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News Bulletin

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Howdy, Pardner... Woody from the Toy Story films made a special appearance at Marlborough Day last weekend to say hello to fans and passersby. He even cheered for participants during the pie-eating contest! For more on Marlborough Day, see the story and additional photos on page 29.

Budgets Return Tuesday To Colchester Voters

By Toriana Williams

Colchester voters will have a third opportunity to decide the town and Board of Education budgets next Tuesday, Sept. 1, after officials voted on Wednesday, Aug. 19 to move both budgets forward to referendum.

The proposed 2026-27 town budget is \$19.06 million, a 3.16% increase from last year's budget, while the BOE budget is \$48.79 million, a 5.38% increase. Both budgets were passed at a special town budget meeting, each with one 'no' vote. Combined, the budget proposals total \$67.85 million, a 3.77% increase from the adopted 2025-26 budgets. The proposed mill rate is 30.43, an increase of about 1.7%.

Voting will take place from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. at Town Hall.

Since last month's referendum in July, officials have cut a combined \$870,543 from the proposed budget increases. The BOE budget was reduced by \$577,010, while town departments were reduced by \$293,533.

Still, not everyone believes the budgets should move forward.

Board of Selectman member Tim Vaillancourt, a Republican, was the only 'no' vote on both budgets last Wednesday night. He said this week that he plans to continue opposing the spending plan because he believes the school budget is still too high.

"I will continue to vote 'no' and encourage others to do the same until the Board of Education spending is brought under control," said Vaillancourt.

Vaillancourt also raised concerns about state money being used to help pay for the school budget.

The Board of Education "used extra money from the state to offset their spending, otherwise it would be worse," Vaillancourt said. "And

they have no guarantee to get that money next year from the state."

He warned that losing that money could create financial problems in the future.

"That will cause a fiscal cliff folks won't be able to recover from," said Vaillancourt.

'Significant' Reductions to School Spending

Interim Superintendent of Schools Judy O'Meara – who said this has been an "incredibly difficult" year for both the schools and the town – noted this week that the Board of Education has already made some "significant" cuts as officials have worked to lower the proposed budget increase.

"The reductions that have been made are significant, and we recognize their impact will be felt across our schools for years to come," she said.

At the same time, O'Meara said the district needed to address a large increase in employee health insurance costs.

"Addressing the more than \$3.2 million increase in employee-related health insurance funding was necessary," she said. "Ensuring that the obligations are appropriately funded was a necessary priority and an important step toward greater financial stability for the district."

The school district has outlined several areas that have already been affected by the cuts.

According to graphics shared by the BOE on its website, 26 positions have not been back-

See Budgets Return, page 30

AHM Set to Dance with the Stars

By Toriana Williams

For one night in September, the stars of Andover, Hebron, Marlborough and Columbia will trade their usual jobs for dancing shoes, costumes and a little stage fright.

AHM Youth & Family Services will bring its first ever "Dancing With the Stars" fundraiser to the RHAM High School auditorium Sept. 19, giving seven local "celebrities" a chance to show off dance moves they have been practicing all summer.

The event will begin at 6 p.m. at RHAM High School, 85 Wall St. Tickets are \$12 when purchased in advance online at tinyurl.com/4t36576c and \$15 at the door. The event is family-friendly, and AHM hopes to pack the auditorium's roughly 800 seats.

This idea has been several years in the making. AHM Executive Director Tressa Giordano

said the organization wanted to create something that would bring people from all four communities together for a fun night out.

"We, as a team, wanted to offer our four communities an event that was fun, exciting and for all ages," said Giordano.

The idea first came to AHM about seven years ago, before the COVID-19 pandemic. However, this year was when the organization finally decided the time was right.

"We just felt that this year, let's go for it," she said.

The event will pair local community figures with professional dancers from five studios around the area: Dance Express in Tolland, Studio E Dance and Acro in Colchester, Dance Dynamics in Hebron, CT Dance Hub in Andover, and Mansfield Academy of Dance in Wil-

limantic.

Rather than asking one studio to coach every contestant, AHM decided to spread the fun around.

"We didn't want to overwhelm one dance studio with all seven dancers," said Giordano. "Just being able to give a number of dance studios the exposure, we kind of wanted to spread around the fun."

The participating studios are helping the contestants choreograph individual routines. The audience can expect a mix of dance styles, including hip-hop, tap, swing dancing and musical theater.

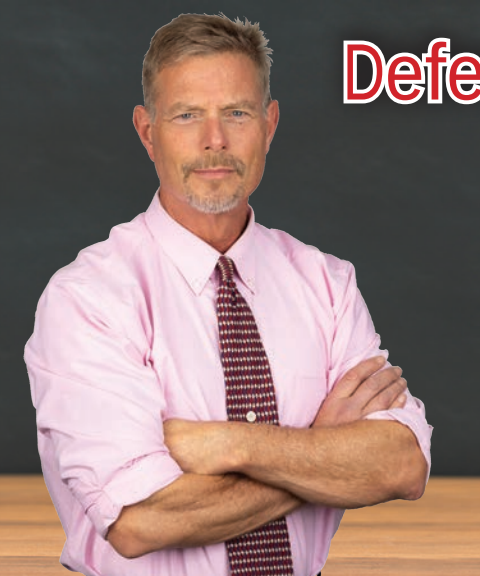
The seven familiar faces taking the stage are Mary Rose Meade, RHAM director of curriculum and instruction; Tom Topolis, Hebron El-

See Dance with the Stars, page 23

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Paint Night with Kim

The Andover Community & Senior Center will hold Paint Night with Kim, a community event for ages 12 and up, on Friday, Sept. 25, from 6-8 p.m. Ages 12-16 should be accompanied by an adult.

You will paint a bittersweet wreath, to welcome the colors of fall. No experience os necessary, and step by step instruction will be provided.

Cost is \$20/person. Register by Monday, Sept. 21, by calling the center at 860-742-7305 ext. 4510.

Cookbook Club

All are invited to join the Andover Public Library Cookbook Club. The club's next session will be Tuesday, Sept. 22, at 5:30 p.m., and focus on dishes found in cookbooks written by Sandra Lee (*Semi-Homemade*).

The library has a small supply of cookbooks by this author that you can borrow. Make one of the dishes you find and bring it to the library on Sept. 22, to share in a "themed potluck."

If planning to attend, or for more information, call the library at 860-742-7428.

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About Eliot

Multi-instrumentalist and solo artist, Eliot Lewis has a career most musicians could only dream about. He has performed with many of the biggest names in the music business including Daryl Hall & John Oates, Billy Gibbons (ZZ Top), Joe Walsh, Todd Rundgren, Train, Cheap Trick, Grace Potter, Ben Folds, Sammy Hagar, Squeeze and many others.

Eliot has appeared on every episode of Daryl Hall's incredibly popular, "Live From Daryl's House" show all while keeping his own solo career going at a seemingly impossible pace.

"Eliot is a musician who can do it all, great singer, songwriter and guitarist. He rocks and he's got soul. No one does it quite like him"

-DARYL HALL

As a multi-instrumentalist, Eliot's energetic and unique shows will find him moving from one instrument to another using live looping to seamlessly construct songs and arrangements on the spot and in the moment. If Eliot plays a cover song, it's typically a song he's performed with that artist.

Equally at home in front of 100 or 15,000, Eliot has performed on the worlds most legendary stages, including Madison Square Garden, Japan's Budokan, Red Rocks, The Hollywood Bowl, Carnegie Hall as well as Late Night with Jimmy Fallon, Conan O'Brien, The Today Show, Jimmy Kimmel Live and many others.

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RE 8-28-26

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Fund Now Accepting Grant Applications

The Andover Community Fund at the Greater Hartford Gives Foundation announced today that it is now accepting grant applications for projects that strengthen the wellbeing, vibrancy, and resilience of the Andover community. Applications are due Oct. 1.

Full details of the Request for Proposals (RFP) – including funding priorities, eligibility guidelines, and how to apply are available at greaterhartfordgives.org/andovercf.

To explore eligibility guidelines, review examples of past funded projects, or learn more about the application process, visit the Andover Community Fund page at the Greater Hartford Gives Foundation at greaterhartfordgives.org/andovercf.

For organizations interested in learning more about the new application, you can sign up for an online information session on either Sept. 8 or Sept. 15 by emailing the committee at andover@greaterhartfordgivescf.org.

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.

Regular Weekly and Monthly Programs: For a list of regular weekly and monthly events, such as Movies, Wednesday Lunches, Stretch & Strength fitness classes, Chair Massage and more, see the monthly newsletter, “Community Connections.” Transportation is available.

Monthly Veterans Coffee House: Monday, 9/14, 9:30 a.m. This is a free opportunity to connect with fellow veterans, share stories, build friendships, and enjoy a cup of coffee in a relaxed setting. All veterans are welcome.

Thrift Shopping: Thursday, 9/3, 9 a.m. All are invited on a trip exploring local thrift stores.

Shopping: Tuesdays, 8:30 a.m. Shop in Wilimantic 9/8, 9/22. Shop in Manchester on 9/1, 9/15, 9/29. Transportation is available. And on Thursday, 9/17, 8:30 a.m., shop Trader Joe’s & Michael’s.

Annual Steak Dinner

The Andover Volunteer Fire Department’s annual steak dinner will be Saturday, Sept. 26, from 5-7 p.m., at the firehouse on School Road.

This meal includes all you can eat sirloin steak, served with a baked potato, salad, fresh baked bread, beverages and ice cream. Eat in or take out.

Tickets are \$20 for adults, \$15 for seniors (age 62+) and \$10 for children ages 6-12.

Tickets can be purchased from any fire department member, on Wednesday evenings at the firehouse, or by calling Mindy at 860-706-3074, Karen at 860-377-1599, or Chief Ron Mike at 860-335-0264. A limited number of tickets will be available at the door.

WAIM Fall Flea Market

Windham Area Interfaith Ministry (WAIM) will hold its Fall Flea Market, “Fifth Floor Treasures,” on Saturday, Sept. 19, from 8 a.m.-noon, at 866 Main St.

Discover a one-of-a-kind indoor flea market experience on WAIM’s fifth floor. Items range from snow shoes to microscopes, and everything in between.

Payment can be by cash, charge or check.

WAIM (Windham Area Interfaith Ministry) is a social-service nonprofit that serves Andover and Hebron, as well as Ashford, Bolton, Chaplin, Columbia, Coventry, Hampton, Lebanon, Mansfield, Storrs, Scotland, Willington, Windham, and Willimantic.

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

The Andover Community Fund Committee is a group of volunteer residents who help identify local needs, shape grant priorities, and review proposals for projects that enhance quality of life in Andover. The committee makes grant recommendations to the Greater Hartford Gives Foundation. In the most recent grant cycle, the fund awarded over \$45,000 to seven local organizations, with individual grants ranging from \$1,000 to \$10,000.

The Andover Community Fund is funded by the Greater Hartford Gives Foundation (formerly known as the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving). For more information on the fund, the volunteer committee, the foundation, and the grant application process, please visit greaterhartfordgives.org/about-the-community-funds.

General inquiries may also be sent to andover@greaterhartfordgivescf.org.

Lunch Bunch: Friday, 9/18, 11 a.m., to Main Moose, Columbia. Enjoy lunch with friends at a local restaurant. The center will provide transportation to and from the restaurant. Participants are responsible for the cost of their own meal. Registration is required; call the center. For a ride, call 860-498-2326.

Breakfast Bunch: Friday, Sept. 25, 9:30 a.m., at Rein’s Deli in Vernon. Participants pay for their own meal. Registration required; call the center. For transportation, call 860-498-2326.

Trip to the Hebron Harvest Fair: Friday, Sept. 11, noon. Admission is free for seniors.

Trip to the Yale Peabody Museum: Thursday, Sept. 24, at 10:30 a.m. Admission is free. Pay for your own lunch at Wood-N-Tap in Newington. Call the center to register.

Playtime with Munchkins: Tuesdays, 9/1 and 9/15, 10-11 a.m. Bring your littles and connect with other young parents in the area. Coffee will be provided for parents.

Intro to Tai Chi: Tuesday, Sept. 15, 1:30 p.m. Introduction to Tai Chi & Chair Tai Chi. This class is designed for all fitness levels. Learn the basic principles and flowing movements of Tai Chi. Call the center to sign up.

Quilting Workshop: Mondays, Sept. 21 and 28, 5:30-8:30 p.m. Cost is \$10 per class. Learn the technique to make a 60-degree triangle table runner. Bring your sewing supplies. Call the center for fabric requirements and to sign up.

Kids’ Art Class with Kim: Wednesdays, 9/23 and 9/30, 3 p.m. Theme: Jelly Fish. This class is geared toward kids grade 4-8 and is for all skill levels. Supplies provided. Discount for siblings. To register, call the center at 860-742-7305 ext. 4510.

Vacancy for PZC Alternate

There is a vacancy for an Alternate Planning and Zoning Commission 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, Sept 3.

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.

From the State Senator’s Desk

Happy August! I hope your summer has been relaxing and you’ve managed to stay cool in the constant heat. As we get ready for schools to start back up and for autumn traditions to arrive – I’m excited for this October’s Glastonbury Apple Festival – I wanted to share a few highlights about Connecticut. Our state is continually being recognized as a national leader in a number of fields.

For instance, many of us know how great Connecticut school systems are, especially when you look at our local schools. It’s not just us noticing, however. According to Consumer Affairs, which recently ranked the Best States for Public Education, Connecticut ranked third in the country, behind only Massachusetts and New York.

Our state’s accolades pushed us to the top of the rankings through several successes – Connecticut students achieved the highest average standardized test score in the country and one of the highest high school graduation rates tracked in the United States.

The state’s education spending was also a highlight, as Connecticut ranked fifth in the nation in spending per student and placed top-5 in the country for teacher pay. On top of that, Connecticut is also reviewing its K-12 funding processes, with potential to further improve on current practices.

On top of that, Connecticut officials aren’t stopping – the state recently made its first investments in administering extra special education funding to towns and cities and unveiled a new training course meant to support paraeducators, helping close a workforce shortage impacting education.

In addition to those strong marks, U.S. News and World Report and CNBC recently recognized Connecticut’s successes in several fields. U.S. News and World Report placed Connecticut third in the country when it comes to health care accessibility and quality, while the Nutmeg State ranked sixth nationally when it comes to low crime rates.

For healthcare, the state saw high marks for its public health response and low rate of residents without health insurance; for crime, Connecticut has a violent crime rate more than 60% below the national average, with a crime impacting 136 of every 100,000 residents, compared to a national average of 359 per 100,000.

As well, CNBC reported Connecticut placed fourth nationally in its education metrics and fifth in quality of life among residents, meaning these high marks are continually replicating themselves in a number of different publications.

This is great news for our state, indicating we’re getting national recognition for the hard work we accomplish every day. It’s inspiring to me to see Connecticut receive these accolades; let’s keep working until we reach the #1 spot. Enjoy the rest of the summer and your Labor Day weekend!

State Sen. MD Rahman
D-Fourth District
Andover, Bolton, Glastonbury and Manchester



Barbecue and Car Show

Andover Congregational Church, 359 Route 6, will hold a Barbecue and Car Show on Friday, Sept. 11, from 4-7 p.m. It doesn’t matter if your car is a show queen or daily driver.

There is no entry fee to show your car. Admission is \$15 and includes hamburgers and hot dogs with all the fixin’s.

America250 Songwriter Program at Library

Andover Public Library invites all to celebrate both America250 and some of Connecticut’s contributions to the American Revolution with Connecticut songwriter and performer, Kent Besocke.

This rescheduled program takes place on Wednesday, September 16th at 6PM. The evening features an hour’s worth of music and stories, revealing Connecticut’s hidden history, folklore, and legendary figures.

RSVP is not required but is requested, by calling 860-742-7428.

Congregational Church News

Andover Congregational Church, UCC, located at 359 Route 6, invites all to worship, held Sundays at 10 a.m. All are welcome. The service also streams live on the church’s Facebook page (First Congregational Church, Andover, CT). For more information, call the church office at 860-742-7696, email andoverctchurch@gmail.com or visit www.andoverctchurch.org.

Children’s Church: Is provided. **Choir:** At 9 a.m. Sundays in the sanctuary.

Food Pantry: Mondays from 5-7 p.m. Bring your own bags. The **Foodshare Van** comes to the church every other Wednesday from 8:30-10 a.m.; **Senior Pantry** is on the opposite Wednesdays.

AA Meetings: Saturdays and Mondays, 7 p.m.

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

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The “East of the River” Real Estate Report

What Most Sellers Wish They Knew Sooner

After helping homeowners through the selling process, there are a few things I consistently hear people say they wish they had known earlier.

The first is **how much preparation matters**. Small repairs, decluttering, landscaping, paint, and proper presentation can make a meaningful difference—but they’re much easier to address months before listing than days before photography.

Second, **pricing isn’t about leaving room to negotiate**. Sellers sometimes want to start high because they can always reduce the price later. The problem is that your greatest exposure typically comes when the home first hits the market. Starting too high can mean missing buyers who may have competed for the property at the right price.

Third, **the highest offer isn’t always the best offer**. Financing, inspections, appraisal risk, closing date, contingencies, and the buyer’s overall strength can sometimes be more important than a few thousand dollars in price. Finally, many sellers underestimate everything that happens after accepting an offer. Inspections, negotiations, appraisals, financing, attorneys, deadlines, and coordinating your next move are all part of the process.

My biggest advice? **Start planning earlier than you think you need to**. A good selling strategy isn’t created the day your home hits the market. The more decisions you make beforehand, the more options—and fewer surprises—you’ll have when it’s time to sell.

Market Snapshot – Past Week			
Hebron, Andover, Marlborough, Colchester, East Hampton & Portland			
Single-Family Homes		Condos	
• 11 homes sold		• 3 sold	
• Average sale price: \$420,781		• Average sale price: \$388,300	
• Average sale-to-list ratio: 106%		• Sale-to-list ratio: 103%	
• Average days on market: 12 days		• Average days on market: 13 days	
• Median days on market: 6 days		Results vary by price point, condition, and pricing strategy.	



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From the Editor’s Desk

Observations & Ruminations

By Mike Thompson

For most towns, school is either already back in session or will begin early next week. There’s a slight crispness in the evening air. Pumpkin-flavored everything is on the menu boards at Dunkin’ and Starbucks.

September is almost here. The month will bring many things. The final weeks of the baseball season, and, on the flip side, opening week for football. County fairs galore – from The Big E to The Big H (a.k.a. the Hebron Harvest Fair). The changing of the leaves. The first day of autumn.

And, in nearby East Haddam, it also brings the annual Venture Smith Day Connecticut Freedom Trail Celebration.

This year, the 30th annual celebration will be Saturday, Sept. 12, from 1-4 p.m., at the First Church Cemetery, 499 Town St. (Route 151) in East Haddam. Venture Smith (1729-1805) is buried in this cemetery. Bring a chair or blanket to sit on and umbrella for shade if sunny. If raining the event will be held inside of the First Church of Christ Congregational. Exhibits and refreshments will be served following the event in the church’s Fellowship Hall.

Who is Venture Smith? The son of an African king, he became the first Black man to document his capture from Africa and life as an enslaved person, living in colonial Rhode Island, New York and Connecticut, and as a successful free man in living in Connecticut.

Venture Smith spent most of his freedom years in Haddam Neck and East Haddam. In 1798, he dictated his autobiography to teacher Elisha Niles; it was then published in pamphlet form by Charles Holt, editor of the *New London Bee*. It is the only slave narrative of the 18th century that recounts life in Africa.

Venture Smith died on Sept. 19, 1805, and his grave is one of the original sites on the Connecticut Freedom Trail.

The Sept. 12 Venture Smith Day celebration

will feature several speakers, on a variety of historical topics. Also, “The Sisters in Stitches Joined by the Cloth” of eastern Massachusetts will return with their African American quilts. Venture Smith’s family genealogy and family photos and artifacts from their trip to Ghana will be on display. A Town of East Haddam proclamation will be presented. A wreath-laying ceremony by the descendants of Venture Smith and the annual Venture family reunion photograph will take place in the cemetery by Venture’s grave.

Adults and children who are interested in learning more about Connecticut history in the 1700s and 1800s, are encouraged to attend. For more information, call 860-873-9375. And to review the original Venture Smith autobiography, go to www.docsouth.unc.edu/neh/venture2/menu.html.

* * *

We lost a big one this week, folks. Dolly Parton passed away Tuesday at the age of 80, after a brief battle with cancer. I’m 47 years old, and Dolly has been an American institution for as long as I can remember. A supremely talented singer-songwriter of course, but also an actress, author, philanthropist (she supported numerous charitable causes), and even had her own theme park: Dollywood, near her hometown in Tennessee.

She was also incredibly, incredibly wise, and her words have inspired countless people for generations. I recently came across a list of some of her more memorable quotes – about life, love, the music business, and more – and I thought I’d end this week’s column by sharing a few of them. Let’s all remember and celebrate the life of someone who, by all accounts, was just a wonderful person.

“The way I see it, if you want the rainbow, you gotta put up with the rain.”

“You have to work at being happy. Some

Editor’s Desk continued on page 15

Bulletin Board

It pains me to report that I realized the other day that my wife suffers from Limbphobia. I am now considering establishing a Go Fund Me page in hopes that a massive infusion of free money may help me to cope with this traumatic situation. But first let me explain just what is going on here.

Limbphobia, which you have probably never heard of, since I just made up the name this morning, is a fear of falling tree limbs. Sufferers are absolutely certain that a tree limb – or the entire tree – could come crashing down on their head at any moment. You don’t even have to be in the woods. You could be almost anywhere and a tree limb could come plummeting down out of nowhere to bash you in the head and spread your brains all over the ground like week-old tapioca pudding.

(Limbphobia, by the way, should not be confused with Limbsallov, a distinctly separate phobia common among people who are afraid to go near railroad tracks.)

While I only diagnosed my wife’s case of Limbphobia this week, it is clearly in an advanced stage and something I probably should have noticed years ago. I blame myself for not nipping this thing in the bud, but as my wife says, I don’t listen (along with a bunch of other stuff I don’t recall, but which apparently included the phrase “tree limb” at some point or another).

Since I am too lazy and self-absorbed with my own issues to organize a golf tournament or hold a chainsaw raffle to raise funds to combat the perils of Limbphobia, I will confine my efforts to publicizing some of the symptoms of this horrible affliction in this column.

Your loved one may have Limbphobia if:

- They refuse to go into the woods. While this seems like a simple diagnosis, it is not, in and of itself, necessarily a clear indication of Limbphobia. The patient may simply be from New York City or some similar urban wasteland. An aversion to forests can also result from other afflictions such as Possumphobia or the dreaded Theresnoshoppingtherephobia.
- People suffering from advanced cases of Limbphobia take an unholy delight in reciting every fatality involving a tree or tree limb that has occurred over the past 40 years in any part of the United States. These include homeowners struck down by tree limbs while walking out to the mailbox in Seattle; motorists crushed by falling trees while on their way to grandma’s house in the Deep South; people dispatched by tree limbs that came crashing through the roof while they were asleep in bed in Dogpatch, New Hampshire; folks that were impaled by falling limbs while leaf-peeping in Vermont, and so on and so forth. No tragedy involving a tree limb is too minor to relate...but the more randomly gruesome, the better.
- Victims of Limbphobia see tree limbs as having some sort of malevolent intelligence directed at human beings in general and toward them in particular. This suspicion extends to saplings and bushes, which, the Limbphobia sufferer contends, are merely biding their time to grow high enough to drop a log on your cranium.
- Sufferers repeatedly point out potentially threatening tree limbs in your yard – including limbs that are 200 feet away, but apparently could somehow fly over to smash your skull – and they think you should pay thousands of dollars to a trained arborist to take precautionary action. They will belabor these concerns to the point that you wish a tree would actually fall on you so you wouldn’t have to listen to them anymore – and if you suggest that calling in an exorcist might be a more practical solution to the problem, they get all huffy and annoyed.
- They spend an inordinate amount of time online, checking housing availability in desert communities and similar treeless locales preferred by scorpions and venomous toads.

Oh, and one last word of advice. If you meet someone in a bar and they confess to you that they are a Limbphomaniac, ask them to repeat themselves very slowly in order to avoid any possible confusion. The limbs you save may be your own.

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.



Adulthood Got Me Like... When you’re grown up, you can do whatever you want to, and these grown-ups decided to go to Marlborough Day and shove their face into pie. While Alexis Tosado (left) didn’t win, she tried her best! Congratulations to winner Frederick Rosenberger (right). For more on Marlborough Day, see page 29.

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

Let’s Be Realistic

To the Editor:

As consumers, we are all aware that everything has become much more expensive, whether it’s groceries, gasoline, fuel, clothing, or household maintenance items. Unfortunately, our general cost of living has increased. So, how can we expect the town and the school system to function at last year’s budget. The town’s electricity, fuel oil, road repairs and landscaping have all increased in price. The same is true for the school supplies and maintenance of the buildings.

The Board of Selectmen and the Board of Education have already made drastic cuts in their budgets. We need our roads and recreation areas to be properly cared for. Our children deserve a school to provide a safe environment and a good education. Our senior center and the library should be open on a full regular schedule. Nobody likes to pay taxes but I believe that we all would want our town to be well maintained and to provide services for all residents. We expect our schools to provide a good education.

So let’s be realistic. Services must be paid for. Please go to the Town Hall on Tuesday, Sept. 1, and vote ‘yes’ for both budgets. The polls will be open from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Goldie Liverant – Colchester

Note: Liverant is a member of the Colchester Commission on Aging, but is speaking as an individual.

By the Numbers

To the Editor:

It’s been a long drawn-out budget season for Colchester. There have been two referendums. The first, a total budget of \$70,390,467, or about a 7% increase over the last adopted budget, was turned down; back to the drawing board. The second referendum, with a total budget of \$68,722,577, or about a 5% increase over the last adopted budget, also failed.

Now a proposed town budget of \$19,060,237 (a \$595,570 or 3.2% increase over the last adopted budget) and a Board of Education budget of \$48,791,797 (a \$1,494,645 or 3.15% increase over the last adopted budget), with a total budget of \$67,852,034 (a \$2,089,645 or 3.17% increase over the last adopted budget), is being presented for a third referendum.

All those involved (and there were many committees, volunteers, and boards) in getting to these numbers made what I think were well-thought-out decisions, but I believe it would benefit us all if it could be shown what exact items were reduced or eliminated so we can have a better understanding of those choices and the impact they may have. As the song says, three is a magic number and I hope the magic and good reasoning is enough so there is no fourth referendum.

Ralph Bianco – Colchester

RIVEREAST

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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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Golfers, Prize Donors Welcome

To the Editor:

Hebron American Legion Post 95 is seeking golfers for our Annual Golf Scholarship event. Foursome golf parties are preferred although many are paired if acceptable. Door prizes are welcomed, as after the final rounds there is a luncheon for the golfers. If a door prize donor wishes to bid on other items, go to the Chantclair Golf facility near lunchtime; just note there are no lunches available for non participants.

Thank everyone who has participated in the previous events, and are certainly welcomed to participate on Saturday, Sept. 12.

To all, be well, stay safe.

Respectfully submitted,
R.A. Bob Mangillo, Adjutant
Hebron American Legion Post 95

History of the Senior Center

To the Editor:

Marlborough Senior Center’s birthday celebration will be held on Sept. 19 from 1-4 p.m. The Marlborough Senior Center on 17 School Drive was opened on Sept. 21, 2001. Vi Schwarzmamm was director. Before the center was opened, the seniors met in various places. Among them were the American Legion and the Moose Club.

At that time, Marlborough had approximately 400 seniors over 65. Since then that number has increased to about 1,100.

Under the leadership of Vi the center served meals five days a week, supplied by CRT in Hartford. Vi and her husband Russell were both certified to prepare meals and on special occasions they treated the seniors.

Many fun and interesting programs included art classes, quilling classes, card games, 8 ball pool, bocci ball, and bingo. Trips to local restaurants for lunch including Aqua Turf club for senior entertainment events. Other trips include going to the Hartford gardens and medical trips 5 days a week. Rham high school band and elementary school alongside political guests visited the center and there were other activities that took place in the evening. Senior support services including tax assistance and blood drives.

The senior center was well attended until COVID. Vi retired in 2025 and since then the senior center has been gradually returning under the current director.

Barbara P. Armfield
Marlborough Commission on Aging

Vote ‘Yes’ This Tuesday

To the Editor:

Voters clearly spoke at the second referendum and said loud and clear that those proposed budgets were too expensive. Since then, elected officials have responded and cut \$577,010 and \$293,533 from the BOE and Town, respectively, effectively reducing the tax burden in half. This equates to a proposed 30.43 mil rate- an increase of 0.51 – roughly equating to \$8.70 a month for the average homeowner, or 1.7%. In a world where everything is more expensive, a tax increase at half the rate of inflation to keep our town and schools running is worth it. One move that I am particularly pleased with is the consolidation of the town and BOE finance offices. Not only does this save money, but it also increases oversight and ensures that the two sides are on the same page.

In the meantime, the entire town has been affected by the budget freeze imposed by entering a new fiscal year without an operating budget. Cragin, the transfer station, the senior center, and the town clerk’s office are temporarily functioning at reduced capacity and service levels until we know what we can pay for. Passing the town budget will restore services.

School has opened in the midst of chaotic un-

certainty. Teachers are leaving because they face job insecurity. Open positions cannot be hired for. Published bus schedules are “estimates,” class schedules and sizes are subject to change, supplies are not ordered, and the list goes on. We owe it to our teachers and students to get the academic year on track as soon as possible.

In the last referendum, only 1 in every 4 eligible people voted. Sadly, this was higher than typical turnout. It is time for our entire community to pull together so that we can move forward. Please make a plan to vote on Tuesday, Sept. 1st. And after you do, remind your family and friends to vote. Then remind them all again and again until they’ve made it to the polls. All voting is at Town Hall from 6 a.m.-8 p.m. Absentee ballots are available in the town clerk’s office on Monday if you won’t be available on Referendum Day. Detailed info for those looking is available on the town and BOE webpages.

We love our town because our schools are strong, our services meet the needs of our citizens, and we are all there to support one another and enjoy the community we have built. Let’s make sure that continues. We are all in this together.

Sincerely,
Monica Swyden, Chair
Colchester Democratic Town Committee

State in Disarray

To the Editor:

The 10 worst cities in Connecticut are governed by Democrats. If awards were to be given out for the worst Hartford would win and yet both LAMONT and BRONIN win their primaries. Lamont’s solution to the crime in Hartford is to force the outlying towns to absorb the worst of the worst, so it appears he is on top of this problem. Bronin, the Newsom of the East, wins the primary for Congress based on his dismal term as mayor of Hartford.

There is no way out of this because it’s a Democrat replacing another Democrat or the same Democrat back in office. My take on this is that the people of Connecticut, not having to think on their own, keep putting in the same old, same old back in office and nothing changes.

Frank Grande – Colchester

Defend the Land

To the Editor:

Recently, the oldest newspaper in “The Land of Pure Imagination” printed a header that read “Don’t Want Explosive Diarrhea? Shop Local and Regulate Big Food” (*Portsmouth Gazette*). Meanwhile, Ry Cooder sang, “taxes on the farmer feeds us all.” Sadly, without a coalition of residents to defend farmers our smart and perfect culture will continue to vilify, and violate, open land.

Big business and politicians continually claim they will make life easier and save us money. They remind me of people who chronically diet only to gain more weight. As kids we lived in a time when open criticism was welcomed. We happily wore buttons featuring counter-culture slogans. One pair had a cow thinking, “No Nukes!”, the other, a nuclear power plant thinking, “No Cows!” Our Jones Generation also collected Wacky Packs. Insulting stickers the size of baseball cards. Mom’s favorite was for a popular antacid. “Dums for the dummies, instant relief from thinking and using your brain.” These slogans pretty much sum up today’s headlines and the more politicians promise savings, the more costly our lives become ... financially and environmentally.

According to the *Hartford Business Journal* April 2026, “CT [alone] has lost nearly 1,000 farms and 65,000 acres of farmland in a decade.” Why?

-Enormous corporate warehouses ready, willing and able to provide same day delivery, free.

-(ctinsider.com 8/14/26)

-New housing. Not necessarily because there aren’t enough brick-and-mortar buildings, but because, primarily, businesses, in The Land of Pure Imagination, don’t pay a living wage (nlihc.org July 23, 2026), while rents remain high.

-Solar fields. (American Farm Bureau Federation 8/8/24 Solar Energy Expansion and its Impact on Rural Communities.)

-AI data centers cover huge swaths of land and consume massive amounts of electricity and water for cooling. AI, like Dums, provides relief from using our brains. But what about that unwanted bacteria flushed into wastewater in Cheyene, Wyoming?

Solar fields, data centers, warehouses and housing, like small modular reactors, (world-nuclear.org) are making big promises while robbing us of land, water, money and peace of mind. Who’s really winning here.... healthcare? Certainly not our farmers and not you. So how did the colonists build homes that lasted hundreds of years while composing the greatest Declaration of Independence the world has ever seen? They shopped locally. Went to bed early, ate good food and defended the land. #save17

Jean Tulimieri – Amston

Dementia Talks No. 70

To the Editor:

I sit here on the side of your bed at 3:30 a.m. You are sitting beside me, nestled into my neck. You could easily go back to sleep, but I know that can’t happen as we have personal care to attend to.

Pause. Thoughts swirling in my head.

Alzheimer’s is no longer a devastating disease to me. It is an unwelcome companion, that is true. It is outside what I can control. This is the fact that I accept.

From Mom’s diagnosis in 2017 to the moment at 3:30 a.m. today, there have been learnings that I never knew were possible.

We have an invisible net around us, so that in those challenging times when I am not sure what to do, we can bounce back. We might have some scratches and bruises (metaphorically speaking), but we find solutions that work for us. That could be smaller bowls at mealtime instead of an intimidating plate of food. It could be hands on mobility because the brain tells you that your left arm and leg are weak so use your right instead. That saying look into my eyes makes more sense that saying look at me, because looking at my foot is looking at me in your mind.

There are so many people that have also taught me along the way, and I know I will continue to learn and perhaps teach others what I have been taught. It’s time to give back.

Mom is back sleeping comfortably. Today is her last day on vacation #2. I am sad because she brings us much joy and will be missed when I wake up in the morning. Admittedly I am also looking forward to a full night’s sleep. It is bittersweet.

To all those reading that don’t feel you have relief, you’re are seen. To all those out there partnering with a loved one that has been diagnosed, you are seen and know you will adapt to meet the moment.

May we all lead first with empathy, followed by kindness, wrapped in love.

You are not alone.

With peace and kindness,
Tonya Maurer – Amston
Alzheimer’s Hotline 1-800-272-3900

Colchester, Please Vote

Colchester Friends:

By now, hopefully everyone understands this process has not been about scare tactics but about how best to spend the limited money available responsibly to support the critical services and programs funded by our school and town budgets.

It had been a terribly difficult year for budgets and the ramifications of these cuts are real and will be felt for years to come.

We must vote ‘yes’ to support crucial services provided by the town, and giving the resources necessary to maintain excellence in our schools.

Please make time to vote in favor of both budgets at Town Hall Tuesday, Sept. 1.

Your vote is needed to minimize any further cuts to both schools and the town.

It is time to do our part. Please vote ‘yes’ Tuesday.

Respectfully,
Vincent Rose – Colchester

Please Vote ‘Yes’

Colchester:

Please vote ‘yes’ for both budgets on Sept. 1, 2026. Our community needs your support. We cannot do without road maintenance; our Youth and Social Services director; our Parks and Recreation director; or our Senior Center director. These are all on the chopping block if this budget fails. Please join me in keeping Colchester alive.

Noreen Bibee – Colchester

‘No’ Means Change the Budget

To the Editor:

After two failed referendums, Colchester’s elected officials are still not listening. They made additional reductions, but the latest proposal still leaves combined town and school spending more than \$8.2 million higher than it was three years ago. That is a 13.8% increase. Trimming around the edges does not address what voters have repeatedly said about affordability.

Supporters will advertise this budget as costing the average homeowner “only \$9 a month.” That number is possible only because one-time money is being used to temporarily suppress the mill rate.

Without that temporary subsidy, the average homeowner’s increase would be approximately \$275 per year, or nearly \$23 a month. More than double! And that does not include the increase in your motor vehicle taxes.

That higher spending becomes the starting point for next year’s budget, but the one-time money may not be there to soften the tax impact again. Now add Colchester’s Oct. 1 property revaluation. Homeowners are being asked to approve higher spending before they even know what revaluation will do to their next tax bill.

A family can withdraw money from savings to make this month’s electric bill appear smaller. That does not make electricity cheaper. When the savings are gone, the full bill remains. Colchester cannot use temporary money to make permanent spending affordable.

During the budget meetings, residents offered specific ways to reduce costs while preserving vital services. Their proposals were largely ignored.

This budget asks families to pay more while funding a \$25,000 raise for an elected position and a nearly \$500,000 golden parachute for a former superintendent under whose watch this

See Letters, page 6

Stuart L. Jablon, D.P.M.

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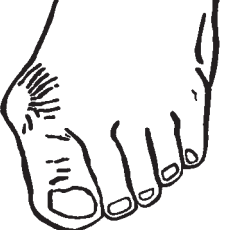
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★ *Letters, cont. from page 5*

financial mess developed. Those are choices, not vital services. A ‘yes’ vote tells elected officials those choices are acceptable and taxpayers will pick up the tab.

I will vote ‘no’.
Voting ‘no’ does not mean abandoning vital services. It means demanding that elected officials prioritize them instead of using them to shield the rest of the budget from scrutiny.

After two failed referendums, it is time for elected officials to listen to residents and make meaningful changes.

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

Time for a Change

To the Editor:
Over the past few weeks, I have seen several letters commenting about Steve Weir, both positive and negative. I applaud these letters as this is what our constitution guarantees: freedom of political choice and voice.

At the start of this political season, I reviewed Steve Weir’s record and was truly surprised. His voting record, which is available to all and has been discussed in depth in several letters, shows a complete lack of support for our district. One of his supporters stated that Steve has a 100% voting record (as does about 40% of our elected representatives), that he always listens and studies what is in front of him, so he understands what he is voting on. My thought was this position statement is unfinished as it should have ended with “and then he votes ‘no’ anyway.”

But what astounded me is the absolute lack of any bills sponsored by Steve Weir. Our district is facing several significant challenges: lack of housing for our young people resulting in many having to move out of state; rising educational costs, especially when it comes to our special needs students; bonding issues for upkeep of our infrastructure; funding to help the less fortunate in our society who are being thrown off food and medical support by the current national administration.

And Steve’s reaction: nothing but crickets.
Join me in voting for Ellen Paul this November, a candidate who has the experience and network in Hartford to help our district navigate our growing challenges.

Davis Howell – Hebron
Note: Howell is a member of the Hebron Democratic Town Committee but said he is writing as a concerned citizen.

Flock Cameras

To the Editor:
People are very upset about the incoming Flock cameras to many towns in the state of Connecticut. I feel we as drivers have set ourselves up to have cities warrant these Flock cameras. If people would stop speeding, stop texting while driving, and were driving without being distracted, I feel we would not be in this Flock camera situation. Further, if people weren’t speeding by school buses while the school bus lights were on and the arm was down on the school bus, we wouldn’t be in this situation.

I do agree with people that are upset about losing their privacy, but why are we no longer able to follow the rules of the road?

S.L. Heise – Amston

What’s At Stake

To the Editor:
Informed voters need to know what’s at stake for our town and educational system if we don’t pass both the town and Board of Education (BOE) budgets on Sept. 1st. The answer is simple- town services that everyone uses and educational programs that we value for our kids. A ‘yes’ vote on these affordable budgets, with an average monthly impact of \$8.70, will move us out of the temporary town budget freeze and allow our schools to move forward. The town budget has been reduced by \$461,423 and the BOE budget by \$3,123,245 totaling \$3,584,668 in cuts since this process started.

On the Town side, we’re in a temporary budget freeze because the town must spend at the 2025-26 budget levels while meeting our contractual and required costs (insurance, electricity, fuel, telephone, etc.). In order not to overspend, resources must come from different departments. Unlike the federal government that shuts down when they cannot pass a budget, our first selectman established a temporary budget freeze to keep the town functioning by freezing discretionary spending which includes items not required by state statute. A hiring freeze and backfilling open positions with employees from the transfer station to do the work that would have been done by new employees are examples. This is why the transfer station is temporarily closed on Tuesdays. Additionally, temporary changes include shortened library hours, suspending senior center evening Wellness Nights, and pausing onboarding new Fire/EMS volunteers, to name a few examples of services that will return if this referendum passes.

The BOE is opening a school year without

a budget, so reductions were made to stabilize the opening of the school year for our students. New teachers cannot be hired with the risk of having to lay them off in the next round of budget cuts- leaving students without programming or teachers as school opens. Permanently, already 26 positions are not being backfilled, and five administrative positions are eliminated or reduced for good. WJJMS sports is already gone and WJJMS band will probably be next if this budget doesn’t pass.

The current proposal is a 0.51 mil rate increase and equates to an average impact of \$8.70/month. Please support these affordable budgets to bring stability to the Town and our schools on Tuesday.

Sincerely,
Rosemary Coyle – Colchester

Note: Coyle is a member of the Colchester Board of Selectmen but said she is speaking as an individual.

Why Not Run Again?

To the Editor:
Since 2018, I have watched firsthand the shift in our state House – from a nearly evenly divided chamber where compromise and common-sense guided decisions, to the current lopsided, left-leaning governance. With an expanded supermajority and political appointees filling key roles, government often seems to run on autopilot. What many suspect is happening is, in fact, happening: backroom deals without proper vetting or robust debate in committee, politicians who appear to believe their constituents are not paying attention, a troubling lack of urgency on clear problems, and, most painfully, a callous approach to spending other people’s hard-earned money. Seeing the process up close – first as a legislator and now as legislative staff – has been truly eye-opening.

One of the most effective ways I can shine a light on these issues and help restore accountability in Hartford is to serve once again as a state legislator. In January 2013 I walked into our beautiful Capitol as an elected official determined to fight for fairness, insist that government live within its means, and protect our treasured natural resources. I was also, in many ways, naïve about how the system truly works.

I want to walk back into the Capitol in January 2027 as a seasoned, homegrown legislator, someone with the experience and the courage to stand up to the bureaucrats who so often control the purse strings. I know I can help shake things up in Hartford for the right reasons. With the

retirement of our current representative, the timing feels right. Why not run again?

I am running because I believe we must always put our small-town values first. We live in a special part of Connecticut – communities built on volunteers, scenic vistas and special places, and quiet pride in the places we call home. We do not need another Hartford “yes” person who is still getting to know our three towns and who doesn’t pay her fair share. My ability to go to Hartford and remain a truly independent voice – while deeply understanding our communities is unmatched. I will focus on protecting our scenic vistas and special places, bringing radical transparency to our state budget process, helping seniors, and keeping education decisions local are all things I care deeply about.

Over the coming weeks I hope to earn your trust and vote once more, to listen carefully to your concerns and learn about what matters most to you and your family. Please reach out with any questions or concerns. 860-470-6662 or melissa@melissaziobron.com

Melissa Ziobron – East Haddam
Note: Ziobron, a Republican, is running for the 34th District in the state House of Representatives. The district covers East Hampton, East Haddam and Salem.

Bus Stop Success!!

To the Editor:
We wanted to share an update from the op-ed that we recently submitted titled “Students Deserve Safer Way” and the corresponding picture that was published on the front page of the *Rivereast* titled “Collecting Signatures.”

We’re excited to share that the superintendent and M&J bus company have worked together to meet our demands. The school bus stop at the corner of Apple Tree Lane and Route 17 has been eliminated! The school bus will now travel up Apple Tree Lane!

We had dozens of petition signers and people from the neighborhood and from the Portland community who emailed and called the superintendent and M&J bus company to support us. And who saw the *Rivereast* and wrote in wanting to help.

What we saw over these last four weeks was a true example of the community coming together for a good cause; to support Portland’s most precious cargo.

Katie Terlalis Bordonaro and Erica Jarzabek
Portland

The Belt Is Out of Holes

To the Editor:
I’m voting ‘yes’ on the budget.
The argument against it is always that there must be fat in there somewhere. I spent about six months looking for it. Eighteen years of budget books, board meeting minutes, the raw accounting reports, the state’s own datasets. It isn’t there.

Adjusted for inflation and population, the town spends 13% less per resident today than it did in 2007. Here is another test. Take the town we have, the same staff and the same programs, nothing new, and just pay everyone a normal annual raise. For more than a decade, the budget has come in below even that. Last year it was \$62.7 million against a standing-still cost of \$65 to \$70 million. We have not been buying anything new. We have been paying less than it costs to keep what we had.

The belt-tightening people are asking for is not a proposal. It is what Colchester has already done, every year, going back more than ten budgets.

The usual suspect is administration. I checked that too. The schools have nine building administrators today; they had ten in 2008, and this budget cuts one more, an assistant principal at Bacon Academy. Central office has the same five positions it had eighteen years ago. Administrator pay has grown 38% against 48% inflation. It isn’t there either.

A good share of this year’s increase is employee health insurance. No money went missing. For three years we budgeted less for medical claims than the claims actually cost, and covered the gap out of reserve. The reserve is now spent, so the budget has to carry the real number. That is a correction, not new spending.

The increase on the table is 0.51 mills. On a median Colchester home that works out to about \$8 a month.

I know \$8 a month is real money in some households. But there is no longer a version of ‘no’ that trims waste. We have been cutting for a decade and there is nothing left to cut but teachers and programs.

Please vote ‘yes.’

John Farrell – Colchester

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Cringeworthy

To the Editor:

Yes, I'll own up to it. I'm a curmudgeon. But I think this might be cringeworthy to others as well.

Portland HS is now on "You Got This" Street. I'm wondering if soaring student performance data follow the name change, could the same sloganeering approach have other applications?

For example, our medical center could be on "You're All Better" Drive. A nursing home on "You're Still Young" Lane. A counseling center on "You're So Happy" Court. A prison on "You're Really Law Abiding" Avenue.

Catchy slogans could be a much more cost-effective approach to better results than actually investing more money in the process.

Stephen Markson – Portland

Editor's Note: Portland High School's access drive has indeed been named "You Got This" Street, for this year only. According to the high school, every spring the access drive's naming rights for the following school year are auctioned off at the PHS sophomore class auction.

Support Both Budgets

To the Editor:

Colchester residents – I strongly encourage you to vote 'yes' on Sept. 1st on both the town budget and the education budget. We need to fund our town and our schools!

The boards have been beyond transparent for each referendum. Costs, cuts and impacts to the town should come as no surprise to anyone. There are no secret agendas. The board members aren't punishing people for not voting for the budgets. They are town taxpayers (that we elected) as well and are equally impacted by cuts to programs and services.

Choices by our elected officials at the state, national and international level are having a direct impact on affordability. Gas, groceries, heating oil, and the cost of goods and services have all increased faster than our paychecks. Taking out that anger and frustration at the town level only hurts us more. Instead, vote 'yes' at the referendum next week and then start focusing on how we can get our legislators and elected officials at the state level to start providing relief for small towns.

Be informed to make the right choices for you, your family, and our town when going to the ballot box in November.

Suzanne Salemi – Colchester

Clearing Things Up

To the Editor:

I am looking to clear up some info that's been brought up this budget season.

I keep hearing a lot of misinformation about "the first selectman's raise" that seems like its really just designed to hurt the budget process.

Some people are framing this like it's a budget proposal but it's not. The first selectman is not "taking a raise" as part of the new budget. The first selectman's pay was set before he took the oath of office for a second term nine months ago in November. That's what this is about.

It all goes back to 2021 when First Selectman Andreas Bisbikos unilaterally cut the pay for the position without approval from his board. That decision broke policy but no one could stop it. It left the first selectman's position making less than most of the positions it oversees.

When First Selectman Bernie Dennler got elected in 2023 people asked what he was going to do about the pay cut. Every time he said it wasn't right for elected officials to decide their own pay and he would leave it up to others to decide what was right. He never asked for a raise.

Last November, it was Republican Art Shilosky who moved to restore the salary to the same level that it was always supposed to be at. That's what was voted on, and First Selectman Dennler wasn't even part of the vote. That change was set to take effect for the new term of office on Nov. 17, 2025. This was a correction that put things back the way they were always intended by the board.

First Selectman Bernie Dennler began receiving the corrected rate of pay the day he took the oath of office in November 2025. This is not about the 2026 budget. This was all decided nine months ago. Those who are making an issue about it now aren't trying to get the first selectman to decline a raise. They want to force him to take a pay cut that would leave him making less than some of our secretarial office staff. How does that make sense?

This isn't about Bernie Dennler. He didn't ask for this or vote on it. This is about a policy decision made by others that took place nearly a year ago. It's not accurate to say he's taking a raise now, and it's not fair to tell a person they

should take a significant cut nine months after the fact because of politics. This is all political which is why the town has a policy in the first place and why it should have never been broken by First Selectman Bisbikos five years ago.

This is no doubt a difficult budget season. This post is to clarify how the salary was determined.

Michelle Millington – Colchester

Note: Millington is a member of the Colchester Board of Education, but said she is writing as an individual.

Why I'm Seeking Reelection

To the Editor:

I am seeking another two-year term as state representative of the 55th District because I believe experience, preparation, integrity and a deep understanding of the communities you represent matter.

My connection to this area goes back a lifetime. I grew up in Glastonbury, have lived in Hebron with my family for 26 years, and have spent more than three decades working, volunteering and serving in our communities. Before entering the legislature, I have served as a police officer, business owner, employer, volunteer and community leader. Those experiences shape how I approach this job every day.

Serving effectively requires much more than showing up, although I am proud to have maintained 100% attendance for every House and committee vote during my four years in office.

It requires doing the work before the vote. It also requires building relationships with legislators on both sides of the aisle, listening to different perspectives and finding common ground whenever possible.

Legislation is rarely as simple as a title or a political talking point. Bills can contain hundreds or thousands of lines, and good ideas are sometimes accompanied by provisions with unintended consequences. I take seriously my responsibility to read legislation, research the issues, ask questions and listen to people on all sides before deciding how to vote.

I don't believe one party has all the right answers all of the time. I have supported good ideas regardless of where they originated and opposed proposals when I believed the details would hurt the people I represent. My obliga-

tion isn't to a political party. It is to the residents of Andover, Bolton, Glastonbury, Hebron and Marlborough.

I also believe balance matters in government. Connecticut's legislature is currently controlled by the Democratic Party by roughly a two-to-one margin, with veto-proof majorities. Regardless of which party holds power, government benefits from strong voices asking questions, challenging assumptions and ensuring that different perspectives are represented.

Over four years, I've worked to earn your trust by being accessible, listening, showing up and treating people respectfully whether they agree with me or not.

I know these communities. I've raised my family here, built businesses here, volunteered here and served here for decades.

I'm asking for the opportunity to continue that service – with the same preparation, independence, integrity and commitment I've brought to the job every day.

State Rep. Steve Weir
R-55th District
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Glastonbury, Hebron and Marlborough

Our Children Deserve the Best

To the Editor:

The Colchester Board of Education is a seven-member unpaid volunteer elected board. The BOE delegates the administration and day-to-day operations of the district to the superintendent and other members of the administrative team. This team is referred to as the board and 'Central Office.'

Together we work arduously with other school staff to create a budget that will provide a quality education for Colchester's young citizens so that they will have the tools necessary for success. We strive for efficiency because we know that affordability is an important consideration. For the sake of transparency, we discuss and make all off our decisions in meetings open to the public. These meetings are recorded and minutes are posted on our website. For those who are not available to attend or listen to hours of meetings, there is a section 'Budget' on the Colchester BOE site with summary presentations and graphics. Nothing is done in secret!

Every time the bottom line of our budget is reduced by the Board of Finance, potential cuts are studied in depth to find reductions with the least impact to students. Materials and projects are ideally cancelled or adjusted first. There will be no technology upgrade this year, for example, and professional development has been dramatically decreased. When positions must be eliminated or shifted academic areas not required by law are affected; twenty-six teaching and support staff positions have not been backfilled since Jan. 1st. This year, we examined every leadership position and eliminated five. This reorganization will be carefully evaluated throughout the school year.

We can assure voters that we have come to a point where additional cuts would hurt the education of the students. This is not a threat but reality as more money is cut with each referendum so must more services to our youth be eliminated. Our town has always prided itself as a place where students are taken care of by dedicated teachers at a reasonable cost to taxpayers. So many families move here for that reason; it is why our property values stay high. Our children deserve the best education possible, for they are our future.

Please vote 'yes' for our town and schools on Sept. 1st! Polls will be open from 6 a.m.-8 p.m. at Town Hall.

Nancy Nelson and Gussie Gilberti
Colchester

Note: Nelson and Gilberti are members of the Colchester Board of Education but said they are speaking as concerned citizens.

Hebron's Road to the Future?

To the Editor:

At the special town meeting on Aug. 18th, the voters of Hebron approved the purchase of 9 Pendleton Drive. This strategic property offers a significant new access point to the town-owned property at 17 Kinney Rd., also called the Horton Property. Posted at the side of the room was a large aerial photograph titled "Concept Plan" that featured diagrams for a new road leading from Pendleton Drive to the 17 Kinney Rd. property. However, the question remains, will this be a road to the future or a road to destruction?

See Letters, page 8

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★ *Letters, cont. from page 7*

tion? At the southern end of the new roadway there is a small arrow pointing south with the notation, “Future Extension to John E. Horton Boulevard.” This simple comment raises significant concerns over the potential uses of the 17 Kinney Rd. property and how a roadway will impact this historic and environmentally vital watershed.

With careful consideration and responsible vision, the Town of Hebron can move towards a robust and sustainable future. On Aug. 18th, ironically the same day as the town meeting, the lead story in *The Hartford Courant* was titled, “State tourism bucks national trends / Visitors spend \$12.B in 2025, data show.” The first paragraph reads, “Connecticut has become one of New England’s top destinations...” and continues on to report that 72 million people visited the state in 2025, spending \$12.3 billion with an economic impact of \$20.1 billion.

Quoted in the article was Morgan Nyerick, director of the Connecticut Office of Statewide Marketing and Tourism: “We have worked to introduce Connecticut in unexpected and highly memorable ways – creating cultural moments around the people, places and experiences that make this state distinctive.” The property at 17 Kinney Rd. features a wide variety of distinctive and “highly memorable” people, places and experiences just waiting to be shared.

It is time Hebron’s town leaders embrace the value of this historic and environmental treasure. Our community is uniquely positioned to capitalize on the trend towards tourism and enhance the local economy by creating a living museum and outdoor classroom at 17 Kinney Rd. After just one visit to the property, the noted history professor John Demos of Yale University stated, “There are so many different parts: geology, environment, Indigenous people, colonists, enslavement, even the present. It could well be a history park, an outdoor museum.”

For more information, please visit Save Hebron Center on Facebook.

Sincerely,
Kevin J. Tulimieri – Amston

Reelect Melissa Ziobron

To the Editor:
Melissa Ziobron gives a new meaning to dedication and hard work. In addition to a perfect 100% attendance in her six years at our state representative, she constantly attended functions throughout the 34th District to get feedback from her constituents about their concerns. What impresses me the most is her ability to effectively work across party lines in the Democratic-controlled House to accomplish objectives that will benefit her constituents.

Melissa understands that the state has a spending problem and the answer is not to continue to raise taxes. She will continue to fight for a common sense budget that will eliminate tax burdens on small businesses, help create jobs and lower the cost of living so that individuals can afford to stay in Connecticut.

Please join me in reelecting Melissa Ziobron to the office of state representative. She works tirelessly for us and understands that it is our money that is being spent in Hartford.

Linda Ursin – East Hampton

Vote ‘Yes’ for Both Budgets

To the Editor:
Hello Colchester voters! You will be reading competing narratives about the town and school budgets. You may have attended Board of Finance, Board of Selectman and/or Board of Education meetings over many months to review the needs of the school system and town. These meetings have offered opportunities for citizens’ comments and citizens’ questions. The information regarding the town and school system (Board of Education) budgets is available to you. Both budgets (and the budget process) have been fully transparent.

If you have not been able to participate in these meetings or access budget information, please know this: we are on budget referendum vote #3. Since the second referendum vote, an additional \$577,010 has been cut from the BOE budget and \$293,533 from the town budget. This referendum is a proposed 30.43 mil rate – an increase of 0.51, approximately \$8.70/month for the average homeowner. This is a 1.7% increase (much lower than the rate of inflation).

Please do your civic duty and vote on Tuesday, Sept. 1st. All voting is at Town Hall. Absentee ballots are available. Please check with the town clerk at Town Hall regarding absentee voting. Only 25% of eligible voters voted in the last referendum. Don’t let other people speak for you! I am confidently voting ‘yes’ for both the town and BOE budgets.

Even if these budgets pass, we are already los-

ing teachers, instructional coaches and interventionists, sports at the middle school, most of World Language at the middle school, and a number of special education paraprofessionals. This is the impact of being on our third referendum. If this does not pass, we have the potential to lose the JJIS band teacher and band stipend. We have already seen how a budget freeze is impacting our town transfer station and other town services. Please exercise your voting rights and vote ‘yes’ for both the town and Board of Education budgets.

Thank you,
Joanne Rose – Colchester

Jazz Band Coming

To the Editor:
The amazing Silk City Jazz Band will bring the spirit of the Swing era – and more – to Marlborough on Sept. 19 at the Marlborough Senior Center on School Street.

The 19-piece band’s performance will be part of the Senior Center’s 25th Birthday Celebration. Its repertoire includes favorites such as “Blue Skies,” “That’s Why the Lady Is a Tramp,” “Taking a Chance on Love,” “Somewhere” and “Misty.” A vocalist will also perform with the band.

The entire community is invited to join in the festivities. Come to listen. Come to dance. Come enjoy an afternoon of celebration with our seniors!

The festivities will begin at 1 p.m. with caricatures, vintage cars, cake and a brief welcoming ceremony highlighting the history of the Senior Center. The Jazz Band will play outdoors under a tent beginning at 2 p.m.

Sept. 19 will be quite a day in Marlborough, as the Fife and Drum Corps will also be holding its parade and muster earlier in the day.

Marlborough is a happening place!

Dianne Dunn, Member
Marlborough Commission on Aging

Real Affordability for Colchester

To the Editor:
As chair of the Colchester Board of Finance, I often hear residents ask why building a budget can be so difficult. The answer is simple: our job is to balance affordability for taxpayers with the services, schools, programs, and infrastructure that make Colchester a great place to live.

Everyone wants taxes to be affordable. So do we. But every budget involves choices and trade-offs. In a small town like ours, both Town departments and our schools already operate with limited staffing and resources. That means every reduction has a real impact.

When people talk about deeper budget cuts, it is important to understand what is available to cut. Much of our spending is required by law, contract, or state mandate. What remains are the services or maintenance residents find value in...senior services, youth programs, library hours, transfer station hours, road maintenance, building repairs, and school programs and staffing.

The challenge is that what appears ‘cut-able’ today can often cost more tomorrow.

For example, maintaining roads/buildings regularly helps avoid costly reconstruction projects and major repairs later, funding school staff who support students with special education needs in Colchester is less expensive than sending students to specialized programs outside town, and maintaining skilled in-house maintenance teams allow repairs to be completed by employees instead of higher cost outside contractors.

Real affordability is not simply spending less this year. It means making smart investments that reduce long-term costs. Just as a homeowner fixes a small roof leak before it causes extensive damage, towns must address needs before they become much more expensive problems. In addition, who isn’t paying more for things like groceries or home repairs now than a year or more ago? The same problem exists for our town and schools, we can’t do the same things with the same budget.

As Colchester voters head to the polls on Sept. 1 for Budget Referendum #3, I encourage everyone to think beyond the immediate cost of the budget and consider the cost of deeper reductions. For the average Colchester property owner, the impact of this budget is about \$9 per month. The proposed Town and Board of Education budgets reflect months of careful review and are designed to balance affordability with the needs of our community. I believe a ‘yes’ vote is the most responsible path forward.

Karen A. Belding, Chair
Colchester Board of Finance

Know Your Senior Center And Vote for It

To the Editor:
A staff of three qualified, knowledgeable individuals and a great group of volunteers keep the Colchester Senior Center going.

A one-of-a-kind chef and his volunteer servers serve TVCCA meals every day. Coffee and snacks are available.

Three seasoned, qualified bus drivers offer medical, groceries, bank and pharmacy transportation.

Some programs offered: art, craft and Making Memories classes, wellness and computer classes, pool (not the water kind, cards, bingo, Mah Jong and many more.

If age 55-plus you can receive free Colchester Senior Center membership if a Colchester resident, or \$15 for out-of-town resident. Colchester members can use our gym that has new equipment, and Silver Sneakers insurance and other insurance might pay. We have at the center some older seniors, one 104 years old, who come to socialize and make new friends and lunch.

We are in a budget freeze right now and possible jobs will be lost. The senior center is funded by the town budget.

You have a privilege to vote; please consider voting ‘yes’ to get funding for your center.

Kaye Chamberland – Colchester

Vote ‘Yes’ for Colchester

To the Editor:
Recently, a writer cited relative numbers of Colchester citizens to justify town education spending ... or not spending. A valid point, to a degree. Let’s add some further perspective to that point. Only about 16% of Colchester is 65 or older (including me). Why spend town money on a senior center and related expenses for this small number? Less than 20% are adolescents and teenagers. Why support recreational fields and a teen center for this minority? More than 40% have annual income over \$100,000, and about 75% are over \$50,000. Only about 25% earn less than \$50,000. It would seem that three quarters of our households should be able to afford to pay their taxes, yet many cry affordability and cost of living to lament taxes. Should that minority dictate spending? Over 60% have at least some college education. Presumably, those citizens appreciate the value of education. That is unless some of that cohort selfishly holds that their kids are no longer in school, so why continue to pay for education. None of these numbers carry any real logic!

We should support town services and education with our tax dollars. Personally, I am already disturbed by the apparent lack of education around me. Education is one of the foundational elements of a competent citizenry. Yes, we expect our town leaders to propose efficient budgets, but they are balancing many needs, considering 100% of our citizens. Carping about line items just because of individual wants and needs is narrow-minded and short-sighted. Pass the already-decimated Colchester town and education budgets!

John Barnowski – Colchester

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

Empathy?

To the Editor:
With yet another referendum approaching, we are unable to free ourselves from debating over the town and school budgets. This time, I am not going to tell anyone how I think they should vote. By now, anyone who reads these letters probably knows where I stand.

What I do want to address is the carefully constructed narrative surrounding these budgets and what our votes supposedly say about us.

For months, we have been told these budgets represent more than dollars. They represent compassion, empathy, and caring about our students, employees, neighbors, and community.

But is that actually true?
I am not an old man. I’m not even 45. Yet lately I feel like I come from a different era, one where saying we should “care about our neighbors” actually meant caring about all of them.

We didn’t call spending millions on central office administration “caring about students” while classroom teachers struggle to pay for basic supplies. We didn’t call it “shared sacrifice” when leaders took more money for themselves while asking employees to accept less, take unpaid days, or lose their jobs entirely.

And we certainly didn’t blame struggling families for those job losses simply because they literally do not have any more money to give.

That is the part of this debate I am simply done with.

Somehow, we’ve reached a point where people already struggling to stay afloat are lectured about compassion by people far more financially comfortable than they are. They’re told to suck it up, pay more, and accept a worsening financial position because supposedly it is in everyone’s best interest. If they say they cannot afford it, they’re accused of not caring about teachers, children, employees, or their town.

I grew up believing we were supposed to reject that kind of attitude, not dress it up as empathy.

Your vote belongs to you. You should vote for what you genuinely believe is best for yourself, your family, and this community. I will not fault anyone for voting differently than I do, and neither should anyone else.

But please don’t fall into the trap of believing your vote means you care more about Colchester than the person voting differently. Someone telling you they cannot afford one more dollar isn’t telling you they don’t care. Sometimes, they simply don’t have one more dollar to give.

We should care about them too.

Jason LaChapelle – Colchester

Kind, Accessible, Committed

To the Editor:
Four years ago, I became friends with Steve Weir, and over those four years, I’ve gotten to know not just the State Representative, but the person behind the title.

Our daughters went to RHAM High School together and are now roommates at FGCU. Along the way, our families have become family, our home is their daughter’s home, and theirs is our daughter’s home.

Steve is level-headed, kind, accessible, and genuinely committed to serving the people of Connecticut. One thing I appreciate most is that he does his homework. He reads the bills before voting, asks questions, and uses common sense to think about what legislation actually means for Connecticut families, businesses, and communities.

When I hear constituents raising concerns about an upcoming bill, I’ll often read it myself and then call Steve and ask, “What do I need to know? Is there something I should be concerned about?” He is always willing to make the time to explain the details and help me understand what’s really in the legislation.

Steve doesn’t vote blindly or simply follow a party line. He has had to make difficult decisions and vote ‘no’ on bills when he believes they are not right for Connecticut. He looks beyond the headline, pays attention to the details, and works to make sure the “hidden stuff” doesn’t slip through.

He has shown up for every vote during his four years in the legislature, and to me, that says a lot about his commitment.

I’m proud to call Steve a friend, and I’m grateful our families have become so close. Most importantly, I know that when Steve says he is working for the people of Connecticut, he takes that responsibility seriously.

Jessica Stewart – Hebron

Before We Cut, Let’s Look Again

To the Editor:
In my last two letters, I wrote about trust and the importance of protecting the opportunities that help our children discover their passions. Now I have another question: Have we really looked everywhere before asking our students to sacrifice?

At the recent Board of Education discussion, one member raised an idea that caught my attention: Could administrative positions and responsibilities be reexamined before cutting programs that directly affect our children?

That seems like a reasonable question.

The current vacancy at Bacon Academy presents an opportunity to review how administrative responsibilities are distributed throughout the district. Bacon unquestionably needs sufficient day-to-day leadership and support, but must every position be filled exactly as it was before? Could existing administrative resources be reorganized, responsibilities reassigned, or the broader administrative structure adjusted to meet Bacon’s needs more efficiently? Have all reasonable options been explored?

That review should also include the assistant superintendent position. The district operated without an assistant superintendent in the past, so why shouldn’t the responsibilities and cost associated with that position be examined as part of the effort to find savings?

These aren’t unreasonable questions. They are the kind of questions taxpayers should expect

See Letters, page 30

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Bobcats Football Continues to Build Foundation

By Josh Howard

After posting a 5-5 record in the first year of a new regime, Bacon Academy/Lyman Memorial football enters season two under head coach Sean Ladyga.

The key for Ladyga in his second year at the helm will be replacing 17 players that exited the program following graduation.

“It’s a big loss, but we’ve brought in a lot of new players to the program,” stated Ladyga. “We’ve got some new kids in the building that are working hard and it’s exciting to see what might transpire this year.”

With a slew of new faces at backs and receivers, the biggest task will be replacing nearly 98% of the team’s yardage production from a season ago.

Quarterback Riddick Burroughs graduated after totaling 18 touchdowns (nine pass, nine rush), including a memorable six touchdown performance in his final game at the high school as the Bobcats beat rival RHAM to retain the “The Rail” trophy for the third straight season.

Ladyga noted that this year’s team will lean on the guys in the trenches in the hopes of controlling the line of scrimmage and grinding out wins.

Returning starters Mason Steele (senior) and James Wissler (junior) return to anchor an offensive line that has both skill and size advantages over most opponents.

Senior Landon Roderick (6’5”) and junior Colton LaFlash (6’1”) are expected to play major roles on both sides of the line of scrimmage. Newcomer Miles Viggiani, a 6’1” senior, and Simon Parra, a 6’2” senior recovering from an injury, are also expected to be key cogs this fall.

Additionally, Kai Ruitto, a 6’6” tight end, will help pave the way in the run game and double as a receiver.

Ladyga called his group up front the “heart

and soul” of the team.

“We’ll be anchored by our offensive line,” expressed Ladyga. “They’ll be the heartbeat of our team.”

The second-year coach added that controlling the clock and playing field position will be essential this season.

Thankfully, all-state kicker Mason Howard returns after connecting on five of seven field goals (including a program-record 42-yarder) and making 87% of his extra points as a sophomore. Ladyga said that Howard’s ability to split the uprights and pin opposing teams deep on kickoffs should allow the team to carry out their strategy.

Howard, who started as a defensive back and played receiver a season ago, is again expected to be a factor in all three phases of the game.

The plan is to lean on the running game early and often in the season, using a single-wing offense that will hopefully wear down opposing teams.

Vincenzo Arrigoni, who made an impact as a defensive back as a freshman, is part of a stable of backs that will help power the Bobcats run-oriented offense this fall.

Ladyga was previously an assistant coach at Bacon Academy in 2023 and prior to taking over the head coaching job, he was in charge of the football program at Thames River (previously St. Bernard/Norwich Tech) from 2013-2016.

Following his first official offseason at Bacon Academy, Ladyga said the returning players are better prepared and have hit the ground running this fall.

“They understand my expectations and the guys that are returning are helping the new players understand where I’m coming from as a coach and as a coaching staff,” stated Ladyga.

The program is also entering its third season

as a co-op as Bacon Academy joined forces with Lyman Memorial in 2024, welcoming in additional players from the surrounding areas.

Two Lyman players are back from a year ago and four more have entered the program this fall.

The Bobcats will kick off the season on the road, visiting the Valley Panthers (Plainfield/Quinebaug Valley co-op) two weeks from today.

The two teams battled late in the season a year ago, with the Panthers edging the Bobcats 27-24 on Nov. 8.

In the rematch this season, the Eastern Connecticut Conference (ECC) Division III foes will clash at Plainfield High School on Friday, Sept. 11 at 6 p.m.

“It’s a great division game for us to open up the season,” noted Ladyga, “We’re looking to run our base offense and grind things out. If we could execute and come away with a victory in that one it would be a great way to start the season.”

Following two straight games on the road, the team will host East Lyme for their home opener on Friday, Sept. 25 at 6 p.m.

It will be the first game for the Bobcats on the recently installed turf field and under the improved lighting at the team’s facilities at the high school.

Ladyga said his players are excited to break in the new turf, which is slated to be completed by Labor Day, and noted that the entire coaching staff is preaching “execution” and “accountabil-



Junior Colton LaFlash returns to help solidify the trenches as the Bobcats will lean on their offensive and defensive lines early and often this season.

ity” this fall.

“It’s a great group of kids that are very coachable,” expressed Ladyga “We’re very excited to see what these guys can do and it’s exciting to see what kind of product we put on the field.”

Colchester Federated Church News

Colchester Federated Church is located at 60 Main St. The church office is open Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., and can be reached at 860-537-5189 or cfc06415@gmail.com.

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

the church’s Facebook page.

Twelve-Step Meetings: AA meets in the church library Monday-Wednesday and Friday at noon and Thursday at 10 a.m., and at 7:30 p.m. Mondays and Wednesdays. On Saturdays at 9:30 a.m., Al-Anon meets in the Jerusalem Room and AA meets in the Stage Room.

Land Trust Upcoming Events

The Colchester Land Trust (CLT) is hosting the following upcoming events. All are invited. Visit ColchesterLandTrust.org for all details on upcoming 2026 events so far.

Trail Crew Volunteers Needed: The third Sunday of each month (weather permitting). Volunteers meet up at one of CLT’s properties each month to fight invasives, maintain meadows, and other needed stewardship tasks. This event is led by board member and stewardship chair Kevin Byrne, and he can be reached at:

CCT to Hold Auditions for Frozen

Colchester Community Theatre has scheduled auditions for its February 2027 production of *Disney’s Frozen* through special arrangement with MTI.

In the beautiful mountainous kingdom of Arendelle, Princesses Anna and Elsa grow up sheltered inside their castle, isolated from the world and increasingly distant from each other. When Elsa is crowned queen, the magical powers she’s desperately tried to conceal from her sister take control, and she flees into the mountains. As a ferocious winter descends on Arendelle, Anna sets off on an epic journey to find Elsa and bring her home – with the help of hardworking ice harvester Kristoff, his loyal reindeer Sven, and a happy-go-lucky snowman named Olaf. Full of magic, humor, and a stunning musical score, *Frozen* is a powerful tale of sisterhood, acceptance, and finding the real meaning of true love.

Auditions will be held Sunday, Oct. 4, from 2:30-4:30 p.m., and Monday, Oct. 5, from 6:30-8:30 p.m., at the Congregation Ahavath Achim (Colchester Synagogue) on 84 Lebanon Ave.

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, Aug. 31: 9 a.m., Making Memories, Exercise w/ Anne; 10 a.m., Sittercize, Flamingo Felting Class; 11 a.m., Learn to Sign; 11 a.m.-noon, Fitness Orientation; 12:30 p.m., Mah Jongg, Bridge, Setback.

Tuesday, Sept. 1: 9 a.m., Making Memories; 9:45 a.m., Tai Chi; 12:30 p.m., Pinochle; 1 p.m., Cornhole; 1:15 p.m., Bingo.

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

Thursday, Sept. 3: 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.

Friday, Sept. 4: 9 a.m., Social Service Hours, Open Art Studio; 10 a.m., Sit & Be Fit; 10:30 a.m., Choral Group; 11 a.m., Yoga; 1-3:30 p.m., Open Ping Pong; 1:15 p.m., Bingo.

National Senior Center Month: “Stayin’ Alive” – Happier Birthdays Happen Here: This September, the center is celebrating National Senior Center Month with a 1970s “Stayin’ Alive” disco theme, which is paired with the national theme of “Happier Birthdays Happen Here,” celebrating the role that senior centers play in fostering creativity, connection, purpose, and resilience in later life.

A New Chapter: Presentation With the Barrs: Wednesday, Sept. 9, 10:30 a.m. Members Susan and Lincoln Barr have started a new chapter in their life as first-time author and illustrator of a series of children’s books about a squirrel named Stanley. Susan writes the books and Lincoln illustrates them using AI tools on the computer. They have started their own business, Popi Press, to market and self-publish the books that they sell through Amazon.

Movie Time – *Forrest Gump*: Tuesday, Sept. 15, 9:30 a.m. The center said it has received several requests to show this movie again. The movie is two and a half hours long. This is a free program and popcorn will be served.

Another Year Older Is a Bushel of Fun Luncheon: Wednesday, Sept. 16, 11 a.m. All are invited to this this apple-themed luncheon. Colchester guitarist and vocalist Bobby C. will perform some favorites from the ‘70s. After the performance, enjoy a lunch of stuffed pork loin with cornbread stuffing, apple sauce, seasoned

rice, broccoli, multigrain rolls and apple pie. Cost is \$10 per person (60 years old and over). Space is limited.

Emergency Services Presentation: Thursday, Sept. 17, 11 a.m. Members of the Colchester Fire and EMS Services will present information about the department’s services, organizational structure, and work it does to support and protect the community. They will also discuss how the department partners with other local stakeholders and prepares for emergencies that may impact the community. This program is free and open to all.

Celebrate Colchester Volunteers Needed: Saturday, Sept. 19, 1-5 P.M. The center is looking for volunteers to man its booth at Celebrate Colchester on the town green. At the booth, there will be information about the senior center, as well as a scavenger hunt that attendees can participate in to win a small prize. The center is looking for volunteers who can work 12:30-2:30 p.m. and 2:30-5 p.m. Call the office to sign up if you can help.

AARP Driver Safety Course: Wednesday, Sept. 23, 11:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. You’ll learn the rules of the road, defensive driving techniques and how to operate your vehicle more safely, and you may qualify for a discount from your insurance provider. Open to anyone age 50 and over. Cost is \$20 for AARP members and \$25 for non-members. Register by Sept. 18.

1970s Name That Tune: Monday, Sept. 28, 10:30 a.m. Picture it: you jump in your car (maybe a Firebird or a Datsun), head to McDonald’s for the new Quarter Pounder, and the Bee Gees are on the radio as Casey Kasem counts down; life is good. All are invited to come test your knowledge of ‘70s music (all genres – not just disco). This is a free program. Refreshments will be served.

Groovy Birthday Party Finale: Wednesday, Sept. 30, 11 a.m. Celebrate birthdays (past, present and those yet to come) and the end of senior center month with a giant ‘70s-inspired birthday cake. Bring a picture and/or story to share from one of your favorite birthday parties and play some nostalgic party games. The center will also draw the names of the disco ball scratch-off raffle winners. This is a free program.

Birthday Cake Project: Wednesday, Sept. 30, 2 p.m. Some families do not have the financial means to buy a birthday cake or the items to bake one. In honor of National Senior Center Month, the senior center will collect boxed cake mix, canned frosting, canned Sprite or other lemon-lime flavored soda, 9x13 aluminum pans with plastic lids, and packaged birthday candles. On Sept. 30, gather together to make Birthday Cake kits for the Colchester Food Bank. If you are a senior center member and would like to volunteer to make the kits, register with the office.



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St. Andrew Church Cemetery Notice

Members of Guardian Angels Parish are working to clear St. Andrew New Cemetery and to help us preserve the beauty and dignity of this sacred place, we are working to clear the cemetery of items that interfere with mowing, routine maintenance, and the overall appearance of the grounds.

Families are asked to visit their loved one's gravesite and remove any glass lights, rocks, ceramic pots, shepherd's hooks, planted flowers, shrubs, trees, or other decorative items that are not permitted under the cemetery's Rules and Regulations.

Please note the following:
Decorations are limited to one display per lot in a portable plastic or metal rectangular box

Senior Center Upcoming Trips

Colchester Senior Center has the following upcoming trips. Trips are available to senior center members and their adult guests over the age of 18. Membership is free for Colchester residents aged 55 and older. There is an annual fee of \$15 for seniors residing outside of Colchester. For more information or full trip descriptions, or to register, call 860-537-3911 or email csc@colchesterct.gov.

Goodspeed – Annie and Lunch at Gelston House: Thursday, Sept 24, 7:45 a.m. The musical that stole America's heart comes home to celebrate its 50th anniversary on the stage where it all began! Cost is \$105 per person. This includes transportation and lunch at the Gelston House. Space is limited.

Majestic Cities of Central & Eastern Europe: Oct. 4-17, departure time TBD. Enjoy multi-night stays, local tours, food and more in Berlin, Prague, Vienna, Budapest, and Krakow. The 14-day, 13-night trip includes airfare, hotels, and meals (12 breakfasts, one lunch, and six dinners). Contact senior center staff for availability and pricing.

Garden Club 'Plants and More Sale'

Colchester Garden Club is having its fourth annual "Plants and More Sale" on Sunday, Sept. 20, from 9 a.m.-1 p.m., at 35 Hayward Ave.

There will be locally grown perennials, houseplants, garden tools, handmade gifts, flower pots, and more. Purchases help the Colchester Garden Club with its programs including community beautification, senior center activities, youth gardening, and public educational programs.

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. All are welcome.

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

Children's Worship: Sundays at 10:30 a.m. Kids learn about Jesus in ageappropriate ways.

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

Zumba Classes

Colchester Parks and Recreation is offering a pair of Zumba classes on Sundays, Aug. 23 and 30, at the Colchester Senior Center, 15 Louis Lane.

Zumba + Lift, a music-driven fitness program, meets Sundays from 11 a.m.-noon, and fee is \$12.

Zumba Gold, a low-impact, modified version of the standard Zumba fitness program, meets Sundays from 10-10:50 a.m. Fee is \$12. Minimum number of participants needed is five, and maximum is 20.

For more information, visit www.colchester-ct.gov/recreation-department or call 860-537-7297.

AARP Meets Sept. 8

The September meeting of the Colchester-area chapter of AARP will be held Tuesday, Sept. 8, t the Colchester Senior Center. The board will meet in the conference room at noon. Members will meet in the senior center at 12:30 p.m., and are asked to bring refreshments to share.

As the chapter renews its meetings in September, the topic will be "Building Bonds: A Fun Start to Our Year" presented by member Noreen Bibee. This will be a casual meeting to learn a little more about each other.

All seniors in Colchester and surrounding towns are invited to attend.

placed no more than 10 inches from the monument.

As stated in the cemetery Rules and Regulations, trees, shrubs, flowers, bric-a-brac, lighting, and other plantings placed in the ground are not permitted and may be removed without notice.

Any non-permitted items remaining in the cemetery may be removed as part of this clean-up effort to ensure the cemetery can be maintained safely and respectfully.

If you have any questions, please refer to the Rules and Regulations that accompany your cemetery deed, or call the Guardian Angels Parish Office at 860-537-2355.

Ocean City, Maryland: Oct. 13-16, departure time TBD. Spend three nights directly on the beach. Cost is \$949/person (double or triple occupancy).

Germanfest – Inn at East Hill Farm, Troy, N.H.: Thursday, Oct. 8, 7:45 a.m. Enjoy a home-made Oktoberfest luncheon at the Inn at East Hill Farm, live German music, and more. Cost is \$158/person and includes transportation and lunch.

Studio Two – The Beatles Tribute Band: Thursday, Oct. 15, at 10 a.m. Enjoy music and a family-style menu at the Farmington Polo Club. Cost is \$132/person, and includes transportation, entertainment and lunch.

Presentations on 2027 Trips: On Sept. 2, at 10:30 a.m., there will be a presentation on the **Discover Mackinac Island** trip running May 1-9, 2027. This tour of Illinois and Michigan runs nine days, eight nights, and cost is \$4,299 (double occupancy). Then, on Oct. 19, at 10:30 a.m., there will be a presentation on the **Cultural Treasures of Japan** trip running Oct. 7-20, 2027. This trip is 14 days, 13 nights, and cost is \$9,999 per person (double occupancy).

Bible Baptist Church News

Colchester Bible Baptist Church holds Sunday School at 9:30 a.m., followed by the Sunday morning worship service is at 10:30 a.m. There is also a Sunday evening service at 6 p.m. There is a Wednesday Evening Prayer Service at 7 p.m.

The church is located at 38 Chestnut Hill Rd., and can be reached at 860-537-1050. Pastor Scott Rosen can be emailed at pastor@colchesterbible.org, and the church website is www.colchesterbible.org.

Resident Produces 9/11-Inspired Tribute

Colchester resident Robert Carley has a new photo exhibit, which will go on display at Slater Memorial Museum in Norwich on Sept. 12 and run through early December.

About 150 photos from all over the country will be displayed, with stories about how Carley located them. For 25 years, Carley has been chronicling 9/11-inspired flag tributes with his camera, and has traveled to 46 states.

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Deadline Soon for Golf Classic

The Colchester Hayward Volunteer Fire Company (CHVFC) annual Golf Classic will be held Monday, Sept. 21, at Blackledge Country Club in Hebron – and the deadline to register is fast approaching.

The CHVFC is a nonprofit organization that has been providing service to the Town of Colchester and its neighboring communities since 1854. The tournament is held to

raise funds to support our school scholarship fund, recruitment, retention and maintain the fire company's Schuster Park training facility and event venue.

If you are interested in being a sponsor or player, email CHFD28golftournament@gmail.com, or visit the CHVFC Facebook page at www.facebook.com/ColchesterFD. Golfers must register by Sept. 12.

Abundant Life Church News & Notes

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

Adult Sunday Bible School: Sundays at 9:30 a.m.

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

Bible Study: Every Wednesday at 6:30 p.m.

Prayer Meetings: Thursdays, 10 a.m. and Fri-

days, 6:30-8:30 p.m. There is also a brief meeting for pre-service prayer on Sundays at 10:15 a.m.

Men's and Women's Breakfast: Meets monthly on Saturdays at 8 a.m. The men meet the first Saturday of the month, and the women meet the third Saturday of the month.

Children's Church: Meets Sunday mornings after worship service.

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

Westchester Church News

Westchester Congregational Church, located at 98 Cemetery Rd., holds worship Sundays at 10 a.m. All are welcome to attend. The church choir always welcomes new members. Services are also available on Zoom; visit www.westchesterconchurch.org for login information. Sunday School for children meets during the worship service.

Twelve-Step Meetings: Al-Anon meets in Canney Hall Wednesdays at 7 p.m. AA meets in Canney Hall Fridays at 7:30 p.m.

Scouts: The church sponsors Scouting America Troop 109. During the school year, Troop 109 meets on Tuesdays at 7 p.m.

Setback League Starting Up

The St. Joseph's Polish Club setback league starts Thursday, Sept. 3, at 6:45 p.m. Teams of two play seven games Thursday evenings for 28 weeks, followed by playoffs and a league banquet.

For more information or to sign up call Deb Crider at 860-204-1555 or Cindy Hardy at 860-823-9278.

Ukrainian Catholic Church News

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

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

History Museum Open Sundays

The Colchester History Museum is open Sundays from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. through the end of December.

This spring you can view the museum's newest exhibit: "Every Possible Means: Colchester's Role in the Revolutionary War." You can also experience histories of people and places in the "ABCs of Colchester History" exhibit.

The Colchester History Museum, located at 24 Linwood Ave., is free and offers both permanent and special exhibits all highlighting the people and events in Colchester's history. Guided and self-guided tours are available.

For more information, contact the Colchester Historical Society at mail@colchesterhistory.org or 860-537-3240.

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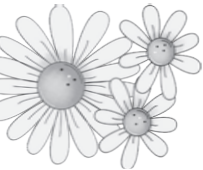
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Local Solar Project Under State Review

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@good-shepherdct.org for more information and where to donate.

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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/bell-ringer for information.

The induction ceremony will be Friday,

Oct. 30, at 6 p.m., at Blackledge Country Club.

The Hall of Fame's objective is to recognize exceptional local athletes and achievements.

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.

Lions Club Scholarship Raffle

The East Hampton Lions Club is conducting a raffle to support its annual scholarship program. The club each year offers four \$1,500 awards to East Hampton graduating students.

The raffle offers a \$2,026 grand prize this year. First prize is \$226, with two winners, second prize is \$156 with two winners, and third prize is \$56 with two winners. Winners of the

first, second and third prizes are reentered for the grand prize drawing. Seven hundred total tickets will be sold.

The drawing will take place Saturday, Oct. 24, at 2:26 p.m., at the Lions Picnic Pavillion, 62 N. Main St. Winners need not be present.

For more information or tickets, call Lion Tom Denman at 860-519-4951.

Senior Center Upcoming Trips

East Hampton Senior Center, 105 Main St., is offering the following coach trips with Friendship Tours. Advance registration is required. For more information or to register, stop by the center or contact the center at 860-267-4426 or seniorcenter@easthamptonct.gov.

Beatles Tribute Band & Lunch: Thursday, Oct. 15. See Studio Two, a Beatles tribute band, and have lunch at the Farmington Polo Club. Cost is \$132 and includes coach bus transportation. Depart from Stop & Shop, 11 East High St.,

at 10:30 a.m.

Joshua in Lancaster, Pa.: Nov. 13-15. Featuring two shows: Joshua at the Sight & Sound Theater and the Holly Jolly Holiday show at the Dutch Apple Dinner Theater. Cost is \$745 per person double/triple occupancy.

Christmas in Newport: Tuesday, Dec. 8, featuring a visit to the Breakers and Marble House mansions and lunch at the Wyndham Atlantic Resort. Cost is \$152. Depart from Stop & Shop, 11 East High St., at 8:45 a.m.

Lake Friends Wine-Tasting Fundraiser

The Friends of Lake Pocotopaug (FOLP) will hold its annual Wine-Tasting Fundraiser on Sunday, Sept. 13, from 1-4 p.m., on Laurel Island. Proceeds from the event will support FOLP's projects and ongoing efforts to preserve and improve Lake Pocotopaug.

Tickets are \$50 per person and include round-trip boat transportation to Laurel Island, wine tasting, limited beer tasting, a souvenir glass and a light snack. Soda will also be available for non-drinkers.

Guests are invited to relax and explore the island. A teacup raffle will feature a variety of prizes. Jack Solomon will be available to answer questions about the history of Laurel Island, and a representative from the Lake Commission will be on hand to discuss Lake Pocotopaug and an-

swer questions.

Boat transportation will run continuously from 1-4 p.m., departing from Ace Marine East LLC at 70 North Main St. Event parking will be available at Sears Park.

Outside food and alcohol are not permitted. Smoking is prohibited, and private boats will not be allowed to dock on the island. The event will be held rain or shine.

A limited number of tickets are available and may be purchased in advance or at the dock, subject to availability. Tickets are also available from any FOLP member.

For tickets, contact Kevin Kuhr at 860-395-7548. For additional information, visit Friends of Lake Pocotopaug on Facebook.

‘Driving for Drafts’ Charity Golf Tournament

The 12th annual Driving for Drafts fundraising event to benefit Connecticut Draft Horse Rescue (CDHR) will be held Saturday, Sept. 12, at Portland Golf Course, 169 Bartlett St., Portland.

There is a shotgun start at 1 p.m., with check-in beginning at noon. Enjoy a grilled lunch and a buffet dinner along with raffles and prizes. Cost is \$175 per person. Sponsorships are also available. Registration closes on Sept. 5.

To sign up as a participant or become a spon-

sor, forms are available at www.ctdraftrescue.org/2026-golf-registration-and-sponsorship, or send an email to cdhr.golf@gmail.com.

CDHR is a nonprofit organization in East Hampton dedicated to saving the lives of neglected or abused draft horses as well as draft horses headed to slaughter. For more information, volunteer opportunities, or to donate, visit www.ctdraftrescue.org or www.facebook.com/ctdraftrescue.

Recreation News

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

Golf Tournament: 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 of 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.

Sweater Weather Pumpkin Wreath: Friday, Sept. 18, 6:30-8 p.m., at Town Hall. Create a sweater-inspired pumpkin wreath, beginner-friendly. Hot apple cider included. Cost: \$45.

Basic Car Care & Vehicle Safety Maintenance Workshop: Saturday, Oct. 3, 8-9:30 a.m., at East Hampton High School, with Tracey Gardiner, owner of Tag Rally Sport. Cost: \$30.

Afterschool Programs at Memorial School (Grade K- 3): **Beginner Spanish:** Thursdays, Sept. 24, Oct. 1 and Oct. 8, 3:30-4:30 p.m. Students will explore greetings, colors, and numbers. Cost: \$60 for all 3 classes. **Pinecone Bird Feeders:** Tuesday, Oct. 6, 3:30-4:30 p.m. Kids will create their own pinecone bird feeders to take home. Cost: \$20. **Build-A-Bird House:** Tuesday, Oct. 20, 3:30-4:30 p.m. Kids will build and decorate their very own bird house. Cost: \$25.

Editor’s Desk continued from page 4

people work at being miserable. If I wake up in the morning and don't feel great or things are not great, I try to think about what I can do to make things work better, rather than just falling into that deep hole, because then you just go deeper and deeper."

"If you see someone without a smile today, give 'em yours."

"If you're feeling low, don't despair. The sun has a sinking spell every night, but it comes back up every morning."

"A positive attitude and a sense of humor go together like biscuits and gravy."

"Don't get so busy making a living that you forget to make a life."

"You'll never do a whole lot unless you're brave enough to try."

"I never tried quitting, and I never quit trying."

"Love is like a butterfly: as soft and gentle as a feather, many-colored and full of cheer."

"Happiness is your commitment to appreciating all that is good in life."

* * *

See you next week.



Brennen Van Cott, Nevaeh Van Cott, Mariah Cecilio, Gavin Lynch and Gordon Gingras take a corn hole break from a planning session for the new youth group at Christ Episcopal Church in Middle Haddam.

Christ Church Forming New Youth Group

By Linda Napoletano

An exciting new chapter is about to begin at Christ Episcopal Church in Middle Haddam; they are beginning a youth group open to anyone 13 years of age or older. One thing making this group unique is that it will not be restricted to members of Christ Church; in fact, young people from any town and of any faith are invited to join and share their beliefs and goals in a setting of mutual respect, support, exploration, fellowship and fun!

The group will be primarily run by two members of the congregation: Mariah Cecilio and Gordon Gingras. Cecilio currently works at Two Brothers Café in East Hampton, and Gingras is an engineer who tests cars and tires. When they were teens, they both went to Camp Washington in Lakeside, and found it to be a seminal experience.

"I loved Camp Washington when I attended it," said Cecilio. "I'd love to bring some of that experience to kids in East Hampton. I think that kids need a reason to stop looking at their phones for a minute and get involved in something that gets them to look at each other, instead."

Gingras concurred, and said he looks forward to sharing his experience.

"I hope members of the youth group are able to make or strengthen friendships that will hopefully be lifelong," he said.

Both Cecilio and Gingras love outdoor activities and said they hope to sponsor several. Gingras has a boat and said he hopes that at some point, members of the group will want to learn to fish with him. He added, "I believe that kids are lacking avenues to spend time with and meet other kids who share similar interests and values outside of a school/sports setting."

Parishioners who will be supporting the group include Linda Napoletano, Jim Van Cott, Patty Kloo and the Rev. Jessie Akerson, a dea-

con at the church.

"I love youth groups," said Akerson. "They are one of my favorite things, and the fact that we have youth here asking for the group is fantastic! There's a vibrancy and excitement. I've had the opportunity to be a chaplain at Camp Washington, and I think that bringing that energy to East Hampton is a great idea. I love that it's faith and fun and service all together. I love seeing where this will go and what will bring joy to the hearts of the kids we will be serving."

Nevaeh Van Cott, a high school student in town, has provided the impetus for this group. In a conversation with Napoletano last fall, Van Cott spoke of how much she loved her Camp Washington experience and how great it would be to bring some of that back home. Van Cott said she wants to "do activities, give more to the community, share the love of God, and give back."

Cecilio and Gingras are planning to have the group meet twice a month from September to June, starting Sept. 16. Some meetings will take place in the parish hall next to the church on Route 151, and others will be conducted on site for an activity. The two plan cookouts, game nights, bowling, visitations to Cobalt Lodge, fund raisers, a trip to St. John the Divine Cathedral's Night Watch in New York City, and several other activities.

Priest-in-Charge the Rev. Diana Rogers added, "In a time when children and adults can feel isolated and alone, Christ Church is choosing to offer youth a safe place to belong, to have fun, and to make lasting friendships. Come, check it out."

Anyone seeking more information or looking to register someone 13 or over to join the group should contact Gingras and Cecilio at ccmhyouthgroup@gmail.com.

Note: Linda Napoletano is choir director of Christ Episcopal Church.

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a moment in time,
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Children's Coat Drive: Foster children who enter the foster care system need warm winter coats. The church is collecting new winter coats for babies through teenagers up to Sunday, Sept.

Middle Haddam Public Library News

250th Celebration: All are invited to the li

Congregational Church News

Aluminum Food & Soda Can Tabs: On-going collection which will be donated to the

Police News

From Aug. 17-23, officers responded to 22 medical calls, seven motor vehicle crashes and seven alarms, and made six traffic stops, police said.

Class of '56 Reunion

Call Joan {Avery} Measimer at 860-788-7198
for more information or to make reservations.

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.

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

For more information, visit cc-eh.org or call the office at 860-267-4959. Office hours are Monday and Wednesday, 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

to Place Flags

For more information, or if you can help,
call Ann McLaughlin at 860-965-8701.

VFW Lobster Fest

Tickets can be purchased by contacting VFW Post 5095 at 860-267-8837.

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Red McKinney Golf Tournament Oct. 7

Registration includes 18 holes of golf with cart, complimentary range balls, full-service bag drop, custom scorecards and cart signs. a putting contest, on-course contests, a sand-

Registration Golfers can register online at easthamptonrotary.org or through the tournament registration page at tinyurl.com/rotary-golftourney.

For sponsorship information or questions, contact Pam at easthamptonctrotary@gmail.com.

First Draft of POCD Now Available

Below is the timeline for the public presentation of the draft plan:

Sept. 2: The POCD working draft will be presented for informal review at the Planning and Zoning Commission meeting at Town Hall, Room 107, at 6:30 p.m. The document will be made public on this date, but the meeting will not be a Public Hearing.

Dean's List

East Hampton residents Kim Dumond, Gabriela Negron, Shane Proxee and Bella Searles made the spring 2026 Dean's List at Eastern Connecticut State University.

EHHS Class of '67 Reunion

Call or text 860-682-2067 to reserve your spot.

Vaccine Clinic at Church

For more information, call Walgreens in Cromwell at 860-613-2324.

Concert Save the Date

Call 203-232-7387 for information.

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EHHS 40th Reunion

The East Hampton High School Class of 1986 will hold its 40th reunion Saturday, Oct. 17, from 6-9 p.m., at Lakeside Bar & Grill, 81 North Main St.

Tickets are \$40 per person and include hors d'oeuvres, one drink coupon, music and games. A cash bar will be available.

Deadline to respond is Sept. 1. Send your payment to Jay or Michele via Venmo: @jszym, or PayPal: j_szymaszek@hotmail.com. A check, made payable to Michele Koss, can be sent to: Michele Koss, 147 Bartlett St., Portland, CT 06480.

If you are in contact with anyone who is not on Facebook, you are asked to reach out to them and have them send their contact information to RLGhezzi@gmail.com.

EHHS Class of ‘76 Reunion

The East Hampton High School Class of 1976 will hold its 50th Class Reunion Saturday, Sept. 19, from 5-10 p.m., at Campagna Restaurant, 151 Marlborough St. in Portland. This is the old Brownstone Restaurant where the Class of ‘76 celebrated Senior Class Night!

Cost is \$45 per person and includes a buffet dinner and dessert. There is a cash bar. Guests are welcome; however, payment cannot be received at the door the night of the event.

Send your RSVP to Cheryl (Edwards) Randino at ehhs1976@gmail.com. Payments must be received by Sept. 9. PayPal or Venmo are accepted to the above email address, or send a check payable to Cheryl E. Randino, 56 Garnet Ridge Drive, Tolland, CT 06084.

Also, all attendees are asked to notify Randino of any dietary restrictions.

East Hampton Library News & Notes

East Hampton Public Library, 105 Main St, has announced the following. For full program descriptions or to register for a program, call 860-267-6621 or visit easthamptonpubliclibrary.org.

Summer Hours: Monday - Wednesday, 10 a.m.- 8 p.m.; Thursday - Friday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Adult Programs: The Great Potato Cookoff – A Cookbook Club Event: Tuesday, Sept. 1, 6:30 p.m. Bring 12 copies of your favorite potato recipe to share and a prepared dish. Food should arrive ready to eat; the library will provide the plates and forks. Register or drop in.

Library Yoga with Amie Meacham: Tuesday, Sept. 8, 6:30 p.m. Join Yoga 200 Certified

instructor Amie Meacham for an hour of all-levels yoga. Bring a mat and wear comfy clothes.

Teen Programs: Chapter Chat with Keri & Friends: Grades 7-10: Tuesday, Sept. 8, 6 p.m. Read and discuss a new book every month.

Teen TCG Club: Grades 8-12: Saturday, Sept. 12, 1-3 p.m. Players of *Magic: The Gathering*, *Pokémon*, *Yu-Gi-Oh!* and more are invited to an afternoon of friendly competition. *Magic: The Gathering* decks will be available for new players to use.

Children’s Program: Lego at the Library: Grades K-6: Tuesday, Sept. 1, 4:30-5:30 p.m. Each month features a new challenge or theme for you to work solo or with friends on. All Lego bricks provided.

Epoch Arts Six-Day Tag Sale

In September, Epoch Arts is holding its annual six-day, two-weekend, indoor, rain or shine, tag sale.

Shop the Christmas and Holiday Room, or check out areas like books, arts and crafts, linens, clothing, kitchen, toys, bath and beauty, and music. There will be furniture, electronics, sports, tools and more. All proceeds directly fund Epoch’s youth programs for the year.

The tag sale runs Friday, Sept. 11, from 2-5 p.m., and Friday, Sept. 18, from noon-5 p.m. On

Saturdays and Sundays, Sept. 12, 13, 19 and 20, hours will be from 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

The first day of the sale on Sept. 11 will also feature an early bird special from noon-2 p.m. with an entrance fee of \$25, pay at the door, for those who wish to have a sneak preview of available items.

The tag sale will be held at Epoch, 27 Skinner St. For more information, visit www.epocharts.org.

Volunteer Sought

The new East Hampton-based organization The Commissions on Aging in Connecticut. (COACT) is looking for a volunteer with office computer skills to spend 4 to 8 hours per week helping to grow and administer the group.

The new organization is encouraging sharing of ideas, plans and best practices among town Commissions on Aging (COAs) and similar groups, in the hopes of improving the lives of older adults.

The volunteer would with outreach to expand COACT’s database of contact information for leaders of town COAs, and would also be a contact person for newly interested people. Other desirable help would be note-taking and distribution for monthly meetings, creation of flyers, and updating a calendar of task due dates.

If interested, contact organizer Eric Rosenberg, MD, at COAchair@EastHamptonCT.gov for more information.

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:

Praise Worship at the Fair

Haddam Neck Covenant Church will host Sunday morning contemporary praise worship at the bandstand at the Haddam Neck Fair on Sept. 6 at 11 a.m. Music will be provided by the HNCC choir, accompanied by Jan Ulanowicz on keyboard, Wayne Visintainer on bass guitar, Frank Natter on guitar and Matt Seymour on drums.

Also, at the fair, all are invited to the HNCC barbecue pit for the church’s famous barbecue chicken with fresh locally-grown corn on the cob. A portion of the proceeds support charities and mission work.

Haddam Neck Covenant Church is located at 17 Haddam Neck Rd., the road to the Fairgrounds. For more information, visit www.hn-covenantchurch.org.

Bethlehem Lutheran Church News

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

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

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

Women Bowlers Needed

The Tuesday Night Women’s League (One Night Out) at Kickback ‘N Bowl in East Hampton is looking for bowlers.

The league needs nine full-time bowlers. There is one full-time team needed, of at least five but up to seven; one team is looking for three full-time bowlers; and one team needs one full-time bowler. There are also several teams looking for subs.

Bowling starts on Sept. 8 and runs for 28 weeks. Practice starts at 6:20 p.m. with bowling

starting at 6:30 p.m.

As One Night Out is a sanctioned league, every bowler needs to pay the \$28 sanction fee. Also, weekly dues are \$20, which covers the cost of three games and the prizes and banquet at the end of the year.

For more information, email kickbacknbowlinfo@gmail.com or call 860-267-4800. This is a league with cash prizes, and all experiences are welcome.

Senior Center News & Notes

East Hampton Senior Center, 105 Main St., announces the following. **Advance registration is required for all programs** unless noted; register at myactivecenter.com or by contacting the center at 860-267-4426 or seniorcenter@easthamptonct.gov. Senior center hours are Monday-Thursday, 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m.; Friday, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Visit www.easthamptonct.gov/easthampton-senior-center for more information and a full list of regular weekly and monthly activities, including games, quilting, Bible study, tap dance, and more. To join the senior center, just stop by and fill out some paperwork. Joining is free for East Hampton residents.

Holiday Closing: The senior center will be closed Monday, Sept. 7, in observance of Labor Day.

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

Canasta: Tuesdays and Fridays at 1 p.m., come learn the game and play the game with new friends.

Simply Social Women’s Group: Meets every first and third Monday at 10 a.m. Meet new people and help plan fun activities.

Meditation: Every Wednesday through September at 10 a.m. led by Eileen Higgins. No experience needed; just come and relax with new

friends.

Meet the Beekeeper: Tuesday, Sept. 1, 10:30 a.m., with beekeeper Mark Ceneri. Discover the tools of the trade, learn how a hive functions, find out why bees are essential to the environment and food supply, and enjoy a taste of fresh, raw honey.

Design & Create: Thursday, Sept. 3, 1:30 p.m. Join staff member Cindy Houle for a hands-on session of creating.

AARP Safe Driving Class: Friday, Sept. 4, 11:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Course is designed for drivers 50 and older. Cost for AARP members is \$20, and for non-members is \$25; make checks payable to AARP. Register at Myactivecenter.com or at the East Hampton Senior Center. Exact cash payment is requested day of the class.

Save the Date for Senior Picnic: The picnic will be held Wednesday, Sept. 23 at Sears Park, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. This annual event features food, live music, games, nature presentations and more. Cost is \$3. Sign up in person.

Trips: Lunch Bunch Outing: Friday, Sept. 11, 11:30 a.m., to Po’s Rice and Spice. Senior menu available. Walk to the nearby restaurant together from the senior center or take the Xtramile Bus from home; driving yourself is also an option. Sign up in advance.

Hebron Mini Golf and Lunch: Sept. 14 leaving the senior center at 10 a.m. Enjoy a round of mini golf at the Hebron Miniature Golf, followed by lunch on your own at Wicked Slice. Cost is \$16 and includes golf and bus transportation. Sign up in advance.

Belltown Motors

Tire & Service Center



Get your family car ready for BACK TO SCHOOL!

The summer is coming to an end, so let us get your family vehicle ready for the school year and the new seasons ahead. Here are some ways we'll help get your car ready for back to school (and some that you can do at home):

- 1. Check Your Brakes**

One of the first things we'll do is check your brakes. Over the summer months, your brakes may have taken a bit of a beating from long road trips, the stop-and-go of highway construction, or increased driving. We'll check your brake pads, rotors, drums and other brake components.
- 2. Wash Your Car**

A clean vehicle is a happy vehicle—and it's also less likely to have problems. Over the summer, your vehicle may have gotten dirty from all the outdoor activities and road trips. Washing your vehicle will not only make it look better but also help to extend its lifespan – run it through the car wash and pay attention to the undercarriage as well.
- 3. Equip Your Windshield**

Your windshield is your best friend when it comes to driving, so you want to ensure it's in tip-top shape for maximum visibility. Visit us at Belltown for help with new wiper blades when you come in for any service!
- 4. Check the Cooling System**

Your cooling system keeps your engine from overheating, so keeping it in good working order is essential. At Belltown, we'll check your radiator, thermostat and cooling fans as well.
- 5. Change Your Oil**

Your engine oil keeps all the moving parts of your engine lubricated and running smoothly, preventing overheating and mechanical damage. Over time, however, your oil can get dirty and break down, so it's good practice to change it regularly. Call us at Belltown to schedule your oil change and we'll make sure your family vehicle is in tip-top shape for the coming year.

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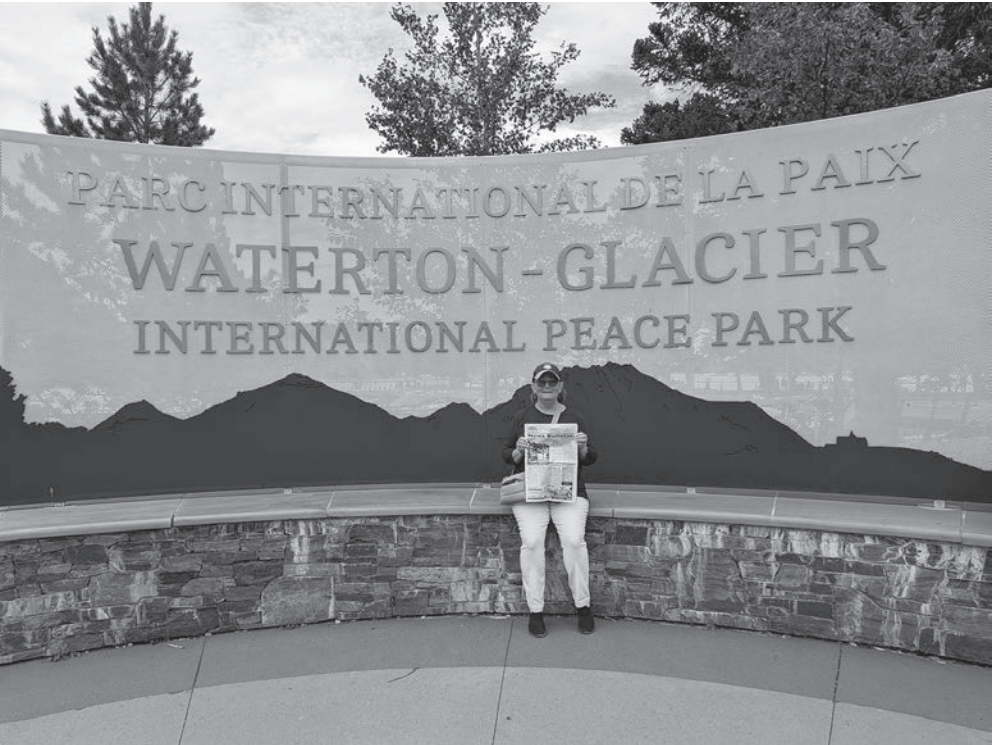
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REP-29-25

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!



Peace With the Rivereast... In July, Barbara Hahn of East Hampton traveled almost 2,000 miles from Vancouver to Seattle through the Canadian Rockies and Glacier National Park. She says Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park was one of her favorite stops. It is the world's first international peace park, uniting Watertown Lakes National Park in Alberta, Canada and Glacier National Park in Montana, U.S.A. It was established in 1932 to symbolize peace and cooperation between the two nations.



Enjoying the Beach... Tom and Annette Okonuk brought the *Rivereast* with them on a recent trip to Old Orchard Beach, Maine!



On Top of Old Smoky... Emily and William Archer brought the *Rivereast* along on their recent family trip to the Great Smoky Mountains in Tennessee.



You're Doin' Fine, Oklahoma!... Julie Einsiedel and her grandniece, Hallie, are shown with the *Rivereast* in Catoosa, Okla. The picture was taken in front of the Blue Whale on historic Route 66. Diana Loller took the picture.

Where in the World?

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

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Chip Sealing to Start

The Portland Department of Public Works expects to begin chip sealing the following roads the first week of September and continuing throughout the month:

Cornwall Street, East Cotton Hill Road, Isinglass Hill Road, West Cotton Hill Road, Appletree Lane, Cedar Terrace, Hartfield Road, Mountain Laurel Way, Paley Farm Road, Rockwood Drive, Rustic Terrace, Blackberry Ridge Road, Grace Lane, Karen Drive, Thompson Hill Road, Michele Drive and Old County Way.

Parking on the road during working hours (7 a.m. to 5 p.m.) will be banned starting August 31st through the completion of the chip seal project. Any cars left in the road during working hours will be towed at the owner's expense.

The chip seal process consists of distributing a liquid asphalt emulsion on the roadway and covering the liquid asphalt with crushed stone to provide a new wearing surface. Chip sealing extends the life of a roadway by protecting it from moisture, ultra-violet degradation and any other exposures that could damage a roadway. Drivers should exercise caution as loose stone will be present on the roadway. It is recommended when travelling on a recently chip sealed road to slow down and allow additional space between vehicles.

The department apologizes for any inconveniences and urges residents to use alternate routes where possible. The department also reminds motorists to use caution and consider worker safety when driving through a work zone.

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 for all programs.

Come on Over 5K: Saturday, Sept. 26, 10 a.m., at Riverfront Park.

USTA Youth Tennis Lessons Fall (Grades 1-8): Tuesdays and Thursdays, Sept. 8-Oct. 20, at the Portland High School tennis courts. Grades 1-2 meet from 5:30-6:30 p.m. and 6:30-7:30 p.m. All players in their first session receive and keep a new age-appropriate racquet and ball.

Junior Golf (Grades K-8): Grades K-2 and 3-5 clinics are held Mondays, Sept. 7-28, from 4-5 p.m. and 5:15-6:15 p.m. Grades 6-8 clinics are held Tuesdays, Sept 8-29, from 4-5 p.m. Clinics held at Portland West Golf Course.

Ladies Golf: Tuesdays, Sept. 8-Oct. 6, 5:15-6:15 p.m., at Portland West Golf Course.

First Aid, CPR & AED Certification Course: Monday, Sept. 28, 5:30-8:30 p.m., at Buck-Fore-

man Community Center.

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 open for the 2026-27 school year.

Kids' Blast Jr.: Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays at 9 a.m. at the Buck-Foreman Community Center. Kids' Blast Jr. is a school readiness program open to children ages 3 to 5 1/2 (or entering kindergarten). Led by Summer Quest Kiddie Camp Director Darcy Parmelee, kids will enjoy mornings of themed games, crafts, and age-appropriate activities.

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

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



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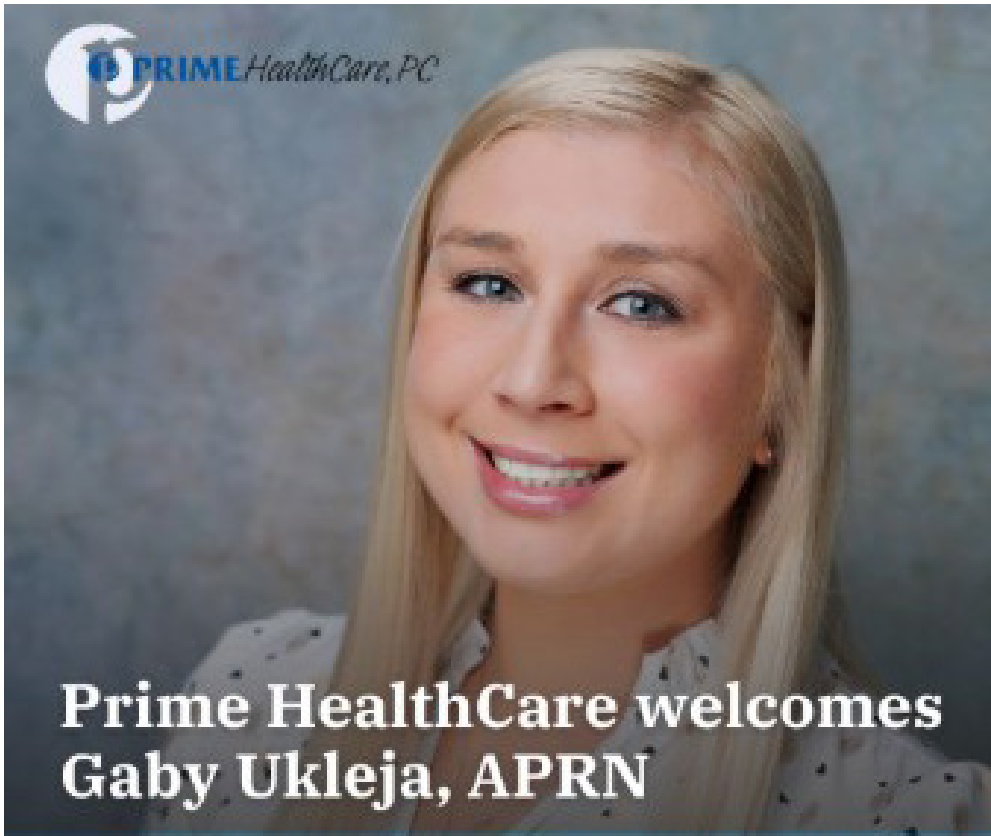
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Dates Changed for Lancaster Trip

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.

Friday, Sept. 11, for children ages 3 to 4 years. The screening is designed to answer any questions or concerns about a child's development as well as identifying children who may be eligible for the preschool selection process.

Portland Little League will hold its annual Golf Tournament Friday, Sept. 25, at Portland Golf Course.

Sponsorships are available and raffle prize donations are welcome.

For more details, visit tinyurl.com/pllgolf.

The Portland High School Class of 1971 will hold its 55-year reunion Saturday, Sept. 26, from 5-9 p.m., at Farrell's Restaurant, 245 Marlborough St.

Cost is \$55 per person and includes buffet dinner and dessert.

Send payment by Sept. 1 to Deb Freitag (Smithwick), 1 Sunset Terrace, Portland, CT 06480.

For more information, email debbfreitag@gmail.com or Kathy at kporyanda@gmail.com.

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.

Nominations are being accepted for the 16th annual Ralph Paley Spirit of Portland Award. The award was initiated to honor Portland's unsung heroes. It was developed to show gratitude for that giving spirit in the Portland community, and in honor of Ralph Paley, who organizers say gave so much of himself to the town. The deadline for nominations is noon Tuesday, Sept. 1. Pick up and drop off the nomination form at the Waverly Senior Center, 7 Waverly Ave.

The Portland High School Class of 1971 will hold its 55-year reunion Saturday, Sept. 26, from 5-9 p.m., at Farrell's Restaurant, 245 Marlborough St.

Cost is \$55 per person and includes buffet dinner and dessert.

Send payment by Sept. 1 to Deb Freitag (Smithwick), 1 Sunset Terrace, Portland, CT 06480.

For more information, email debbfreitag@gmail.com or Kathy at kporyanda@gmail.com.

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.trinity-churchportlandct.org.

Trinity is open for prayer and meditation and the 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.

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 Aug. 31; with the balance due by Sept. 21.

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

During the screening your child will meet with members from our preschool team and participate in a variety of activities. These activities assess different developmental areas including cognition, communication, fine and gross motor skills, and social interaction. During this time, the parent/caregiver will meet with another member of the team to discuss your child's adaptive and personal social skills.

Following the screening, you will receive a letter stating your child's result.

Crafters and vendors are wanted for two events coming up this fall at Trinity Church, 345 Main St. Space is available for \$20 for each event.

The first event is a Fall Craft and Vendor show on Sept. 19, with spaces located on the field next to the church. The second event is a Holiday Craft and Vendor Show on Nov. 21, which will be held inside the church.

Space is limited for both events. For additional information and a registration form, email carol.hill@comcast.net.



This September marks the 25th anniversary of the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. To mark this significant anniversary, members of the community are invited to attend A Service of Prayer, Remembrance, and Hope at First Congregational Church of Portland, located at 554 Main St., at 7 p.m. Friday, Sept. 11.

This multifaith service will include prayers and readings from several religious traditions, inspiring music, moments of silence, and reflections from community leaders. Together, participants will remember those who died, acknowledge the sacrifices made by so many in the aftermath of the attacks, and offer prayers for healing and hope.

The Portland Waverly Senior Center is looking for volunteers to help at its upcoming Wellness Expo, which will be held Wednesday, Oct. 21, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m., at the center.

Volunteers will serve as greeters at entrances, welcome attendees, and help make sure everyone signs in as they arrive.

You will not need to volunteer for the entire

Planning is underway for this year's Portland Fair, which will return to 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



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RE3-29-24

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Vocal Chords Seek New Members

If you have a vehicle of any type for the Touch A Truck event, contact Jamie Leonard at 860-301-6998.

No auditions or prior experience are required. Rehearsals start Tuesday, Aug. 25, from 6:45-9 p.m., at St. Francis Church's Msgr. Fox Parish Hall, 10 Elm St., Middletown, as MHVC prepares for its holiday concert on Sunday, Dec. 6, at 2 p.m., at Portland High School. New

Concert proceeds and funds from MHVC's annual Patron Drive go back to the community through scholarships awarded to Middlesex County seniors who plan to study nursing or music. For more information, visit vocalchords20.org or call 860-342-3120. You can also find the Vocal Chords on YouTube and Facebook.

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



RF8-28-26

DEA-11-25

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The Century 21 logo, featuring a large stylized 'C' with the number '21' inside it.

A headshot of Rick Berkenstock, a middle-aged man with glasses, wearing a blue shirt and a dark suit jacket, smiling.

Rick Berkenstock

A headshot of Lyn Stuart, a woman with dark hair and glasses, wearing a dark jacket over a blue top, smiling.

Lyn Stuart

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A photograph of a two-story red brick house with a gabled roof, white trim around the windows, and a small front yard with greenery.

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REX-11-25

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Portland Broadens Special Education Opportunities

By Anne Lilburn

Portland Public Schools is starting the school year with two new big developments related to special education.

The first involves the Portland Pathways to Transition Program (PPTP), which was formerly housed at both the high school and Brownstone Intermediate School, moving into a new community-based space in a house located on Main Street that the district will rent. The transition program helps the town meet its requirement to educate students with significant disabilities through age 22.

The other involves a lease agreement with a private educational services company called Saybrook Reading, which will rent space at the high school that has been vacated now that the transition program is moving into its new home. The district says that, while only one will immediately bring revenue into the district, both have the potential to do so in the long term.

Transition Program on the Move

The transition program moving out of the school and into a community setting is a natural fit for the type of education it provides, said Sara McLaughlin, Director of Student Services for Portland Public Schools, as the program provides skills that are less about meeting academic standards and more about learning skills that help young adults be more independent.

“Typically we see graduation as an end – you know, they graduate, they go on,” said McLaughlin. “But for students who have disabilities, they require more supports, more services to transition to adulthood, so what we have is our transition program that was started about five years ago and serves students [ages] 18 to 22 who have met graduation requirements, but require additional services in the areas of daily living, vocational [skills], self-care, things like that.”

The goal of the program, said McLaughlin and Superintendent of Schools Charles Britton,

was to set up these students, who have “neuro-developmental disabilities with high needs,” to be employable and capable of being as independent as possible.

Students participating in the program spend a portion of their day on vocational training, volunteering in the community at local businesses. The remainder of their time is spent on life skills training. McLaughlin said that the house-based location will allow students to practice skills such as doing laundry or preparing food in a kitchen.

It will also have an area devoted to leisure and social skills, where students can, for example, practice playing board games, and will also include an “adult-focused sensory space” with a swing, trampoline and a calm down area.

“It’s important for them to be young adults, right? They are young adults. They have graduated from the high school,” said McLaughlin. “It’s really a best practice for these programs to be in the community, because they’re about adulthood. You know, you’re not a high school student; you’re not an elementary student. So, not only does it let us offer more services and do more with them, it’s also really meaningful for them to be in the community as adults and be taking that next step.”

The PPTP program may also eventually provide a source of revenue to the district, said both McLaughlin and Britton, since other area towns are also required by the state to provide eligible students with transition services, but may not offer comparable programs of their own.

“We’re looking to market to other surrounding communities,” McLaughlin said. “So for other communities that might not have a community space or might not have as robust of a community space, we are hoping to offer those students the opportunity to tuition in.”

McLaughlin said she was happy to be able to

offer a program like this in Portland, and noted that transition services often get overlooked when people talk about special education.

“There’s a lot of emphasis” put on early intervention or college readiness, McLaughlin said, “and this is something that often doesn’t get as much attention, but it’s so important because our goal is for kids is to be independent and successful in their lives. And for some of our students, they really need that robust amount of support.”

Private Company Leases Space at PHS

At Portland High School, there will be some changes as well, as private company Saybrook Reading opens its Orton-Gillingham Learning Lab in several unused classrooms. The company will lease the space as a private entity, thus providing revenue to the district, and will also provide some Portland educators with professional development as well.

Saybrook Reading is an education services company that currently operates a location in Old Saybrook, where they provide a range of services to parents and school districts seeking services for children dealing with dyslexia and language-based learning differences. The company focuses on a structured, sequential approach known as the Orton-Gillingham method, which McLaughlin described as “a phonics-based, very research-based approach primarily for students with dyslexia [and] dysgraphia.”

Beginning this school year, the company’s Portland Orton-Gillingham Learning Lab will provide specialized outplacement half-day programming for students who require significant interventions and intensive instruction, said Saybrook Reading founder Sarah Fudge.

The program will serve both elementary and middle school-age students and will have the capacity to be able to serve 18 total students, she said (nine elementary students and nine middle school students). They are beginning this year with four in each age group, with the plan to fill the remaining spots as the year progresses. The

program is a private one and does not currently have any Portland students enrolled.

Students at the learning lab will arrive for a portion of their school day to receive specialized instruction, with much of it happening in either a one on one or small group environment. For the remaining part of the day, these students will attend classes in their home district, where they can maintain social connections with peers. The goal, said Fudge, was to “close the reading gap” as quickly as possible for students.

“We’re very different in the sense that typically, when you do an outplacement for special ed, the district will not have the student within their walls for three years,” said Fudge. “So they basically say goodbye to a kid. They don’t get them back maybe for three years. We’re very different. We’re very collaborative. We don’t intend on keeping kids for years and years. Our goal is to close the gap as quickly as possible, so they can go back into the school to be with their peers.”

As part of the lease agreement, Saybrook Reading will also provide professional development opportunities for Portland educators to receive training in Orton-Gillingham methodology that could be helpful in both special education and general education environments, McLaughlin and Fudge said.

“The model that we’re offering for professional development, is kind of like a co-op style,” said Fudge. “So the teachers come into our lab, there’s a dedicated space for the professional development space. We’re teaching different types of instruction and different types of techniques that we use, and then they can actually go into the classroom and observe those techniques being used in action — and then they go back into their co-op room to try it out.”

“We’re excited not only to just be a part of a new vision of what that type of programming could look like, but also [to receive] some training to our staff in that area of structured literacy,” said McLaughlin.

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

★ Dance with the Stars, cont. from page 1

ementary School Resource Officer; Bernadette Derring, director of senior and human services at Columbia’s Beckish Senior Center; Megan Albridge, AHM’s clinical director; Jenna Cooke, an APRN with Screening and Preventative Services at MidState Radiology; Scot Kauffman, director at Colebrook Village; and Wendy Kopp, owner of Over AndOver Barntique.

The contestants began practicing around mid-July, and some used AHM space for rehearsals.

For Kopp, the experience has meant stepping outside of her comfort zone.

“I do not,” Kopp laughed when asked if she had any prior dancing experience. “Besides the ballerina class that my mom threw me in at seven? No, I do not.”

Kopp admitted she was nervous when she was first asked to participate, but being able to raise money for AHM made the decision easier.

“When I was first asked, I was very nervous, but of course intrigued. I said to myself, ‘Well, it’s for charity, why not?’” she said. Kopp is dancing hip hop with CT Dance Hub. She even took an adult hip hop class over the summer to prepare herself for the challenge.

“I just love that music so much,” said Kopp. “It just really motivates me.”

Her rehearsals have been challenging, but she said she has enjoyed the experience and meeting new people.

“It’s been very fun, and I’ve met a lot of new people,” she said.

Kopp is also grateful to CT Dance Hub owner Stephanie McHugh, who has been helping with the choreography.

“She has said yes and has spent so much time with us, like professional time,” said Kopp. “The way that she’s teaching us and curating the choreography, it’s just amazing.”

As Giordano explained it, the dancers won’t just be performing routines. The event is designed to recreate some of the excitement of the popular TV show, complete with costumes, lighting, sound and a panel of community judges.

As of right now, AHM is keeping a tight lid on the judges’ identities. “We’ve got celebrity judges, those in the community that are influential, and I think everybody will know them,” said Giordano.

The judges will score the performances during the show, with the winning couple receiving a Mirrorball-style trophy.

There will also be a “Fan Favorite” award. Beginning Sept. 1, each contestant will have a fun-

draising page where supporters can donate to their favorite dancer. Voting will remain open through Sept. 17, and the contestant whose team raises the most money will receive the Fan Favorite award.

That gives the community a chance to get involved before the dancers even take the stage.

Giordano shared that AHM intentionally chose contestants who already have strong connections throughout the four towns.

“We really just kind of dug into those that are historically supporters of AHM and have shown partnership and collaboration with us,” she said.

AHM Youth & Family Services provides programs and services across Andover, Hebron, Marlborough and Columbia, including mental health services, clinical therapy, family support, school-based positions and community programs. Money raised through events like “Dancing with the Stars” helps support that work.

Giordano said the fundraiser is another way for AHM to connect with the communities it serves. “We want to try to fill those 800 seats that evening,” she said.

Kopp said AHM’s local focus is one of the reasons she wanted to participate.

“I love how they are so connected to the tri-town area,” she said. “I really loved how they always created programs to support children and families in those three particular towns and stay very local to helping this area.”

The night is also a chance for people who may not know much about AHM to learn more about the organization while having fun.

“We want to try to recreate as much of the magic on the televised show as we can in person, which I think will be really fun,” said Giordano. Guests are even encouraged to dress up and make the night feel like a real television event.

With costumes, choreography, music, judges and local stars taking the stage, Giordano hopes the evening will leave people with a favorite performance and a full heart.

“We want to make sure that we put on a good show for people, bring the community together in a positive way and just continue to spread the word about AHM’s programs and services,” she said.

For Kopp, who began this adventure with little dance experience and plenty of nerves, the challenge has already been worth it.

“It’s a way to exercise, it’s a way to think with another side of my brain and I’m really challenged by it in a good way,” said Kopp. “It’s very challenging ... but we’re having so much fun.”



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Selectmen Catch Up on Routine Business

By Anne Lilburn

Portland’s Board of Selectmen met for a very brief regular meeting on Wednesday, Aug. 19 where town leaders received updates and covered the basics of keeping things going as the summer began to wind down.

First Selectman Mike Pelton, a Republican, started off the meeting by updating the board with a regular monthly report from the City of Middletown’s Central Communications Center, which provides 911 service to both towns. Things were pretty typical, Pelton said, with the center reporting that in July, there were 391 incident calls originating from Portland, which was close to the monthly year-long average of 402 per month. Calls involving fire and police numbered 243, slightly higher than the year-long monthly average of 221, with Pelton noting that “the numbers fall into the [normal] range.”

Pelton also provided an update on the town’s plans for a new well that would serve as the source for a new municipal water supply. He said that the town was working with a firm to finish the modeling and finalize what they will send to the state’s Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP). The town is still on track, he said, to finalize their yield es-

timates and modeling by the end of September in order to continue with the state regulatory process, with Snyder Engineering continuing to work on the design of the pump house at the same time.

“We are fully in line with our initial plan,” said Pelton. “We should be all set by the end of next year with a functioning pump house and have permits done.”

Pelton also said that the town was exploring potential USDA funding for alternate water supplies that might be used for “getting our old reservoir up and running.”

“It’s a big deal for us to be water independent,” said Pelton.

Selectman Jim Tripp, a Democrat, provided an update from the school building committee, which recently launched, saying that they were working on getting an RFP together for an architect for the project, which will keep them on track with their scheduled timeline.

Pelton also provided some community updates that tied into economic development in the town.

He indicated that he had recently visited Birdon Marina and Shipyard, and said that the

company was “renovating and fixing up the 47-foot boats that they give back to the Coast Guard.” He noted that the company was “looking at maybe assembling boats or building boats in the near future” as well.

He also noted that the town had selected Portland Dental Care, or “Dr. Pete,” a.k.a Peter Gietzakos, as the Business of the Quarter, and noted that he had been serving Portland residents for 40 years. He noted that Dr. Pete was his dentist, with others on the council indicating the same. Pelton also pointed out that Gietzakos and his staff “keep their property really, really neat and organized and that makes a difference in the town.” He said that should serve as a model for “the ones on the street that could probably do better.”

On the note of businesses that Pelton clearly thought could do better, at the meeting, he also promised an update on local smoke shop King Smokers. Roughly a week later, on Aug. 25, he did, posting on Facebook that “the Commissioner of the Department of Consumer Protection has revoked the business license of King Smokers as of last week and they will be served with a notice to close in the next couple days. Our town and our Police Department has worked very closely with the Attorney General’s office over the last 9 months to make this hap-

pen and I’m still amazed at how hard it was to shut down a shop that was busted four times for selling illegal drugs. But those days are almost over!”

During discussion towards the end of the meeting, Selectman John Dillon, a Democrat, asked if anyone at the town level had received information about some low-flying military planes that had recently been seen (and heard) in the area.

“The C-17 or whatever, those cargo planes,” Dillon said, “they flew by so low, they were I guess over the river. I was looking from my front porch and I swear I could see the guy’s head in the cockpit. And they did that a couple weeks ago...right over the town hall and I actually stood there and watched because I thought that thing was coming down.”

“I’ve been told unofficially,” said Pelton, “that it may have to do with Pratt & Whitney, maybe they’re working their way there for some training exercises, but I have not been notified and I don’t believe any town around here [has].”

Pelton noted finally that the town was still looking for additional people to apply to serve on the town’s charter commission, and encouraged those interested to apply. The Board of Selectmen will hold its next regularly scheduled meeting on Sept. 2.

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, including a calendar of events.

Food Bank: Open at the senior center on Mondays and Thursdays from 9 a.m.-noon. Donations welcome, but please only leave donations during Food Bank hours.

Mobile Food Pantry: The Food Share Mobile Pantry comes to the Food Bank every other Monday. The next date is Sept. 21.

Weekly Programs: Monday, 8/31: Light Aerobics, 9:30-10:30 a.m.

Tuesday, 9/1: Bears on a Journey, 9:30-11 a.m. – help make fleece teddy bears for cancer patients. Also, donations of light fleece (one yard or more) are sought for making teddy bears for cancer patients throughout Connecticut. To donate, call 860-342-0809; **No Congregate Meal Today; Coupons for Troops,** 1-4 p.m.; **Setback,** 1 p.m.; **SyncoCize II,** 5-6 p.m., fee is donation to instructor.

Wednesday, 9/2: Light Aerobics, 9:30-10:30 a.m.; **Chair Yoga with Gia,** 10:30-11:15 p.m., fee is a \$5 donation to instructor; **Fiber Arts Group,** noon; **Bridge,** 12:30-4 p.m.

Thursday, 9/3: Stretch & Tone, 9:30 a.m.; **Knit & Stitch,** 10 a.m.; **Congregate Meal,** noon – \$3 suggested donation (must fill out form). Menu: chicken and veggie pot pie, mashed potatoes, banana bread slice, orange cup, string cheese; **Mah Jongg,** 12:30 p.m.; **Scrabble,** 1 p.m.

Friday, 9/4: 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.

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

Note: There will be no blood pressure clinic or health chat in September.

Tuesday, Sept. 1: Health Benefits of Tea, 12:45-1:45 p.m. All are invited for a “Par-Tea!” with For All Ages. Discover the health benefits of tea. Enjoy complimentary tea and sweet treats. Also, learn about Tea@3, For All Ages’ free program connecting generations over tea. To sign up, call 860-342-6761 or sign up online at MyActiveCenter.com.

Wednesday, Sept. 9: Shoreline Trolley Museum, 9 a.m.-noon. Ride on the historic Portland Car 2350, view Osprey nest, and travel along the shoreline. Lunch (pizza) will be delivered. Cost (including lunch) is \$13, plus a \$5 ride fee.

Thursday, Sept. 10: The Wall That Heals, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Visit The Wall That Heals, a three-quarter scale replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. Leave the Senior

Center at 10 a.m. to visit the memorial, followed by lunch at The Broken Crust. Cost is a \$5 ride fee. Pay for your own lunch. Rain date: Sept. 11.

Thursday, Sept. 10: Community Quilters’ Group, 7-9 p.m. This is a group dedicated to the art of quilting and passing on the knowledge of this art. All skill levels and ages welcome. No registration required, but must fill out senior center membership form before joining group.

Friday, Sept. 11: Ken Doney Family History Research, 10:30 a.m.-noon. Ken Doney is back to show you how to research your own family history.

Monday, Sept. 14: Cooking for One with Chef Marilyn McGrath, 11:45 a.m.-1 p.m. Enhance your cooking skills, enjoy social interaction, learn how to maximize food budget and learn how to reduce food waste. Don’t forget to bring a take-home container. Space is limited. Class cost: \$10. Call 860-342-6761 to sign up or go to MyActiveCenter.com.

Monday, Sept. 14: Bloom Therapeutic Plant & Nature Program – Herbal Salts Workshop, 1 p.m. Registration required.

Tuesday, Sept. 15: Watercolor Painting Classes with Bivenne Staiger, 9:30 a.m.-noon. A new six-week session starts. Make payment to instructor. Contact bivenne@yahoo.com for more information.

Wednesday, Sept. 16: 2026 Southeast Healthy Living Expo, 9 a.m.-1:30 p.m., at Dodd Stadium in Norwich. Sponsored by Senior Resources Agency on Aging. There is a \$5 ride fee. To sign up, call 860-342-6761 or sign up online at MyActiveCenter.com.

Medical Rides: The center offers ADA-accessible transportation for seniors to medical rides, on a first-come, first-served basis. The fee is \$5/ person, round trip. Please give at least a two-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.

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

Hair by Jessica: By appointment only. Call Jessica at 860-751-9215.

Senior Mixed Golf League

The six-week 2026 Fall Tuesday Morning Senior Mixed Golf League starts Tuesday, Sept. 8, at Portland West Golf Course. All skill levels, and all seniors from the *Rivereast* towns, are welcome to join.

Email Jack Anderson at jackande52@aol.com for more information.

9/11 Morning Service of Remembrance

Zion Lutheran Church invites the community to attend an outdoor service of remembrance on the morning of Friday, Sept. 11, to mark the 25th anniversary of the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001.

The lowering of the American flag to half-staff, prayers, readings, bell-tolling, candle-lighting and classic rock songs will follow the timeline of the attacks.

The service begins at 8:30 a.m. and ends at

10:10 a.m., with one intermission. Chairs and water will be provided. In the case of rain, the service will be held inside in the Fellowship Hall.

After the service, the church sanctuary will be open for prayer and reflection through 11:00 a.m.

The church is located at 183 William St. All are asked to park in the front parking lot.

Fall Soccer Registration Open

Portland Soccer Club has announced fall 2026 registration for the Rec Season is open.

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. When you log in at clubs.bluesombrero.com/portland-soccerclub, the registration system will ask for your player’s information, including birthdate.

Register by Monday, Sept. 7. 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.

Players will be groups 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 additional questions, 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.



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And the Winners Also Are....

Here are some more of the winners and runners-up from this year's Portland Street Garden



Donna Grabek of Winchester Café received the Pretty Palette Award for the business's colorful display.



Kerianne Burchardt of Savvy Swap Consignment and Michelle Engel of Highland Sol Flower Farm received the 2026 Portland's Choice Award, selected by community vote.



Leigh Radziwon of SilTec Labs received the Marvelous Mix Award, recognizing the variety of plants used in the display.



Sarah and Billy Caratasios of Tommy's Pizza received third place in the special America's 250 Award category, celebrating the nation's 250th birthday through a patriotic garden display.



Jessica Blancato Roche of Your Health Solutions LLC received a Green Thumb Tribute, in recognition of the business's contribution to beautifying Portland



Mike and Katie Cannata of Precise Grading & Earthworks LLC received the Crafted with Care Award for the business's entry.



Matthew Pegolo and Kaylee Rugar of PegArch Architecture and Design and Dominic DiMauro of Tropical CT received second place overall.

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School Board Appoints New Superintendent

By Toriana Williams

Marlborough’s new superintendent of schools, with several decades of experience, is excited to return to classrooms and the challenges that come with leading a community.

Paul K. Smith, who began serving as superintendent of Marlborough Public Schools just two weeks ago, brings more than 40 years of experience in education. He has spent time as a music teacher, assistant principal, principal, superintendent, consultant and interim superintendent. Now, he’s returning to the day-to-day life of a school district because he missed the people who make schools special.

“I miss the day-to-day interaction with students, families, teachers and ... really missed the dynamic environment that a school is,” said Smith.

The Marlborough Board of Education unanimously appointed Smith to the position at its Aug. 13 meeting. He succeeded Holly Hageman, who left Marlborough to become superintendent of schools in Barrington, R.I.

Smith said he was immediately impressed by what he found in Marlborough.

“The school is an excellent school, and I’m really impressed with the teachers and the staff,” he said. “I’m really impressed with the really personal approach to education that this community commits to.”

That personal approach, he said, is something he doesn’t want to disrupt.

“When people say, ‘What are you going to do?’, I’m not going to do anything to get in the way of the excellence that’s already present,” said Smith.

Instead, he wants to build on what Marlborough is already doing well while making sure students and staff feel supported.

Leading With Compassion

Smith emphasized compassion as one of the more important aspects of his leadership philosophy.

“I believe that compassion is the cornerstone of education,” he said.

For Smith, that means looking beyond test scores and instead making sure the people inside the school feel valued. He wants students to feel cared for, and he also wants teachers and staff to know that their well-being truly matters.

“It’s important that, as much as we are concerned about our students’ mental health and wellness, that we also remain concerned about the mental health and wellness of our teachers and staff,” said Smith.

He believes the two are ultimately connected. “Teachers that are cared for are going to ensure that students are cared for,” he said.

During his tenure, Smith hopes to build a positive school culture through everyday inter-

actions between students, teachers and administrators. He said his goal is not just to maintain a high-performing school, but to make sure it is also a place where people enjoy coming to learn and work.

He also wants the community to have a voice in deciding where the district goes next.

“It’s not just a superintendent who says, ‘Hey, here’s what we’re going to do,’” said Smith. “It’s listening to people, and then saying, ‘I’ll help you get there.’”

Looking Toward 2039

Even though he’s only been on the job for barely two weeks, Smith is already looking far ahead.

One of his goals is to work with the community to create a strategic plan looking 10 years into the future. He referred to the kindergarten students entering school now as an example. Those students, he said, will be the Class of 2039.

The question Smith asked is what are the skills those children will need by then.

“We’re going to prepare students for a future that, right now, we can only imagine,” he said.

Technology and AI are changing the job market, and Smith believes schools need to prepare students for that changing world. But he also believes there are human skills that technology cannot replace.

“We also know there’s ... certain human skills that AI will never be able to master in our lifetime,” he said.

Smith wants the community to help decide which skills should be emphasized, from critical thinking and creativity to other transferable and life skills. That includes listening to students and parents.

“I think the student voice is really important, and I think the parent voice is really important,” said Smith. He also wants to hear from local business leaders and other members of the community before making major decisions.

Academic Excellence and Good Humans

Smith explained he does not view academic achievement and personal growth as competing goals. Marlborough already has strong test scores, he said, but that shouldn’t be the end of the conversation.

“Every school’s mission is to keep improving what they do academically,” said Smith. “So a district like Marlborough that has very good test scores says, ‘Okay, we’ve met that bar. Now let’s raise the bar a little.’”

He added that test scores are only one part of the equation of what makes a student successful.

“We don’t just look at achieving good scores. We want to achieve good students, and I believe you can do both,” he shared.

Smith wants students to become “compassionate and caring, and curious and creative” while also making academic progress. He is particularly interested in opportunities involving science, technology, engineering, arts and math, otherwise known as STEAM.

He said he would like to see more after-school coding and robotics opportunities, along with other programs that encourage students to experiment and solve problems.

“I’m very supportive of STEAM activities. I’d love to really promote that alongside reading and literacy,” he said. He also strongly believes in the arts, as his own career began with music.

Music Runs in the Family

Smith grew up in Massachusetts and attended Boston University, where he earned a bachelor’s degree in education and music. He later earned a master’s degree in education and music from the Eastman School at the University of Rochester, followed by his sixth-year degree and su-

perintendent certification from the University of Connecticut.

His father was a music educator, and both his brother and sister became teachers. “It’s definitely in the blood,” he agreed.

Smith began his own career as a music teacher in Bedford, Mass., teaching everything from beginning music to high school band. After moving to Connecticut with his wife, he taught music at Killingly High School before moving into administration. He then served as assistant principal, principal and superintendent in Bolton, Griswold and East Hampton, and retired from full-time superintendent work in 2024.

His time away from full-time district leadership helped him realize that he wasn’t quite ready to leave schools behind. When the Marlborough position opened, he applied.

A Marathon Lesson

Smith’s approach to education is also shaped by his life outside of school. He enjoys walking and spending time outside with his dog, Pearl, a small rescue terrier. The pair walk three to five miles a day.

He also enjoys visiting Cape Cod and Boston and is a big Boston Red Sox fan. That much is evident from the Red Sox merch that lines the walls in his office.

In the past, Smith was an avid runner. He completed 10 full marathons and over 50 half marathons. Running, he said, taught him something important about education: the value of a growth mindset.

Smith recalled once telling someone he could never run a marathon. Then he thought about what the message would mean coming from an educator who constantly encourages students to challenge themselves.

“How can I, as an educator, say I could never do it?” Smith recalled thinking. So he changed his mind.

“I said, ‘Okay, I’ve got to put my money where my mouth is, and I’m going to run a marathon,’” said Smith. Then, he eventually ran 10.

Now he jokes that his knees have made three to five miles a more reasonable goal, but the lesson remains.

“We always tell our students, you can have a growth mindset, and here I was saying I’d never do a marathon,” said Smith. “Finally, I said, I need a growth mindset.”

Getting to Know Marlborough

Smith currently lives in West Hartford with his wife, Jacqueline, who he met in college. She’s also a music educator and is a professor of music education at Boston University. The couple has two grown children and a young granddaughter.

Smith said his granddaughter gives him another way to see education. “I love seeing education through her eyes,” he said.

He also hopes to bring some of his interna-



Superintendent Paul K. Smith

tional education connections to Marlborough, and vice versa. Smith has traveled to China six or seven times and has developed relationships with educators and administrators there. He hopes to create opportunities for educators in Marlborough to connect with schools in China.

For right now, however, Smith’s focus is much closer to home. He wants to meet the people of Marlborough where they are, listen to their ideas and become part of the community.

He plans to attend PTO meetings, Board of Finance meetings and Board of Selectmen meetings. Beginning in September, he also plans to host “coffee opportunities with the superintendent” for parents and general community members.

“If parents can’t make it during those, they’re welcome to schedule a time with me. Mornings or evenings, I would love to sit down,” said Smith.

Smith explained that, to him, leadership is not about arriving with all the answers, but instead about taking the time to listen before making decisions.

“I learned early on in leadership that the worst thing you can do is act too quickly,” he admitted.

Instead, he believes leaders should study a situation, listen to different opinions, look at the facts and then make a thoughtful decision.

“The best decisions are made with groups of people based on facts, and not just based on feelings or quick thoughts.”

Reflective Number Signs Available

Marlborough Parks & Recreation has driveway reflective number signs available for purchase.

Signs cost \$50. The vertical sign is double-sided, 8" x 24", with 4" numbers on blue highway reflective metal. The signs help first responders find your home in the event of an emergency.

Order forms are online at www.marlbroughct.gov and at Town Hall.

Former State Troubador to Perform

Marlborough Arts Center’s 4th Friday @ The Arts Café will present Kala Farnham, Connecticut’s 18th State Troubadour, in concert on Friday, Aug. 28, at 7:30 p.m., at the center, 231 N. Main St.

Farnham’s vocals and mystical folk harp, piano and guitar, draws audiences into a transcendent journey, the arts center said.

Tickets are \$15 and available at the door. Doors open at 7 p.m.

Marlborough Farmers Market

Zina’s Cucina is hosting the Marlborough Farmers Market every Wednesday until Oct. 14, from 4-7 p.m., on the Town Green.

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 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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Local Art at Town Hall

Marlborough Arts Center has announced a new solo art exhibit of local artist Arlene S. Cavalieri. Her paintings will be displayed at Town Hall from August through October. Cavalieri’s work includes oils and acrylic. Her compositions often feature ocean and pond scenes as well as landscape, animal and floral subjects. Her ocean paintings have won Dean Waite and First Place awards. Cavalieri’s paintings can be seen in fine art shows in Connecticut and her work has been showcased in Connecticut corporate events.

250th Celebrations Continue

As the town continues to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States, there will be a family-friendly event open to everyone at St. John Fisher Church on Jones Hollow Road on Sunday, Aug. 30, from 1-2:30 p.m. All are invited to “continue to grow together” with various stations set up at the Community Giving Garden (which supports the local food bank), the Pollinator’s Garden (supporting our environment), the church’s outdoor Meditation area (to offer up intentions for the community

Congregational Church News & Notes

Sunday Worship at Marlborough Congregational Church, located at 35 South Main St., is held at 10 a.m. in the air-conditioned sanctuary. The service is also broadcast live every Sunday at mcc.marlconchurch.org and recorded for later viewing. Church pastor is the Rev. Valerie Seaver. There is no nursery care or Sunday School in August; they will resume Sept. 20. Children are always welcome at the worship service. The deacons have provided quiet activity bags, found in the narthex, for the youngest children to borrow and enjoy at summer services and bulletins with word games, mazes, and picture finds for Sunday school-age children.

Aug. 30: The service will be led by Seaver. Her sermon title is “Just Another Day,” based on Exodus 3:1-15. After worship, all are invited to Coffee Hour in the Thienes Lounge for snacks and refreshments

Weekly Program: Senior Stretch and Strengthen meets Fridays from 9:45-10:45 a.m., upstairs in the Thienes Lounge. Cost is \$25 per class. Try it for free on Sept. 4. All are welcome.

Community Sing, led by Seat of Our Pants member Carolyn Brodginiski, is Saturday, Sept. 5, at 7 p.m., in the Thienes Lounge. All who enjoy singing including musicians are welcome. Music is provided.

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**

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.

Youth Programs: Soccer Shots: Saturdays, Aug. 29-Oct. 31, at West Road upper field. No sessions 9/5 or 10/10. Mini, for age 2, will be held 3-3:30 p.m., and Classic, for ages 3-5, will be 4-4:45 p.m. Fee for Mini: \$105/residents, \$110/non-resident. Fee for Classic: \$113/resident, \$118/non-resident.

After School Co-Ed Kickball: For grades 5 & 6. Wednesdays, 3:15-4:15 p.m., Sept. 16-Oct. 21, at MES. Registration fee is \$30.

Sparkling Spinners: Dance class for ages 3-5. Wednesdays, 4:30-5 p.m., Sept. 16-Nov. 18, at Dance Dynamics in Hebron. Fee is \$150.

Tiny Twirlers: Dance class for ages 2-3. Tuesdays, 6-6:30 p.m., Sept. 15-Nov. 17, or Saturdays, 9:30-10 a.m., Sept. 19-Nov. 21. Classes held at Dance Dynamics in Hebron. Fee is \$150.

Skyhawks Multi-Sport Tots: Wednesdays, Sept. 23-Oct. 28, at Marlborough Elementary School. Ages 2-3.5 meet 5-5:45 p.m., and ages 3.5-4 meet 6-6:45 p.m. Parent participation required for ages 2-3.5. Fee: \$102/resident, \$107/non-resident.

Mad Science – Fall Crazy Chemworks: For grades K-6. Thursdays, 3:15-4:15 p.m., Oct. 15-Nov. 19, at MES. Fee: \$144/residents, \$149/non-

Singer to Perform

Marlborough Arts Center’s 4th Friday @ The Arts Café will present Kala Farnham, Connecticut’s 18th State Troubadour, in concert on Friday, Aug. 28, at 7:30 p.m., at the center, 231 N. Main St. Farnham’s vocals and mystical folk harp, piano and guitar, draws audiences into a transcendent journey, the arts center said. Tickets are \$15 and available at the door. Doors open at 7 p.m.

While Cavalieri will occasionally paint Plein Air in the warm weather, she mostly enjoys painting in her studio year-round. Marlborough Arts Center presents three-month solo exhibitions for member artists in the Marlborough Town Hall’s hallway. For inquiries regarding Cavalieri’s paintings, contact Barbara Lazzari in Town Hall’s tax collector’s office or contact Marlborough Arts Center at 860-467-6353 or info@marlborougharts.org.

and country), fun with chalk and bubbles, and a sweet treat. Families with children aged 3-10 may find this the most enjoyable, the church said, while all are welcome to come and have fun. Keeping with the theme of supporting the community, a non-perishable food item for the Marlborough Food Bank is greatly appreciated. Call the church at 860-295-0001 if you have questions.

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 Sept. 27. Mission-giving through September will go to Community Partners in Action Resettlement Program that provides comprehensive reentry services from basic needs to medical care, for women reentering society from York Correctional.

Second Blessings Thrift Shop is closed in August and will reopen Friday, Sept. 11, and Saturday, Sept. 12. Follow the shop through Facebook at Second Blessings Thrift Shop, Marlborough for summer updates. The eBay shop is open year-round at bit.ly/MCCebay.

General Information: Marlborough Congregational Church is an Open and Affirming faith community and all are welcome. The church does not pass a collection plate, but free-will giving boxes are found by the doors in the sanctuary. Donations can also be made through the church website, or mailed to the church at P.O. Box 57, Marlborough, CT 06447. For more information on the church or its programs, call Seaver’s direct line at 860-295-0432, email her at pastorval@marlconchurch.org, or contact the church office at office@marlconchurch.org.

residents.

Crayola Imagine Arts Academy – Epic Landmarks Throughout History!: For grades K-6, at Marlborough Elementary School. Tuesdays, 3:15-4:15 p.m., from Oct. 13-Nov. 24. Fee: \$144/residents, \$149/non-residents. No class on 11/3.

Safe at Home: For grades 4-6. Wednesday, Oct. 14, 5-6:30 p.m., at Marlborough Senior Center. Participants will learn skills to prepare them to be safe when home alone. Fee is \$65/resident, \$70/non-resident.

Safe Sitter: For grades 6-8. Saturday, Nov. 7, 9 a.m.-2:30 p.m., at Marlborough Senior Center. Designed to prepare students in grades 6-8 to be safe when they’re home alone, watching younger siblings, or babysitting. Fee: \$140/resident, \$145/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: Adult Tap: For ages 18 and over. Thursdays, Sept. 16-Nov. 18, 8-8:45 p.m., at Dance Dynamics in Hebron. Fee: \$200/resident.

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

Adult Volleyball: Thursdays, 8-10 p.m., at Marlborough Elementary School. Fee is \$5 per week. Session begins Oct. 5,

Zumba Class – Fall Session: Tuesdays, 6:30-7:30 p.m., at Marlborough Senior Center. Fee is \$60/resident, \$65/non-resident, or a \$10 drop-in fee.

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.

Learn to Play Mah Jongg

Marlborough Arts Center, located at 231 N. Main St., is offering American Mah Jongg classes this fall for teens and adults. This six-week session is for beginners and advanced beginners. The instructor, Barbara Hahn, has been teaching for 15 years at local senior centers and libraries. Classes will be Thursdays 6-8:30 p.m., from Sept. 17 to Oct. 29; or Fridays, 2-4:30 p.m., from

St. John Fisher Church News & Notes

St. John Fisher Roman Catholic Church is located at 30 Jones Hollow Rd. Pastor is the Rev. Carlos Zapata, 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.stjfishchurch.org.

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

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 par-

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, Mah-jongg, 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.

Chair Yoga: Seated in a chair, explore gentle movement, practiced breathing and peaceful mindfulness. Next session: 9/8, 9/15, 9/22, 9/29. Fee: \$35/Marlborough residents, \$40/non-residents. RSVP and payment due by 9/4.

FABBS Exercise: Flexibility, Agility, Better Balance and Strength workout class. Movement and exercises are drawn from body building, yoga, ballet and more. Instructor Hilary Celen-tano. Next session: 9/7, 9/14, 9/21, 9/28; 10:45-11:45. Fee: \$35/residents, \$40/non-residents. RSVP and payment due by 9/4.

Rightsizing Today for More Choices Tomorrow: Making Room for What Matters Most – and Preparing for What’s Next: 9/1, 10:30 a.m. Discover how downsizing on purpose can help you create a safer, more comfortable home today while preparing for whatever tomorrow may bring.

Free Sound Bath: 9/2, 2-3 p.m. In sound baths, sounds and vibrations from instruments such as singing bowls, chimes and gongs help promote calm, relaxation, and a sense of well-being. Jeremy Tucker, the resident engagement director at The Residence at Glastonbury will lead this experience.

Legislative Update with State Rep. Steve Weir: 9/9, 1 p.m. Weir (R-55) serves as the state representative for Marlborough, Andover, Hebron and portions of Bolton and Glastonbury.

Thin Blue Line: 9/17, 10 a.m. Author Greg Dillon will share his story-turned-book, about a former FBI agent who discovers FBI misconduct, and is subsequently demoted, harassed at home and threatened with termination. Even after a major courtroom victory and landmark decision, the agent realizes retaliation has only just begun.

Senior Center 25th Anniversary Party: Saturday, 9/19, 1-4:30 p.m. The party will feature a live swing band, ice cream truck, photo booth, games, car show and more. All are welcome. The event will be held rain or shine.

Birthday Club: 9/22, 1-2 p.m. September birthdays will be celebrated with cake! Open to all friends and family. It does not have to be

Sept. 18 to Oct. 30. There will be no classes Oct. 8 and 9. Fee is a \$60 donation to the Marlborough Arts Center, plus a \$15 fee for the 2026 NMJL Card, which is yours to keep. For more information and to register, go to MarlboroughArts.org. For questions, call 860-467-6353 or text 860-926-7500.

ish fellowship. For details, see the church calendar available on the church website.

Community Outreach and Service: The Community Giving Garden is actively producing fresh produce and meets Mondays at 5 p.m. The garden yields fresh produce delivered weekly to the Marlborough Food Bank. Monetary donations are accepted supporting the students and families at Marlborough Elementary School. 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.stjfishchurch.org, or look for the church on Facebook (Saint John Fisher Roman Catholic Church).

your birthday month to celebrate; however, if it is please RSVP.

Open Discussion on Open AI: 9/30, 1-2 p.m. Paul A. Kriksciun has dedicated his career to helping organizations navigate complex technology and now focuses on making artificial intelligence accessible and understandable for everyone. All are invited to come learn and ask questions.

Friendship Tours: GermanFest at the East Hill Farm in New Hampshire: 10/8. Enjoy a homemade Oktoberfest Luncheon, then listen to live German music by Al Brogdon’s four-piece Oompah Band. Stop at Yankee Candle’s flagship store in South Deerfield, Mass. Cost is \$158/person. More information available at senior center.

Social Services: 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.

Food Bank: Located at 3 Wilhenger Drive, and can be reached at 860-295-6008. There is an open house Tuesdays from 10 a.m.-noon and 4-6 p.m. The food bank is open to qualified residents in need.

Eversource: There are low-income discount rates available for electric bills. Proof required; by appointment only.

Renters Rebate: Rebates are available for renters age 65+ or disabled. Checks up to \$700 for singles and \$900 for couple. Rebate is based on a graduated income scale and the amount of rent and utility payments (excluding telephone) made in the calendar year prior to the year in which the renter applies. For more information call the assessor’s office at 860-295-6201. For application assistance, call the senior center. Renter’s Rebate runs through Sept. 30.

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

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.

Country Line Dancing Fundraiser

There will be a Country Line Dancing fundraiser Friday, Sept. 11, from 6-9 p.m., at the Marlborough American Legion, 128 East Hampton Rd. Aric Lemeix of Sound Train Music will DJ and lead country line dancing. Cost is \$10. Feel free to bring your own snacks. There is a cash bar. The event is open to the public.

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Marlborough Day Brings Community Together, Rain or Shine



Larry Gormick (left) brought his 19-year-old blue and gold male macaw Mickey to Marlborough Day to get some sun, socialize and chow down on hot dogs. The day also featured – among many other things – a pie-eating contest and, in the photo at right, is Marlborough resident Frederick Rosenberger, who won the contest for his age bracket of 18 to 99.



By Toriana Williams

The rain may have arrived early, but it didn't stop Marlborough Day from celebrating like it does every year.

Held on Sunday, Aug. 23, at Blish Park, the annual celebration was filled with laughter, food, music, games, dancing and plenty of family-friendly fun. Even with wet weather threatening to put a damper on the festivities, residents and visitors still made their way to the park.

The event featured several familiar aspects, such as the roaming railroad, a performance by the Marlborough Jr. Ancient Fife and Drum Corps, vendor booths and organizations around the park to say hello.

There were also a few new attractions, like a pie-eating contest and a Brooms Friends Fun events broom dance. Characters including Stuart from *Minions* and Woody from *Toy Story* also made an appearance.

And then there were the bubbles. The beloved bubble wands are a simple but enticing attraction, bringing out the inner child in everyone as they wave the wands through the air and watch enormous bubbles float across the park. For a few moments, the gray skies and wet grass seemed less intrusive as people chased and admired the shimmering and floating orbs.

There was also the comforting smell of fresh cinnamon buns mixed with the earthy scent that the rain left behind. For many, however, Marlborough Day is less about activities and food and more about being together.

Margaret Smith of Colchester brought her 16-month-old son, Charlie, to the event with her friend Kat King, who brought her 17-month-old daughter, Sophie.

"It's our first time here," said Smith. She shared that she appreciated the chance for people to gather and learn more about their community. "I just think gathering people in the commu-

nity to meet new people and to learn about the businesses or the different programs like the library offers, I just think it's important to know your community," she said.

King, who lives in East Hampton, agreed that community events are important for families.

"Having regional events to go to I think is really important for kids and parents together," said King. "We've seen a lot of people we know from the library around here. It's been nice."

The day also offered visitors a chance to meet some unusual guests.

Larry Gormick came from New London with Mickey, his 19-year-old male blue and gold macaw. Gormick has had Mickey for 17 years and said the bird loves to meet new people.

"We go to all kinds of events. He likes to socialize and hang out," said Gormick.

Gormick explained that he had been visiting his son in Manchester when the rain stopped and he noticed Marlborough Day was taking place.

"I saw you guys were having an event and [Mickey] wanted a hot dog," he laughed. Mickey squawked in agreement. He was not interested in letting a little rain ruin his day.

"He always has fun. Kids get to hold him, he gets to socialize and he gets to eat," said Gormick. "He poses with everybody."

Mickey has even posed with American singer-songwriter Mac McAnally, Gormick said.

While Mickey was certainly one of the day's most colorful sights, the pie-eating contest provided plenty of its own entertainment.

Frederick Rosenberger, who lives in Marlborough, entered the 18 to 99 age group and walked away stuffed and as the winner. Rosenberger said he and his fiancée, Ciara Jarman, had a plan going into the competition.

"We had a game plan going into it," said Rosenberger. "Eat the whole center for weight,

then the crust. The bottom was tough."

Rosenberger laughed when asked whether he expected to win. "I thought I had a good crack at it. I've been known to consume pie," he joked.

Jarman served as Rosenberger's "game time coordinator," he called her, keeping watch from the sidelines and making sure he stayed on pace.

"She was there on the sidelines, making sure I wasn't getting behind," said Rosenberger.

The victory was especially meaningful because he and Jarman have only lived in Marlborough for about a year.

"We've only been here for a year, so this is our first [Marlborough Day]," he said.

After winning, Rosenberger said it was, "awesome," and that he "can't want to come back next year."

He also appreciated what an event like Marlborough Day can mean for someone new to town.

"I think it's important to meet other people you may not see on the regular," said Rosenberger. "And also as a new resident, it's nice to be able to see what is in the area, what the town has to offer, so I really appreciate the outing."

His only request for next year's competition? "Hopefully they do strawberry rhubarb next year," he smiled.

The pie-eating contest included competitors in three age groups. River Burns won in the 6 to 8 age group, while Dylan Mahowski won in the 12 to 15 group.

State Rep. Steve Weir (R-55) was also at the celebration and helped make the event happen. Weir shared that he has been attending Marlborough Day since it returned after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Weir, a member of the Connecticut River Valley Chamber of Commerce that organizes the event, also helped prepare the park for the event. He said he had been there the day before

painting parking lines for cars, trucks and vendors before coming back on Sunday morning to help with loading and parking.

"It was a little messy. I got a little wet," said Weir. But he didn't believe the rain ruined the celebration.

"I don't think the festivities were dampened. I just think maybe a little bit delayed," he said.

Weir also found himself with a new responsibility this year: judging the pie-eating contest.

"That is the first time I have judged a pie-eating contest," he said. "I was afraid, a little bit, about the pressure. I didn't want to get it wrong."

Luckily, he said the winners were obvious. As for his qualifications as a pie-eating contest judge? "Probably a lack of other volunteers to be a pie-eating judge," he joked.

The pie contest was just one part of what makes Marlborough Day special to Weir.

"It's nice to find these family type events here. They're free, they're fun to bring the kids to and there's something for everybody," he said.

That sentiment really captured the spirit of the day. Families gathered around activities, adults joined in on the fun and enormous bubbles floated above the park while pie-bespeckled-faces smiled brightly. The rain became less of an obstacle and more of a backdrop to a day centered on community.

Weir said the smaller size of Marlborough is part of what gives events like this their charm.

"I think the small towns in particular, we don't have big venues so a lot of the events that we have tend to be on the smaller, more intimate side," he said.

By the end of the day, it was obvious that Marlborough Day was not going to be washed away.

"We'll be back next year – and it's clear that it's rain or shine," said Weir.

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★ *Letters, cont. from page 8*

when difficult budget decisions are being made.

What concerns me is how quickly the idea of looking at administrative structure seemed to be dismissed before it could be fully explored. The conversation quickly shifted back toward student programs and athletics.

As a taxpayer and a parent, I found myself asking: Why?

I am not suggesting that anyone is doing anything wrong. I am asking why we appear so willing to consider reductions that directly affect students while administrative positions and structure do not seem to receive the same level of scrutiny.

If we are truly facing difficult financial circumstances, shouldn't every position, every department, and every layer of administration be evaluated?

Being creative with a budget takes work. It means challenging assumptions, asking uncomfortable questions, and being willing to consider solutions that may not have been considered before.

Our Board of Education has a responsibility to our teachers and our children. It also has a responsibility to the taxpayers who fund our schools.

We have been told that difficult choices must be made. I agree. But before we ask our children to give something up, let's make sure we have looked everywhere else first.

Again, that's how we begin rebuilding trust.

Olivia Duksa, Chair
Colchester Republican Town Committee

A ‘No’ Vote Is Still Costing You

Colchester Residents:

Instead of just barreling ahead after two failed budget referendums, I think it is important that we pause and recognize what has happened.

Colchester voters have made their concerns clear. The original FY2026-27 budget proposals were not accepted, and after each referendum, the Board of Finance went back to work to identify additional reductions.

The result is a budget proposal that looks very different from where this process began.

Since the July referendum alone, another

\$870,543 has been removed from the combined town and Board of Education budgets (\$577,010 from the schools and \$293,533 from town departments), amounting to over \$3.5 million in reductions overall.

On paper, the current proposal represents a projected 0.51-mill, or 1.7%, increase, with an estimated monthly impact of less than \$9 for the average Colchester household. Tangibly, however, this proposal represents maintenance delays, service and program reductions, middle school sports' removal, and more.

While everyone won't agree that these budgets are perfect (because they aren't), I believe we have a responsibility to our children and community to distinguish between the budgets that were originally proposed and the budgets before voters now.

The latest budgets reflect over six months of scrutiny, public feedback and reductions. At some point, the question must become not simply, "Can we cut more?" but "What are all of these cuts costing us and what is necessary to responsibly operate our town and schools?"

There is no budget that will make everyone happy. There are only budgets that reflect the priorities of Colchester community members and taxpayers.

Less spending on town services? Prioritized. Leaner school administration and operations? Prioritized. Cost savings in delayed maintenance and no new projects? Prioritized.

This is our current reality.

Referendum 3 is on Sept. 1. Voting will take place in Town Hall (6 a.m. to 8 p.m.) and absentee ballots are available already. Before you vote, I implore you to look beyond AI-generated graphics and Facebook posts designed to incite anger. The cuts in front of us are real and your 'no' or 'yes' vote isn't going to change them, but a 'yes' vote will prevent further damage to our district and community.

Voters have spoken and been listened to. Significant changes and reductions have been made. Now it's time to move Colchester forward.

Please join me in voting 'yes' on Sept. 1st.

Stefanie Tracey-Calash – Colchester
***Note:** Tracey-Calash is chair of the Colchester Board of Education but said she is speaking as an individual.*

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Free, Reduced-Price Lunch Info

The RHAM middle and high schools and Marlborough Elementary School have announced their policy for determining eligibility of children who may receive free or reduced-price meals served under the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP), or free milk served under the Special Milk Program (SMP). For school year (SY) 2026-27, breakfast is free of charge for all students enrolled in schools participating in the School Breakfast Program

Local school officials have adopted the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Income Eligibility Guidelines (IEGs) for family size and income criteria for determining eligibility. The following income guidelines will be used in Connecticut from July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2027, for determining participant's eligibility for free and reduced-price school meals and free milk in the Child Nutrition Programs (CNP).

Income Guidelines for Child Nutrition Programs: July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2027
Free Meals

Household Size	Annual gross income	Monthly gross income	Twice per month	Every two weeks gross income	Weekly gross income
1	20,748	1,729	865	798	399
2	28,132	2,345	1,173	1,082	541
3	35,516	2,960	1,480	1,366	683
4	42,900	3,575	1,788	1,650	825
5	50,284	4,191	2,096	1,934	967
6	57,668	4,806	2,403	2,218	1,109
7	65,052	5,421	2,711	2,502	1,251
8	72,436	6,037	3,019	2,786	1,393
Each additional family member	7,384	616	308	284	142

Reduced Meals

Household Size	Annual gross income	Monthly gross income	Twice per month	Every two weeks gross income	Weekly gross income
1	29,526	2,461	1,231	1,136	568
2	40,034	3,337	1,669	1,540	770
3	50,542	4,212	2,106	1,944	972
4	61,050	5,088	2,544	2,349	1,175
5	71,558	5,964	2,982	2,753	1,377
6	82,066	6,839	3,420	3,157	1,579
7	92,574	7,715	3,858	3,561	1,781
8	103,082	8,591	4,296	3,965	1,983
Each additional family member	10,508	876	438	405	203

The income calculations above are based on the following formulas:

- monthly income is calculated by dividing the annual income by 12;
- twice monthly income is computed by dividing annual income by 24;
- income received every two weeks is calculated by dividing annual income by 26; and
- weekly income is computed by dividing annual income by 52.

All numbers are rounded upward to the next whole dollar.

Students residing in households with income at or below the levels shown in the chart above are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals or free milk. To apply for free or reduced-price school meals or free milk households should fill out the application and return it to your child's school or by emailing it to jen.choma@rhamschools.org. Only one application is required per household and an application for free or reduced-price school meals cannot be approved unless it contains complete eligibility information as indicated on the application and instructions.

For questions or more information, call Jennifer Choma at 860-228-9474 ext. 3401.

JT is Impressed

To the Editor:

For the BOF, it seemed like the meeting on Aug. 10th regarding further cuts to the town and BOE budget was a turning point in bipartisan consensus. After a presentation of previous reductions from BOF Chair Karen Belding, robust discussions with the BOE chair, acting superintendent Judy O'Meara and First Selectman Bernie Dennler, the BOF member John Thomas (R) took to the microphone and began speaking starting with "I would like to begin by saying thank you."

John Thomas has been on the BOF for five years and has been on the BOF the longest out of the current elected officials. He proceeded to praise the BOE chair and acting Superintendent Judy O'Meara, "you rolled up your sleeves and I am very impressed!" John Thomas also had praise for First Selectman Bernie Dennler and BOF Chair Karen Belding. John ended by saying "Let's get a budget passed!" This was very

well received by the entire BOF.

Well, the RTC decided their endorsed BOF elected official and endorsed candidate to run for first selectman in 2025 did not have a valuable view on the presented budget, as they met and took a vote and decided not to support the current budget.

The official position of the Republican Town Committee is to vote 'no' on the budget. They don't believe the budgets have been adequately reduced and that the BOF and BOE have failed to listen. What? This is an absolute 180-degree difference in position from the person who represents the RTC on the BOE and is so well thought of they voted to make him a candidate for first selectman, John Thomas! So why? Great question, you as voters should ask why? Our town and schools should not be pawns in a political game. John Thomas and I differ on many things but I do agree, "Let's get a budget passed!"

Krista Kardys, Member
Colchester Board of Finance

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Dancing with the Stars

AHM Youth and Family Services will present a "Dancing with the Stars" fundraiser Saturday, Sept. 19, at the RHAM High School auditorium, 85 Wall St., Hebron.

This community-centered event pairs local "celebrities" with dance studios to learn and perform a choreographed routine on stage.

Submissions Accepted for ‘Fall Into Art’

AHM Youth and Family Services is holding the second "Fall Into Art" autumn-themed community art show on Saturday, Oct. 24. Enjoy local art, craft projects, and a visit from AHM's mascot, Pendelton the Owl!

Local artists and community members of all ages are invited to participate in this autumn-themed day of fun. To submit your artwork for display, use the form at ahmyouth.org/fall-into-art-registration.

This free event is held during Hebron Harvest Moon Festival, in collaboration with the Hebron Creative Collective.

For more information, visit ahmyouth.org.

AHM Fall Brochure Released

Registration is now open for AHM Youth and Family Services' fall programs.

AHM said it has many activities lined up for all ages, including theater, macrame, messy hands, and more. The fall brochure also has information about QPR, Drug Take Back, and special events.

Visit ahmyouth.org to view the program listing and to sign up.

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★ *Budgets Return, cont. from page 1*

filled since Jan. 1, which has resulted in more than \$1 million in savings. Those positions include instruction coaches and interventionists, paraeducators, classroom teachers, a speech-language pathologist and nurses.

The district also listed two and a half teacher furlough days among the impacts.

Administration and leadership have also been reduced. More than five positions have been affected, including a Bacon Academy assistant principal, two special education team development leaders, a finance director, a CES principal and an administrator. The central office also has a wage freeze.

Students could also see changes in other areas.

At William J. Johnston Middle School, two world language teachers have been affected, with high school staff helping to support the program. The district said world language opportunities at the middle school are now more limited.

School safety and security have also been impacted. A safety officer and an access control attendant have been reduced, and the district said those changes could cause delays when the students and families arrive at or leave school buildings.

There will also be no technology upgrades during the 2026-27 school year. That includes student Chromebooks, teacher laptops and computer lab upgrades. Professional development has also been reduced, with only contractually required funds that remain.

Other proposed cuts include math and science instruction coaching, a math coach stipend, a special education team development leader, sports supplies and fees, a student success intervention position, special education paraeducators and some safety positions.

The district also proposed reducing instruction supplies by \$5,000 at each school, for a total of \$20,000. Other reductions include certified substitute salaries, paper at WJJMS, graphing calculators at Bacon Academy, and Lego robotics at Jack Jacker Intermediate School.

O'Meara said the district now needs to focus on moving ahead.

"As difficult as this year has been, our focus

now must be on moving forward together," she said. She shared that school officials will continue to watch spending and look for ways to rebuild programs and staffing when money allows.

"Through every decision, our students remain at the forefront," said O'Meara. "Our goal is to protect the quality of their educational experience, support the staff who serve them each day and begin rebuilding from a more financially sustainable foundation."

Defeat Would Mean More Cuts

As for the town government budget, Dennler warned this week that, if the spending proposal were rejected at Tuesday's referendum, Parks and Recreation, the Senior Center, Colchester Youth & Social Services and Cragin Library may all face additional cuts.

"This could mean reduced hours, activities, events, and other community programming," Dennler said. "Public-facing staff in these departments would likely be cut and departments may need to be restructured. We would not be able to offer the same level of services or hours that we do today."

Dennler said Public Works services could also be impacted, potentially affecting roads and the town transfer station, among other areas.

"I would never recommend any of that by choice but there's just not anywhere else to go within the town budget," he said. "We have tried to avoid touching those areas so far."

Dennler said that while some town services are already being impacted by the temporary budget freeze, "we can still restore them if this budget passes on Sept. 1. If it fails, then some changes could become permanent, depending on what the Board of Finance actually cuts."

And none of those reductions, Dennler stressed, would help people in town in the long run.

"I don't think any of these cuts would make life more affordable in Colchester," he said. "Kicking the can on maintenance or cutting direct services, means people pay more in the long run."

Dennler added, "I think we get a pretty good value out of our town, and I'd like us to keep it strong."

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Benefit Concert for CVC

There will be a benefit concert for the Community Voice Channel – the public access channel for Andover, Hebron and Marlborough – coming up in Ellington in September.

Rock This Town will host a benefit show for Community Voice Channel (CVC) entitled “Rock This Town presents A CVC Benefit Show” on Sunday, Sept. 13, from 11 a.m.-7 p.m., at Market Park, 72 Maple St., Ellington.

This immersive music event will bring together top artists, emerging talents, engaging activities, food trucks, vendors, and music enthusiasts to celebrate the future of CVC.

According to CVC, public access television

in Connecticut is facing a funding crisis driven by the ongoing shift to streaming. As audiences abandon traditional cable television for modern streaming platforms like Netflix, Roku and YouTube, the total revenue CVC receives has plummeted.

CVC said this loss has left it struggling to keep its doors open and maintain its equipment. CVC relies on these cable TV subscriber fees for operating costs; even though CVC is on Roku and YouTube, it does not receive internet subscriber fees.

Tickets to the concert are \$10 for ages 16 and over, \$5 for ages 5-15, and admission is free for ages 4 and under.

For tickets and more information visit ti.nurl.com/cvcbenefit.

Police Cadets Seek Members

Teens considering a job in law enforcement or the military, or just want to serve the community, are invited to join the Connecticut State Police Cadet program.

The program meets twice a month on Wednesdays from 6:30-8 p.m. at the State Police barracks in Colchester, and males and females ages 13-20 are invited to join. The Cadet program focuses on building confidence, improving physical fitness and leadership training.

If interested in attending a meeting or for more information, call 860-465-5468 or email troopcadets028@gmail.com.

**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, September 2, 2026 at 6:30 p.m. at the East Hampton Town Hall – 1 Community Drive, Room 107 and via ZOOM to consider
PZC-26-010: Town of East Hampton PZC, Text Amendment to Section 8.4.M (Accessory Dwelling Units) of the Zoning Regulations.
Applications and Plans are on file in the Land Use Office 860-267-7450.
Ray Zatorski, Chairman

2TB 9/21, 9/28

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Volunteers Wanted for Stream Assessments

The Salmon and Eightmile River watershed organizations are hosting a training program for volunteers in September to assist with biological stream assessments.

Aquatic benthic macroinvertebrates (water bugs) are good indicators of water quality and stream health. Learn how to collect and identify stream macroinvertebrates in this training program which will include an indoor workshop followed by field training at selected sites.

The training program will be held on Saturday, Sept. 12, from 8:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., and includes field time. The indoor workshop will be held at Burnham Brook Preserve, 2 Dolbia

Hill Road-East, East Haddam, starting at 9 a.m. After the classroom portion, we will head to Devil's Hopyard State Park, East Haddam.

Registration is limited to 20 participants. This program is appropriate for high school age and above, however a parent/guardian must accompany a minor. To register or for any questions, contact Pat Young at salmon-riverct@att.net or info@eightmileriver.org.

Collectively, the Salmon and Eightmile River watersheds cover over 200 square miles and include the towns of Bolton, Colchester, Columbia, East Haddam, East Hampton, East Lyme, Glastonbury, Haddam, Hebron, Lebanon, Lyme, Marlborough and Salem.



God Sees, God Cares!

“He (GOD) appointeth the number of THE STARS; He calleth them all by their names. GREAT IS OUR LORD, and of great power: His understanding is infinite”

Psalm 147:4-5

There Really Is God After All!

He is an AWESOME GOD who finds His galaxies a very small expression of His great Person. God is beyond and bigger than His finite universe. Yet GOD CAN HEAR your cry, your whisper, your silent thought. GOD CAN SEE so small a tear. GOD CAN TACKLE so big a problem. “Behold, the eye of the LORD is upon them that fear Him, upon them that hope in His mercy” (Psalm 33:18)

O Wonder of Wonders!

GOD IS HERE right now to reach each and every believing heart: “For God so loved the world, that HE GAVE His only begotten Son, that WHOSOEVER BELIEVETH IN HIM should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). “There is no other God apart from Me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside Me. Look unto Me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else” (Isaiah 45 :21-22). “Thus saith the LORD...I am the first, and I am the last, and beside ME there is no GOD...FEAR NOT, neither be afraid” (Isaiah 44:6,8).

God Really Is After All

He is OVER ALL, He is FOR ALL. God is not absent. God is only a step away. Believe and receive Christ Jesus with all your heart today, without delay. “But as many as RECEIVED HIM, to them gave HE power to become the children of God, even to them that BELIEVE ON HIS NAME” (John 1: 12). “HE THAT HATH THE SON HATH LIFE; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the Name of the Son of God; that ye may KNOW that ye have ETERNAL LIFE” (1 John 5:12-13). “And this is LIFE ETERNAL, that they might KNOW THEE the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent” (John 17:3).

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Obituaries

Salem

Jacquiline Sabolesky

Jacquiline Alice Sabolesky, of Danielson and formerly of Salem, passed away Thursday, Aug. 21. She was 94 years old. Jackie was born Jan. 12, 1932, in Montville, to the late Claude Everett and Alice Cecilia (LaPanne) Pierce. She married John Sabolesky on June 21, 1950, at St. John Church in Montville. The couple settled in Salem where they made their home and raised five children. John predeceased her on Feb. 8, 1980.



Jackie retired several years ago after a long caregiving career as a certified nurse aide at Harrington Court Convalescent Home in Colchester. In her free time, she loved doing needlepoint crafts or tending to the flower gardens in her own backyard. She will be remembered for her kind manner, unique sense of humor, and devotion to her family.

She will be sadly missed but always remembered with love by all who knew her, especially her children, Jonalyn Belliveau of Taftville, Michael Sabolesky of Salem, Kevin Sabolesky of Sterling, Joseph Sabolesky of Griswold; a brother, Mark Pierce of Fitchville; a sister, Donalyn Dufour of Canterbury; 10 grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren; and many extended family members and friends.

In addition to her husband and parents, she was predeceased by a daughter, Janice Goodman, and two brothers, Claude and George Pierce.

Funeral services will be held privately according to her wishes.

The Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester has been entrusted with care of arrangements. For online condolences or to share a story or memory of Jackie, please visit www.auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Tri-County Memorials

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Colchester

Kenneth Christian Johnson

Kenneth Christian Johnson, of Colchester and formerly of Wethersfield, passed away Monday, Aug. 24, at his home. He was 91 years old.

Kenneth was born April 16, 1935, in Hartford, to the late Roy and Doris (Tilton) Johnson. He married Jacqueline Lowe Pierson in 1956. The couple settled in Wethersfield, where they made their home and raised their family. Jacqueline predeceased him in 1997.



Kenneth retired several years ago after a long career, or "labor of love," commuting to Fishers Island daily to work at the Island grocery store. Kenneth was a soft-spoken man who led a quiet life. He loved to tinker in his workshop and was a talented craftsman.

He will be sadly missed but always remembered with love by his children and their spouses, Kenneth C. Johnson Jr. and spouse, Tammie of Bellingham, Wash.; Mark Johnson of Corpus Christi, Texas; Wynne and spouse, Julian Goglia of Chandler, Ariz.; his adoring granddaughter, whom he held dear to his heart, Heather Goglia and spouse, Jennifer Barber of Berlin.

Funeral services will be held privately, according to his wishes.

The Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester has been entrusted with care of arrangements. For online condolences or to share a memory story of Kenneth, please visit www.auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Marlborough

Kathleen Falvey

Kathleen Falvey, of Marlborough, passed away peacefully on Wednesday, Aug. 19, at the age of 76. She was born May 28, 1950, in Gorton, to the late John and Helen Falvey.

After graduating from St. Bernard High School, Kathleen continued her education and earned her degree in Nursing. She married the love of her life, Glen Ervick, in 1988, and together they built a beautiful life in Marlborough.

Kathleen was a natural caregiver throughout her life. Nursing was not simply a career for her, but a true passion and a way in which she touched the lives of many. Over the years, she dedicated herself to caring for others at several facilities, including Harrington Court in Colchester and Hartford Hospital.

Above all, Kathleen cherished her family and the time she spent with the people she loved most. She was warm, caring, and devoted to those around her, creating memories that will be treasured for years to come. One of her favorite pastimes was riding the Harley with her beloved husband, Glen, enjoying the freedom and companionship of the open road.

Kathleen will be deeply missed and lovingly remembered by her husband, Glen Ervick; as well as numerous extended family members and dear friends. She was predeceased by her parents, John and Helen Falvey, and her sisters, Marrian and Maurine.

Care of private arrangements has been entrusted to Aurora McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester.

trusted to Aurora McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester. For online condolences or to share a memory or story of Kathleen, please visit www.auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

East Hampton

Francis John Brady

Francis John "Beaver" Brady, 68, of East Hampton, passed away peacefully at home on Sunday, Aug. 23.

Beaver was truly one of a kind – full of life, witty, kind, hardworking, and always ready for a laugh. He lived by the words, "Life is for the Living," and he embraced that philosophy every day. He loved his family deeply, found joy in nature and the outdoors, and was an amazing cook who took great pleasure in bringing people together.

A skilled craftsman and woodsman his entire life, Beaver took great pride in his work and in creating things with his own hands. His creativity, craftsmanship, and love for his work were a defining part of who he was.

Above all, Beaver was a devoted father and grandfather. He was immensely proud of his three daughters, Erin Colagiovanni and her husband Nick, Lauren Coleman and her husband Kurt, and Audrey Quintiliani and her husband Anthony. He cherished his four grandchildren, Brooklyn and Reeve Colagiovanni and Riley and Kade Coleman, who lovingly knew him as Pop Pop. The memories they made together will be treasured forever.



He leaves behind his longtime fiancée of 20 years, Kathy Fisher; his three daughters and their families; his mother, Theresa Brady; and his brothers, Ken Brady and his wife Annie, Robert Brady and his wife Jennifer, and Jeff Brady and his wife Sandy. He also leaves behind Judy Kachinsky, the mother of his children, along with many beloved nephews, nieces, extended family members, and dear friends.

He was predeceased by his father, Kenneth Brady, on Oct. 23, 2025.

Beaver will be remembered for his humor, his incredible work ethic, his generosity, his love of family, and his ability to bring energy and fun wherever he went. He leaves behind a lifetime of laughter, stories, craftsmanship, and memories that will live on in all who knew him.

Calling hours will be held Monday, Aug. 31, from 5-7 p.m., at Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton. A funeral Mass will be held Tuesday, Sept. 1, at 11 a.m., at St. Patrick Church, 47 West High St., East Hampton.

In lieu of flowers, the family kindly asks that you consider planting a tree in Beaver's memory, honoring his lifelong love of nature and the outdoors.

"Life is for the living." And Beaver certainly lived. To leave online condolences, please visit www.spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Colchester

Flora Marvin Gustafson

Flora Marvin Gustafson, 87, of Columbia, passed away peacefully at her home Monday evening, Aug. 17. She was born in Colchester on Jan. 15, 1939, a daughter of the late Dwight and Cecilia Marvin.

Flora graduated from Bacon Academy in 1956 and married her beloved husband in 1957 at the Colchester Federated Church. The couple made their home in Colchester, where they raised their family. Flora worked with her husband as a bookkeeper at various companies, most recently at Carefree Building Company.

In 1958, Flora joined 18 other women in founding the Colchester Hayward Volunteer Fire Department Auxiliary. She was its last remaining Charter Member, with 67 years of membership.



As a member of the Auxiliary, Flora helped plan and attended countless fundraisers and events for the Colchester Hayward Volunteer Fire Department over the years.

Her passions included decorating her home, her poodles, who were her pride and joy, going to bingo in her younger years, and watching her grandchildren and great-grandchildren grow.

Flora will be sadly missed but always fondly remembered by her children, Donna (Ken) Tardif of Bozrah, Tracy (Mark) Fergione of Coventry, and Todd (Susan) Gustafson of Columbia; her siblings, Reynold Marvin, and Francis Brown; her grandchildren, Matthew, Courtney, Paul, Britta, Kersten, and Jonathan; her great-grandchildren, and many friends.

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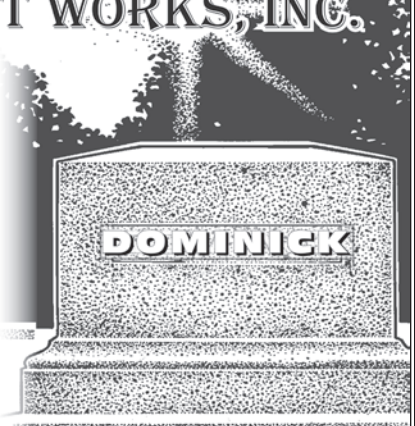
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LEGALS

TOWN OF COLCHESTER
PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
LEGAL NOTICE OF DECISION

At its Regular Meeting of August 19, 2026, the Colchester Planning & Zoning Commission made the following decision (s): **PZC2026-010 Eat Drink & Be Merry (Applicant/Owner)** Special Permit and Site Plan Application for a retail sales/service development at 79 Middletown Road (MBL 06-00-003-000). Zoning District: Suburban Use (SU) and Aquifer Protection Overlay Zone (APOZ). **APPROVED, with conditions.** **PZC2026-012 Jeffrey Naples (Applicant/Owner)** Special Permit Application for a dog day care per Section 8.8.20 of the Land Development (Zoning) Regulations at 155 Westchester Road (MBL 05-14-016-000). Zoning District: Rural Use (RU) and Arterial Commercial (AC). **Approved.** **PZC2026-014 Robert Komoroski (Applicant/Owner)** Site Plan Application to construct a 40' x 52' (2,080 SF) accessory building at 259 Middletown Road (MBL 4W-05/001-011) that exceeds the size permissible by the Zoning Enforcement Officer pursuant to Section 15.4 of the Town of Colchester Land Development (Zoning) Regulations. Zoning District: Rural Use (RU). **Approved.**
Planning & Zoning Commission
Joseph Mathieu, Chair

1TB 8/28

LEGAL NOTICE FOR BOARD
OF ASSESSMENT APPEALS
SEPTEMBER MOTOR VEHICLE APPEALS

In accordance with Connecticut General Statute Sec. 12-110, the Board of Assessment Appeals shall meet at least once during the month of September for the sole purpose of hearing only appeals for motor vehicles that appear on the prior October 1 Grand List. The Hebron Board of Assessment Appeals will meet at 5 p.m. on Tuesday, September 8, 2026 and Thursday, September 10, 2026 to hear appeals for October 1, 2025 Grand List Motor Vehicle assessments ONLY. Such appeal shall be made in person to the Board at the Hebron Town Office Building, 15 Gilead Street, Lower Level, Hebron CT. Appeals will be heard on a first-come, first-served basis. It is recommended that appellants bring the vehicle to the hearing along with any documentation that will support your appeal. Agents representing the appellant must have a letter of authorization to represent the property owner at the appeal. Per CT State Statute 12-71d(b), appeals can only consider the MSRP (Manufacturers Suggested Retail Price). The Board cannot hear appeals based on mileage and/or condition of the vehicle.

2TB 8/28, 9/4

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NURSERY ASSISTANT, GLASTONBURY: St. James' Episcopal Church is looking for a nurturing, dependable person to provide child care for parishioners' children. Sundays 9:45am-11:45am in the Nursery. Will be responsible for providing age-appropriate and child-centered care while maintaining a safe environment. Must be 18 years old and have completed American Red Cross training (Church can help facilitate training). \$50 Stipend provided. Contact Dawn, in Church office, 860-633-8333 or parishadmin@stjamesgl.org.

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Legal Notice

Andover Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission

The Duly Authorized Agent of the Andover Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission **APPROVED** the following application on August 25, 2026:

- Application #**WWC 26-6W**: Paul Surdel, **332 Lake Road** – Installation of 135LF of 4-foot tall black aluminum fence at the edge of lawn above retaining wall for safety purposes. Measurement includes a 5-foot gate above the stairs.

The above decision may be appealed to the Andover Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission pursuant to Section 12.2 of the Town of Andover Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Regulations, available at www.andoverconnecticut.org.

1TB 8/28

LEGAL NOTICE

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
TOWN OF HEBRON, CONNECTICUT

The Hebron Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a Public Hearing at a meeting scheduled for Tuesday, September 1, 2026, at 7:30 PM, at the Hebron Town Office Building, 15 Gilead Street, Hebron, CT, concerning the following:

1. Petition 2026-01 - Request of Frank & Elizabeth F. Ciani for a variance of Section 2.E.5 of the Hebron Zoning Regulations, to allow a 24' x 24' accessory structure (detached two-car garage) to be located 16' from the front property line where the minimum front yard setback is 50', on premise located at 114 Cone Road, R-1 District.

Dated at Hebron, Connecticut, on this 11th day of August 2026.

Interested persons may appear and all written communications will be received.

Legal Notice will be published on the Town of Hebron Website at <https://hebronct.com/agendas/>

2TB 8/21, 8/28

LEGAL NOTICE OF ACTIONS

HEBRON CONSERVATION COMMISSION
15 GILEAD STREET, HEBRON CT

At its August 20, 2026 meeting, the Hebron Conservation Commission took the following action:

Petition 2026-09 – 309 Jones Street, Amston, Walas, Stanley & Natalie, Removal of silt build-up from a pond bank and dispersal of materials in a field to the east outside of the Upland Review Area. **Approved,** with conditions:

Petition 2026-08 – Meadowbrook Road, Parcels 334, 335 & 336, Amston, Parlin, Leslie A. & Kathryn S., Construction of a Single-family Residence within the Upland Review Area. **Approved,** with conditions:

Petition 2026-10 – 21 Bass Lake Road, Parcels 331 & 332, Amston, Refined Living, LLC, Construction of a Single-family Residence within the Upland Review Area. **Approved,** with conditions:

Petition 2026-11 – 28 School House Road, Lot 22, Amston, Douglass, Brett, Construction of a Single-family Residence within the Upland Review Area. **Approved,** with conditions:

James P. Cordier, Conservation and Inland Wetlands Agent For: Thomas Loto, Chairman, Conservation and Inland Wetlands Commission

<https://transcripts.gotomeeting.com/#/s/a2c3078619db563bb9f-386b27a50f44158375b0f39dfe88a11f589edc4f6ae3>

1TB 8/28

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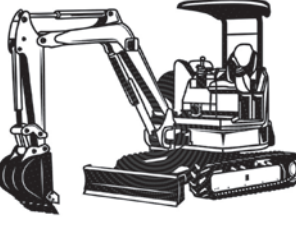
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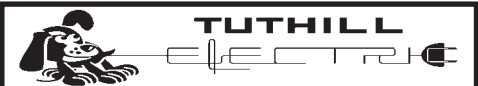
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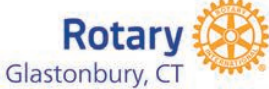
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