults is held every Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9-11 a.m. at the Sears Park courts. Players from all *Rivereast* towns are welcome.

This mixed-doubles program is free, requires no partners and is open to all levels of adult play, except beginner. Pre-registration is not required; just show up.

For more information, call or text Natalie Hurt at 860-227-8538.

Resident Studies Abroad

Caiden Hettrick-Rivera of East Hampton, a senior majoring in finance, studied abroad during the spring 2026 semester at Eastern Connecticut State University.

President's List

East Hampton residents Mohmand Hussaini, Jessica Grant and Jamie Naughton made the spring 2026 President's List at Southern New Hampshire University in Manchester, N.H.

Chicken Cordon Bleu Dinner

The Missions Committee of the Second Congregational Church of Middle Haddam will sell dinners-to-go on Saturday, May 30, from 4-5 p.m., at the church, 52 Middle Haddam Rd.

The meal will feature chicken cordon bleu with a gravy, baked potato, vegetable, roll, and chocolate cherry cake. Cost is \$14 per dinner. Reserve by calling or texting Geri at 860-682-2067 by May 27.

Helping Hands Open Twice Monthly

Helping Hands is open from 9-11 a.m. on the first and third Saturday of each month. Donations will be collected on those Saturdays, as well as every Thursday from 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Helping Hands is located at 27 Skinner St. For more information, call Beth Cunningham at 860-365-1054.

East Catholic Honor Roll

East Hampton residents Marie Doran and Brent Cattanach made the East Catholic High School honor roll for the third quarter of the 2025-26 school year.

Doran, a 10th-grader, and Cattanach, an 11th-grader, each earned First Honors.

CCEH Spring Market

The annual Spring Market will be Saturday, May 23, from 9 a.m.-2 p.m., on the grounds of the Congregational Church of East Hampton at 59 Main St.

The market will include a plant sale, vendors, crafters, food and the Belltown Garden Club will also be selling perennials. Cash, check, credit or debit cards will be accepted by CCEH for payment.

For more information or to reserve a vendor spot, contact Lisa at 860-918-1170.

The Great Restaurant Raffle

The Friends of the East Hampton Public Library group is holding The Great Restaurant Raffle through May 31. A \$20 ticket enters you to win one of three local restaurant gift card bundles. Purchase three or more tickets to be entered into the golden ticket prize.

Tickets can be purchased by cash or check in person at the library (105 Main St.), or via the link on the library's website easthamptonpubliclibrary.org.

All funds raised benefit the East Hampton Public Library.

Hebron • Hebron • Hebron • Hebron • Hebron • Hebron • Hebron • Hebron • Hebron • Hebron • Hebron • Hebron • Hebron • Hebron • Hebron • Hebron • Hebron • Hebron

Paige Houston Memorial Scholarship Fundraiser

The Paige Houston Memorial Scholarship fundraiser will be held Friday, June 5, at The Greenleaf Café, 47 Main St.

A \$20 ticket donation is appreciated. A pasta dinner will be provided along with entertainment by Blue Mountain Haze. Raffle tickets will also be available for purchase along with a 50/50 raffle.

Paige Kendra Houston, 17, was killed in a car accident in the early morning of Aug. 6, 2013 – just weeks before what was to be her senior year

at RHAM High School. Each year since 2014, two RHAM graduates have each been awarded a \$1,000 scholarship in honor of Paige. Money raised at the fundraising dinner will go towards this cause.

If you have any questions or would like to contribute in any way, please free to contact Michele Stephens-Houston at KMPCS@comcast.net or 860-729-3305. Donations may also be dropped off at the Greenleaf Café.

Parks and Rec News & Notes

Hebron Parks and Recreation is offering the following. For full program descriptions – including costs – and to register, please visit hebronct.recdesk.com/community or call 860-530-1281.

Summer Camp Registration is now open. For more information, contact Parks and Rec.

Peaceful Poses Chair Yoga: Wednesdays, June 3-24, 10-11 a.m., at Pathways to Peace Yoga, 269 Church St. Chair yoga is a gentle practice allowing participants to enjoy yoga while seated or using a chair for support. It is suitable for beginners, seniors, and those recovering from surgery.

Cheer and Dance Camp: June 29-July 2, 9-11:30 a.m., at RHAM High School, for grades 1-4. Campers will develop dance and cheer skills such as jumps, stunts, and formations

while enjoying games and teamwork.

Football Camp: June 22-26, 8-11:30 a.m., at RHAM High School, for ages 7-14. Join RHAM football's head coach and the RHAM football players for a week of offensive and defensive skill development.

Food Explorers Summer Kickoff Camp: June 17-19, 9 a.m.-noon, at Hebron Elementary School. You'll be making two recipes from scratch each day such as Pizza Stuffed Naan's, Chocolate Monkey Bread and Homemade Pasta. Recipes are nut-free but may contain dairy, eggs and gluten. **Fairy Garden Camp:** July 13-16 at Hebron Fire Station, Company 2. In this whimsical camp, kids will design and build their own fairy gardens, complete with creative decorations, and magical touches. Session 1 is 8:30-11 a.m., and Session 2 is 11:30 a.m.-2 p.m.



Christ Lutheran Early Childhood Center recently hosted a Mother's Day Brunch. The event included an activity where children and their families painted flower pots and planted seeds inside.

CLECC Hosts Mother's Day Brunch

Christ Lutheran Early Childhood Center recently hosted a Mother's Day Brunch to honor the important women in students' lives. The event welcomed mothers, grandmothers, and special caregivers.

Families gathered to enjoy a warm brunch together. A highlight of the event was a hands-on activity where each child and their family had the opportunity to paint a flower pot and plant

seeds inside. "We wanted to create an experience that was both memorable and meaningful," said CLECC Director Jennifer Johnson. "It was wonderful to see the children so excited to create something special and to spend quality time with their loved ones."

For more information about Christ Lutheran Early Childhood Center, call 860-228-5134.



Tea, Togetherness, and Thankful Hearts... Gilead Congregational Church recently held its annual "Favorite Ladies" tea. It was an afternoon filled with laughter, connection and celebration, the church said.



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Prime HealthCare welcomes Gaby Ukleja, APRN

Gaby is a Nurse Practitioner who has recently joined Greater Hartford Internal Medicine in Glastonbury and West Hartford, CT

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860-659-0581

www.primehc.com

Colchester Budget Sent to Referendum

By Toriana Williams

Colchester residents packed Town Hall last Wednesday, May 13, and, after lengthy and often-heated debate, voted to send the proposed town and education budgets to referendum.

On Wednesday, May 20, voters were asked to approve a proposed 2026-27 town operations budget of \$19,521,660 – an increase of \$1.43 million, or 7.93%, over the current year. Voters were also asked to approve a proposed Board of Education budget of \$50,868,807 – up \$3.57 million, or 7.55%, from the current year.

As polls closed after press time, look for a story on the outcome of the vote in next week's *Rivereast*.

The updated mill rate presented at the meeting was 32.01, an increase compared to the current year's 29.92. However, the proposed mill rate decreased slightly from the 32.28 figure that had been sent to town meeting, after officials said the town had received an additional \$600,000 in state aid earlier this month.

No reductions to either budget proposal were made at the May 13 meeting. A motion from resident Jason LaChapelle to reduce education spending by \$435,656 failed after lengthy debate.

All told, the May 13 meeting consisted of two hours of heated comments, procedural disputes and repeated questions about school leadership and the financial fallout from the separation agreement with now-former schools superintendent Dan Sullivan.

"This is your meeting," First Selectman Bernie Dennler, a Democrat, told the standing-room-only crowd as he called the annual budget meeting to order.

After the proposed town operations budget moved forward with relatively little discussion and overwhelming support, attention shifted to the education spending package – and with it, to the controversy surrounding Sullivan's resignation.

LaChapelle formally moved to reduce the school budget by \$435,656. He argued the number represented what he said was the approximate cost of the former superintendent's separation package over the next 17 months.

He emphasized that his motion would not send school funding below the current year's

budget of \$47.73 million. "It reduces only the additional increase being requested this year," he stated.

Indeed, had LaChapelle's motion been successful, it would have left the proposed school spending plan at \$50.43 million, a 6.63% increase from the current year.

LaChapelle insisted his proposal was not an attack on public education.

"I have three children in the school district myself. I have no interest in gutting education, nor is that what this motion does," he said. "My only intent is to try and help make sure our tax dollars are spent in a way that prioritizes our children's education..."

As he continued, his remarks drew both applause and visible frustration from different corners of the room. "The constant gaslighting is exhausting," LaChapelle said. "Every concern about spending is immediately framed as an attack on education."

His comments opened the floodgates.

For the next two hours, roughly, residents questioned school officials, town leaders and each other over why Sullivan was allowed to resign while continuing to receive salary and benefits through October 2027.

One resident, Brian Smith, offered perspective from his own corporate separation experience. "Most towns, when they get rid of the superintendent, pay out the last year – whatever it is just to end their pain," said Smith. "That's what I think we've done here."

Others were far less sympathetic. Many residents repeatedly questioned why Sullivan was allowed to resign.

Resident Alden Thayer was more direct. "The buck has to stop somewhere," he said. "That guy's making over 200,000 bucks. That's a good place to start."

Questions repeatedly returned to whether Sullivan could have been terminated for cause rather than given a separation agreement.

Board of Education Chair Stefanie Tracey-Calash, a Democrat, confirmed Sullivan had been under a three-year contract. When asked whether he could have been terminated for cause, she responded, "He was not terminated."

At several points, residents pressed board

let LaRose, Zachary Martino, Isabel Mattison, Mairead McGloin, Jasmine Morin, Evan Pazul, Autumn Rettig, Kendall Scholl, Sophia Sherry, Tyler Siena, Otto Walter, Adam Wilinski, Grace Wissler.

Honors: Lyra Ackroyd, Lukas Anastasiou, Brynn Angell, Jenalise Aquino, Kaydence Bedner, Elizabeth Belding, Danika Bennett, Samantha Bertash, Grace Bisi, Emily Borah, Sarah Candler, Mason Catalina, Felicity Chambers, Camden Christoff, Landon Duhamel, Jayson Eisenberg, Lochlan Fabry, Antonio-James Ferreira, Eve Gould, Addison Grosso, Liam Hagan, Courtney Hahn, Aubrey Henry, Nicholas Hiegl, Joshua Hunt, Adeline Jordan, Cameron Kaiser, Jace Kaur, Grayson Kerrigan, Juliet Koonanekil, Sloan LaParre, Haoxi Liu, Ava Lizondro-Pane, Ethan Lukra Matos, Joseph Marotta, Elmira Mulaibisevic, Socrates Pena Valenzuela, Isaac Pensa, Joziyah Perez, London Peterson, Rylan Ramos, Kailynn Rancourt, Rory Richardson, Logan Roberts, Ethan Schoen-Rene, Bryson Simone, Kayden Summerlin, Abigail Van Zilen, Sophie Wilson.

Grade Eight

High Honors: Hayden Barbabosa, Fabiola Berard, Gabriella Bishop, Terry Boaz, Paul Brodeur, Nina Caplet, Olivia Carrington, Chloe Civardi, Tristan Cote, Bailey Cowell, Breana Cowell, Cali Cruz, Carter Dautre, Lily Epler, Caitlyn Griffin, Benjamin Healy, Lily Koji, Hunter Kovach, Lilah Martz, Grace McAlpine, Ryder Michaud, Camille Mickens, Jenna Schoen-Rene, Payton Shelden, Lunaya Urban, Emma Verruso.

Honors: Brady Bigelow, Jacob Bradow, Jacqueline Busby, Molly Buscetto, Sophia Dean, Lucas Dubreuil, Jacob Durfee, Evan Faber, Trevor Garvie, Dylan Gerkey, Taylor Hardy, Alexander Healy, Ruby Jeffries, Skylar Jones, Stella Kauffman, Carlton Kristoff, Kaylee Krol, Ryan Lombardo, Mia Lopez, Reagan Manganello, Axel Monaco, Peyton Moynihan, Hannah Nitkowski, Stella O'Kane, Lauryn Pac, Molly Parsons, Harper Perry, Josslyn Post, Genesis Reyes, Braeden Richards, Lyra Riley, Amelia Roberts, Maya Rodriguez, MacKenzie Schulze, Khegan Serr, Michaela Smith, Kaya Struzik, Ethan Summerlin, Logan Szewczyk, Gino Uccello, Muhammad Usman, Jake Ward, Kadence Weisensee, Jack Wissler.

members for more details, only to be told legal restrictions prevented fuller answers. So, Dennler stepped in to explain what he could.

"You should recognize that there is language in there that restrains what these Board of Education members can say," he explained. "Whether you agree with what they agreed to or not, at this point, that agreement ... does bind these people from being able to respond to some of these questions."

As the debate dragged on, one motion was made to end discussion and move directly to a vote. Even that became a lengthy procedural ordeal, complete with disputed counting methods, paper ballot collection and growing frustration from attendees.

"This is disorganized. It's not working," one resident shouted during the vote-counting confusion.

When the votes were finally counted, the motion to close debate failed, which kept discussion open. The meeting then shifted into broader concerns over the district's troubled health insurance reserve fund and currently pending forensic audit.

Dennler offered his own explanation, and he said he did not believe Board of Education members were initially aware of the depth of the reserve issue.

"I don't believe that the Board of Education knew or understood what was going on," he told residents.

Dennler also said town officials had raised concerns about the district's calculations nearly a year ago.

"We know now that was not true," he said, referring to previous assurances by the former superintendent that the reserve problem was caused simply by high claims. "But I do not blame these people."

Board of Finance member John Thomas, a Republican, openly disagreed with claims that the forensic audit would not affect the budget's bottom line.

"How can we possibly ask our town to vote on something when we don't even know what happened in that forensic audit?" Thomas asked.

Other residents urged the crowd not to punish students for administrative failures. One resident, Nina Manella, said she attended for one reason. "I'm here purely because I don't want to see education get cut in Colchester," she said.

Michelle Millington, a Democrat on the Board of Education, appealed for unity after increasingly sharp exchanges. "We are all in the same boat," Millington said. "Arguing and finger-pointing ... it's not going to help this problem."

Eventually, after nearly every major concern had been aired – and after many in attendance appeared physically and emotionally drained by the process – the motion to reduce the proposed Board of Education budget failed.

A final motion to send the full budget package to referendum passed, and, as the meeting finally wound down after an undeniably long and weary night, one resident summed up what seemed to be the mood in the room:

"Democracy is messy."

Colchester Memorial Day Parade Coming

On Sunday, May 24, Colchester will hold its annual Memorial Day Parade. The theme of this year's parade will be "Colchester Honors 250 Years of Heroes." All local groups are encouraged to participate. Parade applications are available online at www.colchesterct.gov; select 'First Selectman's Office' under 'Town Services.' These are required of all marching units.

Each contingent willing to march or bring a float must obtain an application online or contact the first selectman's office by email aedward@colchesterct.gov and return it to the first selectman's office at Town Hall. Marching units and floats should arrive at the William

J. Johnston Middle School by 11:30 a.m. and the parade will start promptly at 12:30 p.m. The parade route is about ¾ miles long and is primarily downhill.

The Colchester Parade Committee will again award cash prizes for the best volunteer marching unit, best float meeting this year's parade theme, and most creative float.

Veterans Invited: If you wish to march with the veterans' contingent you can choose to go to the old senior center by 11 a.m. or report directly to WJMS at 11:30 a.m. For those veterans who can't march but wish to ride on the veterans float, please report to the old Senior Center by 11 a.m.

Community Invited to Concert

The community is invited to attend a special evening of live music on Saturday, May 23, at 6:30 p.m. at Bacon Academy, featuring performances by the Glenn Hansen Orchestra and the Colchester Choir and Orchestra.

This concert will bring together musicians and vocalists for an evening celebrating music, community, and the arts. Residents of all ages are encouraged to attend.

Land Trust Upcoming Events

The Colchester Land Trust (CLT) is hosting the following upcoming events. All are invited. Visit ColchesterLandTrust.org for all details on upcoming 2026 events so far.

Trail Crew Volunteers Needed: The third Sunday of each month (weather permitting). Volunteers meet up at one of CLT's properties each month to fight invasives, maintain meadows, and other needed stewardship tasks. This event is led by board member and stewardship chair Kevin Byrne, and he can be reached at: kevbyrnect@gmail.com. Trail crew work parties are held the third Sunday of every month usually from 1 p.m. until no later than 3 p.m. (Volunteers can stay for all or part of the hours.) Details of each month's plan will be emailed to you. Sign up at colchesterlandtrust.org.

Connecticut Trails Day! Forest Bathing at Salmon River State Forest: Sunday, June 7, 10 a.m.-noon. Join Lisa Hageman and Liza Sivek for a moderately slow-paced, three-mile hike with the practice of Forest Bathing. For this meditative, quiet hike, meet at the Air Line Trail South/"Hairpin Turn" parking lot at 280 Bull Hill Rd., Colchester (see directions on the site). From there, walk to the Salmon River Forest trail nearby. There is no fee for this hike; it is free to all for Connecticut Trails Day. Rain postpones to a date to be announced. This hike is not suggested for smaller children, and it is not stroller-friendly. Sign up at colchesterlandtrust.org.

Fairy House Builders Wanted! The second annual Fairy House Trail is coming to Colchester – but CLT needs help to make the magic

happen. Want to build a fairy house for the trail? All ages and skill levels welcome! Groups, individuals, and businesses welcome. There will be a Popular Vote for favorite houses. Had a house in last year's trail? Bring it again! Email/call/text lizasivek@gmail.com or 203-278-5492 with questions. Adding your fairy house to the trail is free; however, there are a few rules to keep the fairies, nature, and wildlife safe. Please read the guidelines online. Sign up at colchesterlandtrust.org

Blue Moon Owl Prowl: Sunday, May 31, 7:30 p.m. Join host Liza Sivek for an Owl Prowl night hike under the rare Blue Moon at Bulkeley Hill Preserve. Soft drinks and snacks will be provided. After a talk, take a moonlit hike through the BHP trails, using recorded barred owl calls to attract local resident owls. This is a slow hike, on a wooded trail with rocks, roots, etc. Red light flashlights will be used by the guides. Approximate length of hike is about a leisurely mile, with several stops to call owls. More details online. Sign up at colchesterlandtrust.org.

CLT at Farmers Market: The CLT Booth will be at the Colchester Farmers Market on the Green on Sundays, July 26, Aug. 23 and Sept. 27. All are invited to stop by and learn more about the land trust.

WJMS Honor Roll

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

Grade Six

High Honors: Adrianna Anastasiou, Emma Barthel, Delaney Berta, Elisabeth Boutote, Camilla Bravo, Harper Brenek, Calleigh Carroll, Camilla Carroll, McKenzie Clarkin, Maggie Cleary, Sofia Contreras, Owen Cote, Kennedy Cove, Cole Deacon, Aria Fecteau, Jojo Feinberg, Patrick Feldhouse, Amelia Fluck, James Ford, Caroline Frasier, Hugo Gostkiewicz, Isabel Hawes, Harper Johnson, Caysen Jones, Jameson Kelleher, Brendan King, Zoey Koji, Emily Krepicio, Lucas LaBarre, Brent Lachapelle, A'Mya Laureano, Edward Lengel, Danny Liu, Aubrey Margelot, Olivia McClain, Brody Michaud, Skyler Michaud, Julian Mula, Amelia Mundell, Mackenzie Nadeau, Daniel Page, William Pagel, Bella Panus, Kaitlyn Peck, Luke Reid, Liliana Rioux, Mason Ryan, Elva Seals, Logan Sevigny, Hayden Sposito, Evelyn Suski, Stanley Szczur, Jacob Talarczyk, Nicolette Tichy, Kaydence Trudeau, Lucy Verruso, Joseph Whitley.

Honors: Brynne Alford, Giuliana Arrigoni, Emily Auresto, Nhyira Badu, Gabriella Bagnati, Mia Barillari, Belen Barrios-Valenzuela, Olivia Bishop, Finley Blanda, Samantha Busby, Grant Caplet, Olivia Christoff, Samarie Collazo, Bevin Cowell, Daymon Delaware, Mark Denesha, Lilian Donovan, Drew Dugan, Lilith Erdman, Henry Farrington, John Forbes, Leyawin Grigas, Alessandra Gruss, Maureen Hickey, Brandon Hopkins, Sean Jones, Sarah Langdon, Karson Lastrina, Stella Launonen, Harrison Maher, Gabriella Mauro, Addison McElroy, Aria McLaughlin, Emily Melgey, Juliana Michaud, Charlotte O'Hara, Lili Parks, Mason Patenaude, Connor Peck, Lacey Phelps, Jillian Post, Dmitri Potter, Anthony Previti, Leia Priore, Luca Rago, Samantha Roberts, Nelson Rooney, Ryan Rowe, Lilian Sargenti, Leonora Smith, Xavier Smith, Joseph Spinetti, Levi Stahl, Samuel Standish, Luke Theriault, Skylar Tierney, Charlotte Walls, Reika Zaler.

Grade Seven

High Honors: Delaney Beirn, Olive Boyd-Bingham, Hannah Buyniski, Jace Collins, Nora Creutz, Stella DeGaetano, Josephine Doelger, Neil Drylie, Honorah Gillespie, Grady Greene, Christian Ingalla, Isabela Ireland, Vio-

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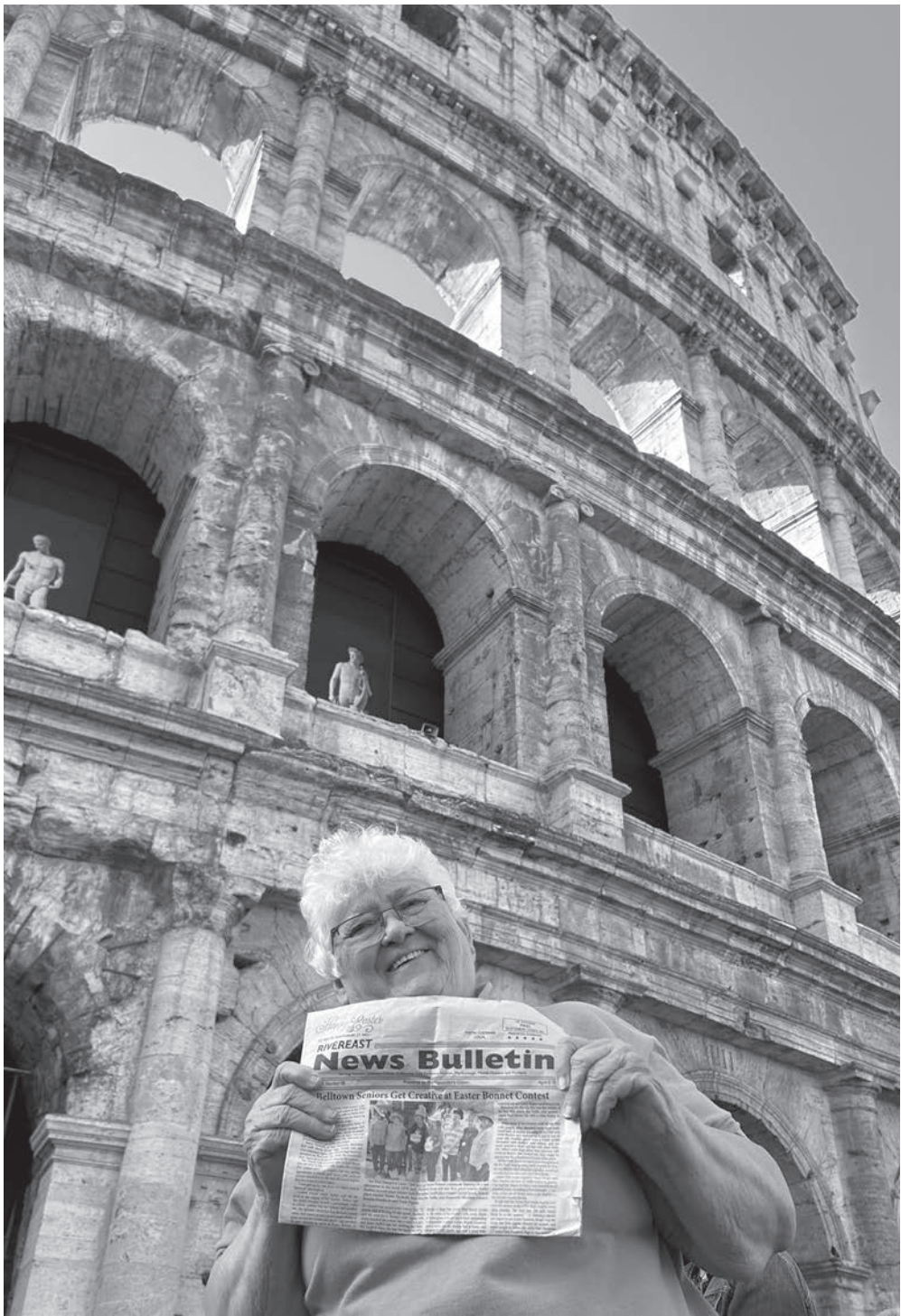
Crossing the Delaware... East Hampton town historian Jay Hansen is pictured in New Jersey with the *Rivereast*, on a research trip to the east side of the Delaware River.

Where in the World is the *Rivereast*?

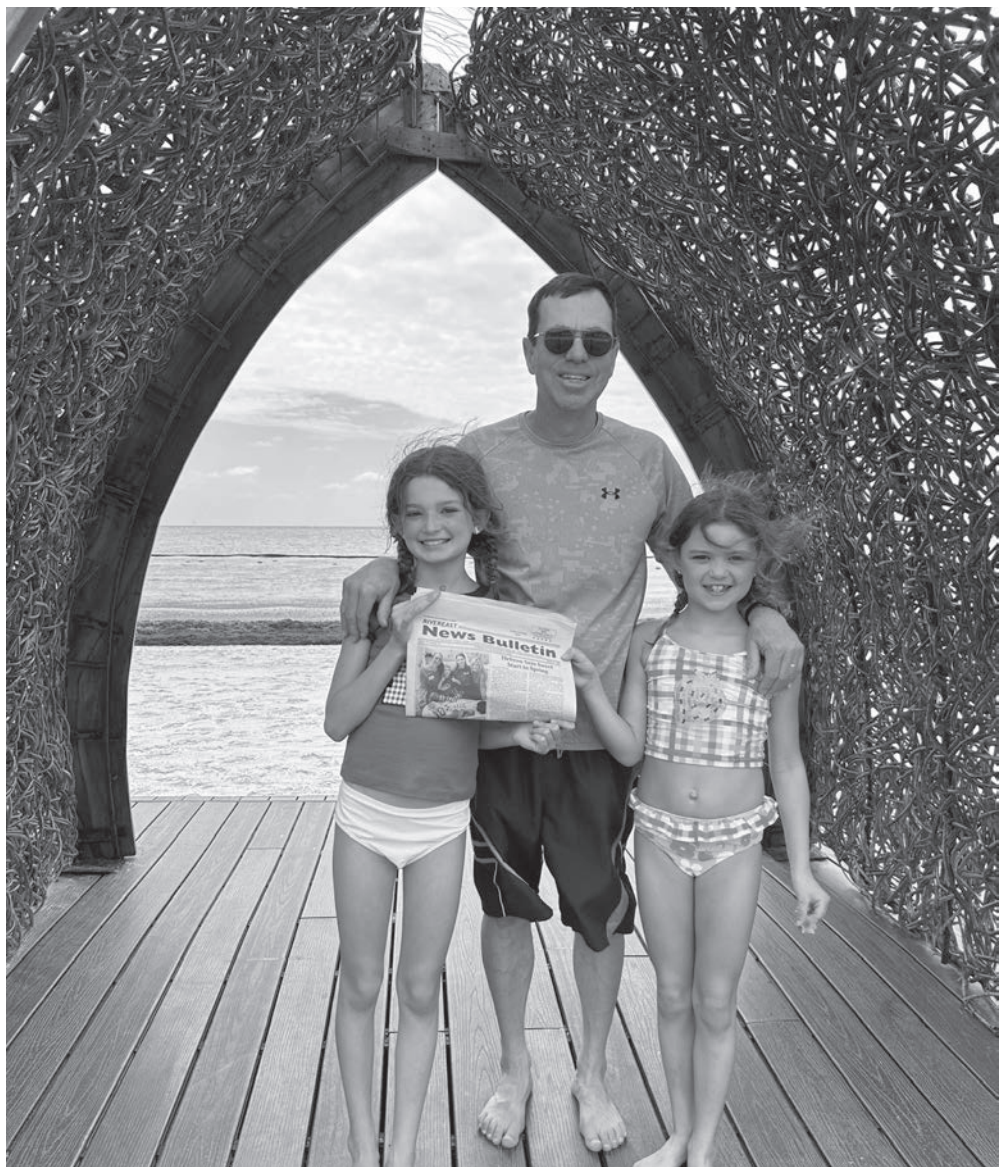
Taking a vacation or a day trip soon? Or simply going out to dinner? Bring the *Rivereast* with you! Whether it's across the globe or across town, we want to see where you've been! Simply snap a photo with the *Rivereast*, send it to bulletin@glcitizen.com and, if printed, you'll receive a gift card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



Chilling in Curacao... Kimber and Frank Perrotta of East Hampton visited Curacao in April, where they brought along a copy of the *Rivereast* to check out the Handelskade – the iconic brightly colored Dutch colonial buidlings along the waterfront in Willemstad.



Trip of a Lifetime... A two week Italian extravaganza took Dianne Grenier of Andover through Pompeii, Rome, Florence, and Venice. She brought along her copy of the *Rivereast* as she explored the wonders of Italy, including the ruins of Pompeii, the Vatican, the Sistine Chapel, St. Peter's Basilica, the Pantheon, and the Colosseum. Her adventures continued with a Tuscan olive farm visit, a pastamaking class, glassblowing and lacemaking demonstrations, the Uffizi art Gallery, a gondola ride, a chamber music concert, and so much more. Grenier said it was the trip of a lifetime, shared with her sister Judith.



A Mexican Holiday... Sharon and Glenn Genzlinger of Hebron traveled with their son's family to Cancun for spring break this year. Their granddaughters spent most of the time in the water.

Where in the World?

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

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

To enter, email your photo and address to: bulletin@glcitizen.com

\$25 GIFT CARD

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