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News Bulletin

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

Volume 47, Number 19 | Published by The Glastonbury Citizen | June 26, 2026

An Incredible Run… **The Portland Little League 8U softball team went 3-1 at the recent David Zettervall Coach Pitch tournament in Colchester, making it all the way to the championship game. The team outscored opponents 21-4 in two games Friday, earning them the top seed and a bye on Saturday. The girls won a semi-final game against Colchester 7-5 on Sunday, before losing in extra innings to Jewitt City 16-15. From left are, front row, Maddy Deary, Gwen Barry, Alex McGrath and Olivia Berube; back row, Brooklyn Abbott, Avery Benson, Phoebe Rago, Rowyn Synder, Amelia Filanda, Kira Clinton, Shea Cousineau, Elianna Papahristou.**

AHM is 'Here 4 You' With New Podcast

By Toriana Williams

Families today are busier than they ever have been, but that does not mean they have fewer questions about raising children. From mental health and substance use to social media and school stress, parents and caregivers are always looking for trusted advice. AHM Youth and Family Services hopes to make that easier with the launch of its new video podcast, "Here 4 You."

The podcast aims to provide expert information that families can access anytime. Episodes are available on YouTube and Spotify, with links shared through AHM's social media and website. The '4' in the show's title represent the four towns AHM serves: Andover, Hebron, Marlborough and Columbia.

"We really sat back and said, okay, what can we do to get this important information out but in a way that is easily accessible?" said AHM Executive Director Tressa Giordano. "We came up with the thought of a podcast and know that podcasts are pretty popular and successful."

AHM created the show and is filmed with the Community Voice Channel in Bolton. Funding comes through Amplify's State Opioid Response grant, along with support from the Cherish the Children Foundation and the Kyle Constantine Memorial Initiative.

Unlike many podcasts, "Here 4 You" is both audio and video.

"We decided when we went into this, that we not only wanted it to be audio, but we wanted it also to be visual," Giordano said. "So it's a video podcast. You can either watch it on YouTube or you can listen to it on Spotify." She said adding a visual component helps viewers connect with the people behind the information.

"We really wanted to put a face to some of the names and the guests that are on the show and bring that to life for folks and really help them to understand how friendly and warm and approachable the staff at AHM are," she said.

The idea grew out of a challenge many organizations face. While AHM has hosted speakers and community forums in the past, busy schedules have often made attendance difficult.

"Families, parents, perhaps grandparents that are raising children in the area are extremely busy," Giordano said. "But there is still a want and a need for important information on a broad spectrum of topics."

Rather than requiring people to attend an event at a certain time, the podcast allows them to listen whenever it fits their schedule.

"At the end of the day, we just want to get information out to families that is useful and helpful," said Giordano. "Parents and caregivers do want to have that information, but just sometimes struggle with finding the time to physically go to an event."

Giordano explained that episodes are designed to fit easily into daily life.

"We try to keep our episodes between 30 and

See AHM New Podcast, page 24

Belltown Set to Vote Again on Budget

By Anne Lilburn

East Hampton residents will again vote on proposed town and education budgets next month at a July 14 town-wide referendum. The revised budgets will be discussed the week before at a town meeting on Tuesday, July 7, at 5:30 p.m.

The Board of Finance had its work cut out for it in cutting the already lean budget this past week. The board held a special meeting on Monday, June 22 to continue their work to make cuts and negotiate compromises. In the end, they managed to cut the town's general operating budget down to $19,699,909, which is $601,595 less than the previously proposed (and voter-rejected) $20,301,504 budget. The Board of Finance also proposed a $250,000 reduction to the Board of Education's 2026-27 budget, bringing its total down to $39,900,937.

At this week's Tuesday night Town Council meeting, the council voted 5-2 along party lines to approve both budgets and the town's capital improvements plan, totaling $2,364,530, sending all of them to town-wide referendum. Republicans Ted Hintz and Tim Feegel voted against the proposed budgets and capital improvements plan.

The Board of Finance's changes to the town's operating budget came from several cuts, including: eliminating a part-time second driver position at the senior center; eliminating the additional clerical position in the Land Use/Building Department (but still leaving the Assistant Planner/Land Use Enforcement position); cutting the transfer station's operating days down to two days per month (from four); charging a larger portion of the Parks and Recreation Department's Program Coordinator position back to programs; and cutting back slightly on the town's "contingency" fund.

Much of the savings also came from an approximate $500,000 reduction in the contribution to the Capital Reserve Fund. The budget passed the Board of Finance along party lines with a 5-2 vote. Republicans Alison Walck and David Radavich voted against the budget.

The Board of Finance also voted along party lines to approve the Capital Improvements Plan, with $28,000 of the Co. 3 Parking Lot and Concrete Apron project re-allocated to help cover the cost of the Fire Department's new fire command vehicle, thereby reducing how much of it will need to be financed.

Debate Over Reductions

During discussions at the Board of Finance meeting, there was some debate about budgetary items related to public safety, including police and fire. Democratic board members, particularly David Caterisano, drew a hard line at cutting what he said were "essential" public safety services, while Republicans Walck and Radavich questioned the need to fill a vacant police officer position and replace the aging fire command vehicle.

Board members heard from Police Chief Dennis Woessner, who explained many times the financial challenges that having an understaffed department can pose. Because he needs to staff two officers on call at all times, he said, being understaffed meant he had to call in officers for overtime shifts, which, due to a higher overtime pay rate, cost the department more than a full time regular, non-overtime position would. He said that, if the line item for an extra officer position were eliminated, the overtime that the department would continue to have to pay to current officers would push the police department over budget.

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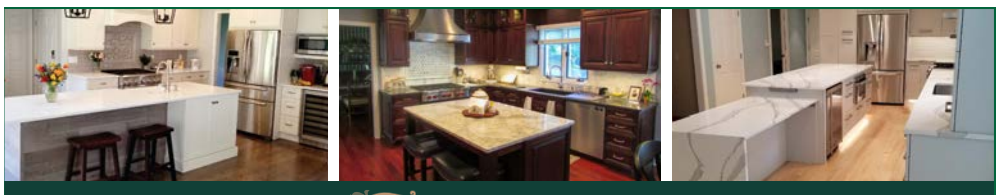

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AHM Launches New Podcast

AHM Youth and Family Services has announced its new "Here 4 You" podcast.

The premiere episode focuses on how parents can support their children's mental health. Megan Aldridge, AHM's clinical director, talks with Tressa Giordano, AHM's executive director, about the when and where to seek mental health supports for kids.

The full podcast can be accessed on Spotify @ AHM's Here 4 You Podcast and on YouTube @ ahmyouthandfamilyservices8196/podcasts, or at ahmyouth.org/here-4-you.

KinderRHAMa Summer Camp Registration

Registration for KinderRHAMa Preschool Summer Camp is open for all towns. The program is held at the AHM KinderRHAMa classroom and play yard at RHAM High School, and is for children ages 3-5 who have not yet started kindergarten.

Hours are 9 a.m.-noon Monday through Friday. Families can choose to enroll for one to eight weeks. Children must turn 3 by Sept. 1 and be fully toilet-trained to participate.

Cost per week is $125 (or $100 for the 6/29-7/2 week). To register, go to ahmyouth.recdesk.com/Community/Program?category=4. Financial aid may be available for families who qualify by filling out the form at: ahmyouth.org/program-scholarship-application.

For more information, visit ahmyouth.org/programs-services/kinderrhama-preschool-program, or contact Becky Murray at beckym@ahmyouth.org or 860-228-0871.

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RE11-29-24

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RE5-29-26

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BUT YOU CAN NEVER GO TO HEAVEN WITHOUT CHRIST

"I am the way the truth and the life; no man cometh unto the father, but by me." John 14:6

RE6-12-26

RHAM High School seniors Nina Paul (in the photo at left) and Nina Krawczyk (in the photo at right) were awarded the Sean Darmody Greene Social Justice Scholarship for the 2025-26 school year. They are each shown with Lindsay Cushing, a teacher at RHAM and the manager of the scholarship.

RHAM Seniors Awarded Scholarship

RHAM High School seniors Nina Krawczyk and Nina Paul were awarded the Sean Darmody Greene Social Justice Scholarship for the 2025-26 academic year.

Greene, a member of the RHAM High School Class of 2012, passed away in 2018 at the age of 23. This scholarship was created to honor his commitment to community service and to recognize and encourage RHAM students to follow his example of community service and commitment to social justice locally and globally.

Nina Krawczyk, from Hebron, was honored in recognition of her commitment to making the world a better place for those experiencing illness. Krawczyk writes, "I want to better understand the impact and interaction medications have that can potentially help ill people feel better. I hope to always send a positive message to others and help in any way I can, but never to judge because you never know what someone is going through."

Nina Paul, from Marlborough, was honored in recognition of her commitment to making the world a better place for those experiencing mental health struggles. Paul writes, "My activism will focus on promoting mental-health awareness, reducing the stigma around therapy, and making relationship support more accessible."

The Sean Darmody Greene Social Justice Scholarship is a 501c3 charitable organization. Donations can be made out to the "Sean Darmody Greene Social Justice Scholarship" and mailed to RHAM High School, c/o Lindsay Cushing, 85 Wall St., Hebron, CT 06248.

RHAM High School Class of 2026

The members of the RHAM High School Class of 2026 are:

Paolo Nicholas Abrantes, Ashlieh Marie Acevedo, Brianna Isis Adu-Poku, Loghan Charles Jordan Aguiar, *Zoe Brynn Albert, Gabrien Ryker Allis, Gage Timothy Alos, Jack Michael Anderson, *Brooke Victoria Arcari, Giovanni Louis Assunto, Barry Grant Avery, *Ellie Grace Ballard, *@Meadow Katherine Mayer Banta, +Grayson William Bell, Hailey Mychael Bergeron, Hunter John Billings, *^Finn Vincent James Blake, Ethan Patrick Boisvert, @Aubrey Elizabeth Brainard, @Emily Ann Brauer, Madison Grace Brede, Maxwell M. Brophy, Hunter James Brown. Cayden James Caplette, @Gianna Josephine Catania, Tanner James Cavanaugh, *@Alejandro William Chalfant, Isabelle Elena Chaves, Christian David Charpentier, Carly A. Charron, *@Avery Dawn Christmas, Emily Rachel Churchill, *@Victoria Ciesla, Kamora Cheyanne Josephine Ciarrocchi, *@Natalie Joyce Costello, Neyda Gabriela Coya-Araoz, Jackson Prior Custer;

*Brenna Grace D'Amico, Janiyah Olivia Davis, *@Maeve Ellen DeDonato, Jake Benedict DellaRocco, Allison DiBuono-Lemke, Darareaksmey Siruis Disher, Justin Noah Dooley, Patrick Jeremiah Dowd, @Seth Dunko, Audrey Lee Eckert, Harley Anthony Emmons, Mikayla Marie Erba, Daniel Noel Eshoo, *@Fiona Alexa Evans, Brody Ryan Falanga, Luke Alexander Farrington, Zoe Ferris, @Douglas Clark Fellman, Dakota James Fowler, Anthony P. Fuschino, *Daren Thomas Gagnon, *Liam Patrick Galligan, Owen Sherman Garner, Isabel Gavrish, Alexander Edmund Giaccone, Logan Reed Giannelli, Benjamin Thomas Giarrusso, Danielle Marianna Glaser, Nicole Lynn Goldstein, *@Julia Kaylee Gorborino, Brooke Lauren Gorgone, @Daniel Evan Gould, *Clara Charlotte Grove, *@+Jake Nixon Guerriero, Nevaeh Kae Hancock, *@Ella Maria Hatzikostas, *Kaitlin Jane Hobin, Noah Jacob Hoffman, *Cameron Jacques, Jacob S. Jarosz-Fenn;

Brayden William Kelly, *@^Rosalee Virginia Kathleen Kelly, @William Worthington Kemp, Alondra Carmina King, Rebecca Lynne King, *@Brody Ryan Kokofski, *@Mason Kevin Kompanik, *@Tate Catherine Knox-Silvia, Turner William Knox-Silvia, Alexander David Kowalski, *@Nina Rose Krawczyk, *@Isabelle Grace Kreamer, +Alexander Jacoby Kusher, ##Aria Rae Lagace, Aidan James Landry, Jason Daniel Larkin-Colon, Zoe Eve Lisee, @Casey James Lovett, *@Kenna Alice MacDonald, *Aidan Miville McDonald, Calvin Marden, @Daniel Andres Mantilla, Jessie Steven Martel, Thomas Charles Meli, *@Emerson Claire Melquist, *@Christopher Jayden Medina, *@Emily Kay Migliaro, *Addison Rae Mike, Julian David Monroe, *@Reese Payton Montstream, Mark David Morris, Grace Madison Moulton, Riley Madison Mounds, *@Abigail Lillian Nalette, Ryan Christopher Napolitano, Max Obey, *@Carmela Rosina Orfitelli, +Ava Sophia Pacheco, *@Ryan Victoria Pagani, *@Reegan Leigh Panico, Lucian Giuseppe Paonessa, *Katryna Nichole Paul, *Alexander James Peeling, Olivia Mary Perez, Sophia Elyse Perkins, Jake Brooks Pinkham, *Honorah Grace Plourde, *Nolan Plourde, *Roger P. Pryor, Zachary Isaac Pugliese;

Nathen Ramos, Noah Michael Rawson, Olivia Sky Ray, Lindsay Rayman, David Scott Reed, +Joshua Scott Renouf, +Gavin Anthony Richards, +Trey Richardson, Brianna Esther Rivera, Paige Willow Rosa, *@Landon Thomas Roy, William Everett Ryan, Aiden Michael Sackett, ^Kaylee Nicole Sandhu, Jason Robert Schadtle-Champagne, +Vaughan Houston Scorso, Abigail Elizabeth Simao, @Alexandra Slyk, *@Isabelle M. Sobieralski, @Maia Ellin Stock, Madelyn Elizabeth Stewart, *@Talula Sarah Stomberg, Eli Joshua Strecker, Clara Rose Sudol, *Conor Drinan Sullivan, @Jordan Watson Summerer, *Emily Grace Suroviak, Emma Anne Sweet, Zoe Nicole Syme, @Olivia Louise Talaga, Liam Michael Tarallo, *Anna Michelle Tartaglione, *@Julia Kathryn Teodosio, Michael Christopher Thatford, Brady William Topulos, *@Helena August Turk, +Landon David Tyc, *Justin R. Tyrol, Blake Raymond VanNostrand, Max Lawrence Veilleux, Aimee L. Viele, Kimee L. Viele, Jacob Geoffrey Viniconis, Makayla Taylor Walker, *Joshua Bergeron Warren, Roland David Webb, Robert Jamieson Weingarten, Madeleine Mae Weinsteiger, @Meredith Emilia Weir, Zachary Quinn Wilkie, Grace Elizabeth Williams, Adriel Omar Wilson, *Cash Curtiss Wilson, Shane Michael Wilson, Alexander Maciej Wolski, *Marina Anne Wood, *@Lillian Aimee Worthen, Gianni Alexander Wursthorn, *Daniel Peter Yeomans, Dylan Jacob Young, Lilah Zern, #*@Cecilia Ann Zito.

Valedictorian
Salutatorian
* Member of National Honor Society in good standing
@ Green cord/100 or more hours of community service
+ Enlisted in the Military
^AP Capstone Diploma Candidate

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High School Plans to Destroy Records

Confidential special education records and academic records for those students who graduated or withdrew from RHAM High School in 2020 will be destroyed after July 10.

Records may be obtained prior to this date by contacting the special education office at 860-228-5302.

CHOREs & TASKs – Job Opportunity for Teens

Are you a teen looking for summer work? AHM Youth and Family Services' CHOREs & TASKs program is currently in need of teens aged 14-18 to work two-hour shifts for senior citizens age 60 and up living in Andover, Columbia, Hebron and Marlborough.

Senior citizens have chores completed at no charge around their home and yard. Teenagers age 14-18 can earn minimum wage and can choose multiple 2-hour shifts, a letter of recommendation for active involvement in the program, and learn communication, scheduling and time-management skills. Teens are paid by AHM Youth & Family Services.

For more information on these programs, and to apply for work, visit tinyurl.com/ahm-chores.

Golf Tournament Coming

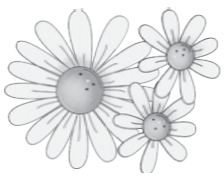
AHM Youth and Family Services will hold its annual Golf Tournament Friday, July 17, at Blackledge Country Club in Hebron. AHM is currently looking for sponsors and players.

Go to ahmyouth.org for more info.

Summer Programs at AHM

This summer, AHM Youth and Family Services is offering programs for all ages, including First Steps in Music, Forest Fun, Brush, Braid & Bond, Macrame' Headbands, Yoga for Kids, and more.

Registration is open now, at www.ahmyouth.org.



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The "East of the River" Real Estate Report

How Important Is Curb Appeal?

When homeowners think about preparing to sell, they often focus on kitchens, bathrooms, or interior updates.

But buyers form their first impression before they ever step through the front door. That's where curb appeal comes in.

Curb appeal is simply how a home looks from the street. It includes landscaping, the condition of the exterior, the driveway, walkways, front entry, and overall appearance.

Why does it matter?

Because first impressions influence buyer expectations. If a home looks neglected outside, buyers may assume the inside has been neglected as well. Conversely, a well-maintained exterior creates confidence before the showing even begins.

The good news is that improving curb appeal doesn't have to be expensive.

Simple projects such as mowing the lawn, trimming shrubs, spreading fresh mulch, pressure washing walkways, touching up paint, and cleaning the front entry can make a noticeable difference.

In many cases, these relatively inexpensive improvements provide a better return than larger cosmetic projects.

Curb appeal won't overcome poor pricing or major condition issues. However, it can help attract more buyers, generate more showings, and create a stronger first impression.

In today's market, where many buyers decide whether to visit a home based on photos they see online, that first impression matters more than ever.

For sellers, curb appeal is often one of the easiest and most affordable ways to improve how a home is perceived before it ever hits the market.

Market Snapshot – Past Week

Hebron, Andover, Marlborough, Colchester, East Hampton & Portland

Single-Family Homes	Condos
• **11 homes sold**	• **2 sold at an average of $305,000**
• Average sale price: **$571,582**	• **Sale-to-list ratio: 102%**
• Average sale-to-list ratio: **106%**	• **Average days on market: 41 days**
• Average days on market: **4 days**	*Results vary by price point, condition, and pricing strategy.*
• Median days on market: **4 days**	

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From the Editor's Desk

Observations & Ruminations

By Mike Thompson

I'm not sure this is going to work out the way the East Hampton Lake Commission wants it to.

There's a new bald eagle nest on Lake Pocotopaug – and last weekend, the town's Lake Commission shared it had received some guidance from the state Department of Energy & Environmental Protection on just how to handle it.

According to the Lake Commission, young eagles are expected to remain in the nest through early July, and loud, unpredictable disturbances can cause them to leave the nest before they are ready to fly – a situation that can lead to serious injury or death, the commission said.

Therefore – as per the suggestion of DEEP – the commission is asking lake residents, and those visiting the lake, to avoid shooting off fireworks on or around the lake until after July 15.

And that's where I'm skeptical. Oh, I hope people follow that guidance, but…….will they?

There's a pretty big holiday happening 11 days before July 15; some of you might have heard of it. People set off fireworks at Lake Pocotopaug every Fourth, and this year is going to be America250. A very big deal. And you want people to wait until nearly two weeks after the Fourth to light up the night sky?

Look, I hope they do; as the Lake Commission said, the only reason the bald eagle nest is there in the first place is because the community "has worked together to be better stewards of Lake Pocotopaug." I just don't know how realistic it is to expect people to hold back.

I hope they do, though. There will be plenty – *plenty* – of other opportunities in other towns to see fireworks on Fourth of July weekend, and hopefully lake residents will take advantage of those. Let's give those baby eagles a fighting chance.

* * *

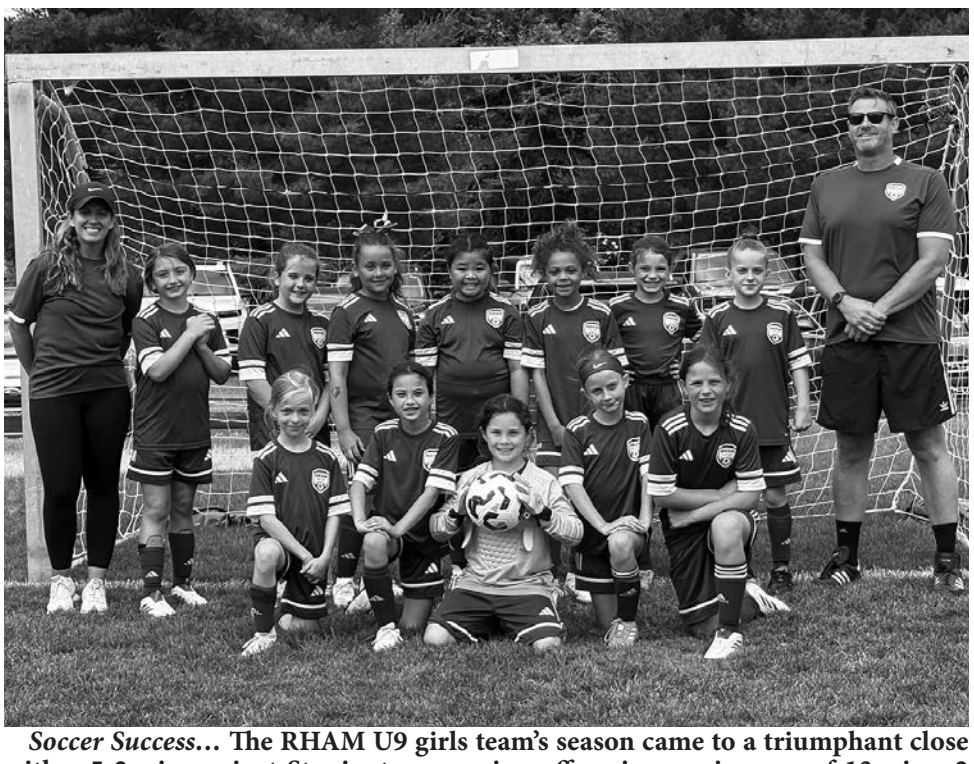
This sounds like it could be a very interesting event. ARTFARM – a Middletown-based nonprofit professional theater company – is hosting "Women of Wisdom", a Tea and Community Dialog celebrating the voices of octogenarian women, on Saturday, June 27.

The event will take place outdoors from 1 to 3 p.m., behind the Middlesex County Historical Society, which is located at 151 Main St. in Middletown. Tea and snacks will be served. ARTFARM Executive Artistic Director Marcella Trowbridge will initiate the dialog by posing a few conversation-stimulating questions to the panel of impactful local women. A free-ranging discussion will follow on life, aging, what matters, and what you wish you knew when you were younger.

"Women of Wisdom" is also a fundraiser to celebrate ARTFARM's 25th Birthday. Tickets range from $25 to $80, and may be purchased at www.art-farm.org. Seating is limited.

For more information, call ARTFARM at

Editor's Desk continued on page 30



Soccer Success… **The RHAM U9 girls team's season came to a triumphant close with a 5-2 win against Stonington, capping off an impressive run of 13 wins, 2 losses, and 3 draws.**

Bulletin Board

If you watch or read the news on a regular basis, you're probably aware of the latest terror facing Connecticut residents.

Ticks.

As in bugs.

Malignant blood-sucking, disease-carrying bugs.

According to recent news reports, the threat of being dismembered by a serial killer, or flattened by a hit and run driver or finding a severed finger in your chili (all of which appear to occur on a regular basis in places like California, according to my readings on the internet) all pale in comparison to the peril posed by Connecticut ticks.

Now, I'm no Daniel Boone, but I do spend a lot of time in the woods. And over the years I've pulled dozens of ticks off myself. If anybody should have had Lyme disease, it's me. But I've never tested positive. On the other hand, Son #1, who lives in Boston and spends most of his time in pool halls as far as I can determine, has had Lyme disease twice. Go figure.

But it pays to be wary. This summer is supposed to be one of the worst ever for ticks in Connecticut. As if swarms of mosquitoes carrying the West Nile virus and encephalitis aren't enough to worry about, now we're facing unprecedented ground attacks from hordes of disease-ridden ticks.

So far this month, I have found two ticks crawling on my body – one after going out to get the mail (me, not the tick) and the other while I was feigning interest in some overpriced plant my wife had just installed in her garden. This indicates to me that those nefarious ticks are no longer confining their activities to the wilderness. I imagine it is only a matter of time before they begin disguising themselves as DoorDash delivery people or Uber drivers, hoping to get close enough to leap on unwary victims and sink their pointy little teeth or beaks or suckers or whatever into our tender flesh.

But don't despair. As the old saying goes: knowledge is power.

According to a very informative news article about the proliferation of ticks in Connecticut this year, there are a number of precautions you can take to avoid becoming a victim. As I understand it (reading between the lines, anyway) the most effective defense would be to just stay inside the house all summer. While I understand the attraction of spending endless days on the couch watching television, this strikes me as a flawed strategy. I mean, all the ticks have to do is sit outside and wait. Sooner or later you're going to need toilet paper or run out of beer or somebody (you know who) is going to demand that you mow the lawn. The ticks just need to be patient.

Given that, and assuming you would prefer not to spend the entire summer cowering in the house clutching a can of bug spray, there are other precautions you can take to avoid tick attacks, according to the Centers for Disease Control. Perhaps the simplest is to cover up by wearing long sleeves and tucking your long pants into your socks. This narrows the target area to your face and eyes. It is also possible that ticks don't gravitate toward people suffering from heat stroke or maybe they think anybody who dresses like an Eskimo in the middle of the summer has mental health issues.

Another tip (possibly sponsored by Eversource) suggests that when you come in from outdoors, you take off all your clothes and put them in the dryer on high heat for ten minutes. While I like the idea of broiling the little vermin – in fact, I like it so much I'd be inclined to roast them for a full 20 minutes – I think this could get to be a hassle if you go in and out of the house more than a couple of times a day.

Still another precaution, which makes more sense to me, advises taking a shower within two hours of coming indoors. I guess the theory is that a tick can't bite you while it's being washed, screaming, down the drain. It occurs to me that showering might also be appreciated by your housemates if you've been wandering around outside in 90-degree heat in a long-sleeved shirt with your pants tucked into your socks.

Finally, just to be on the safe side, the experts suggest that you conduct a full body check upon returning from potentially tick-infested areas, using a hand-held or full-length mirror to view all parts of your body. That's right. All parts.

Of course, if (like me), you no longer recognize that debilitated old coot in the mirror, you might prefer to risk Lyme disease.

Jim Hallas

Rivereast Hours of Operation

The offices of the *Rivereast News Bulletin* and *Glastonbury Citizen*, located at 87 Nutmeg Lane, Glastonbury, are open Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. The *Rivereast* can be reached any time via email at bulletin@glcitizen.com.

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Early Deadline Next Week

Due to the Fourth of July holiday, the *Rivereast* is publishing a day early next week, and all deadlines have been adjusted accordingly. **All news copy** – letters to the editor, press releases, event listings, etc. – must be submitted **no later than noon Monday, June 29** in order to be included in next week's issue.

No exceptions will be made.

The *Rivereast* wishes all a happy and festive Independence Day.

Job Security

To the Editor:

Over the years, I have watched the BOF meetings, and the same questions come up every year: What efforts to regionalize services and or shared service are complete or underway? Each year, the response is that we should or we will, followed by excuses about why meaningful change is not possible. Once the budget passes, the focus on savings fades until the next budget cycle begins.

Sadly, until these efforts get real traction and accountability no change will happen with the town's spending practices and every year, we need more money to continue. And do not forget the threats to staff and programs that follow if we do not cough up the money.

Bridget McLennan
East Hampton Taxpayer

It Meant a Lot

To the Editor:

On behalf of my family, I would like to thank everyone who attended my son Tom Brady's funeral last month. It meant a lot to us to see so many friends, both old and new, come out to pay their respects to Tom and show their support to us. God bless you all.

Ron Brady – East Hampton

A Rousing Success!

To the Editor:

Thank you all for participating in Portland's eighth annual Juneteenth, held on June 20 at Portland Middle School. It was a rousing success!!

If you would like to view the day's outstanding program, please go to tinyurl.com/Portland-Juneteenth.

We want to especially thank Portland Public Schools – Portland Middle School is a wonderful place to host Juneteenth. The staff were extremely helpful to all of us – the Juneteenth Committee members, speakers, vendors, and attendees.

The day was a celebration of freedom – with lots of fun and great conversations.

We are looking forward to 2027, when we will celebrate the ninth annual Juneteenth Celebration in Portland – Saturday, June 19, 2027! Please mark your calendars.

Best,
The Juneteenth Committee
Portland

RIVEREAST

News Bulletin

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

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Vote 'No' Again

To the Editor:

Monday night's Board of Finance special meeting primary function was to come up with a 2026-27 budget, for which the taxpayers could vote 'yes.' But instead it was comparable to five mice nibbling at a graham cracker. Around the edges they gnawed and nothing substantial was accomplished.

Therefore, I ask that you vote 'no' again until they take a real bite out of the budget cracker. Yes, it is a difficult task but that is what you said when you voted 'no' in the previous referendum.

Alison Walck – East Hampton

Note: *Walck is a member of the East Hampton Board of Finance, but is speaking as an individual.*

Dementia Talks No. 63

To the Editor:

The day started just after midnight for personal care. My resulting post cat nap was a little longer, as I've accumulated a bit of sleep debt.

I rose to meet the new day, dogs tended to, the breakfast plan hatched and the mental list of what will need to be packed up brewed in my head.

This was the day Mom's vacation ended.

So much was learned. Things that are needed for comfort & safety, having private duty aides are helpful, that there is more laundry & dishes to wash and regular meal times are nice. The TV was never on; instead the windows provided entertainment from the plethora of bird activity to the launching of a ball for Boomer to cuddles on the couch with Abby Girl, walks outside, sitting on the swinging bench and books to read and games to play.

Yes, there were difficulties, but we learned, adjusted, flexed and became comfortable with the intimate setting.

I was hyper aware of everything. Mom, I think, knew something was up and took a nap after breakfast which gave me the extra time to gather her things, set up the car, settle the dogs, do more laundry and ultimately wake her to head back to the community.

She easily exited the house, navigating all the stairs; was able to get up the exercise steps I set up next to my vehicle, plopping into the seat using my ponytail to slow her decent, I strapped her in and we were off.

Once at the community, we parked, I gathered some essentials and we headed to the door, rang the buzzer, entered the building after hearing the familiar click of the locked door, and saw a sea of familiar & new faces.

In that moment I realized that I truly needed time away from this community; we both needed time away from here.

We brought some things to her room. Mom asked "how long are we staying here?" to which I replied "just a little while" with a vice on my heart.

The moment I walked into our house, saw the pillow propped up where mom was sitting only hours early, Abby Girl lying next to that spot waiting for her grammy and my heart skipped a beat.

I leave you here in our story. May you hug someone you love today...just a little longer than what is typical.

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

Hot Spots in Proposed Budget

To the Editor:

The Board of Finance Monday night proposed a new budget. Here are hot spots that I find most troublesome:

1. Reduce money for roads leaving only enough money to pave one-half a mile this year. Roads are the number one issue in town. They need more attention not less.

2. Start the lake bubbler operation one month late and stop them one month early. This will impact the lake water quality we've invested so much for.

3. Reduce transfer station to two days per month from four days per month. The transfer station is well-used. I'd hate to see trash left by the side of the road.

4. Partial reduction to the ambulance association town contribution. The ambulance is something that the taxpayers fought for just a couple of years ago with great success. Let's not jeopardies that.

5. Reduce lake patrol in spite of recent reports of dangerous activity.

6. The use of one-time money from the state and town surplus to reduce the taxes so real cuts don't have to be made. Hiding expenditures this way will lead to steep increases in next year's budget.

Pay attention to the budget process. It is evolving. Vote on July 14. If you are planning to be away, vote absentee.

Alannah Coshow – East Hampton

More Than a Beautiful View

To the Editor:

If you regularly read my letters and occasional articles, you have probably noticed a familiar theme. I often write about the importance of social connection, lifelong learning, staying active, and finding opportunities to engage with the world around us. There is a reason for that. As someone who works in the field of aging, I have witnessed firsthand how these simple yet powerful experiences can enrich lives, strengthen communities, and contribute to healthier aging.

This July, the Portland Senior Center will embark on a scenic cruise along the Connecticut River. While the stunning views will certainly be a highlight, the true value of experiences like this extends far beyond the scenery.

There is something almost timeless about a river. Long before roads and highways connected our communities, rivers served as pathways for travel, commerce, and connection. They carried stories, traditions, and generations of people forward. Today, they still invite us to slow down, reflect, and appreciate the beauty that often surrounds us every day but is too easily overlooked.

As we glide along the Connecticut River, we will have the opportunity to experience something increasingly rare in our busy lives: the chance to simply be present. To watch an eagle soar overhead. To admire the shoreline. To enjoy a conversation without distraction. To share a laugh with a friend. To create a memory.

These moments may seem small, but they are incredibly important.

Research continues to demonstrate that social engagement and meaningful experiences play a significant role in healthy aging. Strong social connections are associated with improved emotional well being, reduced feelings of loneliness, greater resilience, and an enhanced quality of life. Just as importantly, activities that inspire curiosity, enjoyment, and connection remind us that growth and discovery do not stop at a certain age.

At the Portland Senior Center, we believe healthy aging is not defined by a number. It is defined by how we continue to live, learn, connect, and contribute. It is about embracing opportunities that bring purpose, joy, and meaning to our lives. Whether through educational programs, volunteer opportunities, wellness activities, support groups, or excursions such as this river cruise, our goal is to create experiences that help individuals thrive.

Perhaps one of the greatest lessons that comes with age is learning to appreciate the journey itself. Not rushing to the next destination, but taking time to enjoy the people beside us, the beauty around us, and the moments that make life meaningful.

As the Portland Senior Center prepares to set sail on the Connecticut River this July, we look forward not only to the sights we will see, but also to the conversations we will share, the friendships we will strengthen, and the memories we will create together.

Because healthy aging is not simply about adding years to life. It is about filling those years with connection, purpose, wonder, and joy.

And sometimes, all of that can begin with a boat ride on a beautiful Connecticut summer day.

Sarah Elliott-Caratasios, LMSW
Senior Services Administrator/
Municipal Agent
Portland Senior Center

Officially Salty

To the Editor:

Colchester voters rejected the budgets by nearly two-to-one. The message was simple: spending is too high.

The Board of Finance responded by cutting $1.5 million from the Board of Education budget and only $167,890 from town departments.

That is nearly a 9-to-1 ratio.

After years of large town-side increases under First Selectman Bernie Dennler, Town Hall was protected while the schools took the hit.

And what did residents get? A budget that still increases by about 5.1% over last year.

They did not cut spending. They cut a failed increase.

Then came the petty part: cutting the public sand/salt pile to save just $5,000.

Republican John Thomas was right to object. Eliminating a basic winter safety service for a rounding error in a $69 million budget does not solve the budget problem. It just punishes residents for voting 'no.'

Colchester officials may be salty about the referendum result, but taxpayers are the ones paying the bills.

Michael Dubreuil – Colchester

Note: *Dubreuil is a member of the Colchester Republican Town Committee but said he is writing as an individual.*

Taxpayers Were Ignored

To the Editor:

At Monday's Board of Finance meeting, the Democratic majority once again chose not to listen to the taxpayers. Republican members proposed a $10 million road reconstruction bonding program that would allow the town to make meaningful progress addressing East Hampton's deteriorating roads. The proposal would have enabled the town to reconstruct many roads in a timely and cost-effective manner by utilizing contractors through existing state bid arrangements, accelerating improvements while controlling costs. Rather than embracing a long-term solution to one of the most common concerns expressed by residents, the Democratic majority rejected the proposal and instead voted to reduce road funding in the town budget.

Even more troubling was the board's treatment of the Board of Education budget. The school budget was rejected by voters by a substantial margin at referendum. Yet instead of making meaningful changes that reflected the concerns expressed by taxpayers, the board reduced the budget by only $250,000, a token reduction. Some members suggested that they were not bound by the referendum result and that they also represented residents who chose

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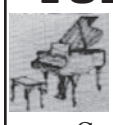
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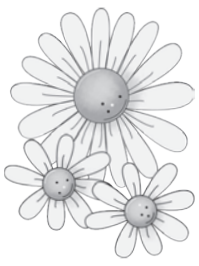

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★ *Letters, cont. from page 5*

not to vote. While elected officials certainly represent all residents, the referendum is the one opportunity taxpayers have to directly express their views. When voters take the time to participate and deliver a clear message, that message deserves more than a symbolic response. The result is a budget process that appears to place greater weight on assumptions about those who stayed home than on the voices of those who actually participated.

Taxpayers deserved a serious reconsideration of the school budget and a serious plan to improve our roads. Unfortunately, they received neither.

Ted Hintz
Member, East Hampton Town Council

A Mistake was Made

To the Editor:

I will begin by acknowledging the Hebron Town Council members for their dedication, hard work, and courage to serve. After two budget rejections and under the pressure to make additional cuts, I believe a mistake was made. With the above attributes noted, a hasty decision and lack of understanding of the impact on our seniors resulted in the elimination of the senior center receptionist's position.

This action, in my opinion, opens our town to possible legal action coming from HIPAA violations regarding confidentiality on Medicare and Medicaid information. Our seniors provide this information and it's used within this position. There is a difference in having a well-trained town employee versus well-meaning but perhaps gossip-prone volunteers. Saving $15,000 in a budget reduction, only to have the town spend thousands to defend just one HIPAA lawsuit...

We also risk complaints filed with the state for mistakes on applications for various senior services (again, supported by this position) that can result in delays or denial to access. Inconsistency is the big issue using volunteers.

Scheduling transportation for homebound seniors using the Dial-a-Ride program is also supported by this position. Making appointment additions, changes, cancellations, with accuracy are all critical needs to manage this. A mistake and missed appointment can cause a delay of weeks for much needed medical care.

To my knowledge, none of our Town Council members have toured the senior center and may not understand the extent of services offered. (Exception – kudos to Sean Fitzpatrick for recently taking the time to tour the Senior Center...sadly, after the position was cut.)

Currently, 2,600 seniors aged 60 and over are served by our Senior Center (about 30% of our town population). Average daily phone call activity 50 to 75 calls. Seniors are far more likely to resolve questions, problems or other issues by phone. There are three paid staff positions: Senior Services Director and Municipal Agent for the Elderly (combined) / Program Director / Adult and Senior Social Services Worker. The receptionist assists all three staff members.

It's not a position that just answers the phone. I believe that our seniors deserve better than getting voicemail, or a volunteer to access Senior Services for the help they need. For the very small impact on our budget ($15,000), the Hebron Town Council needs to find the same commitment and courage that I acknowledged earlier in this letter, to correct this mistake and reinstate this position.

Kirk Smallidge – Hebron

Note: *Smallidge is a member of the Hebron Commission on Aging but said he is writing as an individual.*

Hello Hebron – Is Anybody There?

To the Editor:

Dennis Farrar, the Town of Hebron's adult/senior social worker, is housed at the Hebron Senior Center, where he serves an average of 30-50 clients/outreach contacts per month with counseling via home visits, phone contact and on a walk-in basis. He also facilitates a Caregiver Support Group, Men's Social Group and other groups as the needs arise.

As in many modern-day offices, doing more with less is customary and it is true at the senior center as well! Technology assistance for Zoom exercise class, table set up and breakdown for programs and meetings, delivering meals on wheels (heating up those meals!) are all part of Dennis' day! Now will be added, answering the phone when it rings to schedule Dial-A-Ride for medical appointments, registering people for one of the many programs offered there or other services and information provided by the senior center staff. Does this additional task effectively utilize Hebron's adult/senior social worker? I know the answer! Do you?

I voted 'no' in the first budget referendum; cuts needed to be made. Eliminating the receptionist at the senior center, for $15,775 annual savings, was irrational and uninformed. A poor decision on many levels. A goal of the senior center is to be a conduit, for information, support and resources for the older adult population in Hebron. Older adults much prefer using the phone to reach out for help when they need it (and no we can't change that). Please restore our receptionist so someone is there to answer their call!

Sandy Waldo – Hebron

Note: *Waldo is a member of the Hebron Commission on Aging, but said she is representing herself.*

Disappointed in Weir's Vote

To the Editor:

Earlier this year, millions of Americans were shocked and outraged by the scenes of masked, unidentified federal agents brutally seizing and, in some instances, shooting members of the community in Minnesota. Polls show that the vast majority of Americans reject this kind of lawless, violent behavior and want the immigration laws to be enforced by federal agents who receive the proper training and are directed by their superiors to respect the civil and constitutional rights of U.S. citizens and immigrants.

These were the goals that were embodied in a recently-enacted Connecticut law called SB397. SB397 creates "protected areas" like schools, hospitals and churches where federal agents cannot arrest people for violations of immigration law unless they have an arrest warrant issued by a judge. It prohibits agents from wearing masks (unless they are working undercover or outdoors in freezing temperatures) and requires them to wear identification (again, unless they are undercover). It fills a gap in the law by creating a right to sue federal agents in state court if they violate a person's constitutional rights. It also imposes stricter training requirements for law enforcement officers and bans police departments in Connecticut from hiring former Federal agents who were found guilty of misconduct. Finally, SB397 restricts the amount of time that data from automatic license plate readers can be retained to 21 days and bans the use of that data in connection with investigating acts of protected speech, immigration enforcement and reproductive and transgender healthcare.

SB397 is not "anti-police" or "anti-ICE." It is a common sense reaction to the abuses millions of Americans witnessed on the streets of Minneapolis. I think we can all agree that we want a nation where the laws are enforced, including the immigration laws. But those who are entrusted with the enforcement of the laws should also behave in accordance with those laws.

That is why I am disappointed that the 55th District's representative, Steve Weir (R), voted against SB397. The 55th District (covering Andover, Bolton, Hebron, Marlborough, and portions of Glastonbury) needs a representative who strikes the right balance, and that is why I will be voting for Ellen Paul for the 55th District in November. I hope you will too.

Respectfully,
Marcus Wilkinson – Marlborough

Voting Yes, But Frustrated

To the Editor:

I'm voting 'yes' for the Colchester budget. I want to be clear about that, even with the cuts. I'm voting yes because cutting more would hurt our kids worse, and they've already taken enough hits.

You've probably read too many of my letters by now, week after week. There's a reason for that. I put in a lot of volunteer time supporting education, and I'm not about to go quiet now.

I'm frustrated. Anybody paying attention should be. But frustration is why I keep showing up, not why I'd quit. I do this because I want my kids to have more than I did. And every year it's the same fight over scraps. We don't even fund our schools at a maintenance level, and now the things I figured were a given like band are on the chopping block.

As long as I've been involved, it's been the same thing. Do more with less. Do more with less. The only reason it still works is the teachers and administrators who hold the whole thing together with their bare hands, year after year.

I got into this to make things better for my kids. Now I'm fighting over whether they get to play "Hot Cross Buns" on a recorder. Instead, my kids are headed for the bare minimum. And give it time, somebody will want to cut that too.

John Farrell – Colchester

New Vision for Hebron

To the Editor:

Hebron's residents and Town Hall have a rare opportunity to embrace a dramatic new vision that can propel our town forward. Last week the Planning and Zoning Commission held a "Listening Session" and invited the public to "Help Shape the Future of Hebron Town Center." The large crowd offered thoughtful suggestions of certain business they would like to see in town. Ideas included a healthcare center, an assisted living facility, a nature center and a record store. However, the opportunity that Hebron has in front of us offers a chance to act boldly and create a new future. With little investment and potential for tremendous economic and cultural return, we can engage with the thriving multi-billion dollar outdoor recreation and ecotourism economy. The 53 acres of town owned land at 17 Kinney Rd./the Horton property are an environmental and historic treasure that can draw visitors from across the region.

At the Listening Session I shared the economic numbers; in 2023 the U.S. Department of Commerce reported the outdoor recreation industry generated $4.6 billion in Connecticut, and in 2022 the University of Connecticut reported agriculture contributes $4 billion to the state economy. After the meeting I was made aware of more recent numbers and they are even more impressive. In 2024, the U.S. Department of Commerce reported that the outdoor recreation industry generated $6 billion a year in Connecticut alone! That is a $2 billion dollar increase in just one year, clearly an important economic trend.

Fortunately, the Planning and Zoning Commission has already established a comprehensive road map on how to engage with this thriving economic engine. It's called the 2024 Plan of Conservation and Development. In Section 2, Part A, "Sustainability," the report notes, "The key to achieving a sustainable community and sustainable development is to understand the relationship among three concepts – environmental sustainability, economic sustainability, and social sustainability." This is underscored by Section 2, Part I, "Areas of Historical Heritage,"

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which has as a stated goal: "Locate, document, protect and preserve Hebron's rich, historic heritage for the education, enrichment and enjoyment of all citizens and promote the environmental, economic, and cultural benefits of historic preservation." Without doubt the creation of an outdoor environmental and history classroom at 17 Kinney Rd. embraces these elements of the POCD. Hopefully, the PZC are listening to their own words. For more details, visit Save Hebron Center on Facebook.

Sincerely,
Kevin J. Tulimieri – Amston

Motionless

To the Editor:

Kudos need to be given to the leaders on the Board of Finance. The thoughtful discussions about the budget for fiscal year 2027 were very informative and at times interesting. To be able to get to a budget that not only lowers the proposed mill rate but also keeps key services and essential employees.

The interesting parts of the meeting were the three motions made by the Alison Walck and Jim Radavich. The first motion was in regard to the CIP budget which Alison made. When asked where the reductions came from, both Republicans sat there looking like a deer caught in headlights, and had almost no reasoning or explanation. This begs the questionm, who wrote these motions? Then came their recommendations to cut services to the PD and FD which met great opposition from the public and both chiefs. Lastly, Jim made a motion for the BOE budget, in which he actually proposed an increase to the proposed budget by $600,000! So again I ask, who wrote these motions?

Clearly not being able to answer questions about them and then proposing an incorrect budget and then not being able to pivot to correct the motion by using simple math really makes one think, why are these two people on the finance board? I commend the Democratic leadership and encourage everyone to support this budget at referendum.

Rick Wanat – East Hampton

Get It Right

To the Editor:

To the members of the East Hampton TC, BOE, BOF: listen to the voters and get it right. Because we can still vote 'no' until you do.

Apparently our town officials are hard of hearing when it comes to the EH budget. The recent letters and press articles are full of quotes from the various BOE and BOF members justifying an increase in budget, with no suggestions or recommendations on seriously cutting costs, as the voters are demanding. As noted in letters last week, the efforts to move funds around, versus actually cutting spending is the main focus. What would happen if they expended the same amount of energy to actually make the hard decisions, do what is being asked? Cut spending.

One member of the BOF continues to blame the voters for not passing the budget on the first referendum. If the budget passed, would that mean there was a good turnout? Funny how the RHAM budget failed at referendum twice (poor turnout or poor budget?) and passed on the third try (good turnout or good budget?). Here's a hint for our elected officials: the referendum failed because you failed to listen to the majority of voters in EH who are tired of the officials catering to the minority, with little regard for the entire EH community. Real leaders listen when voters speak, not make excuses, point fingers, call people names, and offer weak solutions. When voters speak clearly at the ballot box, they expect meaningful corrections, not small changes.

And as usual, the BOE and the school superintendant continue the "it will harm the children" emotional extortion, saying that "none of them believed the cuts are in the best interest of the children". They also claim to "understand the financial challenges that many in town face," but they have not offered any serious or material sacrifices on their part (a la RHAM BOE) to trim their expenses. Further, there is still no discussion regarding "pay to play", per student subsidies by the family, fund-raising, administrative cost reduction, and elimination of programs that are currently supported with tearful pleas by a small minority of taxpayers. The BOE apparent strategy is to take no substantive action, make dire threats of educational weaknesses, provide meaningless platitudes, and wait for the voters to give up.

We can still vote 'no' until you listen and do what is best for the entire town.

Regards,
Bob Yenkner – East Hampton

Significant Sacrifices

To the Editor:

On Thursday evening, the Colchester Board of Finance voted to move forward with a $1.5 million reduction to the Board of Education budget and a $168,000 reduction to the town budget. No doubt, supporters of a "no" vote will argue that these reductions are insufficient and that the Board of Finance is not listening to residents.

That argument overlooks an important fact: this is the largest budget reduction in response to a failed referendum that Colchester has seen. Those advocating for significant cuts have consistently called for reductions in Board of Education administration. This revised proposal eliminates two administrative positions and includes a pay freeze for the remaining district administrators.

In addition, the teachers' union felt so strongly about preserving teaching positions and student programs that its members agreed to unpaid furlough days, resulting in a $294,000 reduction. That represents a direct financial sacrifice by educators in support of our children and schools. The proposal also eliminates world language instruction at the middle school level. Taken together, these are meaningful reductions, and I would argue that they are enough.

On the town side, most of the reductions also come from voluntary unpaid furlough days taken by employees. Other cuts include $10,000 from library books and supplies, the elimination of a seasonal groundskeeper position, $30,000 from road improvements, and several other miscellaneous reductions.

What stood out during the discussion was that Board of Finance member John Thomas expressed particular concern about the elimination of the town's winter salt pile for residents. He noted that he uses the salt pile himself and knows others who do as well, and suggested that the $5,000 allocated for that service should be restored. He further stated that he did not believe the town budget should be reduced by even one penny and ultimately voted against forwarding the proposed $168,000 reduction to voters.

Residents can draw their own conclusions about that vote. What is clear is that town employees, teachers, administrators, students, and residents are all being asked to absorb the impact of these reductions. The revised budget reflects difficult compromises and significant sacrifices across multiple areas of town government and education.

Sincerely,
Erin Shuman – Colchester

Hebron Town Budget Cuts

To the Editor:

The Town of Hebron recently passed their budget on the third referendum, by then requiring many cuts on spending. As the saying goes "the little things are the big things."

As one of the 2,500 seniors 60+ years old, 25% of the population in Hebron, I'd like to highlight one of the seemingly small cuts, a savings of less than $16,000, by eliminating the position of the receptionist/clerical support position at the Senior Center. This "small" cut will have a big impact.

One of the many tasks assigned to this position beyond answering the phones, is to channel calls where they can best be addressed, including scheduling rides to appointments for our seniors who are without transportation. This, of course, takes attention to detail for proper arranging, with an available vehicle and available driver. Additionally, every encounter with the senior center exposes them to more of the many services our center has to offer.

In addition to the senior having the need for a ride, for many of the town's seniors, that ride may be their only socialization and form of connection throughout their day. Studies have shown socialization improves cognitive health, mood and physical well-being in seniors. Isolation increases risk of depression, dementia and chronic illness. So, it is also significantly important that this phone call be unrushed so the ambassador for the senior center can share a meaningful conversation with the caller.

To deny this complex, multi-step process from running smoothly and flawlessly by eliminating this crucial position, is to jeopardize the physical, mental and social health of our valuable aging and too often neglected senior population.

Catherine Litwin – Hebron

Note: *Litwin is a member of the Hebron Commission on Aging.*

The Monster Behind the Math

To The Editor:

At a recent public meeting, Andover's First Selectman warned residents about a "monster number": he said it costs about $34,000 a year to send each Andover child to RHAM, and suggested that I, as a member of the RHAM Board of Education, should be focusing on it.

I am glad to focus on what RHAM costs. I am also glad to turn on the light, because this particular monster does not survive it.

The arithmetic is something any resident can do. RHAM's entire budget this year is $32,620,072, and the district enrolls 1,078 students. Divide the first by the second and you get $30,261 per student. That figure includes everything: salaries, buildings, buses, and debt service, spread across every child in the district. It is the largest the per-student number can possibly be. The first selectman's $34,000 exceeds even that maximum, which is another way of saying it cannot be real.

You reach the same place doing it Andover-only. Our town's RHAM assessment this year is $4,237,348, and we send 140 students. Dividing one by the other gives the same figure, give or take a rounding difference. The two methods agree because each town's bill is set in proportion to its enrollment.

The state's official measure, which Connecticut calculates the same way for every district, is lower still: $27,181 per pupil in operating cost. By that measure, only two of the eight comparable regional districts in the state spend less per pupil than RHAM.

None of this means RHAM is cheap, and I will not pretend otherwise. Its per-pupil cost has climbed sharply over the past decade. But the climb is mostly because enrollment fell by more than a third, not because spending grew. RHAM's total budget rose more slowly than inflation. I lay all of this out, with primary sources, in a report at andoverct.info/reports/rham/per-pupil.

Some will ask why I did not say this while the budget was before the voters. I sit on the RHAM board, and I make a deliberate choice to stay out of the public argument over the budget, in either direction. I do not believe anyone holding a seat should put a thumb on the scale of a live

See Letters, page 30

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Last Tuesday at 7:55 p.m., Marlborough resident Alexander Peeling voted in the RHAM budget referendum – still wearing his gown from that night's graduation ceremony!

Graduate Rushes to Vote for Budget

Each year, the town registrars of voters visit RHAM High School to conduct a voter registration drive for students who are or will be 18 years old by the November election.

This year, the students largely took charge of the registration drive, with the registrars providing guidance and support as needed. Many students registered online or turned in registration cards and had their first opportunity to vote last Tuesday, at the RHAM, Hebron and Andover budget referendums.

Alexander Peeling of Marlborough graduated on Tuesday, June 16, and promptly jumped into his car and headed to Marlborough Town Hall to cast his very first vote – still wearing his graduation gown! At 7:55 p.m. – just five minutes before the polls closed – Peeling became the final voter of the day.

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 stjohnfisher30@yahoo.com. The church website is www.stjfchurch.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.

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. 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.stjfchurch.org, or look for the church on Facebook (Saint John Fisher Roman Catholic Church).

One-Day Class at Arts Center

The Marlborough Arts Center, located at 231 North Main Street, announced that Lori Neuman will be returning the afternoon of Sunday, June 28 to teach an acrylic painting class for all levels of students. This class will focus on combining brushwork, palette knife, and glazing to create transparent layers. The emphasis will be on painting sky and water.

Class cost is $75 with all materials provided except for glazing material. Please go to MarlboroughArts.org and click on classes for more information on the class and how to register. To reach the center by phone, call 860-467-6353.

Flute Loops Coming to Arts Center

The Marlborough Arts Center will hold a 4th Friday Arts Café concert with Flute Loops & Ala Carte, on Friday, June 26, at 7:30 p.m., at the arts center, 231 N. Main St.

Flute Loops is a Connecticut-based adult flute choir founded by flutist Erin Vivero. The evening's concert will also feature a quartet of Vivero and friends that include piano, bass and drums. For more about Flute Loops go to erinvivero.com/flute-loops.

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

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

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

Summer Classes at Arts Center

Marlborough Arts Center, located at 231 N. Main St., is offering a number of classes this summer.

Christine Allison, the art teacher at Marlborough Elementary School, will teach a one-day workshop on Sumi-E Painting: Serenity in Japanese Painting. The workshop will guide makers of any ability level through an art experience that embraces zen, simplicity, and imperfections. After practicing brush strokes in exercises, you will then create a full-sized finish piece of art.

Due to popular demand for Rebecca Moran's classes, the center will add another six-week Watercolor II session on Mondays starting June 29. This series is for anyone with previous experience using watercolor. Students will apply techniques and compositions to their own paintings. And for continuing and new students, Alan James returns for another six-week series of Impressionistic Watercolor, in which you will compose a new painting on each day of the workshop. If away on vacation and you miss a session, he will work with you on a make-up session.

More workshops may be added before summer's end and there will be a good lineup for fall, the arts center said.

For details on each workshop and to register, go to www.marlborougharts.org. Or for more information, call 860-467-6353.

Parks and Rec. Programs

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

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.

Youth Programs: Netto Summer Day Camp: For grades K-7. Weekly through 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.

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.

Crayola Arts – Bouncy Bendy Arts in Motion: For grades K-6. July 6-10, 9 a.m.-noon, at MES. Make masterpieces with real moving parts, create the illusion of movement, and discover art processes that use motion to get results. Fee: $193/resident, $198/non-resident.

Soccer Shots: Saturdays, July 11-Aug. 15, at West Road Memorial upper field. Mini, for age 2, meets 9-9:35 a.m., and Classic, for ages 3-5, meets 9:45-10:30 a.m. Fee for Mini is $90/resident, $95/non-resident. Fee for Classic is $113/resident, $118/non-resident.

Skyhawks Flag Football Camp: For ages 7-12. July 13-17, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., at MES. Boys and girls learn skills on both sides of the football including the core components of passing, catching and defense. Fee is $165/residents, $170/non-residents.

Skyhawks Sand Volleyball Camp: For ages 10-14. July 20-24, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., at Blish Park. This program is designed for the beginning and intermediate player. Boys and girls will develop skills through game-speed drills and daily scrimmages. Fee: $165/resident, $170/non-resident.

Family Beach Yoga Night: Tuesday, July 21, 5:30 p.m., at Blish Park. Bring your own yoga mat or towel. Parent/guardian must be present. The class is geared toward children ages 3-10 and their families, but all kids welcome. Registration fee is $25/resident, $30/non-resident.

Skyhawks Mini-Hawk Camp (Soccer, Baseball and Basketball): For ages 4-6. July 27-31, 9 a.m.-noon, at MES. This multi-sport program teaches children the essentials of each sport. Fee is $150/resident, $155/non-resident.

Horseback Riding Lessons: Ages 5 and up. Lesson days and times are flexible. 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.

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.

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

Scholarship Awarded

American Legion Auxiliary Post 197 has announced Gianna Catania from Marlborough is this year's recipient for the auxiliary's scholarship fund.

Catania will attend Eastern Connecticut State University, where she will study nursing.

Marlborough Farmers Market

Zina's Cucina is hosting the Marlborough Farmers Market every Wednesday until Oct. 14, from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. Attendees can expect live music and artisanal goods such as goat milk soaps, fresh fruits and vegetables, baked goods, a variety of crafts and more.

The market will be held on the Marlborough Town Green, and the first 100 shoppers will receive a free Marlborough Farmers tote bag. Produce farms selling at the market will also be accepting WIC and senior vouchers.

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Goats, Snakes, Raccoons – and Retirement

By Toriana Williams

After 45 years in law enforcement and public safety, Jay Kehoe has finally hung up his badge. But if you ask the residents of Marlborough, they will tell you that Kehoe was much more than a police officer. He was a neighbor, a friend, a problem solver and sometimes even the town's unofficial animal wrangler.

Kehoe retired as Marlborough's director of public safety after serving the town for 21 years. Before that, he spent two decades with the Glastonbury Police Department, where he retired as a lieutenant. Along the way, he helped create regional dive teams and tactical teams and became a respected trainer and mentor.

What makes a legacy, though, is not the titles or awards but the man himself.

"He really personifies what a police officer, and the town director of public safety should be," said resident Mary Quirk. "He's a father, he's a husband, he's now a granddad. And his face lights up when he talks about the grandchildren and his family."

Quirk said Kehoe became "part of the fabric of our town."

That was especially true for seniors. Over the years, Kehoe answered wellness calls, checked on particular vulnerable residents and connected people with resources they might not have known existed.

"He knows them personally," Quirk said. "He knows the local resources as well as the state resources that somebody may need and not know about."

And if there was an unusual emergency, chances were Kehoe had seen it before.

One of Quirk's favorite stories began with a phone call from a woman in her 80s. "She says, 'Mary, the goats just broke my window.'" Quirk admitted she was quite confused. "I actually looked at the phone, and I go, 'Did she just say goats and her window?' So I'm thinking, did she say ghosts?" Nope. It was indeed goats. Lots of them.

The animals had smashed windows and taken over the property. Quirk called Fire Marshal Joe Asklar, who quickly decided the situation required another expert. "Mary, call Jay," he told her.

Kehoe arrived, looked over the scene and calmly announced, "Mary, I got this. You can go." Quirk laughed and said, "I guess this isn't his first goat rodeo."

Years later, Kehoe was reminded of the event and laughed. "They were breaking windows in the house," he recalled. "They stole one of the roofer's jackets and they were chewing it up. They were just being goats, you know?"

Instead of chasing them, Kehoe used a clever trick. "I put a couple pebbles in the bottom of a galvanized bucket, and I shook it and they thought I had food," he said. The goats happily followed him to a nearby pen. "It wasn't the right house," he admitted, "but, well, they had to be contained."

Eventually, he said, everyone "lived happily ever after." Quirk now jokes that Kehoe is "the real GOAT - the greatest of all time."

Goats, however, are only one part of the story.

Asklar remembers that Kehoe was the town's snake expert. "He brought with him a tremendous amount of knowledge on rattlesnakes and other reptiles," said Asklar. "Anytime there was a snake problem, we called Jay Kehoe."

Kehoe's love of reptiles started when he was young. He grow up in Florida, and his mother told him half the snakes in the south were poisonous, so he couldn't play with them. After moving from Florida to Connecticut, his mother told him, "there's no poisonous snakes here, you can play with them now." So off he went.

State Sen. Cathy Osten (D-19) recently presented Jay Kehoe an official statement from Gov. Ned Lamont that congratulated Kehoe on his retirement after 45 years of dedicated service to the state of Connecticut and the residents of Marlborough.

For more than 30 years, Kehoe helped study endangered timber rattlesnakes by capturing, measuring and tagging them. He even remembered one snake decades later when a UPS driver accidentally ran it over.

"He says, 'Jay, I just ran over one of your snakes.' And I had that snake 28 years ago," Kehoe shared.

Kehoe has seen all kinds of wildlife emergencies. One even involved a rabid raccoon chasing a woman.

"She comes running for her life as a raccoon is chasing her," he said. "She jumps on to the [animal control officer's car], dents the hell out of the car, but she got away from the raccoon." There was just one detail that made the story even better. "That also happened to be my wife too," he said with a laugh.

Another time, an officer proudly brought a giant snapping turtle back to the station in his patrol car.

"The thing is in this car, tearing the seats apart," Kehoe recalled. He looked at the officer and asked, "Show me your hands." Thankfully, the officer still had all his fingers, which is not a given when it comes to snapping turtles.

Besides his knowledge and sense of humor, friends say Kehoe was always available when people needed him. Asklar summed it up in one word - "accessibility."

If a situation ever arose, Asklar said he "was able to pick up the phone and discuss the issue, and either get a solution right away or at least have something in place." Even on his days off, Kehoe often answered messages.

"He didn't have to, but he did," Quirk said. "That was appreciated."

When residents needed advice on home safety, Kehoe came to their homes. When he and his wife had extra vegetables that they grew, they shared. He was known for stopping to talk with people and waving back when they waved to him.

As for retirement, Kehoe is not slowing down. He still teaches police officers, enjoys gardening and motorcycles and occasionally hops into a friend's helicopter. "There's only one thing better than owning your own helicopter," he joked. "Having a friend that owns a helicopter."

However, he said that, according to his wife, his biggest project is much closer to home.

"The major thrust of my retirement," he said, "is to build a new chicken house behind our house." It won't be just any chicken house, either. "A chicken palace," he called it.

Looking back on his career, Kehoe shared a message with everyone he worked for and worked with: "I want to thank the residents of Marlborough for the great second half of my career."

Congregational Church News & Notes

Sunday Worship at Marlborough Congregational Church, located at 35 South Main St., is held at 10 a.m. The service is also broadcast live every Sunday at mcc.marlcongchurch.org and recorded for later viewing. Church pastor is the Rev. Valerie Seaver. Childcare for infants and toddlers is provided downstairs in the nursery, but children are always welcome at the worship service. The Christian Education team has provided quiet, activity bags, found in the narthex, for the youngest children to borrow and enjoy at summer services.

June 28: The service will be led by worship assistant Gwen Lawson. After worship, all are invited to Coffee Hour in the Thienes Lounge for snacks and refreshments.

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 June 28. Second-quarter mission-giving will go to the AHM Mental Health Fund.

Second Blessings Thrift Shop is located on the lower level with easy access from the parking lot. The shop will be closed July and August. It will be open Friday, June 26, from noon to 3 p.m. and Saturday, June 27, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., and will feature a storewide 50% off. Follow the shop through Facebook at Second Blessings Thrift Shop, Marlborough 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 freewill 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@marlcongchurch.org, or contact the church office at office@marlcongchurch.org.

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.

Events: Line Dancing Lessons: All levels welcomed; for ages 55+. July session: 7/2, 7/9, 7/16 and 7/23, 5-7 p.m. Cost is $50/residents, $60/non-residents. RSVP by 7/2.

Mahjongg: First Wednesday of each month, 1:30-3:30 p.m., at Marlborough Bakery, 8 Independence Drive. All skill levels are welcome. There is no fee to play, but players use 2026 Mahjongg cards, which they purchase on their own.

FABBS Exercise: Movement and exercises are drawn from body building, yoga, ballet and more. Instructor Hilary Celentano. July session 7/6, 7/13, 7/20, 7/27; 10:45-11:45 a.m. Cost is $35/residents, $40/non-residents. RSVP by 7/3

Resin Ocean Side Table: July 8, 1-3 p.m. Make an ocean-inspired side table with resin in this craft class. All supplies provided. Cost is $50.

Cooling Plants for Summer: July 10, noon-1 p.m. Explore some plants that can help us beat the summer heat, learn how we use them, and create your own cooling face mist to take home. Cost is $10/resident $12/non-resident.

Birthday Club: July birthdays will be celebrated July 28 from 1-2 p.m. with cake. Open to all friends and family. It doesn't have to be your birthday month to celebrate, but if it is, RSVP.

Chair Yoga: Next session 8/4, 8/11, 8/18, 8/25. Cost is $35/residents, $40/non-residents. RSVP by 7/31.

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.

Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program: Electronic benefit card, preloaded with $40. For use at participating farmers markets to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables, eggs, honey, and fresh cut herbs. Use at the Marlborough Farmers Market every Wednesday. For Marlborough residents only. Income limit: Household 1 - $2,461/month, Household 2 - $3,337.

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.marlboroughct.gov for the complete transportation policy.

Dog Licenses Available at Town Hall

Dog licenses are now available in the Town Clerk's office. Please check and make sure your dog's rabies certificate is up to date as licenses cannot be issued without a current rabies certificate.

The fee for spayed or neutered dogs is $8 and $19 for unaltered. You must license your dog before July 1 or a $1 late fee will be added each month. If you choose to get your license through the mail, please include $1.23 for postage, and make your check out to the Town of Marlborough.

The Town Clerk's hours are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday; 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Tuesday; and 8 a.m. to noon on Friday.

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Toby Hunter and Eunice Ngunjiri

CAPSS Award

Toby Hunter and Eunice Ngunjiri of Portland High School have been awarded the Connecticut Association of Public Schools Superintendents' (CAPSS) Superintendent/Student Recognition Award. This award recognizes students for outstanding leadership and service to their schools, academic excellence relative to their abilities, and meaningful contributions to their communities. The two students were recognized at the regular Board of Education meeting on May 19, 2026.

Dr. Britton, Superintendent of Schools in Portland, made the presentation as part of a program designed by school administrators to recognize students who have served their schools and communities while maintaining good scholastic progress.

Local Marine Center Named Best Boat Dealer

Petzold's Marine Center has been named Best Boat Dealer in the 2026 Best of Hartford County Awards, a recognition store management said is made even more meaningful by one simple fact: Petzold's Marine Center is not located in Hartford County.

Based in Portland, in Middlesex County, Petzold's has long served boaters across the state, including generations of families from Hartford County who make the trip to Portland for new and pre-owned boat sales, service, and guidance on the water.

"For us, this award means a lot," said Bob Petzold, President of Petzold's Marine Center. "We're proud to be based in Portland, but we've always served boaters from all over Connecticut. To be recognized by Hartford County residents as the best boat dealer, even though we're not physically located there, means they trust us enough to make the drive. That's something we don't take lightly."

Founded in 1945, Petzold's Marine Center offers new and used boat sales, brokerage, service, storage, marina amenities, parts, and customer support across multiple locations.

"This is really a win for our entire team," Petzold added. "Our sales staff, service department, yard crew, parts team, marina staff, and everyone behind the scenes all play a role in how customers experience Petzold's. We're incredibly grateful to every Hartford County boater who voted for us and continues to choose our family business."

★ *Belltown Budget, cont. from page 1*

On the fire side, Fire Chief Robb Rainville described the department's need for a new command vehicle, noting that the department has gone out of its way to work to reduce costs on the new vehicle. He described the old vehicle, a 2011 Ford Expedition, as having holes in the floor and offered to take board members out for a "tour." He challenged a board member to "get in the car and out of it without needing a tetanus shot" and said the vehicle's current state posed both safety and financial risks.

"Just three weeks ago, Chief Swan was responding to a call and he lost his brakes, because his car was rusted," Rainville said. He said he worried that, if the vehicle were unsafe and would up in an accident, it could cost the town more in the end.

On the education side, the Board of Finance proposed cutting the education budget by $250,000, with the Republican members again voting against this proposal. The town council later approved the proposal, without Republican support, but the Board of Education will have to determine what cuts will need to be made to meet that end budget.

Board of Education Chair Nancy Kohler, a Democrat, said the board had presented some potential cuts to the community prior to the last referendum, but that final decisions had not yet been made. Some of the programs proposed for potential elimination, including the Beginner Bellringers and Smart Start preschool programs, generated significant community support after the community became aware that they were under threat.

While the Board of Ed did have potential cuts in mind, said Kohler, "at this time, there have been no decisions on which of those reductions will be made. We have some difficult conversations ahead."

"We are hopeful that the next referendum will result in a positive outcome so that the district can prepare for the upcoming school year, which will be here before we know it," she continued. "Once the community approves a final budget, the Board will deliberate and make the necessary reductions."

At the Town Council meeting, the council also voted unanimously to approve a temporary monthly budget for July 2026, and heard about a change to the Fire Department Length of Service Awards Program, which provides a small pension to the town's volunteer firefighters. The change in language will help the program comply with tax law and clarify benefits. They also voted unanimously to accept a $50,000 cybersecurity grant and approved appointments and reappointments to several committees, including the Inland Wetlands and Watercourse Agency, the Design Review Board, the Ethics Commission, and the Conservation-Lake Commission.

The Town Council will meet next for the town meeting on the proposed budget, followed by their regularly scheduled WPCA meeting, on July 7.

Chicken Barbecue July 18

The Portland Agricultural Fair and Portland Fish and Game Club will sponsor their third annual Chicken Barbecue on Saturday, July 18, from 4-7:30 p.m., at Portland Riverfront Park, 284 Brownstone Ave.

Adult meals cost $30 each and will consist of half a barbecued chicken with an ear of corn and French fries. A child's meal, for children under 12, will consist of chicken tenders, an ear of corn and French fries. Soda and water will be available for purchase. Meals can either be eaten onsite or take them to go. Entertainment will be provided by Paul Christopher and Round 3. Also, the raffle will be held once again.

Tickets can be purchased from any Portland Fair or Portland Fish and Game member or at Bud's Café on Main Street.

River Raft Race to Return

Organizers have officially announced the 52nd annual Connecticut River Raft Race, set for Saturday, July 25. This event is the oldest and largest self-supporting raft race in Connecticut.

This year, the race starts at 10 a.m. on the shoals off the south end of Gildersleeve Island (hug the eastern shore for the fastest route!), and finishes at Birdon Marina, 37 Riverview St. Distance is approximately 3.6 to 4 miles down the scenic Connecticut River

There will be a Captains' Meeting (mandatory for registration) on Saturday, July 11, at 10 a.m., at Birdon Marina

Expect a festive atmosphere at the finish line with live music, food, awards, and plenty of shore-side cheering. All proceeds from the race — a 501(c)(3) nonprofit — benefit local children's charities in the Portland and Middletown area.

To participate, there needs to be a minimum crew of three people per raft. Minimum raft size is 4'x 8' at the waterline. Rafts must be 100% homemade; no commercial hulls. Use foam, plastic barrels, buckets, scrap wood, or recycled materials. Rafts must be human-powered only (paddles, oars, poles, sails, pedal power — get creative!). Life jackets (Coast Guard-approved) are required and must be worn at all times. Sneakers or appropriate footwear are also mandatory.

Every raft also needs a support boat, for towing to the start and safety.

Cost is a $25 donation per crew member. To enter, download the form and hold-harmless agreement from www.ctriverraftrace.org. Notarize it (a notary will be available at the Captains' Meeting) and submit with your donation.

The official event booklet and website offer basic and advanced raft-building guides, safety tips, and full rules. Past racers have floated everything from picnic-table rafts to elaborate themed masterpieces.

Visit www.ctriverraftrace.org for more information, including the entry form, 2026 promotional materials, tide information, raft-building resources, and more.

Fall Soccer Registration Open

Portland Soccer Club has announced fall 2026 registration is now open.

The state is moving to new birthday cutoffs for soccer teams. Players will be grouped according to birthdays on or after Aug. 1 of each year with kids born up to July 31 of the following year. The state has implemented a new registration system. When you log in at clubs.bluesombrero.com/portlandsoccerclub, the registration system will ask for your player's information, including birthdate. New Travel players will need to upload a birth certificate for age verification.

Travel Season: Register by Friday, June 12. Cost is $170. Late registrations are not guaranteed a spot on a travel team. New players will receive uniforms, included in the registration fee. The season begins in September and runs until late October or early November. Evaluations are mandatory and are held at the Portland Rec Complex; dates and times will be announce. Players bring cleats, shin guards, a water bottle, and an appropriately sized ball. Please do not wear any gear with any local children's soccer club logos.

Travel is for the following groups of players by birthdate: U9: 8/1/2017 to 7/31/2018; U10: 8/1/2016 to 7/31/2017; U11: 8/1/2015 to 7/31/2016; U12: 8/1/2014 to 7/31/2015; U13: 8/1/2013 to 7/31/2014; U14: 8/1/2012 to 7/31/2013.

Rec Season: Registrations will be due in late August or early September. Cost is $75. Late registrations are subject to a late fee. Each Dribbler and Kicker player will receive a team jersey. Each Pre-K player will receive a jersey and a size-3 ball. The season is from September to October. All games are Saturday mornings at the Portland Recreational Complex. Kickers have an additional practice on Wednesdays.

Rec is for the following groups of players by birthdate: U4: 8/1/2022 to 7/31/2023 (PreK); U5: 8/1/2021 to 7/31/2022 (Dribblers); U6: 8/1/2020 to 7/31/2021 (Dribblers); U7: 8/1/2019 to 7/31/2020 (Kickers); U8: 8/1/2018 to 7/31/2019 (Kickers).

Financial assistance is available on a limited basis for both Travel and Rec soccer.

For additional questions about Travel and Rec soccer, contact Chad Wilson (president) at nosliw.dahc@gmail.com; Chris Donahue (recreational director) at Donahuecj@sbcglobal.net; or Jeffrey LaBonte (assisting with registrations) at 714jrl@gmail.com.

Local Lawyer Joins Radio Board

At its recent quarterly meeting, the board of directors of Connecticut Radio Fellowship voted local lawyer Ronald Kutz onto the board for a three-year term.

Ronald Kutz

Kutz has operated the Kutz Law Office, a private law practice in Portland, since 2000.

Connecticut Radio Fellowship is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that operates WIHS 104.9 FM Christian radio in Middletown. The station has been on the air since 1969. To learn more, visit www.WIHSradio.org.

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.

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.

Kindergarten Registration

Valley View School is holding kindergarten registration for the 2026-27 school year.

Parents/guardians whose children will be five years of age on or before Sept. 1, 2026, should: contact Valley View School at kregistration@portlandct.us to indicate if you will be registering your child for kindergarten. Please provide your child's full name, date of birth, phone number, address, and parent's names.

Further information regarding kindergarten registration will be provided once you contact the school.

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.

Selectmen Take First Steps to Discuss Charter Revision

By Anne Lilburn

Portland's Board of Selectman met for a speedy and efficient regular meeting on June 17, but First Selectman Mike Pelton, a Republican, did warn that the board had only one scheduled meeting for all of July. That meeting on July 15, he said, would likely be "packed."

The board's agenda took on many small procedural, ceremonial and community-oriented items. It started with the board reading into record a proclamation declaring June 19, 2026 as "Juneteenth Day" in the town and urging "all citizens to become more aware of the significance of this celebration in African American History and in the heritage of our nation, State of Connecticut and Town of Portland."

Later, Pelton also discussed the Portland Sage Masters, a group organized by resident Beau Doherty, which had participated in a state-wide bird count. Pelton said the group found over 75 birds at a recent event, with many found near Wangunk Meadows. He said that, due to the unique river ecosystem, with tidal flooding, birders from all over New England come to the area.

Pelton and others also spoke about the recent Riverbend Landing ribbon cutting, thanking committee chairs Lou Pear and Rick Scharr. Selectman John Dillon, a Democrat, mentioned how important he thought it had been to have included Wangunk Elder Gary Red Oak O'Neil in the event.

The board also had some general discussions around the idea of a "road diet" on Main Street, which would cut down lanes through part of the area. Pelton said that the town had been having conversations with the state Department of Transportation about the idea and that he thought it had the potential to reduce the speed of cars passing through, while also increasing available parking spaces and changing the look of the downtown area.

Pelton said town officials had talked about trying to time out the plan around the state's existing repaving schedule, but that the venture was worth discussing further at upcoming meetings to begin planning.

Andrea Alfano, a Democrat, said she wanted to address the Town Charter revision that had been discussed at previous meetings. Pelton said that the revision process continued to remain an agenda item, but that the town was figuring out costs associated with the revision. The discussion regarding the charter, he said, would be "kicked off" at the upcoming July meeting, with particular consideration given to rules requiring the formal process to be completed within a set window once started.

Still, Alfano said she wanted to make sure that the revision did not get neglected. She said that, after the previous meeting, she had spent some time looking at the charter to see areas that might need changes, and encouraged other members to do the same.

"Be prepared so we can hit the ground running," she said.

Pelton said he agreed, noting that he already had a list of things he might want to change.

John Dillon, a Democrat, said he thought that the charter (and a discussion around what needed to change in it), should be an agenda item at the next July meeting, and emphasized the importance of providing some direction to a committee that might start working on it.

"We need to give them some guidance, some areas that we think are important," he said. "They certainly can find others, but I think we need to give them some guidance."

"I'm sure a lot of us will have similar things [that we want to revise]," said Alfano, noting that anyone who frequently references the document to use it has encountered some areas in need of revision.

Vinnie Pitruzzello, a Republican, agreed that they should get started on it, saying that he, like Alfano, came prepared to discuss the charter tonight.

"I think the sooner we start noodling on this, the better we're gonna be," Pitruzzello said.

Alfano said that, among her noted charter issues, the distinction between boards, committees and commissions needed attention, as well as the rules regarding public hearings and meetings that discuss the same topics. She said she worried these things were unclear to the public as well.

Alfano also drew concern to majority and minority representation rules, saying, "we need to be thinking about the fact that 40% of voters in Portland are unaffiliated voters." She said that she worried that that might raise potential challenges when it came to appointing unaffiliated people to boards and commissions.

In the end, the board agreed to arrive prepared to discuss their areas of concern in the charter at the July 15 meeting.

"Everyone's got their homework," said Pelton.

Portland Library News & Notes

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

Hours: Monday through Thursday, 10 a.m. - 8 p.m., - Friday 10 a.m. - 5 p.m., - Saturday 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. **Holiday Closing:** The library will be closed Friday, July 3, and Saturday, July 4, for Independence Day.

Children's Programs: Cook Up an Adventure Summer Reading Program: 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.

Tasty Tales: Mondays at 10:30 a.m. 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.

Juggler Ned Gelfars: Wednesday, July 8, 6:30 p.m. *The Ned Show* features comedy, juggling, unicycling and fire-eating, plus audience participation. This show will be held on the Town Green and move into the library's Mary Flood Room in case of inclement weather. Registration opens Monday, June 29, at 10 a.m.

Colonial Cooking: Monday, July 13, 3:30 p.m., for ages 9 and up (or over age 5 with adult). Watch a demonstration on how to cook some popular recipes from the Revolutionary War times. Try succotash, johnny cakes, and apple fritters while learning about some of the heroes and key moments from the war such as Sybil Ludington's ride, the kidnapping of Chauncey Judd, and Connecticut's favorite son Nathan Hale. Registration opens Monday, June 29, at 10 a.m.

Stuffed Animal Sleepover: Wednesday, July 15, 6:30 p.m. Leave your (second) favorite stuffed animal at the library after a special storytime and pick them up the next day to hear about their adventures. Registration opens Monday, June 29, at 10 a.m.

Flying High Disc Dogs: Wednesday, July 22, 6:30 p.m., on the Town Gree. Witness backflips, tricks, and extreme distance catches in this family-friendly show. Rain date is Thursday, Aug. 6, at 6:30 p.m. Registration opens Monday, June 29, at 10 a.m.

Science Heroes: Wednesday, July 29, 6:30 p.m. Harness the power of pressure and energy with the Toilet Tornado. Experiment with physical vs. chemical changes with the Disappearing Polymer. Observe the effects of physical explosions, angles, and trajectory with the Hydro-Cannon. Registration opens Monday, June 29, at 10 a.m.

Summer Smoothie Party: Thursday, July 9, 3 p.m., for kids going into grades six and up. Choose your fruits, yogurts and other ingredients, then hop on the bike (loaned to the library from Middletown's Perk on Main coffee shop), and soon you'll sip on a smoothie. Registration opens Monday, June 29, at 10 a.m.

Four-Fold Quesadillas: Thursday, July 16, 3 p.m., for kids going into grades six and up. There will be a variety of ingredients available for you to choose from. Registration opens Monday, June 29, at 10 a.m.

Murder Mystery: Homicide at the Tacky Sweater Shindig: Thursday, July 23, 3 p.m., for kids going into grades six and up. You will make "to die for" holiday memories for years to come. Dress to impress in your tacky sweater best. Registration opens Monday, June 29, at 10 a.m.

Library Lock-In: Friday, July 31, 7-10 p.m., for kids going into grades six and up. Come after the library closes for games, crafts, and food. Early sign-up suggested. Registration opens Monday, June 29, at 10 a.m.

Adult Programs: Photo Exhibit Reception: Saturday, July 25, 1 p.m. "We the People" by John Bula will be on exhibit at the library July 2-Aug. 8. Bula's "free-form puzzles" are his tribute to and illustration of American history. He has been assembling these collages of American Flags from cutouts from magazines, newspapers and advertisements for 28 years, with the average flag taking him three months to complete. The July 25 reception is sponsored by the Friends of the Portland Library.

Adult Summer Reading Program: Cook Up an Adventure: When you sign up, 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. Then, 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.

Movie: Wednesday, July 8, 1 p.m. *You, Me & Tuscany* (2026; rated PG-13) will be shown. Run time is 105 minutes.

America 250 Book Discussion: *George Washington's Secret Six: The Spy Ring That Saved the American Revolution*: Thursday, July 9, 6:30 p.m. When George Washington beat a hasty retreat from New York City in August 1776, many thought the American Revolution might soon be over. Instead, Washington rallied – thanks in large part to a little-known, top-secret group called the Culper Spy Ring. Copies of the book are available at the library and on Libby for all patrons with a Portland library card. Space is limited.

Colonial Cooking from the Revolutionary Era: Monday, July 27, 6 p.m. Join Matt Yanarella for an adult and teen event that celebrates classic New England cooking from the Revolutionary era. Yanarella will also discuss popular Revolutionary War history. 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 chat with others who enjoy knitting and crocheting. Please note: there is no meeting on July 4, because the library will be closed.

From the First Selectman's Desk

Pelton

June is usually a busy month in Portland. School winds down, budget season wraps up, summer vacations begin, and Town Hall slows down just a little.

Not this year. It feels like everything is happening at once – in a good way – and I wanted to share a few updates from around town.

Celebrating Our Students: First and foremost, congratulations to the 78 graduates of Portland High School's Class of 2026. Graduation on June 15 was a wonderful evening despite the occasional 35 mph wind gust! Special congratulations go to our valedictorian, Lillian Gaetani, and salutatorian, Allison Tine, whose speeches were thoughtful and inspiring. I also want to recognize Student Senate President Eunice Ngunjiri, who served as Master of Ceremonies. Her heartfelt remarks about belonging, growth, and family captured the spirit of the evening and left a lasting impression on everyone in attendance.

Immediately afterward, I joined fellow chaperones Mike O'Rourke and Ryan Keating for Project Graduation. We took 60 graduates to the Sports Center in Shelton for an all-night celebration filled with laser tag, ice skating, games, and more. I've participated in Project Graduation for more than a decade, and my favorite part always comes near the end of the night. The excitement settles down, and the students begin to realize this may be the last time they're all together as a class. It's a bittersweet moment, and one I'm grateful to witness each year.

School's Out: I also had the opportunity to speak to our remaining high school students on Juneteenth. Despite a few technical difficulties, I was able to share a simple message: we all have the ability – and the responsibility – to make the world a little better through our everyday actions.

Afterward, the students enjoyed popcorn, lemon ices, games, and one last chance to spend time together before summer officially begins. By the time you read this, school will be out, and summer will be underway.

School Renovation Project Moves Forward: The newly formed School Renovation Committee is beginning to take shape. We've already received more than 15 applications from residents with expertise in education, construction, finance, and other fields. If you're interested in serving on the committee or simply want to offer your expertise as a resource, please reach out. Resumes can be sent to me at mpelton@portlandct.org. Interviews are beginning this week.

In addition, our superintendent and his team successfully completed and submitted all of the required paperwork to the state ahead of the June 30 deadline – a significant milestone in moving the project forward.

River Bend Landing Continues to Shine: Portland's newest park, River Bend Landing, has now been open for about two weeks, and every day more people discover just how special it is. If you haven't visited yet, stop by at 241 Airline Avenue. Bring a fishing pole, a kayak – or maybe just a latte – and enjoy the river. And between you and me, it might be a pretty good place to watch the Middletown fireworks on June 27.

Around Town: Construction of the East Main Street sidewalks continues and will soon extend past the cemetery toward Spring Street. Work on Main Street has paused temporarily but will resume in the coming weeks.

Our Juneteenth celebration at the middle school was another wonderful community event. One of the highlights for me was hearing Eric Grant, Portland's first full-time African American police officer, speak about his experiences growing up in Chester and serving our community. His remarks were powerful and resonated deeply with the audience.

The Knights of Columbus Annual Car Show returns Friday, June 26, from 3 to 8 p.m. It's always a fun event for a great cause.

Water Service Issues: We've received several reports of water pressure issues in different parts of town. We're actively investigating the cause with assistance from our Water and Sewer Department as well as the MDC. If you're experiencing problems, please call Town Hall or send us a message. We'll continue to share updates as we learn more.

Economic Development Updates: I'm meeting with the ownership and construction teams from the Nordic Spa this week to get a better sense of the timeline for opening. There continues to be tremendous excitement around this project, and I look forward to sharing more information soon.

Meanwhile, Brainerd Place recently received its Certificate of Occupancy for its second apartment building. As new residents move in, Portland benefits not only from additional tax revenue but also from the increased activity and energy they bring to our local businesses and community.

And speaking of investments in our future, the town was recently awarded a $634,000 grant for sidewalk and connectivity improvements on High Street. This project complements our upcoming school renovations and continues our efforts to make Portland safer and more walkable. Thank you to state Sen. Norm Needleman and state Rep. Christie Carpino for their support.

A Word About Teamwork: I'd like to close by recognizing the members of our Board of Selectmen: Deputy First Selectman John Dillon, Jim Tripp, Vinny Pitruzzello, Andrea Alfano, Dave Kuzminski and Bobby Hettrick.

We don't always agree on every issue – and frankly, that's healthy. But each member takes their responsibilities seriously, comes prepared, and works hard to find common ground. It's been a pleasure serving alongside them.

Looking Ahead: In the coming months, we'll be forming an efficiency committee to explore ways to reduce costs and improve town operations. We'll also begin discussions about traffic safety initiatives, including speed enforcement cameras, a possible road diet on Main Street, and other projects aimed at making our roads safer.

And don't forget our Farmers Market at Veterans Park Friday, June 26 from 3-7 p.m. The first market of the season was small but mighty, and we're excited for this next one with more vendors, music, and food.

As always, thank you for reading and for all the feedback you share with me. If your organization has an upcoming event—or if you simply have an idea to make Portland a better place—please reach out.

My goal is simple: help connect people, celebrate what's happening in our town, and keep moving Portland forward together.

Have a wonderful summer.

Michael Pelton, Portland First Selectman

Juneteenth Celebrated with Thoughtful Reflection, Calls to Action

By Anne Lilburn

Portland celebrated Juneteenth this past weekend with live music, a vendor fair, free ice cream and, most importantly, thoughtful speeches.

Wind pushed the event – held at Portland Middle School – indoors, but vendors set up inside the main entrance area of the school and food trucks set up outside to accommodate guests. The event was organized by the town's Committee on Solidarity and was the eighth annual Juneteenth event hosted by the town.

Juneteenth commemorates the end of slavery in the United States, celebrating the day, June 19, 1865, when a Union Army general informed enslaved Black Americans in Galveston, Texas, that slavery had been abolished. The holiday is sometimes called "American's second Independence Day," and while celebrations of the event date back to the 19th century, the day did not become a federal holiday until 2021.

Portland's annual celebration featured several speakers, including Barbara Shaw of Voices of Portland, who explained the history behind the holiday to the crowd, and Barbara Roane of Middletown's Zion First Baptist Church, who gave an opening invocation and later led the crowd in the singing of "Lift Every Voice and Sing."

First Selectman Mike Pelton, a Republican, offered up a thoughtful speech in which he encouraged unity.

"Sometimes days like this can feel complicated," he told the small crowd. "We live in a time where people argue constantly – online, on television, even at dinner tables. People are quick to label each other. Quick to assume the worst. Quick to retreat into teams and corners. And for many of us, that can feel exhausting."

Pelton said that, despite that, he believed that "most people are still good and will do the right thing – whether people are watching or not. Most people still want to belong. Most people still want to feel respected. Most people still want their town, their school, their workplace, their community, and their country to be better than they are today. And that matters, because Juneteenth is not just about remembering a moment in history. … It's about remembering what human beings are capable of when we refuse to give up on the idea that things can improve."

Pelton continued, "Freedom did not arrive all at once. Justice did not arrive all at once. Progress never does. It happens because ordinary people decide to keep moving society forward – one conversation, one action, one act of courage at a time,"

Pelton also encouraged people to recall Martin Luther King Jr.'s famous quote:

"Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that"

"That's not just poetry," said Pelton. "That's instruction."

"Juneteenth reminds us that history can bend toward justice – but only when people are willing to push it there," he said.

Former Police Officer Shares Story

Eric Grant, a former Portland Police officer, spoke to the crowd about his own experiences growing up in the area, splitting his time between the very different communities of Chester, where he spent most of his time with his immediate family, and Portland, where his grandparents lived.

"My childhood was fully embedded in the all-white community and town of Chester, where we were the only Black family in town," he said. At the same time, "I split my childhood, running and playing in the predominantly Black and brown small sections of Portland and in areas of Middletown."

Grant said, "I lived and learned so much from living in these two racially split worlds, and later on I realized that this was God's way of preparing me to become the first Black full-time police officer for the town of Portland in 1995."

By the time he had become a police officer, Grant said, "I had already learned that even though I wore a uniform, carried a gun, and had authority, I was still seen by many Americans as a lowly Black man."

He shared the experience of traveling to other states while serving in the Connecticut Army National Guard and United States Army and being warned, along with other Black soldiers, to avoid certain areas due to the threat of racism, "despite the uniform that we wore, despite the flag on us."

Those experiences continued as he changed his uniform, he said.

"Many people did not see me as a police officer coming to their door to help them," he said, "but they saw 'the Black police officer.' And I knew that oftentimes people didn't remember my name, but they knew me as 'the Black cop' — not only in Portland, but also in surrounding towns."

"I took on that responsibility of being the Black cop as a calling," he said, "and pushed to make sure that Black, brown and all minorities were treated equally, as humans are expected to be. Despite often dealing with people at their worst, I felt they should be treated with dignity."

Grant said that, while he never witnessed any direct racism among his all-white fellow officers, there were inevitable unconscious biases that sometimes crept into police work.

He recalled responding to a call for a teen party involving underage drinking at a white family's house, and later to a similar scene at a Black family's residence in the Chatham Court housing complex. At the white family's house, he said, the kids were dispersed and the home's owners made aware. At the Black family's home, he said, calls were made for backup officers from neighboring towns, and officers were more "physically aggressive" with the partygoers, "want[ing] to put the kids in cuffs and take them into custody."

Grant said he remembered speaking up: talking to his supervisor on behalf of the kids at that party in Chatham Court, and reminding him of how things had been handled at the other home. Grant said he asked to call the family who lived there and made sure they could "resolve the situation peacefully."

"I took on my time as 'the Black cop' as an awesome responsibility to try to correct, even in a small way, the sometimes-correct portrayal of the racist cop. I tried treating people with patience and humility, no matter their race," he said. "Yes, I've been the first Black police officer in the town of Portland, and in all these situations, I still felt blessed to have that responsibility. I owe these opportunities I have been given to the arduous struggles and the deaths of my Black people before and after Juneteenth."

Former First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield, who was involved with the Committee on Solidarity's Juneteenth Committee, described the event as a "rousing success," and said that the date for next year's event was already set for Saturday, June 19, 2027.

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, June 28, worship will be led by members of the Ministry of Spiritual Life, with deacon Louise Wright providing the sermon.

Camp Faith: For the summer, Sunday morning Church School has transformed into a camping adventure in Fellowship Hall. Children will explore God's world through hands-on activities, games, crafts and stories. Each week will feature a different camp-themed experience designed to spark curiosity and wonder. Children will create a garden, build birdhouses, learn about animals, enjoy water activities, share stories, create arts and crafts, and more.

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

Portland High School Class of 2026

The members of the Portland High School Class of 2026 are:

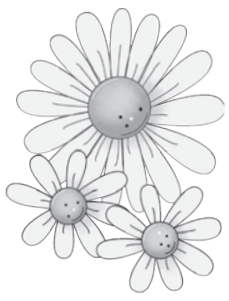
Joshua Abbott, Hasan Abdulqader, Conor Adanti, Nicole Alano, Adella Alberino, Joseph Angersola, Cristina Austin * ++ ^; Elizabeth Barr, * ++ #, Jefferson Batista Rosario, Landon Black,

Peyton Black, Evan Brown, Breckin Burke, Hayden Burke *, Aiden Burrus * @ ++ #, Hailey Bustamante, * ++, Aaron Ciarleglio, Nyla Clarke, Gabrielle Coddette, Dylan Cohen * ++, Maksim Connolly, Martin Coppola, Cole Coppolino, Brady Daggett, Adam Dean, Gracie DeRing *, Jayden Dorsey, Drey Farmer ++, Delano Fenty, *** ++ ^ #, Jacob Gaudino, Juliana Grillo, Evelyn Hair * @, Gerry Hall, * ++ ^ #, Elizabeth Hanna @, Toby Hunter * ++ #, Corbin Jacobson, Cayleb James, Alev Keating, Logan Kehoe, @ ++, Joshua King, Ella Klotz, ++, Leah Lamson ++, Jonah Lavallee, Rita Lin * ++ #, Ebarlinn Liranzo, Cameron Lopez, Caden Lorenti, Ayden Luna;

Caleb MacKay, Kylon Martinez, Spencer Masterson, Ryan McGrew, Dzejla Medunjanin ++, Leana Mierzejewski, * ++; Cade Modon, Ryan Modon, Eunice Ngunjiri, * ++; Patrick O'Rourke,

Kaelyn O'Shea, Romeo Overton @, Evan Piacente, Logan Prince * ++, Brody Quinn, Skyla Rascati @, Jazlin Rios-Pina, Lucius Rivera, Joshua Rosado, Liam Rowe, @ ++, Emelia Rowland, * ++, Kiley Scott, * ++, Cate Stone *, Abraham Suarez Velasquez, Ja'Taveon Thomas, Allison Tine ** ++ ^ #, Mara Tuttle * #, Kai Vardon, * @ ++ #, Ethan Wells, Felix Woodward, Xiaoting Zhang @ ^ #.

*** Valedictorian, National Honor Society
** Salutatorian, National Honor Society
* National Honor Society
@ National Technical Honor Society
# Top 10 of Class
++ Tri-M Music Honor Society
^ Seal of Biliteracy



Senior Center News & Notes

The Waverly Senior Center, 7 Waverly Avenue, announces the following. **Registration is required for all programs** unless noted; for more information or to register, call 860-342-6761. Senior center hours are Monday-Thursday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Friday, 9 a.m. to noon. Visit www.portlandct.org/senior-services for more information.

Mobile Food Pantry: The Food Share Mobile Pantry comes to the Food Bank every other Monday. The next date is June 29.

Weekly Programs: Unless noted, all programs are free. **Monday, 6/29: Light Aerobics,** 9:30-10:30 a.m.

Tuesday, 6/30: Bears on a Journey, 9:30-11 a.m. Help make fleece teddy bears for cancer patients. Bears on a journey are seeking donations of light fleece (one yard or more) for making teddy bears for cancer patients throughout the state. If you would like to donate, call 860-342-0809; **Congregate Meal,** noon – $3 suggested donation (must fill out form). Menu: sliced turkey with gravy, mashed potatoes, green beans, string cheese, cranberry sauce; **Coupons for Troops,** 1-4 p.m.; **Setback,** 1 p.m.; **SyncoCize II**, 5-6 p.m. – fee is donation to instructor.

Wednesday, 7/1: Light Aerobics, 9:30-10:30 a.m.; **Chair Yoga with Gia,** 10:30-11:15 a.m. – fee is a $5 donation to instructor; **Fiber Arts Group,** noon.

Thursday, 7/2: Stretch & Tone, 9:30 a.m.; **Knit & Stitch,** 10 a.m.; **Congregate Meal**, noon – $3 suggested donation (must fill out form). Menu: turkey sloppy joes on a bun, pesto squashes, sweet potato wedges, string cheese, orange; **Mah Jongg**, 12:30 p.m.; **Scrabble**, 1 p.m.

Friday, 7/3: Center closed for the Fourth of July.

Special Events: Unless noted, **registration is required for all programs**. Also, unless noted, all programs are free.

Bingo Canceled: Bingo with Sean, scheduled for July 8, has been canceled.

Wednesday, July 1: Trip to Elizabeth Park and Lunch. Leave the center at 9:30 a.m. There is a $5 ride fee; pay for your own meal.

Monday, July 6: Heart of Health & Community Wellness Series. There will be a Blood Pressure Clinic from 10-11 a.m., and a Chatting with Chatham Health wellness presentation on Gut Health from 10:45-11:15 a.m.

Monday, July 6: Bloom Therapeutic Plant and Nature Program: Growing a Tea Garden, 1 p.m. There is a $20 fee.

Thursday, July 9: Sweet Treats and Conversation with Community Leaders, 1 p.m. This month's community leaders are to be determined.

Wednesday, July 15: Trip to Lyman Allyn Museum & Lunch. Leave the center at 9:15 a.m. Ride fee is $5 and admission fee is $9.

Wednesday, July 15: Walking Club, 9 a.m. Meet at the intersection of Breezy Corners and the Air Line Trail.

Wednesday, July 15: Threads of Time Community Quilt Celebration, 12:30-2 p.m. All are invited to this celebration of quilts, community and shared heritage. A light lunch and tea will be served.

Friday, July 17: Visit the Shrine of Lourdes in Litchfield with lunch at the on-campus cafe. Leave the center at 9:30 a.m. There is a $5 ride fee, and you pay for your own lunch.

Monday, July 21: Veteran Benefits Workshop, 10 a.m.-noon. Learn about programs and services offered to veterans and surviving spouses.

Thursday July 23: Drumming Circle, 2-3 p.m. No experience needed and instruments will be provided. Cost is a $5 donation to the food bank. Registration required.

Monday, July 27: Monthly technology workshop, 11 a.m. This month's program will be an introductory session for the new Portland Senior Center Digital Legacy Project. Explore ways to share your memories and pastimes through written reflections and/or digital storytelling. Create a collection of your history and heritage to share with family and friends.

Monday, July 27 & Tuesday, July 28: Elder Classes at Camp Bethel. Sign up for one or two days of day classes at Camp Bethel. Bus leaves each morning at 9 a.m. and returns at about 3 p.m. Classes and lunch are free. Visit the center for an application to attend and for more information about classes that are available. There is a $5 ride fee per day of attendance.

Medical Rides: The center offers ADA-accessible transportation for seniors to medical rides. The fee is $5/person, round trip. Please give a 2-week notice.

Foot Care: The center is taking appointments for a Foot Clinic with Stacey Cormier, RN; services starting at $35. Call to register and for more information.

Massage by Joan: Thursdays and Fridays, by appointment only. Call Joan at 860-301-6507.

State Funding Comes to Portland, East Hampton

By Anne Lilburn

Both Portland and East Hampton are celebrating recent public funding wins, with state grant money coming in to help support local projects.

In Portland, the town will receive $634,800 from the Connecticut Department of Transportation's Community Connectivity Grant Program (CCGP), which, according to its website, "seeks to improve accommodations for bicyclists and pedestrians in urban, suburban and rural community centers."

"The goal of the CCGP is to make conditions safer and more accommodating for pedestrians and bicyclists, thereby encouraging more people to use these healthy and environmentally sustainable modes of travel," according to the site. "Making these improvements will make Connecticut's community centers more attractive places to live and work."

Portland First Selectman Mike Pelton said that the money would "go a long way to continue the work that we're doing on High Street near Valley View School, as well as our high school [and] middle school complex."

"At the end of the day," said Pelton, "we appreciate any State funding that allows us to improve our infrastructure and make it easier for our residents to walk, jog or ride their bikes around town. The best towns have the best connections!"

State Sen. Norm Needleman echoed Pelton's enthusiasm for the funding. Portland was one of three towns in his district, along with Essex and Deep River, to receive the DOT grant.

"These grants will pay a significant role in improving key downtown and town center, making them more accessible and spurring more local walkability," said Needleman.

* * *

In East Hampton, Needleman was celebrating another funding win, with the town receiving a $250,000 brownfield remediation grant from the state Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), to be used for cleaning up the town-owned property at 3 Walnut St. The 1.53-acre parcel, which is also known as the former water tower property, will eventually be redeveloped into a public park.

The grant was awarded through DEEP's Brownfields into Greenfields (BIG) program, which relies on federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) CERCLA funding. The state program supports local municipalities in their efforts to remediate contaminated properties with the goal of using them as public green spaces, and East Hampton was one of four municipalities in the state to receive such funding this round. It received the largest grant out of the four.

"The BIG Grant Program allows DEEP to assist our municipal partners and non-profit organizations in their continuing efforts to turn brownfields that pose an environmental and economic burden into assets that make these communities better places to live, work and play," said DEEP Commissioner Katie Dykes.

The grant was the end result of a long process, said Brownfields Redevelopment Agency Chair Ryan Baldassario, who noted that the Brownfields Redevelopment Agency has been in existence for "over 20 years." This latest grant, he said, was possible in part thanks to previous funding that the town had received to assess the cleanup needs at this site and at several other town-owned Brownfield properties. It was also possible, he emphasized, due to the hard work and varying expertise of committee members.

"We have folks that have backgrounds in environmental science, in librarian work," he said. "I'm a university professional. We have folks that come from different walks of life that are helpful in taking different perspectives, reading the drafts and giving their two cents."

East Hampton Town Manager David Cox agreed, saying, "The East Hampton Brownfields Redevelopment Agency has really done great work moving these properties forward again. The members are the ones drafting these grant applications; truly relying on their experiences professionally and personally. While some of them are in the environmental area, others have education and research backgrounds that help round out the team."

Cox noted that the town and Brownfields Agency previously removed a water tower and structures on the site, and said that "the vision is to continue clean-up efforts at the property by tackling soils and, at some point, the sediments in the pond on the property to develop it into a multi-use amenity for the Village Center. "

"The concept plans call for a park-like setting that can be used for small events with recreational seating in amphitheater style along the pond slope, paths along the Pocotopaug creek providing views of the historic brownstone dam, and a connection to the Air Line Trail through the Main Street parking lot via a bridge over the creek."

He noted that these concept plans are available to the public via the 2021 Village Center plan found at www.easthamptonct.gov/1285/Plans-Studies.

Though the Walnut Street property will eventually become a park, this round of funding will just get it started on that the journey. Baldassario said that the cleanup might take a year or so, because with any brownfield site, soil and materials that are cleaned up must be disposed of property by carefully chosen vendors.

Baldassario said that the agency and the town would likely seek future funding to finish transforming the property into its finished form. He noted its ideal location for such a use.

"It's so connected to the village center, and right now it is kind of just underutilized," he said. "Right now you can go back there and see the creek and see this historic brownstone dam, but it's hard to get back there because it's all overgrown and underutilized.

"We're hoping to clean that up so that we can get better access to that waterway, so that the community has another space, another kind of pretty space to be in, to entice visitors, to allow folks to see the beauty of the town when they're coming from the Air Line Trail, and just to better use that space."

Baldassario emphasized that this wasn't the only town-owned brownfield property, so the Brownfields Agency's work would continue to assess, clean up and redevelop the other remaining properties as well. He said that the agency was looking to involve the public with meetings and informative online resources this fall.

Needleman said he was hopeful for the project's future.

"I'm encouraged by DEEP's support of our community and am grateful to state leaders for their support," he said. "I'll be watching with interest as work continues here."

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 retuning 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. Donations 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.

Free Show Coming… **Tony Rome and The Peacemakers will be stop at Portland Saturday, July 4, for a free show at Adams Plaza, Route 66 in Portland. This year's tour is called the Sons of Liberty tour. All are welcome. This show runs one hour, and starts at 2 p.m. Rain date is July 5. Bring a lawn chair. Pictured is the band at last year's Halloween show. The group will have another Halloween show this year, on Oct. 31 at Concentric Brewing. The band will also play the Portland Fair on Sunday, Oct. 4.**

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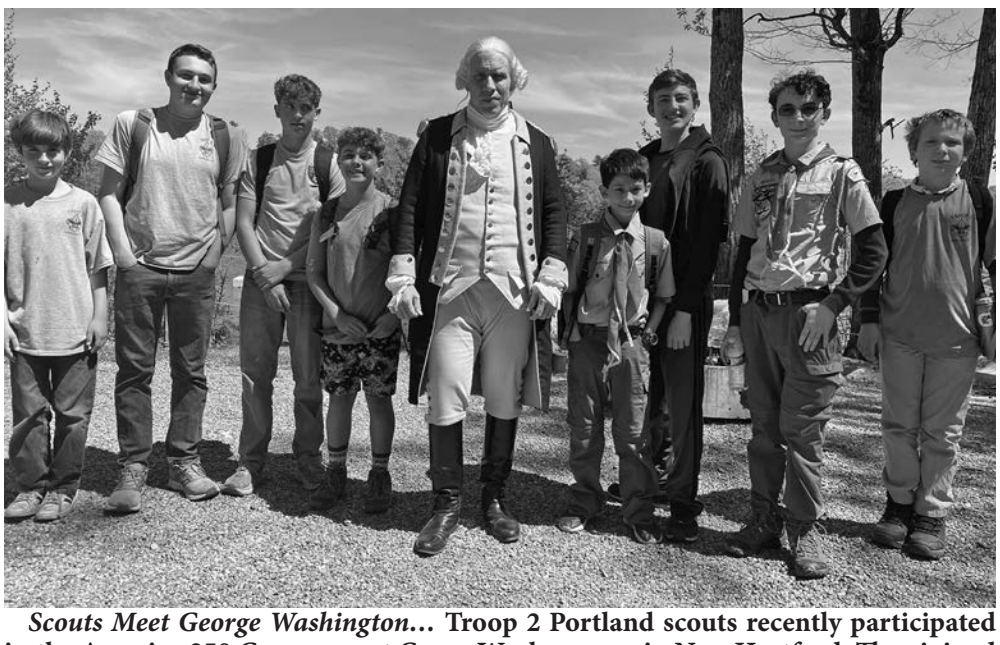

Scouts Meet George Washington… **Troop 2 Portland scouts recently participated in the America 250 Camporee at Camp Workcoeman in New Hartford. They joined hundreds of other scouts in patriotic-themed activities. A George Washington impersonator rode in on a horse to speak during the opening ceremony then spent the day with the scouts. Troop 2 is active in the Portland community and welcomes youth seeking outdoor adventure, leadership development, friendship and lifelong memories. For more information, email barbarahelming@att.net.**

Scholarship awarded… **The Garden Clubs of Portland, CT Scholarship was presented by garden club member, Margaret Stewart, to graduating Portland High School senior, Emelia Rowland, at the school's award ceremony on May 21. The $500 award recognizes Emelia's outstanding academic performance and her plans to attend Central Connecticut State University to major in Civil Engineering with a focus on environmental studies. The garden clubs' scholarship supports students as part of their ongoing commitment to local education and community growth.**

Scholarship awarded… **Senior Cristina Austin was presented the Portland Exchange Club's annual John W. Goodrich scholarship at the recent awards ceremony. Cristina demonstrated an unwavering commitment to her community throughout her high school years through her involvement in the National Honor Society, PHS Music Boosters, and Key Club, as well as creating *Beads of Hope* for cancer patients. She is planning to attend Saint Michael's College in Colchester, Vermont, majoring in health science (pre-dental). Pictured with Cristina is the Exchange's Scholarship committee member Cyndy Deckelman.**

Parks and Rec. News & Notes

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

Slamma-Jamma Summer Basketball Camp: Monday-Thursday, June 29-July 2, 9 a.m.-2:15 p.m., at Brownstone Intermediate School. Open to children in grade 3-8.

Summer Quest: Kiddie Camp is open to children ages 3.5 to entering Pre-K or Kindergarten, Base Camp is open to children entering grades 1-6 and Teen Camp is open to children entering grades 7-9. Contact Parks and Rec. to register.

Summer Concert Series: Tuesdays, July 14-Aug. 11, at 6:30 p.m., at Riverfront Park. Schedule: July 14: The Mick Louis Band; July 21: Great Hill Mountain Band; July 28: Kings of Karma; Aug. 4: Don't Tell Lisa; Aug. 11: Wicked Peach

Brownstone Track - 2026 Summer Series: Monday-Friday, July 6-17, 6-7:30 p.m. Open to kids ages 11-18.

Inspire Girls Basketball Camps: Week 1 is held Monday-Friday, July 6-10 at Gildersleeve School from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Week 2 is held Monday-Friday, Aug. 3-7. Cost for this program is just $20.

Skyhawks Tennis Camp: Monday-Thursday, July 13-16, 9 a.m.-noon, at the Portland High School tennis courts. Open to kids ages 1-12.

USTA Youth Tennis Lessons Summer (Grades 1-8): Tuesdays and Thursdays, July 21-Aug. 6, at the PHS tennis courts. Grades 1-2 meet from 5:30-6:30 p.m. and grades 3-8 from 6:30-7:30 p.m. All players in their first session receive and keep a new age-appropriate racquet and ball.

Lego S.T.E.A.M. Camps: Monday-Friday, July 20-24. Programs are offered for kids ages 5-6 and 7-9.

Multi-Sport Camp (Ages 2-5): Monday-Thursday mornings, July 6-9, on Portland's Town Green. Separate programs are offered for kids aged 2-5.

Kids' Blast: This is an afterschool (3-6 p.m.) childcare program available to students enrolled in grades K-6 in the Portland Public School System. Membership registration is now open for the 2026-27 school year.

Tai Chi for Long Life: Wednesdays, 9:30-10:15 a.m., or Saturdays, 10:30-11:15 a.m., at Riverfront Park.

Lucas Kirsche and Anna Piascik

CABE Award

Portland High School students Anna Piascik and Lucas Kirsche were recently recognized by the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE) with a Student Leadership Award.

Students are nominated to receive this award by their school principal. Students nominated should exhibit the following leadership skills: willingness to take on challenges, capability to make difficult decisions, concern for others, ability to work with others, willingness to commit to a project, diplomacy, ability to understand issues clearly, and the ability to honor a commitment.

Superintendent, Dr. Charles Britton, and the Portland Board of Education recognized award winners at the May 19, 2026 Board of Education meeting.

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.

Ongoing Book Sale at Library

Members of the Friends of the Portland Library have restocked and refreshed the selections in the Ongoing Book Sale at the library, located at 20 Freestone Ave.

Readers will find recently released hardcover fiction, portable paperbacks for beach reads and wide array of children's and young adult books. There is also a selection of DVDs for adults, families and kids. Puzzles, for $5 or less, will also be available.

The sale will take place all summer, in the hallway to the Mary Flood Room.

Dean's, President's List

Abby Doncet of Portland made the Dean's List and President's List at the University of Hartford.

Also, Marley Malanczuk and TJ Spada made the Dean's List at the university.

Dean's List

Portland residents Jackson Williams and Tyler Wydo made the spring 2026 Dean's List at Springfield College in Springfield, Mass.

Williams is majoring in exercise science/applied ES, and Wydo is majoring in accounting.

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.

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Trip to Lancaster

Zion Lutheran Church is sponsoring a five-day/four-night trip to Lancaster, Pa., Oct. 26-30 – and a deposit is due next week.

Travelers will receive admission to the Sight and Sound Millennium Theater to experience their *Joshua*; a show at the Magic & Wonder Theater; the Amish Experience Fisher family homestead and school; and Jacob's Choice at the F/X theater. Also included is a guided tour of Philadelphia; a guided tour of Lancaster; and a visit to the charming Kitchen Kettle Village.

The trip includes travel on a deluxe video-equipped motorcoach with restroom, four dinners, four breakfasts, and four nights lodging in a single hotel. Cost of this trip is $765 per person double occupancy ($934 pp single or $745 pp triple occupancy). A $75 deposit is due by June 27; with the balance due by Aug. 19.

For details & reservations, please contact Barbara Shaw at 860-262-3531.

Pollinator Week Buzzes into Portland

Pollinator Week runs through June 28 – and there is a special Scavenger Hunt taking place, sponsored by the Portland River Valley Garden Club. Participants are invited to visit Portland gardens and use clues to find pollinator friendly plants.

Clue sheets with directions are available at Portland Library. To earn a small prize, answer sheets should be completed and turned back in to Portland Library by Monday, June 29. All correct answer sheets will be entered into a drawing for a free pollinator-friendly perennial plant.

For more information, and for a downloadable form, visit the Portland River Valley Garden Club website at portland-river-valley-garden-club.blogspot.com, or look for the club on Facebook.

Dog License Renewals Due June 30

Dog owners are reminded that there is still time to license or renew their current licenses by Tuesday, June 30, to avoid penalty. Starting in July, a $1 monthly penalty will apply.

All dogs 6 months or older are required to be registered. New owners of dogs 6 months or older need to register their dog within 30 days of adoption. A recent state law also requires an owner of a dog going to a kennel to be licensed. Town Hall closes at 4:30 p.m. June 30.

The state-mandated registration fee is $8 for a spayed/ neutered dog, and $19 for a non-spayed/non-neutered dog. Certificate of spayed/neutered must be provided for first time licenses to receive the $8 fee amount. A rabies vaccination certificate must also be provided for first time licenses, or if the previous vaccination has expired.

The Portland town clerk's office is still accepting donations of dog and cat food until 2 p.m. on Tuesday, June 30, to enter the town's annual contest to determine which dog will wear the No. 1 dog tag for the upcoming year. The pet food collected will go to the Portland Food Bank, for those in temporary need.

More information can be found at www.portlandct.org/licenses-certificates or by calling the town clerk's office at 860-342-6743.

Town-Wide Revaluation

In accordance with Connecticut General Statutes, the Town of Portland is conducting its statistical five-year revaluation of all real estate properties for the Oct. 1, 2026 Grand List.

The town has contracted Tyler Technologies, Inc. to perform market analysis, sales validation inspections, and field reviews as part of the mass appraisal process, which the assessments will represent 70% of fair market value, in collaboration with the assessor's office.

Tyler Technologies, Inc. field personnel will carry official, town approved company identification badges and will have signed authorization letters that include contact information for town officials, including the Portland Police Department.

Property owners are encouraged to review their property record cards available through the online assessment database and report any discrepancies, omissions, or property changes to the assessor's office to ensure accurate, fair, and equitable assessments: www.portlandct.org/assessor.

Revaluation assessment notices will be mailed to taxpayers in December.

Time to Vote for Favorite Street Garden

The Portland Economic Development Commission and the Portland River-Valley Garden Club have encouraged businesses throughout town – and now people can vote on their favorites.

Voting for the Portland's Choice Award runs through June 28. There are two ways to vote: through a link on the Portland Community Facebook Group or with a paper ballot at the Portland Library or The Waverly Center in the designated ballot box.

This year's gardens include: Magic Mirror Unisex Salon, 248 Main St.; Savvy Swap Consignment and Highland Sol Flower Farm, 275 Main St.; Sarah's on Main, 246 Main St.; Connecticut Valley School of Music and Dance, 226 Main St.; Fabian's Pizza, 279 Main St.; Bud's Café, 158 Main St.; The Green Room, 260 Main St.; PegArch Architecture and Design and Tropical CT, 236 Main St.; Siltec, 283 Main St.;

Precise Grading and Earthworks, 218 Main St.; Scissor Happy, 864 Portland Cobalt Rd.; Your Health Solutions, 862 Portland Cobalt Rd.; The Wedding Dress, 162 Main St.; Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St.; Portland Parks and Recreation, 265 Main St.; Portland Ale House, 188 Main St.; Mirabito Energy Products, 276 Main St.; Winchester Café, 1374 Portland Cobalt Rd.; Dog Tales, 283 Main St.; Tommy's Pizza, 330 Marlborough St.; BeStronger Personal Training, Dance with Miss Alicia and Inner Circle Martial Arts, 332 Marlborough St.

Results will be announced in the *Rivereast* in a few weeks after all of the ballots have been tallied.

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 as well.

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.

Lawn Irrigation Inspections

Town inspectors are conducting inspections of irrigation systems on the public water supply.

In order to do this your system must be activated. If for some reason it is not activated, please call the Public Works office at 860-342-6733 to schedule an appointment for a different time.

If the inspector comes out and your system is not activated, you will still be charged the $75 inspection fee.

Car Show Tonight

The Knights of Columbus Freestone Council 7 will host its annual Car Show Friday, June 26, from 3-8 p.m., in the parking lot of the Church of Saint Mary.

This family-friendly community event promises many vintage cars and trucks, as well as a silent auction featuring a Trek Fx+1 MidStep electric bike (retail value $2,200) along with $3,000 worth of other prizes.

This year's car show is dedicated to Portland Youth and Family Services. Ten new bikes and helmets for kids 12 years old and under will be given away via a free raffle during the car show.

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Scholarship winner... **Abundant Life of the Assemblies of God Church announced Matthew Vilardo as the winner of their $500 scholarship. Vilardo and his family have been church attendees for several years. He has served in the church in numerous ways, including assisting in children's church. Vilardo was selected as the winner by a blind vote, and the scholarship was presented to him on May 20.**

Don't Forget to License Your Dog

June is dog licensing month in Connecticut. The law requires you to, by the end of the month, license any dog that is six months or older. You can obtain your license in the following ways:

Come into the town clerk's office in person;

License by mail, be sure to include a stamped, self-addresses envelope, proper documentation and a check made payable to "Town of Colchester";

Online at colchesterct.gov/townclerk/pages/dog-licenses.

A rabies certificate as well as validation of being spayed or neutered is required at the time of licensing. If you are renewing a license, be sure a current rabies certificate is on file with the town clerk's office. Office hours are Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m., and Thursday, 8:30 a.m.-7 p.m.

By state law, penalty charges are added if licenses are not renewed by June 30. The penalty is $1 per month starting July 1.

For more information, email dogowners@colchesterct.gov or call 860-537-7215.

Special Education Records to be Destroyed

The Colchester Board of Education will destroy any and all special education records and section 504 records of students who graduated or would have graduated with the class of 2020.

If any student, as described above, would like a copy of their special education or 504 records, they must request a copy of the records prior to destruction on July 15.

Forward all requests to the Dept. of Pupil Services and Special Education, 380 Norwich Ave., Colchester, CT 06415, or by calling the Pupil Services office at 860-537-3103.

Upon request, records will be available for pickup only at the Dept. of Pupil Services.

Storytime with Local Author

Colchester resident Elaine M. Alexander, an award-winning author known for bringing ocean science to life for young audiences, has released her newest book, *Giant Cuttlefish: Chameleon of the Sea*.

To celebrate, she will be hosting an interactive storytime Saturday, June 27, at 11 a.m., at Salem Free Public Library. The program will introduce children to marine animals like the giant cuttlefish and anglerfish through storytelling and hands-on activities.

Alexander is a lifelong Connecticut resident currently residing in Colchester. She is the author of *Anglerfish: The Seadevil of the Deep*.

Youth Services Summer Programs

Summer is now here – and so are Colchester Youth Services' summer programs!

Registration is officially open, and spots are filling up fast – with some programs already full. 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.

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.

Colchester Coffee House

The next Colchester Coffee House gathering will be held at Cragin Memorial Library, 8 Linwood Ave., on Saturday, June 27, from 10 a.m.-noon. All former and current military members are welcome to join.

Call Mary Gura at 860-537-2921 with questions or suggestions for presenters.

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Local AARP Chapter Celebrates 40 Years

By Toriana Williams

Colchester Area AARP Chapter 4019 celebrated its 40th anniversary on June 2 with a festive luncheon at Papa Z's Restaurant and Pizza. The anniversary luncheon was filled with food, friendship, memories and a look toward the future as members reflected on four decades of community involvement.

The chapter was officially formed in 1986 after receiving approval from the national AARP organization. Watson discovered the anniversary while reviewing historical paperwork earlier this year. "I was going through some paperwork a few months ago when I saw that the summer of 1986 was when they were officially created," she said.

While many people are familiar with AARP through mailings, insurance programs and national advocacy efforts, Watson said local chapters serve a very different purpose. "Whenever we try to talk to people in Colchester about our AARP group, they always say, 'Oh, we belong to AARP,'" Watson laughed. "That's true. You do. … But we're not the same. It's like, no, we will not send you stuff in the mail."

Instead, the Colchester Area chapter focuses on bringing people together, providing information and supporting the local community. "We're a local group," Watson explained. "We're trying to get together as local people to work together and socialize together."

Despite its name, membership is not limited to Colchester residents. The chapter welcomes people from surrounding communities including Hebron, Lebanon, Salem, Norwich and beyond. "Anybody is welcome to join," Watson said. "You just have to kind of live in our general geographic area."

The chapter currently charges annual dues of $10 which help cover operating expenses. Any excess funds are often donated back into the community.

"We usually donate it back to the community," Watson said. "When the senior center was a project that hadn't been built yet, we tended to donate our money towards the senior center. Now we may go back to helping people with the food bank, or a fuel bank."

Over the years, the chapter has adapted to changing needs among older adults. When the organization first formed, senior centers were still relatively new. Local AARP chapters often served as an important source of information about issues affecting seniors.

"People in the community saw a need for a group that would get information out to seniors and advocate for them," Watson said. "They wanted to make sure that people understood about Medicare or the kind of laws that were coming up that may affect them."

Today, senior centers, local commissions and other organizations provide many of those same services. As a result, Watson said she believes local chapters are evolving.

"I'm kind of looking at the local chapters like mine and they're going through a kind of transition," she said. "Do members want to socialize more? Do they want to have more meetings where we have food? Do they have to have programs?"

To better understand what members want, Watson recently distributed surveys. "I think the point of AARP right now is to try and be flexible and do programming that appeals to the membership," she said. "As long as we stay within the general mission of helping seniors."

One challenge facing the chapter is attracting younger retirees and future leaders.

"If you're a 50-year-old senior, you're probably still working, and you're not going to come to a daytime week meeting," Watson said. "But then if I move them to the evening, my older seniors aren't going to come out because a lot of them don't like to drive at night."

She also noted that leadership recruitment has become increasingly difficult. "It's harder to get people to want to be on a board," she said. "There's nobody in the current group that is really chomping at the bit to do it."

Still, the chapter remains active. Members regularly host educational programs, candidate forums and social events throughout the year. One tradition Watson is especially proud of is inviting political candidates to speak. "We always invite candidates from both parties," she said. "Our opinion is we have to be bipartisan."

The chapter's longest-serving members continue to provide inspiration. Among those attending the anniversary celebration was Goldie Limerant, who will celebrate her 100th birthday in July. Watson described Limerant as a "town fixture," and noted her decades of involvement with local organizations and community service.

Limerant estimated she joined the chapter more than 35 years ago. "Because I'm a joiner," she laughed when asked why she became involved. "I volunteer."

When asked what changes she has seen since first joining, Limerant pointed to declining participation. "I think there are fewer members now than there were back then," she said. She believes modern lifestyles play a role.

"Well, I think nowadays, people really don't get involved," Limerant said. "There're too many other things that they can be doing."

For Limerant, however, the organization still holds much value. When asked what she enjoys most about attending meetings, she answered, "Retaining old friendships." She added that the chapter has provided "an opportunity to meet some people" and stay connected to the community.

That sense of friendship and connection was abundant throughout the evening as members ate and laughed with one another, played a historical-theme bingo game and installed officers for another year of service.

Even though they are separated by 40 years, the original and current boards of Colchester Area AARP Chapter 4019 have been leading their community and helping seniors navigate life.

Watson, who has been involved with the organization for roughly 15 years, said the chapter continues to enrich her life. "I like the fact that it's generally a nice social gathering," she said. "There's been a lot of really nice people in the AARP."

After 40 years, the local focus on service, friendship and community remains the heart of the organization. "We should always try to be flexible enough to do what people want," Watson said. "That's what the group is. It's made up of the members."

From the First Selectman's Desk

Dennler

I want to provide Colchester residents an update on the latest developments as Colchester prepares for a second budget referendum.

Last week, the Colchester Board of Finance voted to make reductions totaling $1,667,890 to the combined town and Board of Education budgets and to recommend sending the budgets back to referendum – likely to take place on Tuesday, July 28.

These cuts represent the largest combined cuts after a failed referendum since at least 2010.

In debating cuts, the Board of Finance agreed on bringing the proposed mill rate below the current rate of inflation.

The new proposed mill rate is 30.97 - an increase of 1.05 mills (3.5%). To the average residential homeowner, this represents a monthly impact of about $18.

The Board of Finance made cuts to all major town departments for a total town reduction of $167,890. Town cuts include

- Unpaid furlough days for all elected officials — including the first selectman, department heads, and administrators' union
- Elimination of a seasonal grounds maintainer for parks, trails, and town facilities
- Elimination of a part-time custodian
- Elimination of part-time hours for the Land Use Office
- Elimination of the free public sand/salt pile at Public Works
- Cuts to road paving budget
- Cuts to tree removal budget

Various smaller cuts were made to department supplies, software, other miscellaneous items throughout the town department budgets.

Based on public feedback, these cuts do not currently impact hours at Cragin Library or the fire department staffing plan as previously discussed.

On the Board of Education side, the Board of Finance voted to reduce the BOE budget by $1.5 million.

At the $1.5 million level, likely impacts include:

- Eliminate assistant principal at Bacon Academy
- JJIS/CES to share one principal
- Some office professionals reduced to 10-month work-year
- BOE Finance Department staff reduction as part of merger with Town Finance Department
- Elimination of library media specialist, paraeducator, therapist, and multilingual learner teacher
- Teacher furlough days

Band and sports at WJJMS and JJIS are not expected to be impacted at the $1.5 million cut level.

The Board of Education also voted to begin reintegration of their finance department with the town finance department. I believe this is a critical step that will help restore shared oversight, enhance our long-term planning and coordination, and reduce administrative overhead.

Based on the tentative budget calendar, a town Meeting on the revised proposal will likely take place on Wednesday, July 15; absentee ballots would become available the next day. The referendum will likely take place Tuesday, July 28. The Board of Selectmen will meet to officially schedule dates soon.

Tax bills using last year's adopted mill rate will be mailed out for July 1 (last day to pay Aug. 3, 2026) for all property types (first installment of real estate, motor vehicle, and personal property). In recent years, the town has only sent out real estate bills before budget adoption but state OPM is now advising towns to bill all property types together unless a specific Charter provision authorizes the town to do separate billing. Supplemental bills will be mailed after budget adoption if necessary.

Acting Superintendent Judy O'Meara and I are Colchester residents and taxpayers as well. We know that every decision – whether it is a cut or an increase – impacts our community, our schools, and our neighbors. We will continue working with our respective boards and fellow residents to implement realistic budgets that deliver services residents, students, and families rely upon, while also taking into account the affordability challenges many people are facing in their homes due to the rising costs of gas, electricity, groceries, and more.

Sincerely,

Bernie Dennler, Colchester First Selectman

Colchester Housing Authority
300 Lebanon Avenue
Colchester, CT 06415
Phone: 860-537-5251

The Colchester Housing Authority (CHA) will be accepting Preliminary Applications to be placed in a random selection lottery for all of its properties. Interested applicants may pick up an application at the address above or through the Town of Colchester, Department of Social Service website. Applicants must submit their application to the address listed above between Wednesday, June 24, 2026 at 8am and Wednesday, July 29, 2026 at 4pm. All completed applications will be placed in a lottery. Up to 100 Preliminary Applications will be randomly selected for both the elderly properties and family property listed below.

**State Elderly/Disabled property:
Dublin Village located at 300 Lebanon Avenue, and
Ponemah Village located at 283 Westchester Road, both in Colchester, Connecticut. Residents are responsible for electric heat, hot water, and electricity. Units are Efficiency or 1-Bedroom and come with appliances. Rental amounts are calculated based on the higher of 30% of the household income or the base rent ($475-$650).

**State Family Housing:
Breeds Tavern located on Tavern Lane in Colchester, Connecticut. Residents are responsible for Oil heat and hot water, electricity, water and sewer. Units are 3 Bedrooms and come with appliances. Rental amounts are calculated based on the higher of 30% of the household income or the base rent ($1200 - $1,300).

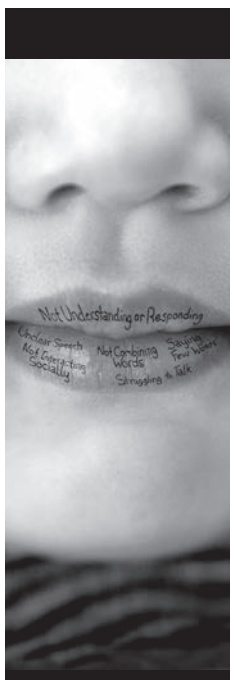
Applicants who are receiving Section 8 subsidies are welcome to apply.

Income limits for admission apply to all CHA Properties:
1 Person - $74,800 2 Persons - $85,450 3 Persons - $96,150 4 Persons - $106,800 5 Persons - $115,350 6 Persons - $123,900

If you are a person with a disability and require reasonable accommodation in order to submit an application, please contact the Housing Authority at 860-537-5251.

EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

RE 6-26-26



The early stages of communication disorders are easier to spot when you know the signs.

IDENTIFY THE SIGNS

Early detection can improve treatment and quality of life. For more information visit IdentifyTheSigns.org.

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association

Proposed School Budget Reduced by $1.5 Million

By Toriana Williams

Colchester's next budget referendum date is tentatively set, after the Board of Finance last week voted to reduce the overall town spending package by more than $1.5 million.

Members of the boards of finance, education and selectmen all met last week to discuss how to arrive at budgets for the town and school that would pass muster with voters at referendum. Later in the week, on June 18, the finance board then met and approved a $1.5 million reduction to the Board of Education's proposed 2026-27 budget, setting it at a total of $49.36 million, a 4.4% increase over current year spending.

The board also approved a reduction of around $168,000 on the proposed town operations budget, bringing it to $19.04 million, a 5.3% increase. Officials noted that a town meeting will be the next step, followed by a tentative July 28 referendum.

BOF Chair Karen Belding, a Democrat, opened the meeting by explaining how much the budget proposals have been reduced since first presented in March. She said the original proposals would have produced a 33.5 mill tax rate and an 11.9% increase.

After reductions and additional state aid, the proposed tax increase dropped considerably. The current plan leads with a proposed mill rate of 30.97, a 3.5% increase.

School leaders then warned that the district has already made painful cuts. Acting Superintendent of Schools Judy O'Meara said the largest reason for this year's increase is the need to rebuild the health insurance reserve fund after it had fallen almost to depletion.

"These reductions result in more than $1 million in cuts to operational spending when compared to the fiscal year 2025-26 budget," O'Meara said. "These reductions affect staffing programs, services and resources that directly support students and schools."

Assistant Superintendent of Schools Jessica Kuckel said the district had already identified more than $2 million in savings through retirements, vacancies and restructuring. Those reductions included eliminating positions such as a speech language pathologist, literacy coach, social worker and several classroom jobs.

She warned that additional cuts would mean fewer course sections and reduced access to Advanced Placement classes.

At the $1.5 million reduction level, which the BOF approved at the June 18 meeting, O'Meara said administrative cuts would include eliminating the Bacon Academy assistant principal position and not filling the interim principal position at Colchester Elementary School. Other positions to be eliminated included a library media specialist, paraeducator, therapist and a math teacher. Professional development, supplies, books, technology upgrades and maintenance projects would also be reduced.

"At the $1.5 million level, students continue to receive a comprehensive educational program, but schools operate with fewer resources, fewer support systems and less flexibility to respond to students' needs," said O'Meara.

First Selectman Bernie Dennler, a Democrat, explained that the town side of the budget was built with a few new initiatives and no new capital projects. Wages and benefits account for roughly 60% of the budget. Employee benefits alone rose by about $500,000, while health insurance costs increased by roughly $460,000.

Dennler shared that his office had already proposed about $160,000 in cuts, including furlough days for department heads, reduced office supplies, cuts to road work and eliminating a seasonal grounds position. "I don't have a lot of runway left to go to," Dennler said, "without starting to disrupt services."

Students, Staff Warn Against Cuts

The school system's music programs were largely left alone in the latest round of budget reductions – but parents and students alike appeared aware that might not be the case if the school budget proposed increase were trimmed any further.

Aaron Brown, a parent and music teacher, warned that cutting music programs would hurt students.

"Music is not a luxury, it's a necessity," said Brown. "Band and choir routinely teach grit, growth, mindset and collaboration."

Bacon Academy senior Keegan McKenzie reminded adults that students do not vote. "These kids have not yet finished," she said. "They do not have a vote; they do not have a voice. Their future is in the hands of all of the adults here and in this town."

Recent Bacon graduate Gianna Riley credited the band program with helping her reach college. "Without Bacon's band program, I would not be able to attend the college I have chosen this fall," she said.

Meanwhile, math teacher Jennifer Emery described the emotional strain facing educators.

"Today was a really hard day at work," Emery said at the June 18 meeting. "I sat with colleagues of mine with tears in their eyes because they were told that there's a possibility that they are not going to be employed come August."

She noted that teachers had agreed to furlough days and called for limiting cuts.

"Every day that passes without a resolution, we're increasing the likelihood of losing some of the best teachers that I know," said Emery.

Still, some residents argued that the proposed budgets remain too high. Jeff Mattson said voters had already sent a message when they overwhelmingly rejected both the town and school budgets at referendum last month. On May 20, voters shot down a proposed $50.87 million Board of Education budget, which would have been a 7.5% increase from current year spending, and also rejected a proposed $19.52 million town operations budget, which would have been a 7.9% increase.

"I think you need to do the right thing and get us a budget that's no more than a 3% increase," Mattson said last week.

Merging Finance Departments

Another major topic at last week's meeting involved merging the town and school finance departments. Dennler said discussions were already underway.

"It takes two to tango," he said. "The Board of Selectmen cannot impose this on the Board of Education."

He added, "We think that there may be some savings, but ultimately the larger savings in my opinion comes from having a model that is more financially sound."

The BOE ultimately motioned to initiate the reintegration of the finance departments for the town and BOE, which passed unanimously.

Christian Life Chapel News

Christian Life Chapel is located at 392 S. Main St. For more information, call 860-398-9119 or email chapel.colchester@yahoo.com. The Rev. Don Rivers is pastor.

Worship Service: Sundays at 10 a.m. A livestream is available on YouTube and Facebook.

Children's Worship: Sundays at 10:45 a.m. Kids will learn about Jesus in ageappropriate ways.

Women's Bible Study: Tuesdays, 10-11:30 a.m., studying the book of Revelation.

Community Bible Study: Wednesdays at 7 p.m. All are invited.

Donuts with Don: Fridays at 10 a.m. This is a relaxed gathering and open discussion on the theme: "How does God fit in this thing called life?"

Vacation Bible School (VBS): Monday, July 20-Friday, July 24, 9 a.m.-noon. This year's theme is: Illumination Station: "Shine a Light on Jesus." This is a week of faith, fun, and discovery for children.

Bacon Academy Class of 2026

The members of the Bacon Academy Class of 2026 are:

Oakley Adams *, Emma Aivaliotis *, Devin Alejos, Riley Anderson, Timothy Angell, Elijah Banks, Olivia Barnett, Natalie Bennett, Harrison Billiot, Alyssa Blanchette, Kylie Boerenko *, Evelina Bouna, Cody Brault, Maily Bravo, Haley Brinson, Caroline Brown, Hailey Brown, Joseph Brown, Riddick Burroughs, Benjamin Buyniski **, Ashton Capone, Felix Cintron, Naia Coelho, Clarence Coogan, Emma Corn, Emma Cote *, Edward Cotillo, Melanie Couture, Ethan Creutz, Julian Dean, Lucian Dean, Bela Dec *, Morgan Delaney, Michael Dickey, Samuel Dickey, Jordan Donnelly, Jade Duksa, Logan East, Arianna Elliott, Bailey Elliott;

Matthew Farrington, Mikayla Farrington, Emma Fidrych, Kiley Filloramo, Hurley Fontaine, Hector Franceschi-Newton, Charlotte Galarneau ***++; Julia Gale, Taylor Georgens, Joseph Gignac, Nicholas Gilman, Liam Goodine ++; Taryn Gray *, Emma Gyngell, Mia Hageman, Leyia Hall, Brynn Herboldt *++, Alexander Hirschkowitz, Colby Hlasyszyn, Anna Ibey *, Troy Johnson, Lucas Jones, Jordan Julian, Caden King, Sasha Koopman, Vera Korzhoff ++, Lily Koziol, Michel Krol, Devon Kudrak, Talan Ladyga, John Larson, Cole Lee, Jack Levasseur, Madison Levasseur, Evan Lovegrove, Derek Luczka, Grayson Mahon, Willow Malcolm, Ramier Martin, Rackelle Mathieu, Owen McCarvill, Ian McClain, Lanie McIlduff, Oliver Melmed, Andrew Mertz, Madeline Meyer, Olivia Meyer *, Jacob Millington, Scarlett Morsch, Alexander Nantz, Sawyer Nauss, Alyssa Nelson, Sokhano Nguon, Chloe Nunez;

Joseph Papale, Madison Peck, Aadyn Pelletier, Ashlyn Perra, Wesley Piella, Olivia Pike, Alexei Potter, Allen Quinones *, Reagan Reid, Noah Richardson-Suljic, Gianna Riley ++, Ahviel Rodriguez, Alondra Rodriguez-Rivera, Lorelei Romasanta, Deyaneira Ruiz, Rachel Rumph, Makaila Sage, Sara Sands, Mia Santini, Syris Sciremammano, Lily Shuman ++, Benjamin Simonds, Delaney Smith, Zoey Smith, Jillian Snow *, Liana Southworth, Stephen Stabach, Abigail Stillwell *, George Stula, Christopher Sullivan, Alexis Swanson, Liam Sweeney, Cameron Taskey, Michael Theriaque, Ishmael Tholley, Carleigh Todd, Corinne Toennes *++, Selene Torres, Natalie Uhrig, Landon Vigil, Matthew Vilardo, Iyana Walston, Aiyana Walters ++, Brayden Ward, Colton Waterman ++, Chase Williams, Ryan Williams, Devon Wolicka.

***Valedictorian, National Honor Society
**Salutatorian, National Honor Society
* National Honor Society
++ Tri-M Music Honor Society

Colchester Special Olympics 17th Annual Golf Fundraiser at Blackledge Country Club
• • • • • • Friday, August 7, 2026 • • • • • •
Registration starts at 7:30am • Best Ball – Shotgun start at 9am

Please join us in support of the Colchester Special Olympics by playing in our 17th annual golf tournament. Come *play*, be a *sponsor*, or *donate* a raffle prize – 100% of contributions support our local team. A light breakfast, grab and go lunch, and a buffet dinner is included with golf registration. Raffle prizes will be drawn during dinner. This fundraiser provides the opportunity for us to offer year-round sports training and competition in Bowling, Swimming, Track & Field, and Golf for people with intellectual and/or other challenges, by giving them opportunities to improve their physical fitness, demonstrate courage, form and foster friendships, and gain confidence. It is also a tremendous help to our athletes' families, mine included, giving us all added friendships and perspectives. Colchester Special Olympics is a registered non-profit organization and any donation made is tax-deductible. The course does not allow walk-ons for tournaments so please register by July 26th so we can get an accurate headcount.

Golf & Sponsorship Registration: https://give.soct.org/colchestergolf

Thank you so much for your support with this fantastic cause. We appreciate everything you do to help us! See you on August 7th!

Please call or email any questions to Tim at: (cell) 860-608-0056, or email teamcolchesterso@gmail.com

Looking forward to seeing you there!

RE6-26-26

Abundant Life Church invites you as we celebrate...

OUTSIDE ON THE CHURCH LAWN, NEAR THE STREET SIGN
July 4TH
9-10:00AM
85 Skinner Road, Colchester
Come join us for prayer, praise and worship and have a word as we celebrate our nations' 250th Anniversary.

RE 6-26-26

Senior Center News & Notes

Colchester Senior Center, 15 Louis Lane, has announced the following. **Unless noted, registration is required for all programs.** Credit cards are currently not accepted. For full descriptions of programs and to register, call 860-537-3911, email csc@colchesterct.gov, or for a full list of activities, visit www.colchesterct.gov/colchester-senior-center.

Monday, June 29: 9 a.m., Making Memories, Exercise w/ Anne; 10 a.m., Sittercize; 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Haircuts; 10:30 a.m., Photo Scavenger Hunt Party; 11 a.m., Learn to Sign; 11 a.m.-noon, Fitness Orientation by appointment; 12:30 p.m., Mah Jongg, Bridge, Setback.

Tuesday, June 30: 9 a.m., Making Memories; no Tai Chi today; 11 a.m., Healthy Food Series; 12:30 p.m., Pinochle; 1 p.m., Cornhole; 1:15 p.m., Bingo; 6 p.m., Ultimate Bingo.

Wednesday, July 1: 9 a.m., Making Memories, Walking Group; 9 a.m.-3 p.m., Reflexology; 9:30 p.m., Live Well; 10 a.m., Adult Coloring, Hand and Foot Card Game, Sit & Be Fit Video; 1 p.m., Sew-cial Time; 1:30 p.m. and 2:30 p.m., Cardio Drumming.

Thursday, July 2: 9 a.m., Exercise w/ Anne; 10 a.m., Sittercize, Wii Bowling; 11 a.m., Yoga; noon, Sr. Benefits Counseling; 12:05 p.m., Chair Massage; 12:30 p.m., Dominoes, Needlework Club; 1 p.m., Patriotic Jewelry Workshop; 5:30-6 p.m., Exercise to '70s Music Video, 6-8 p.m., Evening Cornhole.

Friday, July 3: Senior center closed for the Independence Day holiday.

Outhouse Americana: Tuesday, July 7, 6 p.m., and Wednesday, July 8, 10:30 a.m. Senior center member Georg Papp Sr., an internationally-known authority on the rustic American outhouse, will present. His unique toilet paper roll book will also be on sale. This is a free program.

Patriotic Sugar-Cookie Decorating Class: Thursday, July 9, 1 p.m. Each participant will pipe 6 different red, white, and blue cookies in the class. Cost is $12 per person and includes the cookies, icing, recipes, scribing tool and a box to take the cookies home. Space is limited.

Bunco: Tuesday, July 14, 6 p.m. Come play "The Dice Game." Players of all levels are welcome. Twelve players are needed. Register at the front desk. Cost of playing is $5. Cash prizes are awarded.

Four-Week Mixed Media Landscapes Workshop: Tuesdays, July 14-Aug, 4, 10 a.m.-noon. Beginner and intermediate students will create three landscapes and one seascape using painting, collage, and assemblage techniques with basic art supplied by you. Instructor is Jeff Poale. Cost is $40 per person; space is limited.

Trivia Night: Thursday, July 16, 6 p.m. Snacks will be provided, and cash prizes will be given. Cost is $7.

Movie Time – *Forrest Gump*: Monday, July 20, 9:30 a.m. The history of the United States from the 1950s to the '70s unfolds from the perspective of an Alabama man with an IQ of 75, who yearns to be reunited with his childhood sweetheart. This is a free program. Popcorn will be served. The movie runs for two and a half hours.

Painted Mandala Suncatcher: Tuesday, July 21, 6 p.m. Paint a pretty suncatcher to put on your window. Cost is $3.

Americana Share & Tell: Friday, July 24, 10:30 a.m. Come together to share these stories about your experiences in, and hopes for the future of, America. A special American-themed birthday cake will be served. This is a free program.

Healthy Food Series – How to Read Food Labels: Monday, July 27, 10:30 a.m. Take a deeper dive into the labels and compare various brands. This is a free program.

Aromatherapy Workshop: Thursday, July 30, 1 p.m. Susette Christiansen, the center's own reflexologist, will share the basics of aromatherapy, an introduction to several commonly used essential oils, and how aromatherapy can be used to promote physical, mental and emotional wellness. All participants will create their own essential oil blend spray to take home. Cost is $15 per person. Space is limited.

Ultimate Bingo: Tuesday, July 30, 6 p.m. Space is limited. Cost is $10.

Author to Appear at Bookstore

Songwriter and literary fiction novelist John Lang will give a reading from his new book *All the Darkness Holds* at Folklore & Fable, Colchester's local bookstore, on Saturday, June 27, at 6 p.m.

All the Darkness Holds is the story of a young biracial girl whose self-willed journey through darkness and adversity leads her to a life she can call her own. The *Kirkus Review* calls the book "a profound, sometimes grim story with a troubled but remarkable young hero."

Lang was previously a pop songwriter, and was recently interviewed on his transition from pop songwriter to literary fiction novelist. You can see the interview at tinyurl.com/2pey4cjh.

Parks and Rec. Seeks New Programs

Colchester Parks & Recreation is interested in expanding its community programs – and is looking for new ideas!

The department is currently seeking instructors to lead a wide variety of recreational, educational, and enrichment programs for residents of all ages. Opportunities are available in areas such as youth and adult fitness, arts and crafts, dance, outdoor recreation, sports, STEM activities, wellness, and specialty hobby classes.

Individuals interested in offering a new program can submit a program proposal or request more information by contacting Colchester Parks & Recreation at 860-537-7297 or parksandrec@colchesterct.gov.

More information is also available at www.colchesterct.gov/recreation-department.

Touch-a-Truck Returns July 2

Families are invited to climb aboard, explore and discover a variety of vehicles at the annual Colchester Touch-a-Truck event on Thursday, July 2, from 6-8 p.m., at the Town Green. This free, family-friendly event gives children and adults the opportunity to get an up-close look at the trucks, equipment, and vehicles that serve the community every day.

Attendees will have the chance to explore a wide range of vehicles, including emergency response vehicles, construction equipment, public works trucks, and other specialty vehicles. Representatives from local organizations and agencies will be on hand to answer questions, demonstrate equipment, and share information about their work in the community.

Touch-a-Truck provides children with a hands-on learning experience while encouraging curiosity about transportation, public safety, and community services. The event has become a favorite summer tradition for families.

"We are excited to welcome families back for another year of Touch-a-Truck," said the Colchester Parks and Recreation Department. "This event gives children the opportunity to see these impressive vehicles up close and meet the people who operate them every day to keep our community safe and running smoothly."

The event is open to children of all ages and their families.

For additional information, or to bring your vehicle, call the Colchester Parks and Recreation Department at 860-537-7297.

Craft Fair at Lake Hayward

A craft fair will be held Saturday, July 11, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m., at Lake Hayward Pavilion, at first beach. The craft fair will have 15-20 vendors, with assorted crafts such as jewelry, knitting, painted shells, shadow boxes, etc.

The fair will take place rain or shine.

Abundant Life to Celebrate America 250

Abundant Life Church invites all to celebrate America's 250th anniversary outside on the church lawn, near the street sign, on Saturday, July 4, from 9-10 a.m. The church is located at 85 Skinner Rd.

All are invited for prayer, praise and worship to celebrate the nation's birthday.

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RE5-24-24

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RE6-26-26

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.

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.

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.

CLT at Farmers Maket: 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.

Dean's List

Courtney Davis of Colchester made the spring 2026 Dean's List at Southern New Hampshire University in Manchester, N.H.

Dean's List

Juliana Martino of Colchester made the spring 2026 Dean's List at Assumption University in Worcester, Mass.

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RE 6-26-26

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Congratulations Bacon Academy CLASS OF 2026!

On behalf of Bacon Academy Project Graduation, we salute our parents, volunteers and companies that generously supported our mission to enhance drug and alcohol-free awareness by providing safe and healthy graduation events for all seniors.

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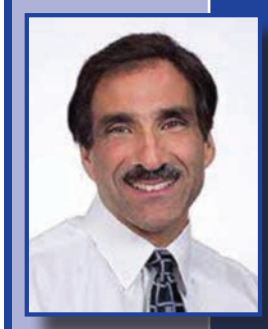

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RE4-24-26

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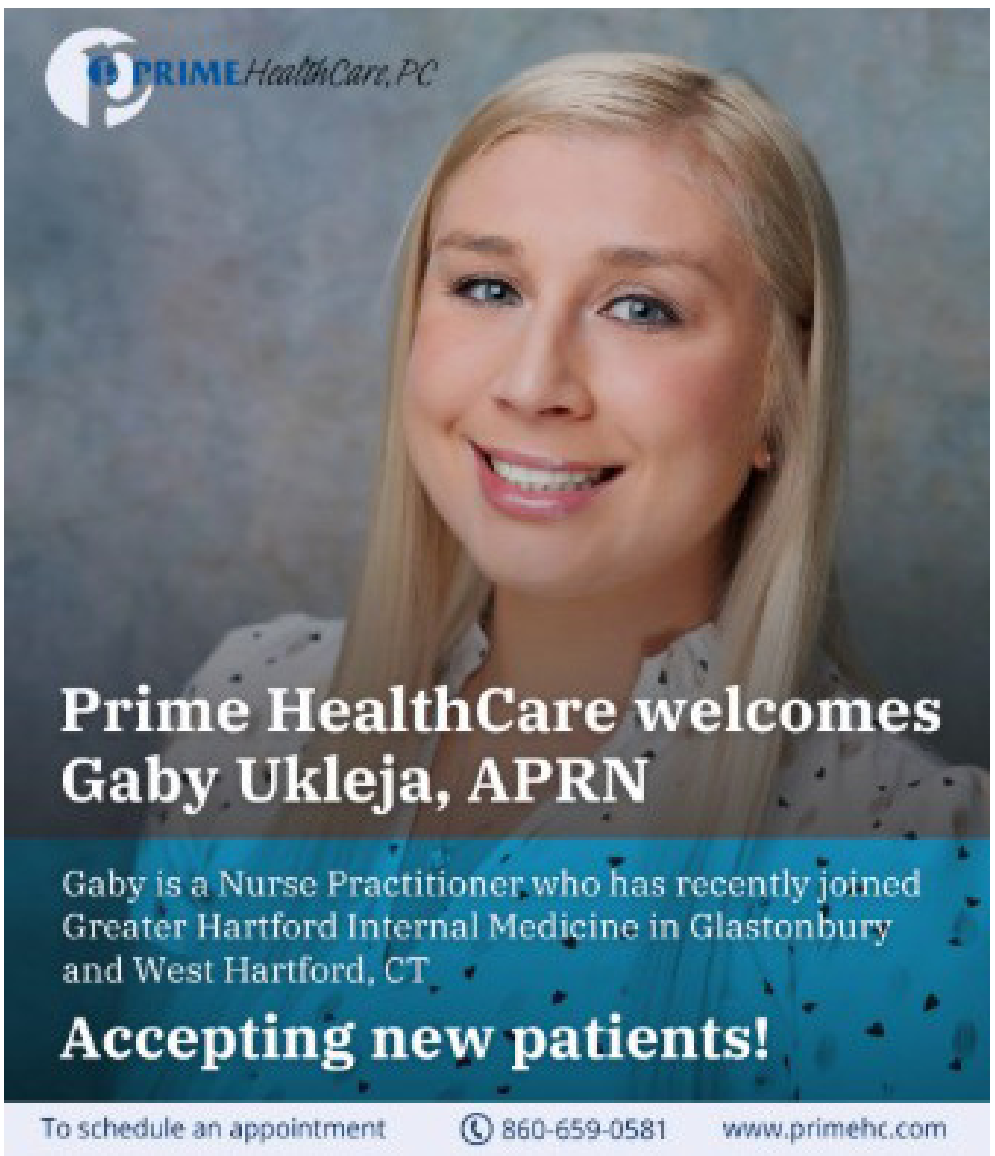
CIT6-25-26



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Chicken Parmigiana
Eggplant Rollatini Rolled eggplant stuffed with ricotta, prosciutto and roasted peppers
Chicken Marsala Sauteed with mushrooms, shallots in a marsala wine sauce
Stuffed Pork Chop Stuffed with broccoli, gorgonzola cheese and ritz crackers in a brown cognac sauce
Stuffed Sole Crab meat stuffing served over spinach
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RE6-26-26

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WAIM Flea Market

Windham Area Interfaith Ministry (WAIM) – whose service area includes Andover and Hebron – will hold a "Fifth Floor Treasures" flea market Saturday, June 27, from 8 a.m.-noon, at 866 Main St., Willimantic.

The market will feature framed art, glassware, décor, collectibles, household finds, and unique surprises. Payment options are cash, charge or check.

Support helps WAIM continue its mission as a social-service nonprofit strengthening families and neighbors across the region.

For more information, call 860-456-7270 ext. 104 or Kathy Callahan at 860-228-0873.

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RE6-28-24

Hebron Summer Concert Series

The Town Center Project (TTCP) announces the return of the Hebron Summer Concert Series. Concerts will take place Friday nights through August, on the side lawn of 17 Main St., Century 21. Picnics welcome!

The lineup is: June 26: The Patty Tuite Band – blues, jazz and rock; July 10: The Big Deal – featuring Motown and southern rock; July 17: ZZ Not – a ZZ Top tribute band; July 24: The Bart Bryant Band – he's performed original music on this stage and at Hebron Maple Fest in the past; July 31: Bonnie Jacobson and Friends – local, veteran musician who performs regularly with acoustic originals; Aug. 14: One Part Harmony – a local duo playing folk, country and rock music.

Follow on Facebook at facebook.com/towncenterprojectinc for current updates, or at www.thetowncenterproject.org for more information on TTCP.

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.

Wet and Messy Camp: July 6-10, 8-11 a.m., at Hebron Elementary School. In this camp your child will make slime, goo, puffy paint, oobleck, engage in experiences, and more.

Crafty Kid Adventure Camp: July 6-10, 11:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m., at HES, for ages 5-10. Kids will engage in guided drawing, painting, creating canvases and more.

Building Up STEAM Using Lego: July 13-17, 9 a.m.-noon, at HES, for grades K-1. Children work independently and cooperatively as they begin to explore simple machines using Lego Duplo early childhood materials.

STEAM Works Using Lego: July 13-17, 1-4 p.m., at HES, for grades 2-5. Children will work with standard Lego materials to solve engineering challenges involving structure, levers, gears, pulleys, and other elements of simple machines.

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RE3-29-24

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CIT6-16-26

Owner/Agent

CIT6-25-26

Christ Lutheran Church News and Notes

Christ Lutheran Church and Early Childhood Center (daycare) is located at 330 Church St.

Worship Service with Pastor Matthew Hardaway: 9-10 a.m. Sundays. All are welcome. People unable to attend services in person can participate online at www.facebook.com/clchebron/live.

Bible Studies: Sundays at 10:30 a.m., following service and fellowship time. All are welcome. Also, there is a once-a-month **Men's Bible Study**, which will next meet Wednesdays, July 1 and Aug. 5, at 7 p.m. both nights. The current series is: "Seven Christian Rules Christians Should Break as Often as Possible." There is also a **Weekly Podcast** during which Hardaway discusses biblical topics. To access the podcasts, go to clchebron.org and click on "Our Pastor," or access via the CLC Facebook Page

Early Childhood Center (Daycare): Offers childcare, preschool, and before/after school care, and is open to all faiths. **Registration for summer camp (ages 5-12) is open.** Camp began this week and runs through the week of Aug. 10-14. For more information, call director Jennifer Johnson at 860-228-5134. Application forms are at www.clecchebron.org.

Time to License Your Dog

Hebron dog owners are reminded this is the month to license your dog.

All dog owners are asked to purchase their licenses online, through the mail or in person at the town clerk's office. For online and mail requests, your tag(s) and license(s) will be sent to you via the U.S. Postal Service. You are welcome to visit in person if that is your preference.

Dogs 6 months and older must be licensed during the month of June. The fee is $8 for a spayed/neutered dog and $19 for a dog that is not spayed or not neutered. After July 1 there is a penalty fee of $1 added to the charge for each month the dog is not licensed.

A rabies certificate must be presented indicating an expiration date. If your dog is spayed or neutered, documentation must be presented as well.

Check the town clerk's page of the Town of Hebron website, at hebronct.com/town-departments/town-clerk/ for details. Or, call for more information at 860-228-5971 ext 125 during the normal business hours of Monday through Wednesday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Thursday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.; and Friday, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

If you no longer have a dog that was previously licensed, please contact the town clerk's office so that your records may be updated.

Douglas Library News & Notes

Douglas Library, located at 22 Main St., has announced the following. For a full listing of events and more information, call the library at 860-228-9312 or visit douglaslibrary.org.

Holiday Closings: The library will be closed July 3 and 4 for the Independence Day holiday. Online services will be available.

Adult Programs: Friday Film: June 26, 1 p.m. *Avalon* (rated PG) will be shown. Free popcorn and water will be served.

Access Health Assistance: Monday, June 29, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Get in-person help with a trained professional who will assist you and answer questions.

Medicare Info Session: Tuesday, June 30, 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. Mark Macrina from Senior Health & Retirement Services will assist with your Medicare questions.

Artist of the Month: Rita Reimer, whose fiber artwork is on display in the community room.

Summer Reading: Each time you check out an item you will receive a ticket to enter the raffle.

Teen Program: ***Dungeons & Dragons* Campaign:** Wednesdays, 5:45-7:45 p.m. Ages 10 and up are invited to join this weekly campaign. Registration requested.

Children's Programs: Summer Reading: Stop in and pick up your summer reading sheets to track your reading and receive tickets towards a prize.

Lunch & Storytime: Wednesdays at noon. Bring your lunch and listen to stories while you eat.

Messy Art/Sensory Play: Thursdays, 10:15 a.m. Come to the children's program room and play with art materials and different sensory experiences.

Paint a Canvas: Monday, June 29, 2 p.m. Come and paint a canvas to be displayed in the library Community Room for summer reading. All ages are welcome.

Good Shepherd Parish News

The Church of the Holy Family (CHF), located at 185 Church St. (Route 85), Hebron, is yoked with St. Columba Church (STC) in Columbia, and together are members of the Catholic Community of the Good Shepherd, with the Rev. Michael Phillippino serving as pastor. The parish office can be reached at 860-228-3727 ext. 105 Tuesday-Friday, from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. through Labor Day.

Mass Schedule: Mass is offered at CHF Saturday at 5 p.m. and Sunday at 10 a.m., and at STC Sunday at 8 a.m. There is no longer a Sunday Mass at 11 a.m. Visit www.goodshepherdct.org for weekday Mass times.

Sacrament of Reconciliation: The pastor is available for the sacrament at CHF on Thursdays at 7 a.m. and on Saturdays at 4 p.m., and at STC on Wednesdays at 7 a.m. and Sundays at 7:15 a.m., or by appointment (church phone ext. 110).

Praise Band and Choir Rehearsals: Both groups are on hiatus for the summer months. Rehearsals will resume in mid-September.

Cereal & Meatloaves for CSK: The Community Outreach Committee collects breakfast cereal each month for Covenant Soup Kitchen (CSK) in Willimantic; the next date is July 12. Cereal donations are also welcome any time; place bagged donations in the oak collection box near the CHF Robing Room. The parish also provides meatloaves to CSK each month. Parishioners can deliver a cooked meatloaf to the freezer in the garage (use side entrance) closest to the CHF Parish House or the freezer in the STC church hall by the 4th Tuesday of the month. Meatloaves are delivered the next day. The next due date us July 28. Contact Diane (860-508-9959) for more information.

July 4th Parade Float: The parish is sponsoring a float in the Columbia 4th of July parade honoring the 250th birthday of the country. Contact Phyllis Dunn at Phyllis.dunn14@gmail.com if wish to ride the float with the pastor.

Bicycle Drive for Windham Area Interfaith Ministry (WAIM): The Community Outreach Committee is supporting WAIM's drive for rideable adult bicycles and working bicycle equipment (Ulocks, tire tubes, pumps, chains, helmets, etc.) for adult transportation. Donors can drop off bicycle and/or equipment donations at the CHF garage (use the left side garage door). Donations can also be brought to the WAIM loading dock on Riverside Drive in Willimantic on Tuesdays through Saturdays, 9 a.m. to noon. The drive will continue through September.

Homebound Ministry: The parish ministers to homebound parishioners who wish to receive the sacraments. Call the parish office (860-228-3727 ext. 105 or 110) to set up a schedule.

Health Ministry: This ministry has wheelchairs and walkers available to parishioners who may need them. Contact the parish office (see info above) or email parishhands@goodshepherdct.org for more information and where to donate.

Collection for Project HOPE, Inc. (Homeless Shelter): The parish supports the shelter by providing much-needed items. Greatest needs: All types of household cleaning products (critical need); TP, paper towels, dish soap, laundry pods & dryer sheets; new combs & hairbrushes; toiletries; men's crew neck T-shirts & boxer briefs (M,L XL,2XL) & women's briefs (sizes 6-10); and 8x10 tarps (green or brown, no blue) for the Outreach Program. Place bagged donations in the oak collection box next to the CHF Cry Room or the designated bin in the STC entryway. Contact Monica (860-228-4211) for more information.

Rainbow Doors… **All June, Gilead Congregational Church has celebrated Pride month by once again displaying rainbow doors on the front lawn, bearing the message: "God's Doors Are Open to All." Created through the collaborative efforts of church members across generations, the church said the doors serve as a visible reminder of its commitment to being an Open and Affirming congregation.**

Senior Center News & Notes

Russell Mercier Senior Center has announced the following programs. For more information, full program descriptions, and a list of recurring weekly activities, see the online senior newsletter at hebronct.com/town-departments/senior-center, or call the center at 860-228-1700. **Registration is required for all programs, unless noted, by calling the center.**

A Walk in Their Shoes - Dementia Simulation: Tuesday, July 7, 11 a.m. Join Heather Toutain from The Residence of Glastonbury as she will take you through a simulation experience to better understand with what living with Alzheimer's or other forms of dementia can be like. You will be guided through the challenges of compromised vision, hearing and dexterity, which all affect cognition.

Sunshine Singers Kick-Off to Summer Concert: Thursday, July 2, 11:30 a.m. The group will sing a variety of songs. The concert is free; light refreshments served. RSVP requested.

Weekly Shopping Trips: Trips are now Thursdays at 8:15 a.m. Pre-registration is required by noon the day before. Call 860-228-1700 to register. Schedule: July 2, Big Y; July 9, Walmart; July 16, Stop & Shop; July 23, Big Y; July 30, Walmart.

Recurring Daily/Weekly Happenings: Some programs have a fee, and some are no-cost, and most require pre-registration. More information in the monthly newsletter or at the senior center.

Monday through Friday: Exercise Equipment Room, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., or 9 a.m.-noon on Fridays.

Mondays: Enhance Fitness via Zoom with Paul Smith, 9-10 a.m.

Tuesdays: Knitting/Crocheting Group, 10:15-11:45 a.m.; Hand and Foot Canasta (cards), 12:45-3:15 p.m.; Card-Making, 1-2:15 p.m. (pre-registration required).

Wednesdays: Enhance Fitness via Zoom with Paul Smith, 9-10 a.m.; FABBS, 10:45-11:45 a.m.

Thursdays: Massage, 9 a.m.-5:30 p.m.; Yoga, 9-10 a.m.; Sunshine Singers, 10:15-11:45 a.m.; Tai Chi, 10:15-11:15 a.m.; Mahjongg, 12:45-3:15 p.m.; Bingo, 1-3 p.m.

Fridays: Enhance Fitness via Zoom with Paul Smith, 9-10 a.m.; FABBS, 10:45-11:45 a.m.; Caregiver Support Group (3rd Friday), 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m.; Golden Oldies Men's Social Group (4th Friday), 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Holiday Closing

The Hebron Transfer Station will be closed Saturday, July 4, in observation of Independence Day.

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"Stop, Look, and Listen" could be the mantra for the Triple Play activities of the Hebron Pollinator Pathway (HPP) next weekend, June 27 and 28.

Triple Play Pollinator Weekend

In celebration of National Pollinator Week, the Hebron Pollinator Pathway (HPP) is offering a triple play of family-friendly activities for the community to participate in next weekend.

For part one, on Saturday, June 27, at 9 a.m., is an HPP-guided nature trail walk to view the new garden and educational signage to learn about the identity of native and invasive plants and the best plants to attract our local pollinators. Part two will be later that day, at 6 p.m. Gabrielle Bugden will host an evening stroll to learn about our feathered pollinators. Binoculars are not required as this walk will be geared towards those with little or no birding experience.

Part three is Sunday, June 28, at 5 p.m., the artists' "Golden Hour," where photographers and painters alike will scatter throughout the park to create work inspired by the plant and wildlife within the preserve's natural landscape.

All meet-ups start at the Kinney Road entrance to the Raymond Brook Preserve. For more information, follow on Facebook at Hebron Pollinator Pathway, or call Michele Sinkez at 860-205-1481 or Candace O'Shea at 860-918-3295.

Independence Day Celebration

All are invited to begin their Independence Day celebration in true Hebron fashion by gathering at 9 a.m. on July 4 outside the Old Town Hall in the center of town.

This year's program will feature the presentation of the 250th Oratorical Essay Contest Award, where the winning student will present the winning essay.

The one-hour program will also include patriotic music, songs, and poetry, along with a commemorative Flag Ceremony conducted by local veterans. Hebron Scouts will assist in a public reading of the Declaration of Independence.

Also, visitors will have the opportunity to view a community collage reflecting what freedom means to many neighbors, purchase commemorative 250th anniversary merchandise, and enter a raffle for a magnificent handmade quilt. The program will conclude with an inspiring address, "Let Freedom Ring."

St. Peter's News & Notes

St. Peter's Episcopal Church, located at 30 Church St., welcomes all to worship. Priest is the Rev. Ron Kolanowski. For more information, visit stpetershebron.com or search for St. Peter's Hebron on Facebook.

Sunday Worship: Summer hours are underway. Services will be at 9 a.m., followed by a coffee hour in the parish hall. Rite 2 will be celebrated through July, and Rite 1 in August. The service is streamed live on Facebook; visit www.stpetershebron.com to join.

Weekly Virtual Coffee Hour: Wednesdays at 10 a.m. Connects parishioners and friends via Zoom for an online social gathering.

Outreach: Food donations support the local food pantries. A collection basket is in the church and outside the parish hall. St. Peter's maintains a nature preserve in the center of Hebron for use by local nonprofits. The church is also a supporter of Project Hope homeless shelter in Willimantic.

Recurring Meetings: Contact the church for more information on the following: Balance Class: Mondays, 10:30-11 a.m., $5; Connect: Mondays at 2 p.m.; Virtual Zoom Coffee Hour: Wednesdays at 10 a.m. – contact office for access information; Choir: Wednesdays at 6 p.m.; Weekly Weeders/Garden Group: Mondays at 4 p.m.

Monthly Meetings: Building and Grounds, Community Events planning, Finance, Liturgy, Pastoral Care and Vestry. The Women's Club typically meets the third or fourth Sunday each month for crafting and fellowship. The St. Peter's 200th Anniversary Celebration Planning group meets the third Thursday of each month at 5 p.m. All are welcome to join.

The Worship Center News & Notes

The Worship Center, a non-denominational Christian church, holds services and programs at 99 Marjorie Circle (unless noted). For more information and full program descriptions, visit theworshipcenterct.org and click on the 'events/calendar' link, or call 860-228-4442.

Worship: Services are Sundays at 10 a.m. and are also broadcast on Facebook at www.facebook.com/TheWorshipCenterConnecticut and on YouTube at www.youtube.com/@theworshipcenter9733.

Adult Bible Study: Every Sunday at 9 a.m. The study, on the First Epistle of Peter, is led by Elder George Logan. The theme is "Standing Firm in Grace: A Call to Holiness in a Hostile World." All adults welcome.

Kingdom Women: Women's Bible Study: Meets in-person every first and third Thursday from 6:45-7:45 p.m., at the church. The study will continue on the book of Psalms. Zoom access is available.

Virtual Prayer Night: Tuesdays, 7-8 p.m., via Zoom. Contact the church office or website for a link and meeting ID.

One-to-One Confidential Christian Care: Provided by Stephen Ministry to people in difficult life situations. If in need of help, call the church office.

Youth Ministry: Grades 6-12 are invited every first and third Friday of the month from 6:30–9:30 p.m. for activities, games, Bible lessons, dinner, dessert, and community. Upcoming: June 19.

TWC Upward Running Club: Upward Running at The Worship Center. This class is designed to improve faith, fitness and fellowship within our community through a walking and/or running program custom made for your fitness level. Download the app, or contact the church office for more details. Training Sessions still meeting at the church on Saturdays from 8–9 a.m.

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 – Summer Hours Now in Effect: Sunday worship is at 9:30 a.m., followed by coffee hour at 10:30 a.m. Services can also be viewed online at YouTube at www.bit.ly/GileadChurchUCC and on Facebook at tinyurl.com/GileadChurchUCC. Worship this week, June 28, will include a Youth Birthday Celebration.

This Week's Scheduled Events and Meetings: Saturday, 6/27: Stu Rapp Memorial Service, 10 a.m., Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall; Saturday, 6/27: Gilead-to-Go Meals Assembly and Pick-Ups, 3-6 p.m., Fellowship Hall kitchen and parking lot; Monday, 6/29: Bible Study via Zoom, 9:30 a.m. (online); Tuesday, 6/30: AA Meeting, 7:30 p.m. (Fellowship Hall); Wednesday, 7/1: Wise Warrior Yoga, 9:30 a.m., Fellowship Hall or Garden, weather dependent; Wednesday, 7/1: Book Group, 10:45 a.m., Fellowship Hall; Friday, 7/3: The church will be closed in observance of Independence Day.

Upcoming Events and General Announcements: 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.

Outdoor Garden Summer Worship: This summer, the church will offer two opportunities to worship outdoors in the church's garden space. Outdoor worship will be Sundays, July 12 and Aug. 23, at 9:30 a.m. Remember to dress for the weather and bring your water and lawn chair. Note: in case of inclement weather, worship will move indoors to the sanctuary.

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.

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

Last month, AHM Youth and Family Services launched a new podcast. The premiere episode focused on how parents can support their children's mental health, and featured AHM clinical therapist Megan Aldridge (right), who's shown with episode host, and AHM executive director, Tressa Giordano.

★ *AHM New Podcast, cont. from page 1*

40 minutes, which we felt is a good time period, especially if a parent is commuting to work or perhaps they're going for a walk," she said. "It's a short enough time that [it] doesn't seem too long, but a long enough time where we can really pack some good information."

The first two episodes were released during Mental Health Awareness Month in May and focused on youth mental health. Both featured AHM clinicians. Additional episodes released in June focus on substance use and include guests from Amplify, AHM's regional behavioral health action organization.

Future episodes are already in the works. Giordano said topics involving technology are especially important right now.

"We definitely, over the summer, want to approach topics around social media and phones, devices, AI," she said. "Those are topics that we know, just from interacting with our families at the office, that those are very much hot topics right now."

AHM also plans an episode focused on helping students transition back to school after summer vacation.

"We know for some youth that that's a point which can be a little bit anxiety-driven," Giordano explained. "So we want to give parents tips on how to transition your child back into the routine and the structure of school."

She added with a laugh, "There is not going to be a shortage of topics for sure."

Beyond sharing information, the podcast also introduces families to local resources.

"Whatever topic we're discussing, we want to give some factual information, but then perhaps provide families with local resources – where to turn to if this is a challenge that maybe you're seeing in your child," she said.

She hopes families who listen will feel comfortable reaching out. "They know that we're friendly, we're approachable and we're right around the corner."

Giordano added she believes the topics discussed are relevant far beyond the four towns AHM serves.

"Our country is experiencing a youth mental health crisis. That's universal," she said. "When we're talking about substance use and addiction, those are topics that if you go anywhere, youth are exposed to and struggling with."

The first episodes have already received strong engagement. In addition to full episodes, AHM shares clips and highlights across Instagram, Facebook, TikTok and more.

"We really feel that any information that parents are picking up is helpful," Giordano said.

As the youth service bureau for the four towns, AHM provides outpatient counseling, school-based support, family resource centers, prevention programs and positive youth activities. The organization serves children from birth through age 26 and helps about 12,000 residents each year.

"We really try to go where the people are, to be able to give information, create connections and just be present within the community," Giordano said.

Young Soccer Star Jetting to France

By Josh Howard

Nolan Quealy, a 10-year-old from East Hampton, will soon have the opportunity to train with and compete against the top soccer talent from across the world.

Quealy has been selected for the highly-competitive Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) Academy Pro Top 44 Program, an elite international soccer development held in France.

"I'm very happy and excited," stated Quealy, who added that he is most looking forward to learning from the PSG coaches and training with other kids from different countries.

Quealy was identified for the program following his participation in the PSG Academy Pro Summer Program at Oak Hill Academy in Virginia during the summer of 2025. Throughout the week-long training experience, players were evaluated by PSG Academy Pro coaches and staff using the same developmental principles employed throughout the PSG Academy network.

Following the evaluation process, Quealy was selected to participate in the PSG Academy Pro Top 44 Program, one of the most prestigious opportunities available within the global PSG Academy network.

The invitation-only program brings together the highest-rated young players identified through PSG Academy Pro events around the world and provides them with an immersive training experience at the academy's elite training facilities in France.

Training with PSG is the next step in Quealy's quest to become a more polished player.

It's a passion for Quealy that has grown over the years, but it was not love at first kick.

When his parents first signed him up for town soccer in preschool, his father, Jonathan Quealy, said "he hated every second of it" and that he did not make it through the initial season.

But after taking a year off, the young prodigy asked to give it another try and a few years later he has earned the right to learn from the best of the best in the business.

Along with playing for the town, Quealy also plays travel soccer for East Hampton Soccer Club (EHSC). He joined CFC North for a few seasons before making the jump to Hartford Athletic Youth Academy, where he still plays today.

It was at the Hartford Youth Academy that the PSG Academy saw Quealy's potential, noting the blossoming local talent, "distinguished himself through his intensity, technical ability, speed, and passion for the game."

This will be his second time training in France, first visiting and playing in Paris for a week in October 2023 as part of a similar invitation-only program.

For his latest invite, the Quealys received an email before informing their son he was about to make a return to France.

"Nolan's selection is a tremendous accomplishment and a reflection of the hard work, dedication, and passion he brings to the game every day," stated his parents. "To be recognized among such a talented international group of players is an incredible honor."

More than 700 players from across North America, Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Middle East participated in PSG Academy Pro programs during the selection cycle. From that international talent pool, only 44 players earned invitations to the Top 44 Program. Quealy's selection places him among an exceptionally small group of elite youth players chosen to represent the very best performers identified worldwide.

The PSG Academy Pro Top 44 Program is designed to replicate the demands and expectations of a professional academy environment. Players participate in advanced technical and tactical training sessions, performance analysis, athletic testing, and high-level competition while being evaluated by academy coaches and development staff. For many participants, the experience represents a rare opportunity to train alongside some of the most promising young soccer players from around the globe.

As part of the program, Quealy will travel to France to train alongside other elite youth players from across the globe, gaining valuable experience both on and off the field while representing East Hampton and the United States on an international stage.

Quealy, who lives in East Hampton with his parents and two brothers, will attend East Hampton Middle School this upcoming fall.

His selection to the PSG Academy Pro Top 44 Program marks a significant milestone in a soccer journey that is just getting started for the Belltown native.

East Hampton's Nolan Quealy will train in France as part of the PSG Academy Pro Top 44 Program.

YPPCA Taking Registrations for Summer Theater Camp

The Young People's Center for Creative Arts (YPCCA) 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.ypcca.org or email info@ypcca.org.

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.

Win a 2026 Chevy Colorado Pick-Up Truck

The East Hampton/Marlborough Rotary Club is selling raffle tickets for its largest fundraiser of the year. The drawing will be held at East Hampton Old Home Days on Saturday, July 11, at 8 p.m., at Bevin Park on the Center School grounds. The grand prize is a 2026 Chevy Colorado LT crew cab truck.

The second prize is a cabin stay on Laurel Island, Lake Pocotopaug, third prize is an Estate Planning gift certificate at Kenneth Barber and Associates, and fourth prize is a $250 gift certificate to Lakehouse Bar & Grill.

Only 800 tickets will be sold, at a price of $100 each ticket.

Winners need not be present and are responsible for all federal and state taxes.

Most of the tickets are already spoken for but occasionally a longtime buyer decides it's time to pass the raffle ticket number off to someone else. If you would like to be added to the waiting list, call Rotarian Pam Greenwald at 860-965-4646 or email pjoslyngreenwald@gmail.com.

Old Home Days Returns for 46th Year

The community tradition known as Old Home Days, affectionately called the "Glorious Celebration," returns for its 46th year on July 9, 10 and 11.

With roots dating back to 1910 and the founding of the Village Improvement Society, Old Home Days continues to celebrate community spirit and East Hampton traditions. Today, the event is organized entirely by the dedicated, all-volunteer Old Home Days Committee and funded solely through generous donations from local residents and businesses.

This year's America 250 theme, "Bells, Boats and Birth of Our Nation," will be front and center during the annual parade on Saturday, July 11, at 11 a.m. Parade participants are invited to showcase and honor a local business in their float designs. Marching bands, local businesses, community organizations and residents are encouraged to take part. Parade registration is available at www.ehohd.org.

Families can look forward to the return of Marenna Amusements, offering rides for all ages, along with free nightly entertainment on the main stage and delicious food from local civic groups and vendors .

Each evening, 15 children's bikes, complete with helmets, will be given away to children under 12. One free ticket per child per night will be available at the front entrance beginning at 6 p.m., with drawings held between 7 and 8 p.m.

Also returning is the fifth annual "Rails to Trails" 5K, kicking off at 7 p.m. on Friday, July 10. Race details, registration information and the full schedule of events can be found at www.ehohd.org.

Old Home Days remains a true community celebration made possible by volunteers, donors, local businesses and the residents who continue to support this long-standing East Hampton tradition.

For more information, parade registration, race details and the full event schedule, visit www.ehohd.org.

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/east-hampton-senior-center for more information and a list of regular weekly and monthly activities, including games, quilting, the Trailblazers walking group, Bible study, tap dance, Yarn Yogis, Linefit and more.

Lunches: Served Monday through Friday, to ages 60 and up. Call to reserve a meal or sign up online. Reservations for the next day's meal are due by 10:30 a.m. the day before. Meals are free; a $3 donation is requested. A Form 5 document must be completed before registering for lunch; stop by the senior center to complete and submit the form.

Health Talk with Chris: Monday, June 29, 12:30 p.m. "Go with Your Gut – Exploring the Connection Between Food and Gut Health" is the topic of the discussion with nutritionist Christ Blancarte of Senior Resources Agency on Aging.

Honoring the Journey: Thursday, July 2, 11 a.m. The group helps participants to navigate loss and prioritize safety, validation, and the transition from pain to integrated memory.

Design & Create: Thursday, July 2, 1:30 p.m. Senior Center members are invited to help create props for the East Hampton Senior Center Old Home Day Float for the parade on July 11.

Bike Rides for Seniors: Friday, June 19, 10 a.m. Ride at the Air Line Trail, 69 Smith St., East Hampton. For riders 55 and older. Bring your bike, helmet and water bottle.

Trips: Thimble Island Cruise: Thursday, July 9, departing the senior center at 9:45 a.m. Sail aboard the Volsunga IV for a narrated tour of the Thimble Islands. Depart the center at 9:30 a.m. for a 11 a.m. tour. Bring your own lunch – drink and dessert provided. Cost is $20 with bus transportation.

East Hampton Lunch Bunch: Enjoy lunch together on Friday, July 17 at Two Brothers Café in East Hampton. Choose your meal from a specially priced menu for senior citizens, or the café's regular offerings. Depart from the senior center at 11:30 a.m. using Xtramile. Payment due from each diner to the restaurant.

A Day at Harkness Park: Wednesday, July 22, departure at 11 a.m. Spend the day at this lovely state park in Waterford. Bring lunch, water, sun block and a chair, stroll the grounds and gardens, take a swim. Donation of $4 for bus transportation suggested.

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.

Tennis Program for Adults

The East Hampton Recreation tennis program for adults is held every Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 8-11 a.m., at the East Hampton High School 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.

Monthly Herb Circle

All new and experienced herbalists, tea drinkers, plant lovers, gardeners and more are invited to the next Monthly Herb Circle on Wednesday, July 1, at 6 p.m., at Wildcraft Herb Shoppe, 70 Main St., Unit B.

The July topic is "Herbs to Stay Cool This Summer." Admission is $10 to Wildcraft for herbs.

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"A perfect summer day is when the sun is shining, the breeze is blowing, the birds are singing, and the lawn mower is broken.
—James Dent

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HOF Association Accepting Nominations

The East Hampton Athletic Hall of Fame Association is accepting nominations through Aug. 26. If you know of who you feel is a worthy candidate – which could be an athlete, coach, team, or contributor – email seidlt@sbcglobal.net for a nomination packet or go to the Hall of Fame website at ehahof.wixsite.com/bellringer for information.

The induction ceremony will be Friday, Oct. 30, at 6 p.m., at Blackledge Country Club.

The Hall of Fame has been in existence since 2006 and our objective is to recognize exceptional athletes and achievements. The association has inducted 65 athletes, coaches, teams and contributors into the Hall of Fame since its founding.

Also, the association's membership and committee are very small and new members are sought, preferably those who have a knowledge of history of sports in East Hampton to join our team. Email seidlt@sbcglobal.net if interested.

Time to License Your Dog

June is dog licensing month. All dogs 6 months or older require a license each year in the town where they reside. A current rabies certificate for all dogs, and a neutered/spayed certificate for first time licenses are required.

Dog license fees: neutered male/spayed female, $8; unneutered male/spayed female, $19; kennel licenses, 10 for $50 plus 10 cents per tag, or 20 for $100 plus .10 per tag. Late licensing penalty is $1 per month after June, and fee is 50 cents to replace a lost tag.

Dog licenses may be obtained at the town clerk's office Monday, Wednesday and Thursday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Tuesday, 8 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.; and Friday, 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Licenses may also be obtained by mail; include a check for the proper fee, made payable to the East Hampton Town Clerk; all certificates; and a self-addressed stamped envelope. Send all mail requests to the Town Clerk, Town Hall, 1 Community Drive, East Hampton, CT 06424. All certificates required will be returned with the new license and tag.

Renewals – and only renewals – can be completed online through the town clerk's dog renewal system. To renew online you must have a current rabies certificate on file with the town clerk's office. Access the online dog renewal system at www.easthamptonct.gov/town-clerk/pages/dog-licenses.

Taxes Due

Taxes for real estate, personal property and motor vehicles levied on the Oct. 1, 2025 Grand List are due and payable on Wednesday, July 1. The final day to pay without penalty is Monday, Aug. 3. Real estate and personal property taxes totaling more than $100, as well as motor vehicle taxes totaling more than $500, may be paid in two equal installments.

Property owners are responsible for ensuring that all taxes are paid when due. Failure to receive a tax bill does not relieve the taxpayer of the responsibility to pay taxes owed, including any applicable interest charges for delinquent payments. If you did not receive your tax bill, please contact the Collector of Revenue at taxcollector@easthamptonct.gov.

Late payments accrue interest at a rate of 1.5% per month (18% annually) with a $2 minimum interest charge, as required by state law. Payments legibly postmarked by the USPS on or before Aug. 3 are considered on time regardless of when they are received by the tax office.

Checks should be made payable to Town of East Hampton. Payments may be mailed to: Collector of Revenue, 1 Community Drive, East Hampton, CT 06424. Payments may also be made online at www.easthamptonct.gov. Credit card payments are subject to a 3.25% convenience fee. There is no fee for ACH/EFT payments.

Hours of collection: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday: 8 a.m.-4 p.m.; Tuesday: 8 a.m.-6:30 p.m.; Friday: 8 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Summer Events to Mark America 250

East Hampton will join communities across the country in commemorating America 250 with a series of patriotic events celebrating the birth of the United States, local history, community spirit, and the traditions that bring residents together.

The summer schedule will feature concerts, parades, historic readings, town gatherings, and a special red, white, and blue lakeside celebration.

America 250 Event Schedule

Thursday, July 2 – 102nd Army Band Goff House Gazebo Concert at 6:30 p.m.: Residents are invited to enjoy a patriotic outdoor concert performed by the 102nd Army Band at the Goff House Gazebo.

Saturday, July 4 – Middlesex All County Parade at 10 a.m.: East Hampton will take part in the Middlesex All County Parade on Main Street in Middletown, celebrating Independence Day with communities from across the region.

Wednesday, July 8 – Declaration of Independence Reading at 6 p.m.: This will be a special public reading of the Declaration of Independence.

Thursday, July 9 through Saturday, July 11 – Old Home Days: East Hampton's annual Glorious Celebration will make its return, offering family-friendly activities, local traditions, and summer festivities. The **Old Home Day Parade** will be on Saturday, July 11. The theme will be "Bells, Boats and Birth of Our Nation," highlighting East Hampton's heritage and its connection to America's founding story.

Saturday, Aug. 8 – Lions Club Townwide Picnic from 5-8 p.m.: The East Hampton Lions Club will host a townwide picnic at Sears Park, welcoming residents and families for an evening of community celebration.

Saturday, Aug. 8 – Light Up the Lake at 8 p.m.: Lake Pocotopaug will shine in red, white, and blue as residents are encouraged to "Light Up the Lake" in celebration of America 250.

Additional details, times, locations, and participation information will be announced as event plans are finalized.

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 easthamptonpublicilibrary.org.

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

All Ages: Summer Reading Kickoff!: Friday, June 26, 5-7 p.m., at Memorial School. There will be an inflatable obstacle course, a dunk tank, free ice cream from the Ice Cream Dream truck, a farm petting zoo with Xen's Critters, and face-painting by Epoch Arts. This is a chance to learn more about the Summer Reading Program. (Note the location change to Memorial School.)

Family Trivia Night: A Journey Through Time: Monday, June. 29, 6:30-7:30 p.m.

Adult Program: Wolf Conservation Center Presents: North American Wolves: Tuesday, June 29, 6 p.m. Meet a Wolf Conservation Center expert to learn more about wolves, their habitats, and the work WCC is doing to protect the endangered Red Wolf and Mexican Gray Wolf.

Teen Programs: Lunch Bunch – The Next Chapter (Freshmen Only!): Wednesday, July 1, 1-2 p.m. Bring your lunch and the book you are currently reading.

Teen TCG Club (Grades 8-12): Friday, July 3, 1-3 p.m. Come play your favorite trading card games alongside fellow fans or learn a new one. Players of Magic: The Gathering, Pokemon, Yu-Gi-Oh!, and more are invited to this afternoon of friendly competition. Magic: The Gathering decks will be available for new players to use.

Lunch Bunch Book Club: Grades 6-8: Wednesday, July 8, 1-2 p.m. Bring your lunch and the book you're currently reading. Chat about books, play games, do crafts, and eat lunch together.

Children's Programs: LEGO at the Library: Grades K-6: Tuesday, July 7, 4:30-5:30 p.m. Work solo or with friends on a new challenge or theme each month. All Lego bricks are provided; just bring your creativity and get ready to build.

Science Heroes Presents: Diggin' It!: Saturday, June 27, 11 a.m. In this interactive S.T.E.M. show for the whole family, conduct experiments about the changing states of matter, pressure, and more while raising a shovel to scientist who work with dirt. Best for Grades K-5. Register or drop in.

Dean's List

East Hampton resident Neha Sidana made the spring 2026 Dean's List at Quinnipiac University in Hamden.

Sidana recently completed her freshman year in the ELMPA (Physician assistant) program.

Summer Fun… **Children who are clients of the Department of Children and Families (DCF) and in need of things to do this summer are getting some help from members of the Congregational Church of East Hampton. To engage the clients in healthy activities, the members are donating items like sidewalk chalk, coloring books, bubbles, hula hoops, and 15 youth basketballs. Pictured are, back row, Lanette Zaborowski, Luanne Sanzo, Jackie Hooper-Hage; front row, Cyndi Shirshac, Donna Marsden, Rae Strickland, Mary Decoursey.**

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.

Recreation News

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

Mad Science Camp: July 13-17, 9 a.m.-noon, at Center School, for ages 5-10. Cost is $115.

Art Explosion Camp: July 20-24, 9 a.m.-noon, at Center School, for ages 5-10. Cost is $115.

Hoop it Up Basketball Camp: July 13-17, 9:30-11:30 a.m., at Center School, for grades 1-6. Cost is $140.

Coastal Christmas in July: July 29, 6:30-8 p.m., at Town Hall. Fee is $45.

Camp Wildwood at Lake Pocotopaug at Sears Park: Aug. 17-21, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., for ages 6-12. Cost is $225.

Golf Tournament Rescheduled: The tournament will now be Thursday, Sept. 3, at Blackledge Country Club in Hebron. The event will feature 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. A highlight to this year's tournament will be a Hole-in-One contest, where golfers will have a chance to win a 2026 Nissan Rogue SV. There will also be a raffle contest and prizes. The tournament benefits East Hampton Sears Park Playground equipment. Cost is $145 per golfer.

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.

Women's Fellowship: Will meet Wednesday, July 1, from 5:30-7:30 p.m., at Mary's house.

Men's Group: Will meet Wednesday, July 8 from 7-8 a.m., to share scripture around what the Bible says about being a man. There will be coffee and pastries.

Chicken Barbecue: The next drive-thru Chicken Barbecue will be held Saturday, Aug. 8, from noon to 5 p.m., at the Church field.

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., though it's on hiatus for the summer. 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.hncovenantchurch.org.

East Hampton, Let's Celebrate America 250!

This summer, as July 4 nears, the EH America 250 committee is inviting homeowners and businesses around East Hampton to help celebrate America's 250th anniversary by decorating your homes in the spirit of America 250.

Bring out the flags, bunting, red, white, and blue lights, patriotic porch décor, and historic flair. Fill the streets with American pride so that everyone who drives through town can see East Hampton celebrating in a big way.

Senior Center Upcoming Trip

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.

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.

An Epoch Grant from Rotary… **David Quast, the chair of the East Hampton/Marlborough Rotary Club's Community Service Committee, recently presented Elizabeth Namen, the artistic director of Epoch Arts, with a $1,500 grant. The funds will be used to support Epoch Arts' theater department, Speak Out Productions. Speak Out offers teens the opportunity to participate in two original theatrical productions throughout the year. Speak Out is one of the core programs of Epoch Arts and was founded 28 years ago upon the production of *Romeo and Juliet*. Quast is pictured at left, with Namen.**

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, bedframes, 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 June 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.

Old Home Days Parade to Return

The Old Home Days Parade will return Saturday, July 11, at 11 a.m.

The theme of this year's Old Home Days is "Bells, Boats and Birth of our Nation." The parade will celebrate the town's history as Belltown, its connection to ship building, Lake Pocotopaug, and America's 250th birthday.

It's not too late to join the parade; visit www.ehohd.org to register. For information, contact Bo Tinson at 860-414-9712 or RLTinson@gmail.com.

Troop 57 Bottle Drive

Troop 57 will have its next bottle drive Saturday, June 20, from 9 a.m.-noon. Bring clean cans, plastics and glass to the American Distilling Parking lot, 31 East High St.

Since Connecticut charges 10 cent on soda, beer, water, tea, kombucha, and juice, all of these clean containers can be dropped off. It may not specifically say Connecticut will pay the 10 cents, but if you paid a deposit, the scouts can take it. However, Connecticut doesn't pay for milk containers, dairy products, wine and hard liquor, so they will not be accepted.

For more information, call Annette Kowalczyk at 860-267-2962.

Education Records to be Discarded

The guidance department of East Hampton High School will destroy any and all education cumulative files of students who graduated or would have graduated with the classes of 1969-1976.

These records will be destroyed on July 17.

If any student, as described above, would like their education cumulative file, they must submit a written request for a copy of the records no later than July 3. Send all requests to Roseann Bullett, Guidance Administrative Assistant, East Hampton High School, 15 North Maple St., East Hampton, CT 06424.

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 June: Nancy Riella of Colchester. Her coastal and nautically themed watercolors can be viewed during regular library hours.

Open Mic Night: Friday, July 17, 6-8 p.m. This event might be held outdoors on the lawn, weather permitting, so plan to bring your lawn chairs. Come and share your talent or just listen and enjoy. Performers, call the library to sign up at 860-267-9093.

Save the date: For a performance of blues and jazz with musicians Lynn Tracey and Hannah Ardens on Sunday, July 19, at 5 p.m. Original poetry selections will be provided by Sympetalous – a.k.a. Stan Lindh.

Chatham Community Chess Club: The club continues in July. Dates to be announced. 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.

EHHS Class of 2026

The members of the East Hampton High School Class of 2026 are:

Casey N. Anderson, Marian Naana Andoh +, Ava N. Archer, Sofia E. Aresco *+, Beckett Jameson Asklar, Lila Jayne Babcock, Alivia Grace Baier, Ayomide Bamgbose, Carolyn Frances Barry, Michael Ryan Bellemare, Carli Anne Blakey, Nicolas M. Borrelli, Vivienne Elliott Braun-Fales, Aubrey Rose Butler, Lilah Butson, Jason Charles Gerald Canterbury Jr., Alexis Mia Cardenas, Richard John Carl III, Dylan June Carlson, Ava Brooke Carpenter, Anastacia Therese Cooke, Jack Paul Cote, Tyler Crumb +, Klara Adele Cygan, Madelyn Mary Daniels *+, Hannah Michelle DePino, Ethan John Dewhurst, Izzy Dickinson, Christopher R. Dows, Matthew Drlik *+;

William Radcliffe Faber +^, Andrew J. Fenton *, Ryder Fijalkowski, Mia Kenley Flynn, Nadia Nicole France ^, Stephanie Alice Franklim, Javier Garcia-Villa, Brielle Grace Gay, Hailey Lynne Geoffrey +, Aiden John Gora +^, Daniel H. Green, Gunnar J. Green, Madeline Helen Griswold ^, Jocelyn Elizabeth Gustavson *, John Crain Haley II +, Ethan Richard Hall, Parker Robert Hambidge, Jaxon Elias Hanson, James M. Harris Jr., Collin James Hicks, Ava Grace Jedziniak +, Ashley Elise Johnson *+^, Sofia Charlotte Johnson, Logan Johnston, Lindsey A. Joy, Dean Michael Jump, Kendall Paige Jump +, Abagail Janelle Kiernan +, Bella E. Knouse, Julianna Amelia Korczak *+, Adriana Carol Kromish, Talor May Lambo, Jillian Moorea Leonardo *+^, Mikah Jade Levenduski, Jonathan Michael Le Moine, Bethany Denise Limmer *+^, James Thomson Limmer +^, Dominic J. Lisboa, Josiah P. Lobban, Sophia Michelle Long +, Lillian Bella Lord;

Christopher R. Machnik, Hannah Elizabeth Malinka-Morgan, Domenic G. Mangino, Jacob W. Marchinkoski, Colin Daniel Marshall, Stephanie Blaire Martin, Eryk O. Mitkiewicz, Noah John-Russell Mokrzycki, Jake Joseph Morrone, Mackenzie Grace Mortimer, Aiden Kyle Niderno *+, Leah Grace Norton, James Robert O'Brien, Chase Jonathon Palmer +, Grace Elizabeth Pekar ^, Sophie Marjorie Perron +, William Ian Potter, Samantha A. Pugo +, Nevaeh F. Ranney, Jaelynn Ann Nicole Ray, John Richard Riley, Angel Lynn Rodriguez, Cheyenne R. Rodriguez, Logan Gerald Ruel, Shane R. Ruggiero, Jackson William Rurka +, Declan Seamus Joseph Russell +, Brooke Lynn Ryan, Chelsea Lynn Ryan, Landon J. Searles, Lucy Marie Shogren, Katrina Skye Smith, Sophia Maria Snyder, Aubrey Gayle Stevens *+, Grace Josephine Thrasher +, Samantha Julia Traino, Victoria R. Twiss, Griffin Michael Valley, Damon Gaetano VanBlaricom, Sydney Lynn Vicino, Caleb Michael Wagner, Evan L. Wagner, Amelia Juliette Wiesner +, Madelyn Emma Wilk +, Ruger William Wojchowski, Jacob Stephen Woods, Marley Sandia Zinkerman.

* Top Ten Students

\+ Ferrigno-Bell Chapter National Honor Society

^ Tri-M

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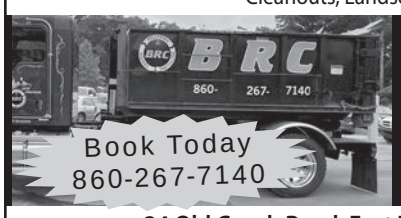

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DISCARDING RECORDS Class of 2019 and 2020

The Student Services and Special Education Department of East Hampton will destroy any and all special education/504 records of students who graduated or would have graduated with the Class of 2019 and 2020. These records may be helpful or necessary for future referrals to social security and other state services. These records will be destroyed on July 20, 2026.

If any student, as described above, would like his/her special education/504 records, he/she must submit a written request for a copy of the records no later than July 10, 2026. Please forward all requests to Rodney Mosier II, Director of Student Services and Special Education, East Hampton School District 1 Community Dr, Suite 1, East Hampton, CT 06424

RE 6-26-26

Teresa Shulman, left, is the top volunteer for the East Hampton Community Cares programs. Marilyn Gerzabek, 92, said Shulman gives her rides to doctor's appointments and is "a lovely lady."

Volunteers Changing Lives for Older People and People with Disabilities

By Kathy Megan

It was almost three years ago when Teresa Shulman decided she had gazed out at the beautiful lake across the street from her home long enough.

"I decided that retirement is not for me," said Shulman, who had been assistant finance director in East Hampton for years.

At the same time, she heard about East Hampton Community Cares – a program started locally by the East Hampton Commission on Aging that connects volunteers with older or disabled people who need help with transportation, grocery shopping, housework, yardwork, technology or who simply want someone to talk with.

So Shulman, 72, started volunteering – driving people who needed a ride to the doctor's or to a food bank.

"I was hooked," said Shulman, who grew up in a family and went to a school that stressed the importance of reaching out to those who are less fortunate. "It serves a purpose for those giving the benefits and those receiving the benefits. … It makes me feel useful and helps me get out of my own head and into someone else's head."

Marilyn Gerzabek is one of those people that Shulman is helping. Gerzabek, 92, lives on her own in East Hampton and stopped driving a few years ago.

She has children and grandchildren who can help but they would have to take time off from work to drive her to doctor's appointments – not something Gerzabek wants to ask them to do.

"It has worked beautifully," said Gerzabek of getting rides with Shulman. "She is a lovely lady."

And with all the drives together, the two have become friends, which often happens.

"Marilyn is sharper than I am," said Shulman. "I'll ask, Marilyn, what is this about? And she fills you right in."

Eric Rosenberg, chairman of the East Hampton Commission on Aging, said the program, which was started with the help of UR Community Cares in Manchester, has 119 people participating: 48 volunteers helping out and 71 members requesting help.

Rosenberg said recently that during the last 120 days ending in May, 68 deeds – as each task is called – were done. The annualized rate is 207 deeds per year or more than one every two days.

While the program is strong, Rosenberg is certain there are more older adults in East Hampton who could use help. In the commission's survey of the town's older adults, one third of those who responded said they could use help maintaining their home or doing yard work. Of those with lower incomes or age 80 and older, a third had trouble getting transportation to medical appointments.

Rosenberg said that providing these services to older or disabled people helps them "to live at home and gives them a sense of community – a sense that other people care about them and are willing to help them out.

"It's a great asset to the whole community," said Rosenberg.

Shulman has done 151 deeds – the most of any volunteer. Last summer, she was honored along with several other top volunteers by the commission with a Bevin Bell and a proclamation for her efforts.

Lois Caron is another East Hampton resident who has benefited from Shulman's help. When Caron, 81, lost her husband four years ago, she hadn't driven in 30 years.

In addition, she had a sprawling yard that needed to be mowed. Her husband's rider-lawn mower was in her shed.

"I can't do any of this myself," she said recently. "I don't dare get on that lawn mower."

One of her nieces found out about East Hampton Community Cares and Caron hit it off with Shulman, who helps her out with rides. "She's great! We even went out to dinner together. She's something – she really is. She's very reliable."

And meanwhile Caron has gotten help from EHCC with her lawn. On a recent very hot afternoon, Steve Steele, a volunteer, was mowing her lawn.

A retired high school math teacher, Steele said he's one "of those crazy people who loves yardwork."

Besides, he said, when he found out that Caron owned a riding lawn mower, it was "a win/win for both of us!"

Steve Krupp, a former high school special education teacher in East Hampton, said EHCC said is his favorite volunteer program because of its flexibility and ease.

Volunteers sign up with the statewide, parent group called UR Community Cares which provides an on-line portal so that East Hampton volunteers can see who in town needs help with what and when. The program is open to all, regardless of income.

"It's very convenient," said Krupp. "You get to pick what you want. You pick and choose what you are comfortable doing each week."

For more information and to sign up, go to urcommunitycares.org or email Dr. Eric Rosenberg with any questions at COAchair@easthamptonct.gov

If you don't have computer access, you can call the East Hampton Senior Center at 860-267-4426 and leave a message for Beth Angel or Dr. Eric Rosenberg. One of them will call you back.

Teen Game Night Summer Bash

Epoch Arts will hold a Teen Game Night Summer Bash Friday, June 26, from 7-9:30 p.m., at Epoch, 27 Skinner St.

Teens in grades 6 and up are invited to come celebrate that school is out and summer is here. Play some old school games as well as some new ones like DDR, XBox, Chess, Corn Hole, and a variety of other games. There will be ice cream, snacks and drinks all night long. For more information, visit www.epocharts.org.

Christ Episcopal Church News

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

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: Glass bottles and aluminum cans should be separated prior to drop-off.

Food4Lives Warm Weather Clothing Drive: Patty Kloo is collecting warm weather new or nearly new clothing for un-housed persons in Middletown. Needed are T-shirts, shorts, pants, light sweaters, hoodies, sweatshirts, sandals/sneakers and underwear in adult sizes small to XXL. Clean items should be placed in the blue tote in the Parish Hall.

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

Charlotte Galarneau and Ben Buyniski were named as the top Scholar Athletes at Bacon Academy. The two are flanked by Bacon Academy athletic director Kevin Burke and Bacon Academy principal Amy Begue.

Rivereast Standout Athletes of the Week

By Josh Howard

Charlotte Galarneau and Ben Buyniski – Bacon Academy: Galarneau and Buyniski were honored as Bacon Academy's 2025-26 CASCIAS Scholar Athletes. Galarneau was a fencer for the Bobcats and was the school valedictorian. Buyniski played baseball for the Bobcats and was the school's salutatorian. The Scholar-Athlete Program annually recognizes two high school seniors from each member school whose academic and athletic careers have been exemplary, whose personal standards and achievements are a model to others, and who possess high levels of integrity, self-discipline and courage. Both Galarneau and Buyniski will attend the University of Connecticut where Galarneau will study physics and Buyniski will study actuarial science.

Ethan Wells – Portland High School (Baseball): Wells was named All-Shoreline Conference (SLC) first-team after starring as a senior catcher for the Highlanders this spring. Wells was a three-sport standout at Portland, also playing soccer in the fall and basketball in the winter. Following his graduation from PHS last week, Wells will now continue his athletic and academic career at the University of Saint Joseph where he will play baseball for the Blue Jays in West Hartford.

Kendall Jump – East Hampton High School (Softball): Jump was named All-Shoreline Conference (SLC) honorable mention after serving as the team's No. 1 pitcher and was a reliable hitter for the Bellringers this spring. Jump, a senior, led the team in hits and RBIs, along with starting 16 games from the mound. Following her graduation from EHHS earlier this month, Jump will now major in elementary education at Saint Anselm College in New Hampshire.

Reese Montstream, Meredith Weir, Alexandra Slyk – RHAM High School (Tennis): Montstream, Weir, and Slyk represented RHAM tennis at the State Invitational that took place at Conard High School on June 7. Montstream, the team's No. 1 singles player, defeated Middletown's Mackenzie La in straight sets (6-3, 6-4) to reach the Round of 32. Weir and Slyk, the RHAM's top doubles team, won a trio of matches, upending the top doubles teams from Avon (6-1, 6-1), Glastonbury (6-1, 6-4), and Simsbury (6-4, 6-1) to reach the semifinals where they would fall to the eventual state champion duo from Greenwich. The three were all selected All-Central Connecticut Conference (CCC) as they powered a Raptors team that finished 12-5 in the regular season and also won a pair of matches in the Class M state tournament.

From the State Senator's Desk...

Investing In Connecticut Families

Needleman

At a time when more households are watching budgets and spending carefully, we're at a point where our state needs to step in and make sure our residents are being taken care of. I'm proud that Connecticut is stepping up, with two significant investments in programs aiding people around the state the latest evidence of that fact.

At the beginning of June, Governor Lamont announced the state's investment of $320 million into the Early Childhood Education Endowment. Created last year, the Endowment, now worth $620 million, is designed to ensure no Connecticut family pays more than 7% of its income on child care, acknowledging the rapidly increasing cost of infant-to-kindergarten programs and strain faced by families and providers alike.

Under child care programs participating in the Endowment, once it reaches full steam in July 2027, families earning under $100,000 per year will pay $0 for child care, and anyone earning above $100,000 will pay no more than 7% of their earnings – meaning a family earning $200,000 would see costs capped at $14,000. That's a huge way to support young families and better ensure every child in our communities is given a chance to succeed from their earliest days.

In addition, the Endowment is working to support the expansion of child care providers, with the goal of creating thousands of additional spaces and financially supporting providers themselves in a competitive industry. It has a full board of advisors overseeing its activities as well, who will make sure it remains both financially solvent and focused on supporting the children of Connecticut.

That's not all, either. In 2024, the legislature worked with Governor Lamont to approve the use of $6.5 million in leftover American Rescue Plan Funding, received during the pandemic, toward reducing medical debt among Connecticut residents. Two years later, Governor Lamont just announced that without spending all of that $6.5 million sum, the state has canceled medical debt for more than 252,000 residents, with more than $513 million in debt automatically canceled.

That means more than 5% of the state's population has received debt relief averaging more than $2,000 per person, removing significant burdens from their finances.

Under the initiative, the state works with a nonprofit, Undue Medical Debt, to purchase up bulk portfolios of qualifying medical debt owed by Connecticut patients. Anyone earning at or below 400% of the federal poverty level, or $132,000 for a family of four, or with medical debt exceeding 5% of their income is eligible. The debts are acquired in large packages and can be bought for fractions of their actual value, allowing for low-cost debt relief.

Residents who received debt relief will be notified by mail; no one can apply for or request relief, but it can be delivered for countless residents, with money left to be spent before it expires.

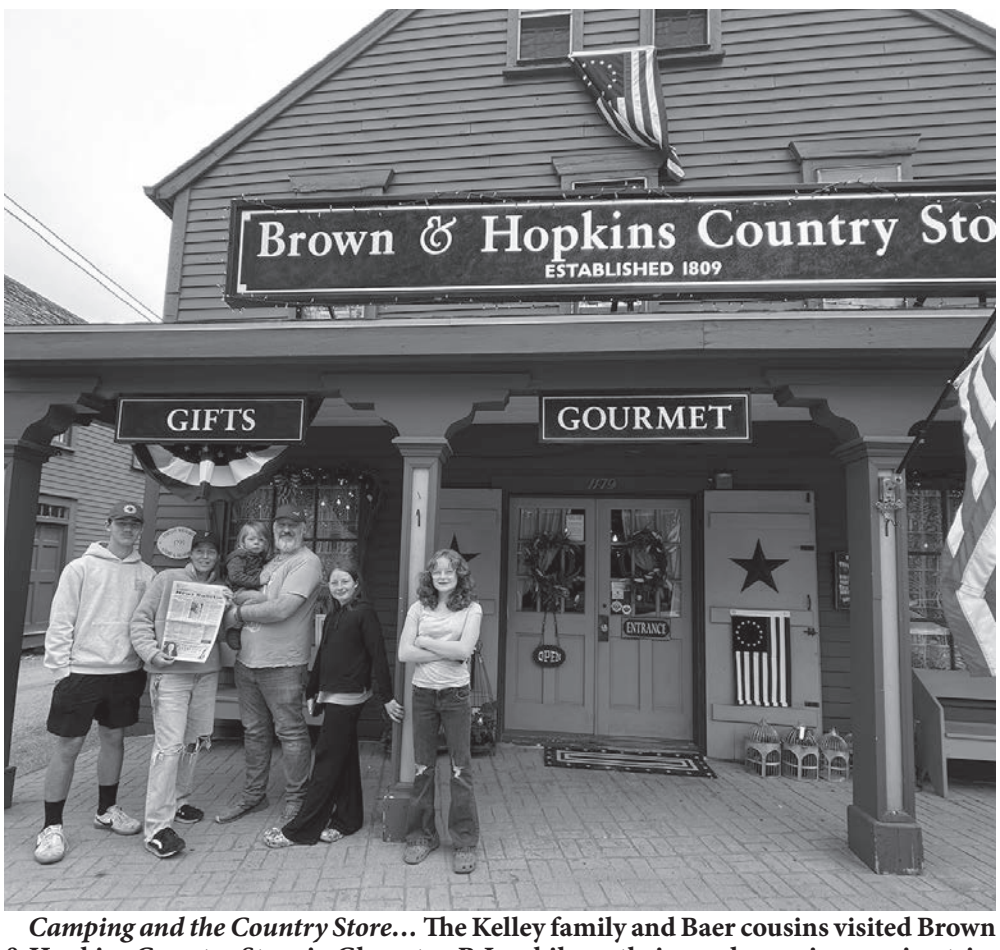
Affordability remains a serious issue throughout our communities, but Connecticut is working to respond and meet people where they are. Making child care more affordable and erasing medical debt will pay strong dividends in our communities for years to come.

State Sen. Norm Needleman
D-33rd District

Note: *The 12-town 33rd District includes the* Rivereast *towns of Colchester, East Hampton and Portland.*

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!



Camping and the Country Store… **The Kelley family and Baer cousins visited Brown & Hopkins Country Store in Glocester, R.I., while on their yearly cousin camping trip. Brown & Hopkins is considered the oldest continuously running store in the country, as it opened in 1809, and the building itself was constructed in 1799.**

Dream Vacation… **John Lezak and Claire Pugliese from East Hampton are holding on tight to the *Rivereast* while vacationing at the Riu Palace Antillas in gorgeous but very windy Aruba. "We finally made our dream vacation come true!!" Claire said.**

The Bulletin and a Bass!… **Natalie Hurt and her daughter Melanie from East Hampton visited family in Plum Island, Mass., over Memorial Day weekend. Natalie caught a 29-inch striped bass right off the dock!**

Golf, Beach, and the Rivereast… **Friends since kindergarten, Joe Balskus of Portland and Gary Beaulieu of East Hampton were recently in Conway, S.C., for a guys' golf and beach trip, with two other high school friends. They played at Shaftesbury Glen, pictured here, and Glen Dornoch in North Myrtle Beach, S.C.**

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

Campagna Restaurant & Lounge

Fine Italian & American Cuisine
151 Marlborough Street (Rt 66), Portland

This new playground will have a grand opening at Veterans Memorial Field on Wednesday, July 1, at 5 p.m. The new pickleball courts will also open that day.

New Playground, Pickleball Courts to Open

The Town of Andover and the Veterans Memorial Field Improvement Committee will hold the grand opening of the new Veterans Memorial Field playground and pickleball courts on Wednesday, July 1, at 5 p.m.

The grand opening event is free and open to the public. Veterans Memorial Field is located on Riverside Drive. The bridge on Long Hill Road is currently closed; please use the Hendee Road detour.

The event will mark the completion of major improvements to the field made possible through a STEAP (Small Town Economic Assistance Program) grant, a legislative grant, a grant from the Andover Greater Together Community Fund, and 'in kind' work provided by the Town of Andover.

The community is invited to join local officials and members of the Veterans Memorial Field Improvement Committee for an evening of celebration. The event will feature a ribbon-cutting ceremony, free play on the new playground and pickleball courts, activities for kids and food. All are welcome.

The Veterans Memorial Field Improvement Committee will offer bench and picnic table sponsorships for local businesses as well as memorial dedications for individuals wishing to honor a loved one.

For more information, call Town Hall at 860-742-7305.

Summer Programs for Kids at Library

Here are this summer's first few programs offered for kids taking place at Andover Public Library. All programs are held at the library this summer. Call the library to sign up or with any questions, at 860-742-7428. You can find the complete summer program flyer posted on Andover Public Library's Facebook page.

¡Amigos!: As part of the Early Roots Collaborative, parent ambassador Doris Maldonado Méndez and AES student Marie will lead another bilingual summer series at the Andover Library, sharing stories designed to help young children explore big feelings, relate to peers, and celebrate the strength of community. This year's lineup also includes a mid-summer "Navidad en Julio," inviting families to learn, laugh, and grow together, where we will have a special guest. The next session in the *¡Amigos!* series will be held Saturday, June 27, at 10:30 a.m. where the featured stories will be *Colores de mi Corazón* (*Colors of my Heart*) and *¿Cómo me siento?* (*How do I feel?*) Future dates will be Saturdays at 10:30 a.m. July 18 and July 25 (Navidad en Julio).

Mr. Magic Returns! Tuesday, June 30, 6 p.m. This magician (also known as attorney Richard Rothstein) has become an annual favorite visitor. He will come for an evening of tricks and illusions for all ages. Space is limited

Summer Sing-Along with Wendy!: Wednesday, July 1, 10:30 a.m. Andover resident Wendy Baver will be at the library with stories and songs for young patrons.

Bingo for Kids!: Tuesday, July 7, 4 p.m. There will be snacks and small prizes. Best for grades 2-6, with adult helpers for younger players. Space for 12 participants.

Coyotes for Kids!: Wednesday, July 8, 4 p.m. Certified Master Wildlife Conservationist Paul Colburn returns to the library to tell kids all about coyotes in Connecticut: their history, habitat, diet, behavior and more. Program targeted to kids aged 12 and younger.

Vacancy for PZC Alternate

Andover electors are advised there is a vacancy for a Planning and Zoning Commission alternate member.

Any qualified Andover elector interested in serving as a member of the Planning and Zoning Commission for a term ending Nov. 20, 2029, is encouraged to apply.

The deadline for submission of letters of interest is Thursday, July 16.

Letters of interest should be sent to: Town of Andover Building Department, 17 School Rd., Andover, CT 06232 Alternatively, submissions may be emailed to: zoning@andoverct.org.

Transfer Station Stickers Available

Andover Transfer Station stickers for the 2026-27 fiscal year are currently available at the town clerk's office at Town Hall. Cost is $50, payable by cash or check.

Bring your vehicle registration, and the vehicle must be present at the time of issuance.

The current year's Transfer Station stickers expire June 30.

For more information, call the town clerk's office at 860-742-0188 ext. 4218.

Board of Selectmen Vacancy

Any Andover elector who is interested in serving on the Board of Selectmen for a term ending Nov. 16, 2027, should send a letter of interest to: Town of Andover - c/o BOS vacancy, 17 School Rd., Andover, CT 06232 or email townclerk@andoverct.org by July 9.

Please note that due to the minority representation requirement in the Town of Andover charter, the candidate can't be a registered Democrat.

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.

History Museum Open Saturday

The Andover Historical Society will open its Museum of Andover History this Saturday, June 27, from 4-6 p.m. New items are continuously being added to the display.

The museum is located in the Old Town Hall on Monument Lane.

Library to Hit the Beach

Andover Public Library is visiting the Andover Lake Beach on Tuesday, June 30, from 2:30-4:30 p.m. This is a rescheduled date as the first potential dates were negatively impacted by weather.

The library will officially kick off the summer season with book giveaways for adults and kids, as well as all kinds of info about summer programming. The library's children's programmer, Lisa Kurtz, will provide some crafting opportunities, and Library Friend Ellen Repay may join as well.

For more information, call the library at 860-742-7428.

Dog Licensing is Underway

It's time for dog owners to renew their dogs' licenses. Current licenses expire June 30. All dogs six months of age and older must be licensed.

Licenses may be renewed or obtain by mail be sending a current rabies certificate (for renewals, only if the certificate on file has expired), proof of spay/neuter for new licenses, a self-addressed stamped envelope for return of the license and a check payable to the Town of Andover - $8 for spayed or neutered dogs and $19 for unaltered dogs.

Residents may also renew or obtain licenses in person at the Town Clerk's Office, 17 School Rd. For more information, contact the Town Clerk's office at 860-742-0188, ext. 218.

WAIM Flea Market

Windham Area Interfaith Ministry (WAIM) – whose service area includes Andover and Hebron – will hold a "Fifth Floor Treasures" flea market Saturday, June 27, from 8 a.m.-noon, at 866 Main St., Willimantic.

The market will feature framed art, glassware, décor, collectibles, household finds, and unique surprises. Payment options are cash, charge or check.

Support helps WAIM continue its mission as a social-service nonprofit strengthening families and neighbors across the region.

For more information, call 860-456-7270 ext. 104 or Kathy Callahan at 860-228-0873.

★ *Letters, cont. from page 7*

referendum. However, the vote is settled now; I'm free to speak.

We can have a real argument about school spending. We cannot have it with imaginary monsters, imaginary numbers.

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.*

Fireworks are Coming

To the Editor:

The start of summer marks one of Hebron's most beloved traditions—the annual Fireworks Show at the Hebron Fairgrounds on Saturday, June 27, with a rain date of Sunday, June 28.

This year's celebration is especially meaningful as our nation marks the 250th anniversary of American independence. As we gather with friends, family, and neighbors, we have a special opportunity to reflect on the history, freedoms, and shared values that have united generations of Americans and continue to strengthen communities like ours.

Each year, this event celebrates not only the season, but also the strong sense of community that makes Hebron so special. This cherished tradition is made possible through the efforts and funding of the Hebron Lions Club, along with the generous support of local businesses, sponsors, and volunteers.

We are especially grateful for the continued partnership of Fire Chief Peter Starkel and the members of the Hebron Volunteer Fire Department. Their dedication, professionalism, and support help ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for everyone in attendance.

Festivities begin at 4 p.m. and will feature a variety of food trucks, live music, and family-friendly activities leading up to the fireworks display.

Whether you're continuing a family tradition or attending for the first time, we invite you to join us for an evening of great food, entertainment, and community spirit as we celebrate the start of summer together.

On behalf of the Hebron Lions Club, thank you for your continued support of our organization and the events that help bring our community together. We look forward to welcoming you to the fairgrounds and sharing another memorable summer evening with you and your family.

Sincerely,
Mike Beaulieu
President, Hebron Lions Club
and
John Flahive
Fireworks Committee Chair,
Hebron Lions Club

Nourish Hebron

To the Editor:

On June 17, Hebron's Planning and Zoning Commission held an informal meeting where the public could discuss their ideas for Hebron Center. A good crowd showed up and ideas were freely exchanged. One person suggested a community center, another, for music lovers, a 1980s-style "ma and pa" record store. A third idea is to build a Nature/Visitors Center. And a fourth, to preserve 17 Kinney Rd. (old Horton land) by putting this property into Hebron's Open Space program. Saving the property allows it to be utilized much like the Raymond Brook Park is now utilized. Thanks to many generations before us, the property lends itself perfectly to this frugal idea. An idea so simple and inexpensive it might just be ignored.

For years now, Hebron has wanted to connect their trail system to downtown. Through low impact updates, the existing farm road and historic laneways, could easily extend the trail from the Raymond Brook Park to a vacant lot at Pendleton Drive. Quite recently, Hebron's Town Council purchased this lot. By carefully combining the laneways and tractor path on 17 Kinney, we can connect to Hebron Center while still allowing our farmers to farm, our trees to flourish and our wetlands to remain productive. Aside from a couple sensitive areas, the farm road and laneways are uncomplicated. Once fully cleared, the laneways themselves create the option for a longer hike. The vacant lot at Pendleton is a great spot for a Nature/Visitors Center and a basic greenhouse for community gardening and growing food, possibly for the food bank. As it now stands, when residents purchase groceries for Hebron's food bank, the food must be packaged or canned. Fresh vegetables might be a welcome addition.

Rumor has it there are empty storefronts on Pendleton Drive, so the record store could also have a home. Additionally, perhaps the Pendleton lot could house the outdoor parties people seem to want. This leaves 17 Kinney to safely filter groundwaters, grow trees, harbor historic artifacts and support our famers as they continue feeding all of us. Do note: basic starter green houses can be made inexpensively out of hoop frames and heavy clear plastic sheets. We can update as donations come in, provided this is a popular option. For more information on fresh food for food pantries, see nOURish INDOOR FARM (www.nourishbpt.org/indoorfarm).

#save17

Jean Tulimieri – Amston

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RivereastNewsBulletin

Editor's Desk continued from page 4

860-346-4390 or email info@art-farm.org.

* * *

As I mentioned earlier, there will be plenty of chances over the next two weeks to see fireworks in towns that aren't East Hampton. Heck, just tomorrow, Saturday, June 27, there are several area opportunities. In Coventry, there will be a fireworks celebration starting at 6 p.m. at Patriots Park. The event starts at 6 p.m., and the fireworks will blast off at 9.

The always-spectacular Hebron Lions Fireworks will take place at the Lions Fairgrounds on Route 85. Gates open at 4 p.m., and the fireworks begin at 9:30 p.m.

Also, the Middletown Fireworks Festival will be held tomorrow at Middletown Community Park. The festival starts at 5 p.m., and fireworks will be shot off at 9:30 p.m.

That's just a sample. I haven't even touched on the many, many fireworks opportunities happening next week. For a full list, see ct-visit.com/articles/connecticut-fireworks.

* * *

Lastly, since next week is the Fourth of July, we at the *Rivereast* will be going to press a day earlier than usual. That means all of our deadlines will also be moved up a day. Therefore, *all* news copy for next week's issue – including letters to the editor, press releases, event listings, etc. – must be submitted by noon Monday, June 29.

No exceptions will be made.

* * *

Have a good week.

Resignations Rattle Andover Residents

By Toriana Williams

A series of resignations and near resignations in Andover has left many residents worried about the future of town government and town services.

In recent weeks, both Republicans on the Board of Selectmen – Carol Lee and Jeffrey Murray – announced they would step down. Community and Senior Center Director Tess Grous nearly resigned before reaching a new contract agreement with the town.

During public meetings, residents expressed frustration over what they called a "revolving door" of employees and officials leaving. Questions about political divisions, working conditions and stability in Town Hall have become a major topic of discussion.

A sudden major change came when Lee resigned on June 6, effective immediately. Three days later, Murray submitted his own resignation, which takes effect July 1. Murray also stepped down from the Building Design Committee and the AES bathroom renovation committee.

Republican Town Committee Chair Carol Barton said she had limited information about the departures. "All I know is, I got told by the two people stepping down that they were stepping down and they had issues with what was going on between the board," said Barton.

Later, during a second conversation, Barton gave a different explanation. "Basically, it was family," she said.

Town Administrator Matthew Streeter praised both departing members and said he hoped they would remain involved in town affairs.

"I'm sorry that I'm not going to be able to continue to work with them as a select board," said Streeter. "Hopefully we don't lose them as volunteers in the town. And who knows, maybe they can run again."

While the board changes attracted attention, perhaps the biggest concern came when Grous submitted her resignation on May 29. In a lengthy letter, Grous described her decision as "extraordinarily difficult."

"This decision has been extraordinarily difficult for me because I genuinely love the work I do and the residents I have had the privilege to serve," Grous wrote. She said she had hoped to remain with the town but felt the atmosphere had become too difficult.

"Unfortunately, over time, the ongoing political discord and unprofessional conduct exhibited by certain members of the board have created an environment that has become emotionally exhausting and unsustainable," she wrote.

Grous also worried about the effect on senior residents. "What saddens me most is the impact this instability will continue to have on our senior residents," she wrote. "These residents deserve consistency, professionalism and leadership focused solely on their well-being."

When news of her resignation broke, residents had strong reactions during a June 8 Board of Selectmen meeting.

At that meeting, resident Dianne Grenier called the situation another major loss for the town – noting town administrator Eric Anderson, public works supervisor Jay Tuttle and "multiple treasurers" had all recently left.

"What is wrong with you?" she said to the selectmen. "What are you doing? And how could you let this happen? To me, it makes my head spin."

Resident Bill Penn said town leaders should study why people continue to leave. "I don't know if you guys do exit interviews," Penn said. "Losing people repeatedly just costs the town more money."

Elaine Buchardt, chair of the Commission on Aging, praised Grous for her work. "The energy that Tess brings to the job has been so positive for the town and the seniors and the community," Buchardt said. "It's just a shame that you weren't able to come to a contractual agreement."

Despite Grous' resignation letter, contract negotiations continued through June. Streeter shared that when Grous first received her proposed contract, the language in it had been altered, no longer stipulating "just cause" was required for possible termination; instead, the proposed contract read, Grous could be terminated simply "at will."

According to Streeter, that change was unacceptable to Grous and even drew criticism from the town's attorney.

At that June 8 BOS meeting, selectmen voted 3-0 to return the language to "just cause." Maguire and fellow Democrats Anne Cremé and Scott Person all voted in favor, and Lee and Murray both abstained from the vote.

Maguire defended Grous at the meeting, and said mistakes had been made.

"Tess has every right to want to have as much protection as she possibly can get because this board has not done a good job by her," Maguire said, without offering further explanation as to how the board had not "done a good job."

Eventually, a new three-year contract was approved and signed, allowing Grous to remain in her position.

When asked what Grous looked forward to now, she answered: "Peace and harmony."

As questions continued about the departures of Lee and Murray, some suggested conflict inside Town Hall played a role. RHAM Board of Education member and Democratic Town Committee Vice Chairman Scott Sauyet, who shared he was speaking as an individual and not on the behalf of any board or committee, described the atmosphere bluntly.

"There's just chaos galore in Town Hall," he said. "We've lost so many people."

Sauyet added, "This seems to be emanating from the top."

Lee was unable to be reached for comment. Murray did not share his reasoning for resigning but reflected on his years of service. "I'll let my 14-year tenure on the Board of Finance and the Board of Selectmen speak for itself. I have always put the town first and made decisions that were fair."

Murray added, "I was able to accomplish so much and enjoyed serving the town of Andover. I've met so many residents over the years and it's been a good run; but felt it was my time to pass the torch."

Despite disagreements and uncertainty, town officials said they hope to move forward. Streeter emphasized that everyone ultimately wants the same thing.

"At the base of everything, they all want what's best for the town," Streeter said. "They just have different ideas how to get there."

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.

The center's monthly newsletter is available online at www.andoverconnecticut.org. Copies are also available at the center, Town Hall, and Andover Public Library. To receive the newsletter by email each month or to reserve space, call 860-742-7305. Also call the center if **interested in volunteering.** Evening hours are available. Call or stop by the center if interested.

Transportation: Call 860-498-2326 to schedule transportation. Provide a one-week notice for all appointment requests. Transportation to town events, voting, and ACSC activities to Andover seniors, veterans, and disabled are welcome.

Regular Weekly and Monthly Programs: For a list of regular weekly and monthly events, such as Movies, Luncheons and Special Speakers, Yoga, Dominos, Tai Chi, trips to the library and the food pantry/Foodshare truck, Chair Massage, and more, see the monthly newsletter, "Community Connections." Transportation is available.

Special Upcoming Events: Shopping: Tuesdays, 8:30 a.m. Shop in Willimantic on 6/30. Transportation is available.

Amateur (Ham) Radio: Saturday, 6/27. Stop by the center and discover radio. Join other "Hams" and engage in two-way personal communication. Call the center for more information on this free program.

Kids' Art Class with Kim (BAF): This class is perfect for all skill levels. Space is limited. Supplies are provided. Contact the center and ask about the summer schedule.

Walking Club: Tuesdays, Thursdays, 2 p.m. Low-key, no-pressure walking club. Groups forming now for walks along the Rails to Trails, the track at Long Hill or indoors at the center. Contact the center if you are interested.

Lawn Games: Tuesdays, 1 p.m. Enjoy classic lawn games including Yahtzee, Tic-Tac-Toe, Yard Pong, Ring Toss, and Cornhole. Lemonade will be served. All are welcome. To register, contact the center.

The Summer Scoop! A Passport to Ice Cream: Fridays, 7/10 and 7/24, 1 p.m. Watch for location and dates. The center is hosting a summer-long journey for residents where passports will take people to area ice cream shops. Call the center to register and pick up your passport.

Zumba Gold: Interested in more Zumba? Let the center know. The center is currently looking for instructors for the summer and beyond.

Foot Care with Sue: Thursday, 7/23, 9 a.m. Cost is $42. Call the center for an appointment. Transportation is available.

They'll Be Walking in Memphis… **Cliff Taylor & The Undertakers Band (a.k.a. Brandt Taylor Band) won the 2026 Connecticut Blues Society Band Challenge, held recently at Black-Eyed Sally's in Hartford. The band – which features an Andover resident – will travel to Memphis, Tenn., next January to represent Connecticut in the International Blues Challenge. Band members from left are Andover resident Jeff Bousfield on keyboards, Canterbury resident Brandt (Cliff) Taylor on vocals and lead guitar, Brooklyn resident Jay Wiggin on bass and vocals, and Jewett City resident on drums. For more on the band, visit www.clifftaylorandtheundertakers.com.**

Commemorative Reading of Declaration of Independence

All are invited to the Town Hall Gazebo on Wednesday, July 8, at 6 p.m., to participate in a reading of the Declaration of Independence, to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the first reading at the State House in Philadelphia.

Just as the Declaration of Independence was read to the people for the first time on July 8, 1776, now, Americans in all 50 states, five territories, D.C., U.S. minor outlying islands, and wherever they may live throughout the world, will read the Declaration of Independence 'together.'

The reading will be divided up the reading among those who show up to participate. If you would like more information or to confirm your participation, contact Susan Camoroda, municipal veterans representative, at veterans@andoverct.org. Additional information also can be found at hawaiiamerica250.org/sharing-the-spirit-of-america.

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Obituaries

Portland

Alfred Grover Reylek
8/28/1930 – 6/1/2026

Alfred was born in Sayville, Long Island, New York, the youngest of seven siblings. Al grew up with a love of animals and watching the skies for airplanes. He owned his first airplane before his first automobile and got his pilot's license and license to teach.

After high school, Al served in both the Army and Air Force. He later settled in New Jersey and raised German Shepherds and showed them, winning many blue ribbons. He also took up horseback riding and competing in jumping, again winning many blue ribbons.

Al's and his first wife Louise built a farm in New Jersey. Al started skeet shooting, collecting rifles, and many other endeavors. The Reyleks became antique dealers. Al began flying with the Flying Tigers and joined United Airlines. He also rode with the Essex Fox Hounds with Jackie Kennedy.

Their collection of primitives became extensive, and when they could not find the perfect old house, they built a reproduction in Lyme. It had a horse barn and massive gardens. Al kept small planes at Goodspeed.

His first wife died young of lung cancer. About that time, he became acquainted with Priscilla Jackson Amenta, who had a local antique shop at Cold Spring Farm. Priscilla and Louise became friends, as Louise had a shop at Tom Roses. Rattebury Farm at Hadlyme Four Corners.

Tom was a dear friend and great folk-art painter. The Reyleks and the Amentas both had many pieces featuring animals. Priscilla never met Al until Louise's death, as he was always off on a trip, based out of Newark, N.J.

Al had no children by choice and Priscilla had two grown sons. Al bonded well with Priscilla's sons; George helped build many stone walls on Al's properties and Tony joining Al with collecting guns and skeet shooting.

Al retired at age 60, mandatory by United. Priscilla went on his commercial last night a red eye from San Fran. He wanted no fanfare but upon landing was greeted by many of the top officials from United.

Al and Priscilla started world travels with a trip to London on the Concord, returning to New York on the Queen Elizabeth II first class. It was a rough voyage as the captain didn't have the stabilizers out.

It was time to move into an older house in Cape Cod at Quivet Neck in East Dennis, Mass. It was built in 1783 and was in need of major reconstruction. The Reyleks also added a three bay Cape Cod barn to house Al's growing collection of hand-crafted toy airplanes. Al became very involved in Old Kings Highway, trying to save Cape Cod from developers. He was also the president of Homeowners Association.

The Reyleks were avid entertainers and enjoyed gourmet food and fine wines.

The Cape became crowded and Vermont had a calling. They bought 26 acres of land in Waitsfield along with the Captain Hallet house, 1862 from Hyannis and had it shipped to Vermont. It took over a year to rebuild. The Reyleks still had their Cape Cod Airedales and Al was collecting more planes, China and much more.

Both Priscilla's sons and their significant others lived close by. After several years Al felt he could no longer do the yard work and would not hire anyone; they bought a townhouse in Middlebury. It had beautiful gardens and was backed up to many walking trails. Al served on the Board of Directors and was grounds chairman for many years. The Airedales were gone but along came Sarah, a Wesla.

The Reyleks continued to travel; East Africa, the Amazon, climbing Machu Pichu, Egypt, Jorden, South Africa, Cambodia, and Vietnam to name a few adventures. They also went on many Viking cruises and on the Oceania, dining with Jacque Pepic, whom they knew from Connecticut. Air Museum, a special gathering. Barcelona to Turkey via the Panama Canal. One last was a trip to Cuba!

Al's health started with issues. The Reyleks moved to a cottage at "The Residence at Otter Creek," Middlebury. It was a rental with meals included. Priscilla thought this was adequate forever. It had a yard with a fence, and it had been upgraded to make it look old. They put in gardens and new brick paths. The birdhouses went up and bluebirds moved in. It overlooked a marsh, with easy walking to the main building.

Al was not happy, although he walked daily with a walker and enjoyed happy hour at the main building.

Time to go back to Connecticut. Priscilla and son George settled on Bartlett Hill. Several longtime friends were residents. Priscilla had lived in Portland for a few years when her sons were young. The move took place along with two rescue cats and now began trying to make the house look early. Al had basically sold his airplane collection at auction and much more.

Al is remembered pushing his walker up and down hills, still looking forward to going out to lunch and long drives. Finally, after breaking his hip, Al settled in at Portland Rehab, easy for Priscilla to visit as close by.

On June 1, 2026, Priscilla heard a small aircraft hovering over the house. Went out to see a small aircraft, bright blue and white, circling above the house. It dipped its wings and flew due north.

Al is survived by his beloved niece Nancy and her husband Tom Sokolski; his wife, Priscilla Jackson Reylek, of 35 years; his stepson, George Amenta of Portland; his daughter-in-law Margaret McGrath of Waitsfield, Vt.; and the Jackson family. He is also survived by many good friends.

He is predeceased by his entire family, his much-loved stepson, Anthony T. Amenta, and granddaughter, Ellie Ann Amenta.

The family would like to extend special acknowledgment to the staff of Portland Care and Rehabilitation Center for Al's excellent care, encouragement, and kindness.

A pink dogwood will be planted at Portland Care in Al's memory.

Those who wish may send memorial contributions to the New England Air Museum, 36 Perimeter Rd., Windsor Locks, CT 06096 (https://neam.org/pages/donation-page).

To share memories or express condolences online, please visit www.biegafuneralhome.com.

East Hampton

Frank J. Mikullitz Jr.

Frank J. Mikullitz Jr., 85, of East Hampton, passed away peacefully Tuesday, June 16, at Hartford Hospital, surrounded by his beloved family.

Beloved husband of Anne (Cusack) Mikullitz, Frank was born Jan. 15, 1941, in Hartford, to the late Frank J. Mikullitz Sr. and Genevieve (Paganelli) Mikullitz. He served his country honorably in the U.S. Navy aboard the USS Yorktown in the early 1960s.

Frank devoted more than 35 years to his craft as a commercial electrician and was a proud member of IBEW Local 35. He took great pride in his contributions to commercial projects throughout the greater Hartford area and across Connecticut, leaving behind a legacy of skilled, dedicated work.

Above all, Frank cherished his family. He will be forever remembered for his deep love for his wife, his children and grandchildren, his boundless energy, his infectious laughter, his generous spirit, and the joy he so naturally brought to everyone around him.

In addition to his wife, he is survived by his sons, John Mikullitz and his wife Patricia of Boston, and Mark Mikullitz and his wife Carrie Durant of Larchmont, N.Y.; his daughter, Kathleen Durkin and her husband Edward, of Montclair, N.J.; and six beloved grandchildren: Cadence, Madeline, Frances, William, Alexander and David.

Friends called at Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., on Wednesday, June 24. A funeral liturgy was celebrated that morning at St. John Paul II Parish of St. Patrick Church, East Hampton, followed by burial in the family plot at St. Patrick Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

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

Marlborough

JoAnne B. Picard

JoAnne B. Picard, 69, of Marlborough, beloved wife of Kenneth Picard, passed away Tuesday, June 2, at Middlesex Hospital. Born July 23, 1956, in Meriden, she was the daughter of the late Joseph and Evelyn (Charest) Borriello.

JoAnne had worked as a teacher for the Meriden School System until her retirement. She loved horses and was a member of the 4-H horse program. She was a co-leader with the Marlborough Tails and Trails youth horse group.

Besides her husband Ken, she is survived by her son Neil Picard and his wife Kristen of South Glastonbury; her daughter Wendy Stout of North Carolina; her brother William Borriello and his wife Verna of Meriden; and her three beloved grandchildren Brianna, Teagan and Eddie.

Funeral services will be private.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to Hartford County 4-H Camp, 247 South Rd., Marlborough, CT 06447 or to the Muscular Dystrophy Association.

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

TOWN OF PORTLAND

Legal notice is hereby given to the taxpayers of the Town of Portland that the first installment of Real Estate and Personal Property taxes on the Grand List of October 1, 2025 are due and payable on July 1, 2026. Motor vehicle taxes will also be due in one installment.
Taxes not paid in full on or before August 3, 2026, become delinquent and subject to interest at the rate of 18% per annum (1.5% for each month or fraction thereof) dating back to the original due date of the bill. Two months of interest will be due on August 4, 2026. Minimum interest charge is $2.00.
Quarterly water and/or sewer usage bills are due and payable July 20, 2026. Payment not made in full on or before August 20, 2026 will be subject to interest of 1.5% per month from due date.
Payments are accepted in person at 33 East Main Street, Portland, CT or by mail: Portland Collector of Revenue, P.O. Box 71, Portland, CT 06480-0071. Payment can also be made online at www.portlandct.org or placed in the drop box.
As a matter of law, the taxpayer is liable to the town for the tax or water/sewer installment(s) as they become due and payable. Therefore, failure to receive a bill does not relieve the taxpayer of the statutorily required interest when a payment is late.
Regular office hours are as follows:
Monday, Wednesday, Thursday: 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Tuesday: 8:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
Friday: 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
Holiday hours:
Friday, July 3rd closed
Michele B. Nuhn, CCMC, CCMO
Collector of Revenue

3TB 6/26, 7/3, 7/24

Water System Flushing

The Town Center Water System and Royal Oaks Water System will be flushed starting Monday, July 6, 2026 through Friday, July 10, 2026.
The Town of East Hampton Water Department periodically flushes its water lines to ensure that the valves are in good working order and to maintain water quality. Flushing will be between the hours of **8:00am and 3:00pm**. Please excuse any temporary drop in pressure and any possible discoloration of the water during flushing operations. Customers are advised to avoid using washing machines, dishwashers or other water using devices during flushing operations. Running the cold water will help to clear discolored water. If discolored water or low pressure persists into the next day call the Town of East Hampton Water Dept. at 860-267-2536.

2TB 6/26, 7/3

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 July 1, 2026 at 6:30 p.m. at the East Hampton Town Hall – 1 Community Drive, Room 107 and via ZOOM to consider
PZC-26-006: West High Enterprises LLC, 12 Long Crossing Road, 2 Lot Re-Subdivision, 207 West High and 12 Long Crossing Map 12/ Block 36/ Lot 2
PZC-26-007: Town of East Hampton PZC, Text Amendments to multiple sections to comply with middle housing and parking requirements in Public Act 25-1
The file is available for viewing in the Land Use Office and Town Clerk's office 860 267-7450.
Ray Zatorski, Chairman

2TB 6/19, 6/26

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE
TOWN OF ANDOVER
INLAND WETLANDS COMMISSION

The Andover Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission will hold a hybrid in person and online Public Hearing Tuesday, July 7, 2026, at 7 Pm in the Town Hall Community Room to hear the following application and receive public comments:
Application 26-2W Replacement of Bridge No. 001007, Lake Road over Cheney Brook at Bausola Road.
Comments, questions or concerns may be presented at the public hearing or submitted in writing to the Andover Building and Land Use Office, 17 School Road, Andover, CT 06232.
The application is on file in the Building and Land Use Department for public inspection or online on the Town of Andover's website.
Instructions for joining the public hearing via Zoom are posted on the town's website in the Calendar.
Savannah Kitchin
Inland Wetlands Agent

2TB 6/26, 7/3

LEGAL NOTICE
TOWN OF COLCHESTER
NOTICE OF TAXES AND UTILITY BILLS DUE

Notice is hereby given to the taxpayers of the Town of Colchester that tax bills on the Grand List of October 1, 2025, and quarterly Water and/or Sewer Usage Bills, are due and payable on **July 1, 2026**. The Town of Colchester does not have an approved budget for FY 2026–2027. Current tax bills are based on last year's rate. Upon budget approval, an ADJUSTED TAX BILL will be issued for any increase reflecting the approved mill rate.
DELINQUENCY & INTEREST: If any tax or utility installment due July 1, 2026, is not paid in full on or before **August 3, 2026**, it shall be deemed delinquent. *Failure to receive a bill does not invalidate the tax or the interest.*
Tax Interest: Charged at a rate of 18% per annum (1.5% per month) from the July 1 due date. Taxes becoming delinquent on August 3, 2026, will immediately incur a 3% interest charge for July and August. Minimum interest charge is $2.00.
Water/Sewer Interest: Charged at a rate of 1.5% per month from the July 1 due date.
Payments can be made online: Pay online under "Online Services" at **www.colchesterct.gov**. or mail payment to Tax Office, 127 Norwich Avenue, Colchester, CT 06415. Legible US Postal Service postmarks dated on or before August 3, 2026, will be accepted as timely. For Water/Sewer, make checks payable to "Water & Sewer" and write your account number on the check. For a return receipt, enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope and two copies of the bill. Drop Box is located to the left of the Town Hall entrance. Payments deposited after 4:30 p.m. on August 3, 2026, will be processed on the next business day and deemed late.
TAX OFFICE INFORMATION: July Hours: Monday–Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.; Thursdays until 7:00 p.m. **Closures:** The office will be closed on Friday, July 3, 2026.
Please contact the Tax Office at (860) 537-7210 if you have questions or did not receive your bill.
Michele Wyatt, CCMC
Tax Collector, Town of Colchester

3TB 6/26, 7/10, 7/24

Place Your Classified Ad Online!

Visit www.glcitizen.com and click "Classifieds" Fill out the fields and submit payment via PayPal.

7-3-2025

Tri-County Memorials
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10% OFF any monument
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860-443-8744
366 Windham Road, Willimantic, CT
860-456-8658

www.TriCountyMemorials.com
tcmemorials@aol.com

RE5-29-26

The early stages of communication disorders are easier to spot when you know the signs.

IDENTIFY THE SIGNS

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association

For info: IdentifyTheSigns.org

DOMINICK & SONS MONUMENT WORKS, INC.

Monuments & Marker Sales & Service Since 1982

· Cleaning · Repairing
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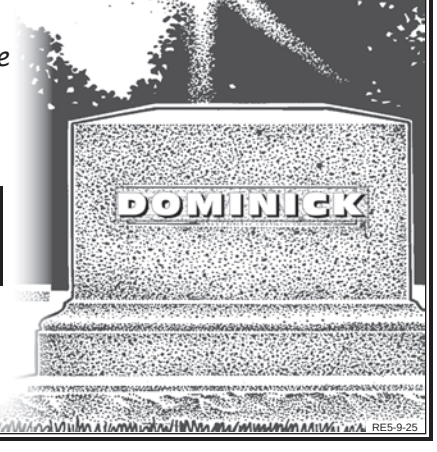
"A monument should cost no more than a family can afford."



RE5-9-25

"PET OF THE WEEK"

Sonny 4yrs, is a big-hearted, beautifully social pittie who would love to be part of a loving, stable family. Because he is so connected to humans, Sonny can get anxious when he's unsure or alone. To help him, Sonny has completed Board & Train program, building confidence in a fear-free environment. Sonny has continued sessions with a trainer, and his trainer will be available to his adopter throughout his transition and beyond to ensure success at no cost to the adopter.

Atlantis, 3mths, FIV+, is a beautiful black-and-white kitten with a personality that shines brightly. Atlantis stands out for her looks but also for her wonderfully affectionate nature. Atlantis loves spending time with people and is quick to share her affection. She enjoys being part of the family action and is happiest when she can play, cuddle, and soak up attention from her favorite humans. FIV+ cats can live long , happy and healthy lives! Talk to our adoption team for more information on FIV.

FOR MORE INFO ON ADOPTING CATS OR DOGS, CALL 860-569-0722
VOLUNTEERS & FOSTER HOMES NEEDED – CALL: 860-569-0722

Protectors of Animals, Inc. 144 Main St., Unit O, E. Hartford, CT 06118
A non-profit, all volunteer animal rescue organization, rescuing abandoned, abused and impounded cats and dogs.
WWW.POAINC.ORG

RE6-26-26

Having a Tag Sale?
Reach more than 75,000 Homes
For Just $19 A Week

Includes 25 words; .20 cents each additional word (Now through July 15, 2026)

A $45 Value **Your Tag Sale ad will appear in:**

-**Glastonbury Citizen**, mailed Thursdays to 5700 paid subscribers in Glastonbury -**Rivereast News Bulletin**, mailed Fridays to 27,500 homes in Portland, East Hampton/ Cobalt/Middle Haddam, Marlborough, Hebron/Amston, Andover and Colchester.
-**Rare Reminder**, mailed Thursdays to 40,500 homes in Newington, Wethersfield & Rocky Hill/Cromwell

Just e-mail us at classifieds@rarereminder.com or call 860-563-9386.
Deadline is every Tuesday at 10am for that week's papers.

LEGALS

TOWN OF PORTLAND
LEGAL NOTICE
OFFICIAL NOTICE OF DEMOCRATIC PARTY PRIMARY

Notice is hereby given that a Primary of the political party listed below will be held in your town on August 11, 2026 for nomination to each office indicated below.

Notice is also hereby given that the following are the names of the party-endorsed candidates, if any, for nomination to each office indicated, together with the street address of said candidate. The party endorsed candidates, if any, are indicated by an asterisk. Additionally, the following are the names of all other candidates who have filed their certificates of eligibility and consent to primary or have satisfied the primary petitioning requirements in conformity with the General Statutes as candidates for nomination to each office indicated, together with the street addresses of said candidates.

Office	Party	Candidate	Address
Governor	Democratic	*Ned Lamont	4 Ashton Drive, Greenwich, CT 06831
		Josh Elliott	28 Cobbleston Dr., Hamden, CT 06518
Representative in Congress	Democratic	*Luke Bronin	93 Elm St., Hartford, CT 06106
		Ruth Fortune	140 Elizabeth St, Hartford, CT 06105
		Jillian Gilchrest	115 Maplewood Ave., West Hartford, CT 06119
		John B. Larson	1887 Main St., East Hartford, CT 06108

Dated at Hartford, Connecticut, this 23rd day of June, 2026.
Stephanie Thomas
Secretary of the State
The foregoing is a copy of the notice which I have received from the Office of the Secretary of the State, in accordance with Section 9-433 of the General Statutes. As provided such primary will begin with early voting on August 3, 2026 through August 9, 2026, and the primary of the referenced party for nomination to the state or district offices therein specified will be held on August 11, 2026. The hours of voting during early voting and at said primary and the location of the polls will be as follows:
EARLY VOTING:
LOCATION: Portland Town Hall, 33 East Main Street, Portland, CT 06480
August 03, 2026 - 10:00 am to 6:00 pm
August 04, 2026 - 8:00 am to 8:00 pm
August 05, 2026 - 10:00 am to 6:00 pm
August 06, 2026 - 8:00 am to 8:00 pm
August 07, 2026 - 10:00 am to 6:00 pm
August 08, 2026 - 10:00 am to 6:00 pm
August 09, 2026 - 10:00 am to 6:00 pm
PRIMARY DAY VOTING:
LOCATION: Portland Middle School, 93 High Street, Portland, CT 06480
August 11, 2026 - 6:00 am to 8:00 pm
Absentee Ballots will be counted at the polls.
Dated at Portland, Connecticut, this 23rd day of June, 2026
Michael V. Tierney
Portland Town Clerk

1TB 6/26

TOWN OF COLCHESTER
LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that a Primary of the political party listed below will be held in the Town of Colchester on August 11, 2026 for nomination to each office indicated below.
Notice is also hereby given that the following are the names of the party-endorsed candidates, if any, for nomination to each office indicated, together with the street address of said candidate. The party endorsed candidates, if any, are indicated by an asterisk. Additionally, the following are the names of all other candidates who have filed their certificates of eligibility and consent to primary or have satisfied the primary petitioning requirements in conformity with the General Statutes as candidates for nomination to each office indicated, together with the street addresses of said candidates.

Office	Party	Candidate	Address
Governor	Democrat	*Ned Lamont	4 Ashton Dr, Greenwich, CT 06831
Governor	Democrat	Josh Elliott	28 Cobblestone Dr, Hamden, CT 06518

Dated at Hartford Connecticut, this 23rd day of June, 2026.
Stephanie Thomas
SECRETARY OF THE STATE
The foregoing is a copy of the notice which I have received from the Office of the Secretary of the State, in accordance with Section 9-433 of the General Statutes. As provided such primary will begin with early voting on August 3, 2026 through August 9, 2026, and the primary of the referenced party for nomination to the state or district offices therein specified will be held on August 11, 2026. The hours of voting during early voting and at said primary and the location of the polls will be as follows:
Early Voting - Hours of Voting: Location: Colchester Town Hall, 127 Norwich Ave., Colchester, CT
August 03, 2026 - 10:00 am to 6:00 pm
August 04, 2026 - 8:00 am to 8:00 pm
August 05, 2026 - 10:00 am to 6:00 pm
August 06, 2026 - 8:00 am to 8:00 pm
August 07, 2026 - 10:00 am to 6:00 pm
August 08, 2026 - 10:00 am to 6:00 pm
August 09, 2026 - 10:00 am to 6:00 pm
Hours of Election Day Voting: 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Location of Polling Place	Voting District
Town Hall, 127 Norwich Ave, Colchester, CT	1
Abundant Life of the Assemblies of God, 85 Skinner Rd, Colchester, CT	2
Bacon Academy, 611 Norwich Avenue, Colchester, CT	3

Absentee Ballots will be counted at the following location: Town Hall, 127 Norwich Ave, Colchester, CT
Dated at Colchester, Connecticut, this 23rd day of June 2026
Town Clerk, Gayle Furman
Town of Colchester

1TB 6/26

LEGAL NOTICE
TOWN OF EAST HAMPTON
ATTENTION TAXPAYERS

Notice is hereby given to the taxpayers of the Town of East Hampton that taxes on real estate, personal property, and motor vehicles, as levied on the Grand List of October 1, 2025, are due and payable on July 1, 2026. The last day to pay without penalty is August 3, 2026. Real estate and personal property taxes exceeding $100, as well as motor vehicle taxes exceeding $500, may be paid in two equal installments due July 1, 2026, and January 1, 2027.
The mill rate for the October 1, 2025 Grand List is 27.79 mills, which is equivalent to $27.79 in taxes per $1,000 of net assessed value. Tax bills will be mailed on June 29, 2026.
Any payment received, or post marked, after August 3, 2026 will be subject to interest at the rate of 1½% per month or any fraction thereof (18% per annum) from the original due date of the tax, as required by Connecticut General Statutes Sections 12-130, 12-145, and 12-146.
Checks should be made payable to Town of East Hampton. Payments may be mailed to: Collector of Revenue, 1 Community Drive, East Hampton, CT 06424. Payments may also be made online by visiting www.easthamptonct.gov. The Tax Office hours of collection are: Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday: 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Tuesday: 8:00 a.m. – 6:30 p.m. and Friday: 8:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Respectfully Submitted,
Kristy L. Merrifield, CCMC
Collector of Revenue

3TB 6/26, 7/10, 7/24

TOWN OF MARLBOROUGH
TAX COLLECTOR'S LEGAL NOTICE

All persons liable to pay taxes to the Town of Marlborough as levied on October 1, 2025 Grand List which includes Real Estate, Personal Property, and Motor Vehicle, are hereby notified that the first installment is due July 1, 2026 and will be delinquent August 3, 2026. The second installment will be due January 1, 2027 and delinquent February 1, 2027. Delinquent bills will be subject to interest of one and a half percent a month reverting to the due date or 18% a year. Minimum interest is $2.00. Failure to receive a bill does not invalidate the interest or tax. If you do not receive a bill, please check online at www.marlboroughct.gov bill lookup or contact the Tax Office. Tax bills of $800.00 or less are due in one installment. Bills over $800.00 may be paid in two installments. The Mill Rate for Real Estate, Personal Property, and Motor Vehicle for the 2025-2026 Fiscal Year is 27.10.
Tax payments can be mailed to Tax Collector, P.O. Box 29, Marlborough, CT 06447, paid in person (cash or check) at the Tax Collector's office during normal business hours, placed in the DROPBOX (No Cash) at Town Hall, or paid online. **Credit and Debit payments (Mastercard, Visa, or ACH) are only accepted online at** www.marlboroughct.gov Tax Collector hours are Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Tuesday 8:30 a.m.-7:00 p.m., and Friday 8:30a.m.-noon.
Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Lazzari
Tax Collector

3TB 6/26, 7/10, 7/24

HEBRON LEGAL NOTICE
OFFICIAL NOTICE OF DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY STATE AND DISTRICT OFFICES ONLY

Notice is hereby given that a Primary of the political party listed below will be held in Hebron on August 11, 2026 , for nomination to each office indicated below.
Notice is also hereby given that the following are the names of the party-endorsed candidates, if any, for nomination to each office indicated, together with the street address of said candidate. The party endorsed candidates, if any, are indicated by an asterisk. Additionally, the following are the names of all other candidates who have filed their certificates of eligibility and consent to primary or have satisfied the primary petitioning requirements in conformity with the General Statutes as candidates for nomination to each office indicated, together with the street addresses of said candidates.

Office	Party	Candidate	Address
Governor	Democratic	*Ned Lamont	4 Ashton Drive, Greenwich, CT 06831
Governor	Democratic	Josh Elliott	28 Cobblestone Dr., Hamden, CT 06518

Dated at Hartford, Connecticut, this 23rd day of June, 2026.
Stephanie Thomas
SECRETARY OF THE STATE
The foregoing is a copy of the notice which I have received from the Office of the Secretary of the State, in accordance with Section 9-433 of the General Statutes. As provided, the primary will begin with early voting on August 3, 2026 through August 9, 2026, and the primary of the referenced party for nomination to the state or district offices therein specified will be held on August 11, 2026. The hours of voting during early voting and at said primary and the location of the polls will be as follows:

Hours of Early Voting:		Early Voting Location for All Hebron Democratic Party Voters
Monday, Aug. 3, 2026	10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.	Hebron Town Office Building Lower Meeting Room 15 Gilead Street Hebron, CT 06248
Tuesday, Aug. 4 2026	8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.	
Wednesday, Aug. 5, 2026	10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.	
Thursday, Aug. 6, 2026	8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.	
Friday, Aug. 7, 2026	10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.	
Saturday, Aug. 8, 2026	10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.	
Sunday, Aug. 9, 2026	10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.	

Poll Hours on Primary Day: August 11, 2026 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Location of Primary Day Polling Place for all Hebron Democratic Party Voters : Hebron Elementary School
92 Church Street, Hebron, CT 06248
Absentee ballots will be counted at the Primary Day Polling Location at the close of the polls.
Dated at Hebron, CT, this 24th day of June, 2026.
Town Clerk, Francesca Villani

1TB 6/26

PARTY TIME

C	L	E	F	#	S	H	A	L	E	#	C	L	A	P
R	O	V	E	#	T	E	N	O	N	#	R	O	T	A
A	G	E	S	#	O	M	E	R	S	#	E	D	E	N
M	O	R	T	A	L	#	W	I	N	G	D	I	N	G
#	#	#	I	D	E	A	#	S	A	R	I	#	#	#
P	R	E	V	E	N	T	S	#	R	A	T	T	A	N
R	O	M	A	N	#	T	O	T	E	M	#	H	U	E
I	D	O	L	#	D	A	L	E	S	#	J	I	G	S
M	E	T	#	S	I	R	E	N	#	M	A	N	E	T
P	O	E	T	I	C	#	S	T	E	A	M	E	R	S
#	#	#	A	L	T	O	#	S	N	U	B	#	#	#
C	O	N	C	L	A	V	E	#	C	L	O	C	H	E
O	B	I	T	#	T	E	S	T	A	#	R	A	I	L
L	O	C	I	#	E	R	N	E	S	#	E	R	R	S
A	L	E	C	#	S	T	E	L	E	#	E	P	E	E

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LEGALS

LEGAL NOTICE
TOWN OF ANDOVER REVENUE COLLECTOR'S NOTICE

To the property owners of the Town of Andover:
The first installment of the taxes listed on the October 1, 2025 Grand List becomes due and payable to the Town of Andover on July 1, 2026. Payments must be US postmarked, paid on line, or brought to Town Hall by August 3, 2026 to avoid an interest charge. Interest will be charged starting August 4, 2026 on all delinquent bills at a rate of 18% per year (1½% per month) from the due date of July 1st, with a minimum charge of $2 for each bill.
View or pay taxes online at www.andoverct.org. Cash, check or money order payments are accepted at the Town Hall during business hours. Payments by check or money order may be mailed to the Tax Collector's office or placed in the drop box outside Town Hall. Typical office hours during collection months are Monday 8:15am- 7pm, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday 8:15 am-4pm. Please refer to www.andoverct.org for updated office hours.
Failure to receive a tax bill will not invalidate the tax or any interest which may, by State law, accrue.
If you have any questions, please contact the tax office at 860-742-4035 option 4.

3TB 6/26, 7/3, 7/24

LEGAL NOTICE
TOWN OF EAST HAMPTON
ANNUAL TOWN BUDGET MEETING
TUESDAY, JULY 7, 2026

The electors of the Town of East Hampton and those entitled to vote at town meetings are hereby notified that an Annual Town Budget Meeting will be held in the East Hampton Town Hall Council Chambers Room #107 at 1 Community Drive in said Town of East Hampton on Tuesday, July 7, 2026, at 5:45 p.m. Pursuant to Section 7 - 7 of the Connecticut General Statutes and Section 4.1 of the Town of East Hampton Charter, said meeting shall be immediately adjourned to a referendum on Tuesday, July 14, 2026 from 6:00am to 8:00pm at the East Hampton Town Hall, 1 Community Drive, for a vote on voting machines for the approval or disapproval of the Annual Budgets for the Board of Education and the Town Government for fiscal year 2026 - 2027 as recommended by the Town Council.

EAST HAMPTON TOWN COUNCIL
Dean Markham, Chairman
Jack Solomon, Vice Chairman
Timothy Feegel
Ted Hintz, Jr.
Richard Knotek
Joelyn Leon
Karen Wanat

1TB 6/26

TOWN OF EAST HAMPTON
LEGAL NOTICE
OFFICIAL NOTICE OF DEMOCRATIC PARTY PRIMARY

Notice is hereby given that a Primary of the political party listed below will be held in East Hampton on August 11, 2026 for nomination to each office indicated below.
Notice is also hereby given that the following are the names of the party-endorsed candidates, if any, for nomination to each office indicated, together with the street address of said candidate. The party endorsed candidates, if any, are indicated by an asterisk. Additionally, the following are the names of all other candidates who have filed their certificates of eligibility and consent to primary or have satisfied the primary petitioning requirements in conformity with the General Statutes as candidates for nomination to each office indicated, together with the street addresses of said candidates.

Office	Party	Candidate	Address
Governor	Democratic	*Ned Lamont	4 Ashton Drive, Greenwich, CT 06831
		Josh Elliott	28 Cobblestone Dr., Hamden, CT 06518

Dated at Hartford, Connecticut, this 23rd day of June, 2026.
Stephanie Thomas
Secretary of the State
The foregoing is a copy of the notice which I have received from the Office of the Secretary of the State, in accordance with Section 9-433 of the General Statutes. As provided such primary will begin with early voting on August 3, 2026 through August 9, 2026, and the primary of the referenced party for nomination to the state or district offices therein specified will be held on August 11, 2026. The hours of voting during early voting and at said primary and the location of the polls will be as follows:
EARLY VOTING:
LOCATION: East Hampton Town Hall, 1 Community Drive, East Hampton, CT 06424
August 03, 2026 - 10:00 am to 6:00 pm
August 04, 2026 - 8:00 am to 8:00 pm
August 05, 2026 - 10:00 am to 6:00 pm
August 06, 2026 - 8:00 am to 8:00 pm
August 07, 2026 - 10:00 am to 6:00 pm
August 08, 2026 - 10:00 am to 6:00 pm
August 09, 2026 - 10:00 am to 6:00 pm
PRIMARY DAY VOTING:
LOCATION: East Hampton High School, 15 N. Maple St, East Hampton, CT 06424
August 11, 2026 - 6:00 am to 8:00 pm
Absentee Ballots will be counted at the polls.
Dated at East Hampton, Connecticut, this 23rd day of June, 2026
Patricia Burnham
East Hampton Town Clerk

1TB 6/26

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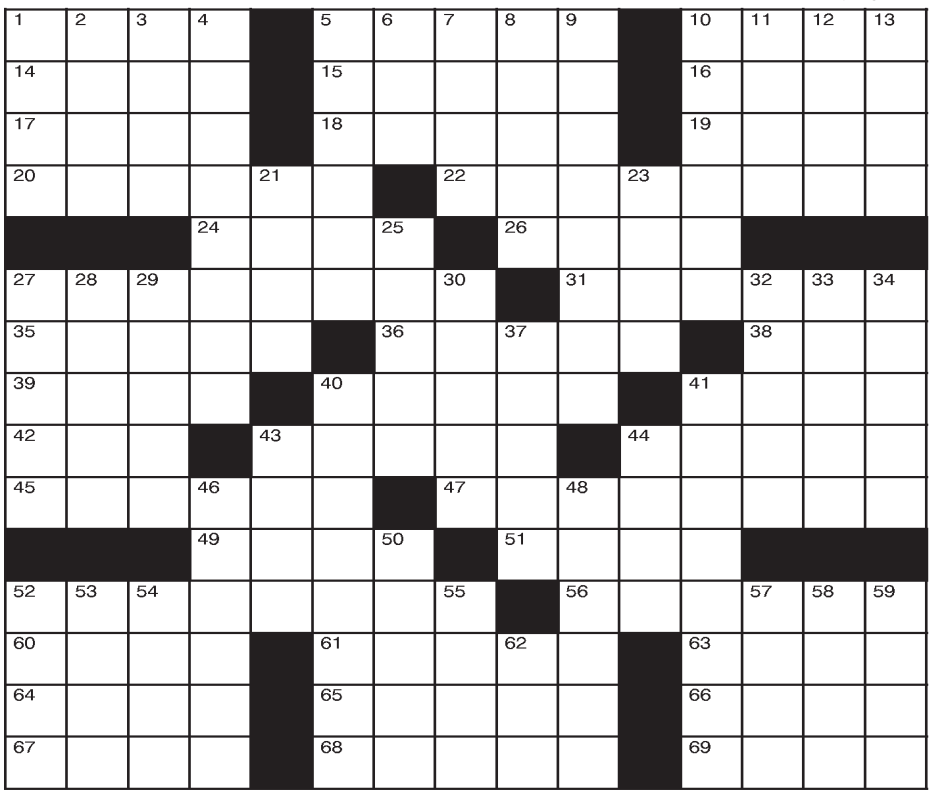
RE1-31-25

PARTY TIME

★ *Answers on page 33*



CREATORS NEWS SERVICE By Neil Manausa

ACROSS

1 Staff sign
5 Fissile rock
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16 Schedule
17 Eons
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24 Productive thought
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35 Holy ___ Empire
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52 Cardinals' gathering
56 Close-fitting hat
60 Brief newspaper item
61 Hard seed coat
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64 Places
65 European coastal eagles
66 Wanders
67 A Baldwin
68 Stone monument
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DOWN

1 Study at the last minute
2 Trademark
3 Unending
4 Special observance
5 Pilfered
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8 Tailless primate
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10 Give recognition to
11 Wine city in Italy and California
12 Sun god
13 Piercing pain
21 Mideast gulf
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28 Cowboy contest
29 Play the part
30 Cobblers save these
32 Biblical pronoun
33 Boring tool
34 Birds' abodes
37 Camp shelters
40 Gives commands
41 Boy Scouts' gathering
43 Window section
44 Heavy hammer
46 Military move
48 Put into a carton
50 Open
52 Popular drink
53 1/6th of a drachma
54 Pleasing
55 Feudal serf
57 Find fault
58 Employ
59 Do it, or ___!
62 ___ Aviv-Jaffa

ANNOUNCEMENTS

WANTED TO BUY

BUYING COLLECTIONS & ACCUMULATIONS, FREE REVIEW: Comic Books, Vintage Toys, Sports Cards, Adv Signs/Cans (Soda, Beer, Gas Station), Zippos, License Plates, Jewelry, Postcards, Etc. Call/Text 860-817-4350

WANTED TO BUY: All antiques; toys, military, watches, advertising, jewelry, coins, clocks, signs, all musical instruments, guitars, saxophones, keyboards, trumpets, amplifiers, accordions, vintage electronics, hi-fi stereo, amplifiers, pro-audio, radios, ham equipment, tube type equipment, plus more. 1 item or entire estate. Call 860-707-9350.

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

WANTED TO BUY: your sterling silverware, tea set, or any item made of sterling. Top cash price paid on the spot. I can come to your home or meet you at a place of your choosing. Call/text Dominic at 860-836-5013 or email dmbappraisal@sbcglobal.net.

WANTED: Individual firearms, collections & estates including, military & related items. Federally licensed firearms dealer. Appraisal. Richard Pleines. 860-663-2214.

PETS

DOG OBEDIENCE CLASSES: starting soon. Offering Puppy Kindergarten, Basic Manners/What Rescue Dogs Need and Want; CGC/Therapy; Agility. Over 25 years experience. Michelle Larson, Paws-N-Heel DTC, 860-267-6040. paws-n-heel-dogtraining.com

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CIT1-12-23

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REAL ESTATE

FOR SALE

FOR SALE: 225, 227, 229 Hebron Ave, Glastonbury. Featuring the highest traffic flow in town. Call 860-652-9234 anytime.

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CIT6-25-26
120723

EMPLOYMENT

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WANTED: Someone to pull weeds for $20/hr cash in Portland. ID needed. You make your own hours/day. 860-593-7851 or rob.shortell@gmail.com.

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7-3-2025

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For our day support program, which is from 8am-4pm and 2pm-5pm, the towns are in Salem, Groton, Hebron, Lebanon, Higganum, East Haddam, New London, Norwich, East Hampton, Colchester.

For our group home positions we have Monday-Sunday open second and third shift which is 3pm-11pm and 11pm-7am. These positions are in Colchester.

If you are interested in becoming a part of our team, please feel free to call us and ask for more information at 860-531-9426

RE3-15-24

ASSISTANT REVENUE COLLECTOR TOWN OF HEBRON

The Town of Hebron is seeking candidates to fill the position of Assistant Revenue Collector. This full-time position reports to the Revenue Collector and is responsible for assisting in the billing and collection of current and delinquent taxes including real estate, motor vehicle and personal property taxes as well as sewer use and assessment, and revenues from all other departments. The successful candidate should be familiar with the operation of a Tax Collector's Office, have strong computer skills and must be able to work with the public. Preference will be given to those individuals who have had experience in the position and are CCMC certified. Salary up to $65,000 depending on experience. Please send cover letter, resume and Town of Hebron employment application to The Town Manager, Town of Hebron, 15 Gilead Street, Hebron, Connecticut 06248 by July 24, 2026. For more details visit hebronct.gov. Town of Hebron is an EOE.

1TB 6/26

ASSISTANT ASSESSOR TOWN OF HEBRON

The Town of Hebron is seeking a candidate to fill the position of Assistant Assessor. This is a full-time position reporting to the Assessor. Responsibilities include assisting the Assessor with determining proper valuations of land, buildings, improvements, and all tangible personal property and motor vehicles located within the corporate limits of the town. Must have a working knowledge of the rules, regulations, policies and procedures pertinent to Town of Hebron and the State of Connecticut tax assessment regulations and statutes. The successful candidate should be familiar with the operation of a Tax Assessor's Office, have strong knowledge of office management procedures, strong computer skills and must be able to work with the public. CCMA II designation and familiarity with Quality Data and OpenGov software is preferred. Salary up to $65,000 depending upon experience. Please send cover letter, resume and Town of Hebron employment application to The Town Manager, Town of Hebron, 15 Gilead Street, Hebron, Connecticut 06248 by July 24, 2026. For more details visit https://hebronct.gov. Town of Hebron is an EOE.

1TB 6/26

TREE & LANDSCAPING

POISON IVY ~ HAND WEEDING: pest plants and vines removed from trees, walls, and gardens/land clearing. NO CHEMICALS EVER. Call Mike 860-398-0500. Portland.

TREE SERVICES: Beech leaf disease management, arborvitae maintenance, tree pruning, shrub pruning, removals, consulting by licensed arborists. LaPila Arborists, LLC 860-965-5546.

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RE4-2-21

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CIT3-5-26

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CIT3-9-23

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RE6-5-26

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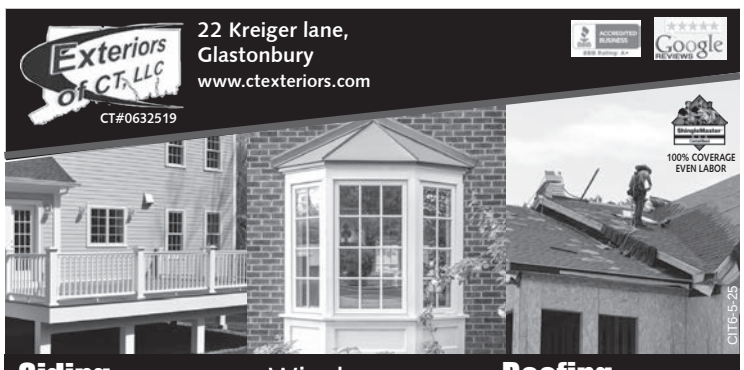

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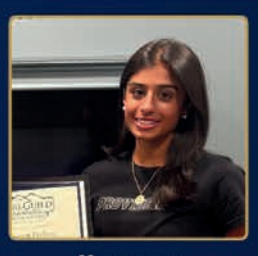
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