

THE EASTFORD Communicator



SEPTEMBER 2026 EASTFORD.NEWS "Eastford: One of Connecticut's best small towns." - Carol Davidge VOL. 35, No. 2

Emilio defeats MacCormack in GOP primary

WILL FACE OFF AGAINST BOYD FOR 50TH DISTRICT IN NOVEMBER

BY ADAM MINOR
MANAGING EDITOR

After controversial comments from a 50th District GOP candidate pushed an election race into turmoil, a last-minute push by area Republicans has led to a new face set to challenge the Democratic incumbent in November.

In the GOP Primary held Tuesday, Aug. 11, Anthony Emilio (Pomfret) defeated Jadon MacCormack (Brooklyn) by a district-wide count of 368-90, which represents an 80.3-percent advantage for Emilio. In Eastford, Emilio defeated MacCormack by a total of 65-8. According to Town Clerk Johanna Wolfe, there were 59 machine poll votes on Aug. 11, no absentee ballots, and 14 early voting ballots. In total, 73 Republican voters were counted among 448

Turn to **PRIMARY**, pg. 23

SUMMER SPIRIT



EASTFORD — While summer may unofficially be over, children in town had plenty to keep themselves occupied over the past couple of months. Above, during the week of July 27-31, the Congregational Church of Eastford and Living Proof Church in Ashford hosted its annual Sports Camp at Eastford Elementary School. The week provided practice in several sports, along with Bible lessons. At left, Eastford Baptist Church held its annual Vacation Bible School event Aug. 3-7. The theme was "Down on the Farm: God Gives the Growth," which aimed to teach kids about the parables of Jesus. Pictured, Aubrey takes a ride down the water slide on Water Night. For more photos from Sports Camp, turn to page 6. For more photos from Eastford Baptist Church's VBS, turn to page 7!

Courtesy photos

Turning pain into purpose

AUTHOR SHARES THE STORY OF A LIFE ENDED FAR TOO SOON — AND THE LESSONS LEARNED SINCE

BY ADAM MINOR
MANAGING EDITOR

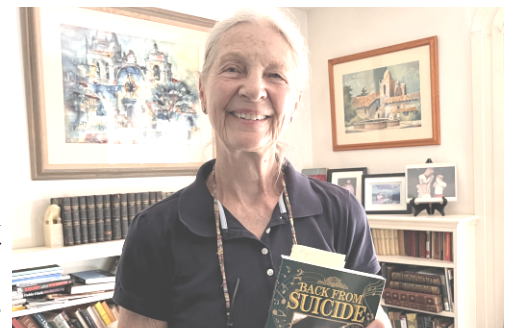
Patrick Wood had the world at his fingertips. The Pomfret native could read at the age of 2. He excelled in academics and music, becoming a top scholar at Pomfret Community School. He earned perfect SAT scores and was the valedictorian of his graduating class of Pomfret School in 2001, earning a scholarship

to Stanford University, where he graduated in 2005 with honors and worked as a programmer for Siemens in Berlin, Germany.

But underneath all the success, Patrick was struggling.

"He was a miracle child," said his mother, Marie Lisette Rimer. "He did everything you asked. He played well with others. He was a

Turn to **AUTHOR**, pg. 22



Author Marie Lisette Rimer will visit the Eastford Public Library on Wednesday, Sept. 16, to discuss her book, "Back from Suicide: Before and After the Essential Patrick," which chronicles her journey through the death by suicide of her son, Patrick, in 2006. Adam Minor photo

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THE
EASTFORD
Communicator
LOCAL NEWS SINCE 1992

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MANAGING EDITOR: Adam Minor

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CONTACT INFORMATION

Articles, calendar or event information, press releases, photos or questions may be sent to eastfordnews@gmail.com. Please send text in Microsoft Word format (not PDF), and high-resolution photos in JPG format. Send mail to Editor, Eastford Communicator, P.O. Box 253, Eastford, CT 06242, by the 15th of the month preceding the next issue. All submissions to the *Communicator* are subject to editing. The *Communicator* reserves the right not to accept submissions. We do not publish Letters to the Editor.

To contact the *Communicator* by phone, call (860) 337-2481, and leave a message, and someone will get back to you as soon as we can.

ADVERTISING

E-mail ads.eastfordnews@gmail.com for advertising information and questions, or to be sent a copy of our rate sheet. Payments should be by check only, and should be sent to *The Eastford Communicator*, P.O. Box 253, Eastford, CT 06242, by the 15th of the month preceding the next issue.

CIRCULATION

The Eastford Communicator is available online at <https://eastford.news/>, and in print, free of charge, to every home in Eastford. Out-of-town subscriptions are available by request, for an annual fee of \$50 (although additional donations are appreciated).

Auction Committee seeks assistance from community

EASTFORD — The Eastford School Annual Goods & Services Auction is coming up on Saturday, Nov. 14, and we're starting to collect donations for our silent and live Auctions.

For those who may not know, the auction helps fund the eighth-grade class trip to Washington, D.C. (or, when class sizes are smaller, the seventh- and eighth-grade trip together). Our goal is to raise enough money to make sure every student has the opportunity to go, regardless of their family's ability to pay. We really don't want any student to miss out because of the cost.

We reach out to businesses all over Connecticut and New England, but we'd especially love to support and highlight the talented people and small businesses right here

in Eastford and our surrounding communities.

Do you make pottery, jewelry, art, or woodwork? Own a landscaping business, food truck, salon, or pet service? Maybe you're a photographer, baker, personal trainer, yoga instructor, or have another service or talent that could make a great auction item.

We'd love to hear from you! Donations can be an item, a gift certificate, a service, an experience, or anything else you think people would enjoy bidding on.

If you're interested in donating or just want to learn more, please e-mail auction@eastfordct.org.

Thank you to everyone who has supported this auction over the years. It really does take a community to make this happen, and we're so grateful for ours!

SUPPORT THE COMMUNICATOR VIA VENMO!

The *Eastford Communicator* is proud to serve our community by providing local news, event coverage, and stories that matter to Eastford. If you enjoy reading the paper and would like to help support our mission, you can now make a donation quickly and securely through Venmo! Simply scan the QR code with your smartphone's camera, or search for us on Venmo (@EastfordCommunicator), to make a contribution of any amount. Every donation helps us continue bringing quality content to our community. Thank you for your generous support!



venmo



Sometimes, the little things make the biggest difference. "Shout Outs" is your place to celebrate kindness, gratitude, and everyday heroes. Did someone brighten your day? Help without asking? Go the extra mile when no one was watching? Let's tell their story. Share your "shout out" and together, we'll spread some joy — one good deed at a time.

From Susan Burns: Shout Out this month to the many people who helped the Town of Eastford during the election season. The Registrars put in many hours in order to facilitate the safe and accurate process. Without volunteers, the week-long voting procedure would be impossible. Thank you to all who devote their time and energy.

Send your "shout outs" to Managing Editor Adam Minor at eastfordnews@gmail.com, or send a message to us on our Facebook page. Please keep your messages to 75 words or less. The editor has the right to accept, reject, or edit any submission. Deadline to receive "shout outs" is the 15th of every month before the next publication.

DONATIONS MAKE THE COMMUNICATOR POSSIBLE!

Please consider a donation to the *Communicator*!
Send checks to:
Eastford Communicator, P.O. Box 253, Eastford, CT 06242

After five decades, an amazing homecoming for Lucy Marcy

EASTFORD — After nearly 50 years away, Lucy Marcy's headstone has finally returned home to Eastford.

The remarkable journey began in mid-July when First Selectman Deb Richards received a call from Elaine Hess, chairperson of the Montville Cemetery Group. While organizing the basement of Montville Town Hall, the group discovered Lucy Marcy's headstone, which they believe had been stored there since the 1960s. Further investigation revealed that the stone had been found years earlier along a back road in Montville and brought to Town Hall for safekeeping. How it came to be abandoned there may never be known.

With assistance from Montville Town Historian Jon Chase, the group began researching the stone's origins. Using records compiled by Mike Carroll of Rediscovering History, Inc., along with the Hale Index System, they determined that Lucy Marcy had originally been buried in Deane Cemetery in Eastford. Elaine Hess then contacted Deb Richards to arrange for the headstone's return.

On the morning of July 20, Lucy Marcy's headstone was carefully reset in Deane Cemetery, placed behind her footstone and

near the grave of her husband's first wife, Polly. Oren Marcy married Polly in 1797 and, following her death, married Lucy in 1820. Polly's parents are also buried in Deane Cemetery, along with Oren and Polly's 3-year-old daughter, Esther.

Although the exact date of Polly Marcy's death remains unknown, Lucy Marcy died in 1830. Despite extensive research, the burial location of Oren Marcy, who died in 1828, has not been confirmed. It is believed that he was buried in Deane Cemetery, but his headstone has never been located.

The successful return of Lucy Marcy's headstone was made possible through the dedication and collaboration of many individuals. Special thanks go to the Montville Cemetery Group, Mayor Bunnell Sr., Montville Town Historian Jon Chase, Mike Carroll of Rediscovering History, Inc., Eastford First Selectman Deb Richards, Chairman of the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Tom DeJohn, and Historian Tom Latham, whose combined efforts ensured that Lucy's marker was finally returned to its rightful place.

After nearly half a century away — and nearly two centuries after her death — Lucy Marcy's



After nearly five decades away, the headstone of Lucy Marcy was finally returned to Deane Cemetery on Ashford Road in July. Courtesy photo

headstone once again rests in Eastford, reunited with her family. Her story is a remarkable reminder of the importance of preserving local history and honoring those who came before us. This long-overdue homecoming stands as a testament to what can be accomplished through historical research, community collaboration, and a shared commitment to preserving our shared heritage.



We want to see your

FAIR FUN &

BACK TO SCHOOL

Photos!

Send us your
FAIR PHOTOS
of you and your
family having fun!

Send us your
BACK TO SCHOOL
photos of your kids
on their first day!

E-mail your photos to
eastfordnews@gmail.com.
Please include your name, along with a brief description.
We hope to feature these photos in the October edition!

Share your moments!

Eastford students awarded scholarships from Community Foundation

BY ADAM MINOR
MANAGING EDITOR

EASTFORD — Six Eastford students recently received scholarships from the Hartford Foundation and the Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut.

Scholarships awarded included:

- The Dennis S. Barlow Scholarship: Awarded in memory of Dennis Barlow, whose dedication, love and commitment to his family, patients and community were evident throughout his life. Dr. Barlow served on the Eastford Board of Education and chaired the Facilities Committee. Provides scholarships to Eastford students pursuing degrees in the sciences, engineering, or pre-med fields. This year's recipients are Robert Ellsworth and Emmanuel Kaberia.

- Harold D. Carpenter Scholarship: An avid supporter of local history, Harold Carpenter contributed a supplement to Diane Maher Cameron's book, "Eastford, The Biography of a New England Town," published in 1976 by the Eastford Historical Society. In the supplement, Mr. Carpenter shared first-hand memories of local history. The fund provides scholarships to graduating students from Eastford who demonstrate financial need, scholastic ability, and qualities of character — including integrity, industriousness, and seriousness of purpose. Special consideration is given to candidates interested in history. This year's recipient is Eric Mathewson.

- Esther & Lucie Harmon and Leta Sabin Trepal Scholarship: Leta Sabin Trepal was a 12-year member of the Eastford Board of



Six Eastford students recently earned a variety of scholarships from the Hartford Foundation and the Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut. Pictured, from left, Eric Mathewson, Max Larkin, Robert Ellsworth, and Emmanuel Kaberia. Not pictured, Johanna Blanchette and Kerry Blais. Adam Minor photo

Education and a Woodstock Academy Trustee. Esther Harmon was a scholar in Teutonic Philology. Lucie Harmon was an expert in vertebrate biology. The fund provides scholarships to residents of Eastford who are pursuing a post-secondary education in any area of study, with special consideration for non-traditional students returning to academia. Requirements are academic achievement and good character demonstrated via integrity, industriousness and seriousness of purpose. This year's recipients are Johanna Blanchette and Eric Mathewson.

- Eleanor K. Lewis Scholarship: Established by former pupils, neighbors, and friends in memory of Eleanor K. Lewis, who was a

teacher and principal in Eastford for 34 years. The fund provides scholarships to Eastford students who demonstrate scholastic ability, good character, and financial need. This year's recipient is Max Larkin.

- Edith Wheaton Smith Scholarship: Edith Wheaton Smith was a school teacher in Eastford and then secretary of the Board of Education. The fund provides scholarships to Eastford students in good academic standing who will pursue any course of study at an accredited two- or four-year institution or other accredited institution. This year's recipients are Kerry Blais and Emmanuel Kaberia.

- Town of Eastford General Scholarship: Provides

scholarships to benefit high school seniors residing in the Town of Eastford who are pursuing post-secondary education. This year's recipient is Max Larkin.

- Emil Vaida Scholarship: Emil Vaida began his education in the one room Phoenixville School. He greatly valued education and earned many degrees. The fund provides scholarships for students from Eastford. This year's recipient is Max Larkin.

- Mary King Sharpe Memorial Business Scholarship: Given for the study of business. Mary King Sharpe grew up in Eastford and was one of seven children. Her family's farm was located at the top of School House Hill. This year's recipient is Max Larkin.

EES announces Third Trimester Honor Roll

EASTFORD — Eastford Elementary School has announced the Third Trimester Honor Roll for the Middle School level (Grades 6-8).

HIGH HONORS

(Grades of A, including A+ and A-, in every academic and special subject, allowing for one B+)

Owen Barlow, Georgia Barlow, Katherine Douglass, Olivia DePercio, Zoe Labonte, Logan Gillett, Xander Sughrue, Jillian Norman, McKenna Tacy, Grace Witter

HONORS

(Grades of A or B, including B+ and B-, in every academic and special subject)

Alina Platt, Emma-Lynn Salony, Aiden Abbamonte, Ryan Collard, Blake Gilbert, Jericho Hillman, Callum St. John, John Douglass, Charles Ellsworth, Armeen Kuljancic, Mackenzie Lathrop, Isla Lupacchino, Chloe Minor, Fernando Perez, Syllas Platt, Aiyana Reed, Ilsa Reiner, Jacob Waddicor

EPL celebrates summer reading finale with colonial-themed event

EASTFORD — It was a perfect summer Saturday on Aug. 15, as the Eastford Public Library celebrated its Colonial Days Summer Reading Finale with old-fashioned fun and games in the park. Children crafted the 19th-century Game of Graces using wooden embroidery hoops, ribbons, and dowels. They played with colonial toys and cat's cradle, visited the park's StoryWalk, experimented with three-legged racing, blew bubbles, enjoyed refreshing ice cream and frozen pops, and held friendly tug-of-war competitions.

Courtesy photos



Sports Camp event brings Spirit-filled summer fun to EES

EASTFORD — The Congregational Church of Eastford and Living Proof Church in Ashford held their annual Sports Camp at Eastford Elementary School July 27-31. Sports included flag football, basketball, cheer, soccer, and skill development for 4- and 5-year-olds. Campers received daily Bible lessons. Staff included college-aged coach/leaders from UW Sports Ministries. The week hosted 137 kids and around 50 volunteers. This was the eighth year of the camp. education. *Courtesy photos*



EBC goes ‘down on the farm’ for Vacation Bible School

EASTFORD — Eastford Baptist Church brought the farm to its latest Vacation Bible School event Aug. 3-7, as it held its annual outreach week for more than 50 kids in grades pre-K to 6. The theme of the week was “Down on the Farm: God Gives the Growth,” which featured a weeklong curriculum based on the parables of Jesus. Kids enjoyed snacks, crafts, games, music, live animals, and giveaways, along with a “Water Night” theme night on Thursday, Aug. 6. Also featured throughout the week was the church’s annual Penny War and Food Drive to benefit the Eastford Food Pantry. This year, the children raised \$700 and collected more than 300 items for the food pantry. Next year’s event has already been announced for July 26-30, 2027, and will be titled: “Hero: God to the Rescue.”

Courtesy photos





DID YOU KNOW?

Dogs hear what you cannot. They detect frequencies up to 65,000 Hz (humans max out at 20,000 Hz). Dogs have 18 muscles controlling their ears for directional hearing.



DOG OF THE MONTH

Meet Jack! — This 3-month-old shepherd mix is smart, fun, sweet, and ready to join his new family. Visit www.pawsafe.org to learn more about him! PawSafe is located at 348 Old Colony Rd., Eastford.

FOOD PANTRY UPDATE: AUDREY CARABEAU

The Eastford Food Pantry is located at the Eastford Baptist Church, 133 Union Rd. Please see our hours of operation below. Please note that we will be open on Tuesday, Sept. 8, due to the Labor Day holiday on Sept. 7.

If you reside in Eastford and are in need of food assistance, call Audrey Carabeau at (860) 933-7685 to sign up. We have the resources to help you! All referrals are kept confidential. Delivery is available to homebound individuals.

Thank you to all who donated food, home goods, and money in August. Your donations are greatly appreciated by our pantry

families. The Eastford Food Pantry relies on donations from the community. All donations to the pantry can be dropped off at Bowen's Garage or at the Town Office Building during regular business hours. Check donations can be mailed to Eastford Food Pantry, 16 Westford Rd., Eastford, CT 06242.

Donation suggestions include cereal, rice mixes, healthy snacks, deodorant, and laundry detergent. Thank you for your support!

Eastford Food Pantry hours for September are: Tuesday, Sept. 8, 8-10:30 a.m.; Wednesday, Sept. 23, 2-4 p.m.

VETERAN NOTES: GARRY BROWN

Could you use a little extra financial help? The Soldiers, Sailors and Marines Fund has expanded its financial assistance programs for any Connecticut veteran or surviving spouse who served during a wartime period.

You may qualify for assistance with:

- Monthly rent
- Electric and utility bills
- A free tank of heating oil
- And other financial needs

For example, veterans who served in the U.S. Army in Germany between 1961 and

1975 may be eligible. You do not need to have served in a combat zone to qualify.

To be eligible, a couple's household income should generally not exceed \$80,000 per year.

There is no cost to apply, and all inquiries are handled with the utmost confidentiality.

For more information or to see if you qualify, contact Garry Brown, Municipal Veteran Representative, at (860) 928-2309 or e-mail garry.brown71@aim.com



Our next issue will be published on:

Oct. 1

Please send all submissions to eastfordnews@gmail.com by:

Sept. 15

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HERE**

Let *The Communicator* help you spread the word about your business!

E-mail ads.eastfordnews@gmail.com for more info or to request a rate sheet!

CALENDAR

Calendar entries must be sent to the editor no later than the 15th of the month preceding publication. Please send all calendar content to eastfordnews@gmail.com. Please try to limit calendar submissions to 100 words or fewer.

SEPTEMBER

Wednesday, Sept. 2

Wednesday night ministries are slated to begin on Wednesday, Sept. 2, at Eastford Baptist Church! There is something for all ages! For Grades 1-6, join us at 6:30 p.m. for our Olympians children's ministry. For students in Grades 7-12, join us in the Family Activity Center at 6:30 p.m. for Teen Club! For adults, join us at 6:30 p.m. for Women's Ministry, where we will be beginning a study in the Book of James. In the downstairs Family Activity Center classroom, we will begin a new series titled "Cults and Counterfeit Christianity." We will discuss the definition of a "cult" and then look at several common examples. For more information, call the church at (860) 974-1414, or visit www.eastfordbaptist.com.

Thursday, Sept. 3

Eastford Public Library will host "Storytime" at 11 a.m. Join us for a story, craft, snack and time of free play.

Wednesday, Sept. 9

Eastford Public Library will host "Maker's Night" from 6-7:30 p.m. This program is for teens and adults! Please register.

Thursday, Sept. 10

Eastford Public Library will host "Storytime" at 11 a.m. Join us for a story, craft, snack and time of free play.

Saturday, Sept. 12

Eastford Public Library will host "The Page Turners" at 1 p.m. This book club will discuss "Back from Suicide: Before and After the Essential Patrick" by Marie Lisette Rimer in anticipation of her upcoming Author Talk at the library on Wednesday, Sept. 16.

Wednesday, Sept. 16

Eastford Public Library will host an "Author Talk" at 6 p.m. with local author Marie Lisette Rimer. She will be sharing her heart-rending story about a mother's grief by discussing her book, "Back from Suicide: Before and

After the Essential Patrick." Please register.

Thursday, Sept. 17

Eastford Public Library will host "Storytime" at 11 a.m. Join us for a story, craft, snack and time of free play. In the evening, the Friends of the Eastford Public Library will meet at 5:30 p.m. All are welcome to attend.

Saturday, Sept. 19

Eastford Public Library will host an "Author Talk" with award-winning author Paul Tremblay at 1 p.m. Paul is best known for writing horror, dark fantasy, and suspense-filled novels. Don't miss out! Registration is a must.

Thursday, Sept. 24

Eastford Public Library hosts "Storytime" at 11 a.m. Join us for a story, craft, snack and time of free play.

Save the Date! Thursday, Sept. 24, 6-8 p.m. in the Eastford Elementary School Gymnasium — The Eastford Board of Education invites all Eastford

families and community members to attend a Community Conversation regarding the district's ongoing review of Eastford's designated high school. For the past several months, the board has been comparing and evaluating Woodstock Academy and E.O. Smith High School to better understand the opportunities each school offers Eastford students. This meeting is an opportunity to learn more, ask questions, and share your thoughts as part of the community discussion. Your voice is important. Whether you are a current parent, future parent, student, resident, or community member, we encourage you to attend and participate in this conversation. This informational meeting is intended to provide information and gather community input. No decision will be made at this event.

Saturday, Sept. 26

Eastford Public Library hosts a "Welcome Fall Craft" for children at 10:30 a.m. Please register.

FROM THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF EASTFORD: MIKE MORAN

Greetings Eastford! As I write this, the Congregational Church of Eastford is moving towards a moving target — the completion of our new building. We are very blessed to be able to replace the building we lost to an arson fire 3 1/2 years ago. It is, however, taking a bit longer than we had hoped, and the ride is a bit bumpy. But all is OK. We will be in the building "soon" (please note that I'm non-committal about an exact date) and will invite you all to an open house later this fall.

In the seasons of life, fall is often a time of new starts. A new school year, a new football and soccer season, and a time when we move from the loose structure of summer life to more structure and discipline. This fall, I have an

invitation for you to step into something you may not have tried before. Now, maybe you just jumped to the conclusion that I am about to ask you to add Sunday worship to your weekly routine. I could do that, but it isn't actually what I have in mind.

As we start new things this fall, as we shift our "busy" from summer to school, work, exercise, diet, and driving kids to sports and such, maybe the cooler weather has you energized. Or maybe not. Perhaps you are feeling the burden of fresh responsibilities. Maybe you are starting to feel tired before you even get started. In light of this, I have another idea you might consider.

Jesus said these words: "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy

laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." (Matthew 11:28-30)

I can tell you from personal experience that when you are busy, harassed, and harried, if you accept Jesus' invitation to "come to me," you will indeed find rest. Real rest. Soul rest. The kind of rest you can only have when you are "right" about things like guilt and shame and fear — even fear of death. I am talking about sleep-well-through-the-night, peaceful rest. If you come near to Him, you will also be challenged, changed, spiritually healed, loved, and hopeful.

If that sounds good to you and you would like to know more, please reach out to us at the Congregational Church of Eastford so that we might help you find that rest. Or, come worship with us on a Sunday. Or open a Bible and start reading. Maybe start with the Gospel of John. One of the titles of Jesus is "Prince of Peace." He loves you and wants you to receive ultimate peace.

P.S. The Congregational Church of Eastford is centered on Jesus Christ, grounded in the authority and truth of the Bible, and committed to serving God by telling all about Jesus, emulating His love, and walking in His truth. Check us out at ceastford.org.

VITAL STATISTICS

BIRTHS

July: 1

MARRIAGES

July: 0

DEATHS

July: 3

REAL ESTATE TRANSACTIONS

June 2: 89 John Perry Rd., \$575,000, Stephen M. Bell to Peter S. Galloway

June 3: 41 Millbridge Rd., \$570,000, Mrl LLC to Michael W. Moran

June 16: 22 Westford Rd., \$310,000, Kelley L. Kurrelmeyer to Kirk M. Ducharme

June 23: 123 Ashford Rd., Unit 1, \$335,000, Yaacov Kopliovich to Caroline Hutchings

PUBLIC MEETINGS: SEPTEMBER

Tuesday, Sept. 1: Conservation and Historic Preservation Commission, 7 p.m., Town Office Building

Friday, Sept. 4: Board of Assessment Appeals, 7 p.m., Town Office Building

Sunday, Sept. 6: Recreation Commission, 4 p.m., Town Office Building

Tuesday, Sept. 8: Planning Commission, 7:30 p.m., Town Office Building

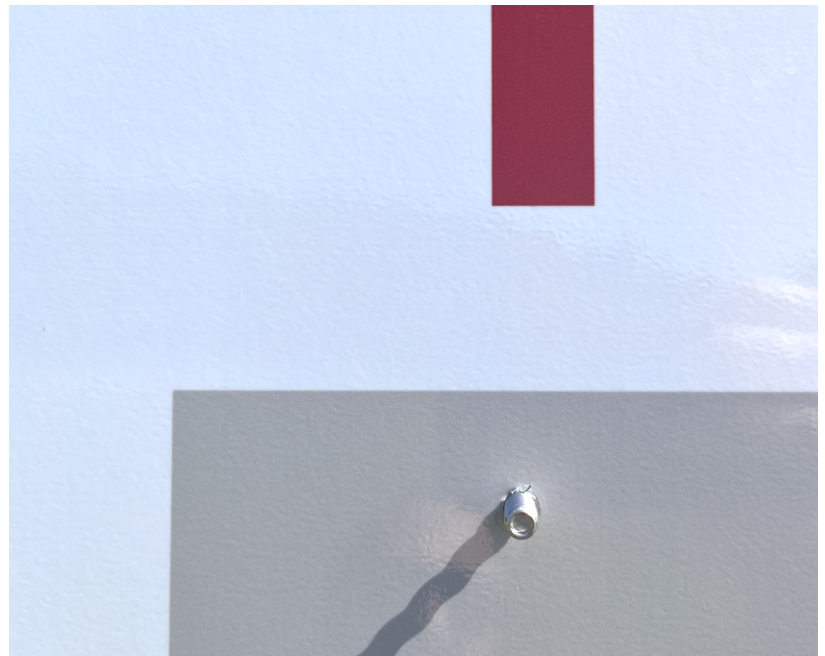
Wednesday, Sept. 9: Crystal Pond Park Commission, 6 p.m., Crystal Pond Park, 305 Crystal Pond Rd., Woodstock, CT 06281

Thursday, Sept. 10: Bowen's Field Committee, 6 p.m., Town Office Building; Board of Education, 6 p.m., Eastford Elementary School Library

Monday, Sept. 14: Board of Selectmen, 7 p.m., Town Office Building

Thursday, Sept. 24: Library Board of Trustees, 6:30 p.m., Eastford Public Library; Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission, 7 p.m., Town Office Building

WHERE IS IT?



Where was this photo taken? See the answer on page 20!

FROM THE GROVE CEMETERY ASSOCIATION BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The President of the Eastford funeral attendees at the Eastford Grove Cemetery Association wishes to acknowledge members of the Board of Trustees and friends who volunteer their time to ensure the safety of Grove Cemetery: Alex Kowalchuk, Carolyn Hazard, David Barlow, Ken Grube, Linda Torgeson, Ralph Yulo, Rick Torgeson, and Scott Huri.

Yes, I would like to help. Enclosed is my gift of \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Gift in memory of _____

Send to: Eastford Grove Cemetery Assoc., Inc. P.O. Box 284, Eastford, CT 06242

IN THE GARDEN: SUSAN BURNS

When we hosted a Garden Conservancy Open Day here this summer, most guests asked about one plant in particular.

This plant is "Clethra alnifolia," whose common names are Summersweet and Sweet Pepperbush. This is a native plant, and really good for wildlife. When it blooms, it smells heavenly. Clethra is very easy to grow. I have never watered it. We have a hedge of the shrub. It is

tremendously pest-free. It is excellent for summer flowers and fragrance, a shrub border, and good in shade and wet areas, although ours are grown in drought conditions. The foliage is very handsome, and the overall winter habit is clean. This is one of the easiest plants to grow at commercial and garden centers, so many cultivars are available. You could choose pink or white flowers — whichever height suits your landscape and your

soil conditions. Our hedge uses the cultivar "Hummingbird," which stays low and spreads by rhizomes. Fall color is golden yellow. The flowers are 6 inches long and open earlier than the parent (species). This plant has cold hardiness of -30°F.

So, if you are looking for something special for your yard that attracts a lot of attention, look no further than Clethra. A picture of this plant is attached to this article.



WHAT'S GOING ON AT THE EASTFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY?

KATIE BALL



Calling all teens! As the new school year begins, the library hopes to offer more programs to better meet your needs. A cozy corner has been evolving in our young adult section, complete with a couch, chair, and plenty of new books to read. We welcome any ideas or feedback to be able to provide you with the perfect space to imagine, discover, and connect.

Library hours are Tuesdays, 11 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.; Wednesdays, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Thursdays, 11 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.; and Saturdays, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. Stop in — we'd love to see you!

You may reach us at (860) 974-0125, or by e-mail at eastfordpublib@gmail.com. Upcoming events and programs can be seen on the town page or on social media. If you haven't yet, please follow Eastford Public Library on Facebook and/or Instagram @eastfordpubliclibrary.

FROM THE FIRST SELECTMAN: DEB RICHARDS

ASSISTANCE CONNECTION

- Life Safety: Call 911 – Police, Fire, Medical
- Poison Control: (800) 222-1222
- Crisis Helpline: 988
- Adult Mobile Crisis – Mental health teams come to you: (860) 467-3135
- United Services – Counseling and Therapy: (860) 456-2261
- Sexual Assault Center – Crisis Support and Counseling: (860) 456-3595
- Substance Misuse Help, DMHAS: (800) 563-4086
- Natchaug Hospital – Local Detox and Rehab: (860) 456-1311
- Meals on Wheels: (860) 886-1720
- Information and Utilities, Housing, Heating and Shelter Aid: Call 211
- Eastford Food Pantry: (860) 933-7685.
- Congregational Church of Eastford – Grief and Loss Group: (860) 974-0294
- The Access Community Action Agency, Greater Willimantic, 1315 Main St., Willimantic, CT 06226. Employment and Training, Energy Heating Assistance, Weatherization, Homeless Shelter, WIC Programs, Child and Adult Food Program, Emergency Food Bank, Senior Housing, Income Tax Assistance: (860) 450-7400
- Eversource Energy Assistance: (800)

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- Community Kitchens of Northeastern Connecticut, Inc., provides healthy and nutritious meals to all who come through their doors. P.O. Box 502, Danielson, CT 06239: (860) 779-2465
- TVCCA Meals on Wheels: (860) 934-1010
- QV Senior Citizen Center – Sophie Charron, Director and Agent for the Elderly: (860) 774-1243
- Covenant Soup Kitchen: (860) 423-1643
- The Chaplin Congregational Church Food Pantry serves Chaplin and the surrounding areas. They aim to provide a full week/plus of emergency food for all those they serve and to provide personal care products in addition to just food. If you need assistance, please call the church at (860) 455-9708 to schedule a pickup appointment for your food.
- Help with rent in Windham County – 1320 Main St., Willimantic, CT 06226: (866) 327-7700
- Veteran Assistance benefits – Eastford residents, Garry Brown: (860) 928-2309
- Town Office Building/Selectmen's Office: (860) 974-0133, ext. 3.

DID YOU KNOW? EASTFORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Did you know that in the horse-and- buggy days, when many mail trains were running, it was possible to send a letter to Hartford and get a reply the same day? The letter would leave Eastford at 4 a.m. via Putnam, and the reply would come via North Windham and be delivered to Eastford at 7 p.m. the same day. Oh, for the good old days!

To learn more about the Eastford

Historical Society and Eastford history, visit our website <https://www.eastfordct.gov/community/page/eastford-historical-society>. If you wish to join our organization, membership forms are available on our website or at the Town Clerk's office, Library, or Post Office. Our mailing address is P.O. Box 350, Eastford, CT 06242. Donations are greatly appreciated.

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FROM THE EASTFORD INDEPENDENT FIRE COMPANY #1 INC.



Where did the summer go? Hot and humid weather is still predicted — so hydrate, hydrate,

hydrate!

The EIFC responded to 24 calls during July.

Annual hose and ladder testing was scheduled on Aug. 1. The purpose of the testing was to determine how much pressure the hoses can take and the strength of the ladders.

Santa returned to the Peppertree Campground on Aug. 8.

On a solemn note, members, along with Engine Tanker 171, Rescue 171, and UTV, participated

in the annual “Silas Run” in memory of member EMS Lieutenant Silas Bunnell, who passed away in April 2018. Silas joined the EIFC as a Junior Member in 2013. He took pride in his work, offering his computer expertise and being only a phone call away to support his peers and fellow officers. Silas became proficient as a pump operator on Engine Tanker 171 and earned the rank of CAR 971 in June of 2017. There were approximately 300

people in attendance at the J.J. Webster Scout Reservation in Ashford for a “Celebration of Life” run honoring Silas on July 11. Run fees and donations are contributed to a fund in his name to help subsidize scholarships for potential Scout campers. There is always a true sense of fellowship and support from friends, family, and local fire departments in memory of Silas during the “Silas Run.” RIP – CAR 971.

-Submitted by Jeannine Spink

FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT: DONNA LEAKE

I always enjoy the excitement and special energy that permeates the first days of school. As we begin the 2026-27 school year, I want to take a moment to thank our entire school community for helping to make the opening of this school year a success. Our students returned ready to learn, connect, and grow. It is uplifting to see students reconnecting with their friends and meeting their new teachers. Our teachers and staff have worked diligently to prepare welcoming classrooms and supportive learning environments. They deserve a special thank you for their dedication and commitment to our students.

In addition to welcoming back our returning staff members, we are pleased to welcome Mrs. Dana Mutch as our Director of Special Programs and Social Studies teacher for grades 5 and 6, and Mr. Stephen Nappi as the

Special Education teacher who will be leading a new program for us — the Therapeutic Learning Center (TLC), which is designed to meet the varied learning needs of students at EES. Although not new to the staff, Catherine DePercio, our world language teacher, will also serve as the social studies teacher for grades 7 and 8.

In addition to hiring new staff, our administration has been actively monitoring several facilities projects this summer. With a new coat of paint, our gym has become a brighter and more inviting learning and community space. The overall appearance of EES has been enhanced with the installation of a new roof on the middle school section of the building, and our cupola has been restored.

At its meeting on Aug. 20, the Board of Education (BOE) recognized the recipients of the

Community Foundation Scholarships — Robert Ellsworth, Emmanuel Kaberia, Eric Matheson, Johanna Blanchette, Max Larkin, and Kerry Blais. The BOE also received a special report concerning high school options from Lauren Barlow and Terry Cote, members of the Ad Hoc High School Committee. Additional review and discussion of this topic will take place during the Community Conversation scheduled for Sept. 24, from 6-8 p.m.

In closing, I need to thank our families and members of the Eastford community for your continuing partnership. In a small community like ours, we know that it takes all of us working together to provide a successful learning environment for all students. I am grateful for the support, kindness, and pride you continue to show for our schools. As John Dewey reminded us,

“Education is not preparation for life; education is life itself.” This is a wonderful thought as we begin this new year. Every day brings our students opportunities to learn, discover, build relationships, and become the people they are meant to be. I am looking forward to a wonderful year ahead full of learning, growth, and many moments that make us proud to be part of this community.

Thank you for allowing me to be a part of this amazing learning community. As always, you are invited to contact me at dleake@eastfordct.org if you have questions or concerns and/or would like to schedule an appointment. Of course, please feel welcome to stop by to say hello before our regularly scheduled Board of Education meetings. Our next meeting is Sept. 10 at 6 p.m. in the EES library.

THE PASTOR'S PEN: TIMOTHY R. HOWARD JR.

A simple invitation may not seem like much. It is a little like planting a seed — the act takes only a moment, but we never know what may grow from it. An invitation to church may introduce a child to the truth of God's Word, help a teenager find lasting friendships and direction, or encourage an adult who has quietly been searching for hope.

That is why, as pastor of Eastford Baptist Church, I would like to extend a simple invitation to you and your

family — come and grow with us.

Every Sunday begins with Bible studies for all ages at 9:15 a.m. These classes provide an opportunity to study the Bible carefully, ask meaningful questions, and discover how God's Word applies to everyday life. At 10:30 a.m., we gather for worship, prayer, fellowship, and in-depth, verse-by-verse preaching from Scripture.

Also, beginning Sept. 2, we meet every Wednesday at 6:30 p.m. Our midweek gathering

includes Bible study for adults, our Olympians children's ministry (Grades 1-6), and Teen Club (Grades 7-12). Children and teenagers enjoy age-appropriate Bible lessons, games, activities, and time with friends in a safe and welcoming environment. Our goal is to help young people build a strong biblical foundation while forming healthy friendships and having fun together.

In a busy and often confusing world, individuals and families need the unchanging truth and

lasting hope found in Jesus Christ. Whether you have attended church your entire life, have been away for some time, or have never entered a church before, you will be warmly welcomed at Eastford Baptist Church.

Sometimes something as simple as accepting an invitation can become the beginning of something life-changing. We invite you to come, meet us, and discover a place where your whole family can learn, belong, and grow.



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QMC announces Spring 2026 honor roll

DANIELSON — Quinebaug Middle College High School proudly recognizes the students who earned places on the High Honor Roll and Honor Roll for the Spring 2026 semester. Your hard work, dedication, and commitment to academic excellence are outstanding achievements.

High Honor Roll

(awarded to students who earned all E grades in QMC courses and As in their college classes. College grades are weighted one full letter grade)

Tabor Ambrose, Samyah Azeez, Alexis Barber, Lillian Bertram, Allysen Bonafine, Camden Chaplin, Mason Dansereau, Emma Decker, Giovanni Duclos, Yvonne Fitzsimmons, Noah Glynn, Kyla Grant, Alison Gutierrez Cordero, Nathaniel Kersting, Madison Knudson, Dominic Perras, Seamus Vaillencourt, Xophi Vanner, Cecilia Wilkosz, Aurora Wood

Honor Roll

(awarded to students who earned at least two E grades in their QMC courses, with all other QMC course grades being E or M, and A or B grades in their college classes)

Danica Alvarado Wilcox, Ava Aubin, Dahlas Avery-Burdsal, Morganna Avery-Burdsal, Jordan Bachand, Isabella Barnett, Lily Begin, Ariella Bessette, Scott Bonafine, Noelli Cabrera, Grace Carter, Khelvon Caudill, Aidan Chelette, Tobias Clark, Christopher Comtois, Ren Deojay, Zoey Dubois, Julian Dunnack, Jason Fletcher, Ella Forgues, Madyson Gallow, Molly Garland, Erin Gravell, Ava Guillemette, Phineas Hagan, Lawrence Haworth, Michael Hoenig-Welch, August Holdridge, Eli Kapszukiewicz, Ruby Kersting, Darby Lalumiere, Gavin Lalumiere, Mason LaRose, Daniel Lobe, Hailey Marshall, Kelton McKenna, Gavin Moore, Rae Neal, Bailey Nicolosi, Anna Polaino, Jazandrel Ramos, Jocelyn Richards, Jolene Schlegel, Madison Smith, Mikayla Snyder, Royce Toledo Rivera, Aedyn Trigo, Abigail Trudell, Cheyann Turcott, Savannah Waite, Nerissa Winters

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WINDHAM-TOLLAND 4-H CAMP NEWS



Despite the heat, there was lots of fun and laughter, friendships made, and new skills learned at camp this summer. We ran at close to full capacity all summer, with 826 children attending for more than 1,475 camper weeks.

Come check out our Fall Tag Sale on Saturday, Sept. 26, at the Horse Camp entrance from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. We will have a wide range of donated items — furniture, vintage and antique, holiday, golf clubs, household and decorative goods, linens, toys, handmade cradle, and more.

As our summer program ends, we shift our focus to our Ragged Hill Woods Environmental Education Programs. Our fall homeschool days for children in Grades 2-5 will run from 12:30 to 3:30 p.m. on Mondays as follows:

- Sept. 14 – Nature Detective Training
- Sept. 21 – Mapmakers and Trailblazers
- Sept. 28 – Tree Time Travelers
- Oct. 5 – Forest Feasts: Seeds, Nuts, and Survival
- Oct. 19 – Forest Floor Recycling Crew

- Oct. 26 – Rocks, Roots and Hidden Trails

Cost is \$45 per child per class or \$250 for all six weeks. Topics are being selected for our six-week Wednesday afternoon programs, held from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m., for children in kindergarten to Grade 6, from Sept. 9 to Oct. 21. All programs are held rain or shine. You can e-mail raggedhillwoods@gmail.com for topics, fees, and specific dates for this series.

As pictured with this article, the Ragged Hill Woods Program was recently awarded a \$5,000 grant from the Chelsea Groton Foundation. We are extremely grateful for this award, which will be used to keep tuition costs as low as possible, allowing more participants to access the program. This is the second year we have received support from this foundation, and as you can see, it has made many campers smile.

Windham-Tolland 4-H Camp is located at 326 Taft Pond Rd, Pomfret Center, and can be contacted at (860) 974-1122 or visited online at www.4hcampct.org.



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TOWN SEEKING MUNICIPAL AGENT FOR THE ELDERLY

The Town of Eastford is seeking an individual to serve as the Municipal Agent for the Elderly. This appointed local official assists residents age 60 and older by connecting them with available programs, benefits, services, and community resources. Under Connecticut law, every municipality appoints at least one Municipal Agent for the Elderly. The appointment is made by the town's chief elected official or chief executive officer for a two-year term, with the opportunity for reappointment. We are looking for someone with general knowledge of programs and services available to older adults and individuals in need, along with a genuine desire to help others. The Municipal Agent serves as a liaison, providing information, guidance, and referrals to ensure residents can access the resources and assistance available to them.

NEWS HOUND



EASTFORD — Thanks to Terri Warren for this great shot of her dog, Bandit, “reading” the August edition of the *Communicator*! Courtesy photo

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YOUR WINNERS!



EASTFORD — Eastford Public Library held its August Trivia Night on Aug. 6. Jeremy Barlow hosted the night, which was won by "The Barlow Babes (Plus 1)!"
Courtesy photo

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We took way too many photos for this issue.
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Visit calendar and event tabs for more!

Pastor Mike Moran and Associate Pastor Evan Burgess

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Save the Date

The Eastford Board of Education invites all Eastford families and community members to attend a Community Conversation regarding the district's ongoing review of Eastford's designated high school.

For the past several months, the Board has been comparing and evaluating Woodstock Academy and E.O. Smith High School to better understand the opportunities each school offers Eastford students. This meeting is an opportunity to learn more, ask questions, and share your thoughts as part of the community discussion.

Thursday, September 24
6:00-8:00 p.m.
Eastford School Gymnasium

Your voice is important. Whether you are a current parent, future parent, student, resident, or community member, we encourage you to attend and participate in this conversation.

This informational meeting is intended to provide information and gather community input. No decision will be made at this event.

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Local author set to visit library to discuss story of son's suicide

AUTHOR

Continued from pg. 1

sterling person. It's hard to put it into words. Everything about him was [impressive.] You could not fault this person; he did his chores, he ran upstairs after school and did his homework, didn't watch TV, and was always working. He was filled with curiosity. He had this desire for knowledge all the time. There was no stopping this person. He was voracious about learning. ... but Patrick began to realize that the sadness he was feeling wasn't normal. He wrote in one of his essays that he would wake up not knowing if he was going to be OK that day or be miserable that day. It was unpredictable. It was the unpredictability of his own character that was scary — that you couldn't even control your own personality, even if you were doing everything right."

Less than a year after graduating from Stanford, in January 2006, Patrick died by suicide.

The journey Rimer has been on since is chronicled in her 2024 book, "Back from Suicide: Before and After the Essential Patrick." Rimer will visit Eastford Public Library on Wednesday, Sept. 16, at 6 p.m. to discuss the book, which Rimer admitted is a combination of Patrick's story and an explanation of her "lack of understanding" about the mental health issues that led to her son's death.

"I wanted people to know that you can think you are doing everything right, but all of a sudden you get hit right in the face with a 2x4. That's exactly what it was," she said, adding that both her mother and father-in-law also died by suicide. "When my mother died, she used to say it was family that made her drink and go into a manic depression. I thought that was the secret to life — have the best family you possibly can, that will guarantee that things will turn out the best they possibly can. I had no idea what I was talking about. I felt like that was the safeguard."

Rimer said her thinking about suicide began to change once she began doing research on mental health and depression, and began to see it as "not logical, but biological."

"It's the interpersonal theory of suicide, and three components — isolation, being a burden on others, and having the capability, which includes losing the fear of death, which I know now that I heard in Patrick," she said. "I heard him lose that fear in his tone of voice. I felt when I was writing the book that I had to go beyond Patrick's story, that I had to offer readers something that was information they could take away, and it was basically my journey about learning the biology of suicide and depression and how Patrick got to the point where he wanted to die. I could not reconcile the fact that this brilliant person who had the world in the palm of his hand would want to do that, and I realized after it happened that there was no other explanation other than that suicide is a disease. It's the culmination of mental illness, and in his case, major depression."

Another important aspect of Patrick's story revolved around his sexual identity. Rimer reflected on the struggles he faced in his own mind, grappling with his homosexuality, a struggle that would lead to hospitalization at Stanford for suicidal ideation after a potential relationship ended in disappointment.

"He called me up one night and said, 'I think I'm depressed,'" she said. "I took him to a psychiatrist. He went on medication and regular therapy. When he got to Stanford, we were 3,000 miles away. That's where he wanted to be. I think he figured that California would be more liberal. At the same time he was realizing his depression, he was realizing he was gay. ... Depressed people cannot handle disappointment."

Coming to terms with Patrick's death was an exercise in humility for Rimer, who admitted that she was "naïve" and lacked understanding about suicide, mental health, and depression. The decision to write a book chronicling her journey after her son's death was born not only to pay tribute to her son, but also to share what she has learned since.

"I felt like I let him die one time and I wasn't going to do it again," she said. "Despite all his success, I didn't understand that that is no

obstacle against depression. I didn't understand. I thought depression was bad family or an abusive family. I thought good family could nurture anybody out of anything. I had no understanding of the biology and the genetics involved. No matter who you are, no matter if you are a failure or the most successful person, it doesn't matter, because it's a medical issue. ... I was so naïve about that. I figured you go away to college, you figure it out, and there you go. I didn't understand. And that's what the book is about."

Work on the book started in 2014, and Rimer said she spent nearly a decade working on it.

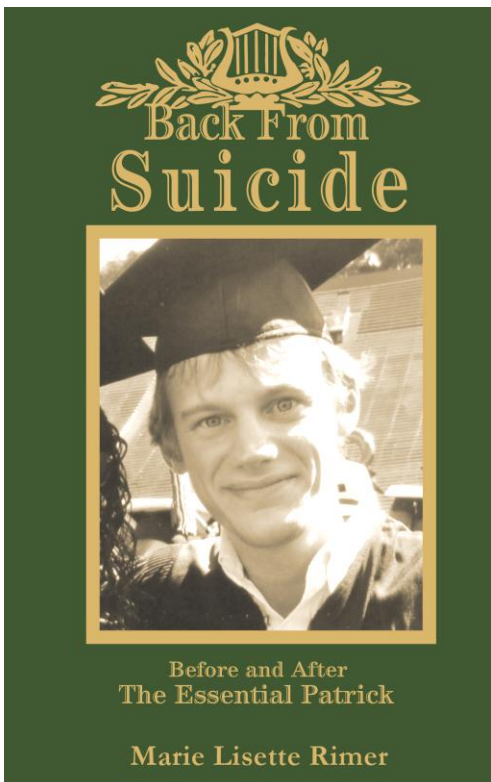
"It was hard for me," she said about the writing process. "It's because I am nothing close to a scientific person. I was a total ignoramus about it, and every day I have to claw my way back into understanding how that works. ... I needed people to know my ignorance about mental illness. When it happened, I thought I missed everything. I realized I missed all the signs, because I was relying on this brilliant person who was way smarter than me, and I thought if anyone could push through it, it was this brilliant person. I remember my father saying, 'Emotions are not always solvable.' You don't solve them like a math equation. It doesn't work. I hated writing it. I hated it. I felt like such a dope. But it was right. I knew that I owed him that."

Since the book was released, Rimer has visited local establishments such as the Putnam Public Library, the Coventry Public Library, and the Windham County Chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), and has enjoyed interacting with people who have shared her experience.

"From the presentations I've given so far, the best part is people's reactions," Rimer said. "The best part is sharing the stories. As I say, you don't often get the opportunity to start talking about your personal version of what happened. I love the fact that people take advantage of this at these events. Oftentimes the Q&A is longer than the presentation, and I love that. It's my favorite part. You can tell a bunch of stats, but that doesn't work for me. What works for me is learning from other people's stories. Maybe it's anecdotal, not scientific, but I think the stories really help you understand how you came back from suicide. And you can do it. I think that's the takeaway."

For more information on "Back from Suicide: Before and After the Essential Patrick," visit www.backfromsuicide.com. To register for the Sept. 16 event, call the Eastford Public Library at (860) 974-0125, or e-mail eastfordpublib@gmail.com.

September is National Suicide Prevention Month. If you or someone you know is struggling or in crisis, call or text 988, or chat with 988 Lifeline, in the United States and Canada.



"Back from Suicide: Before and After the Essential Patrick," by Marie Lisette Rimer, explores the death by suicide of her son in 2006 and her journey to understand the reasons behind it. Courtesy photo

Emilio victorious in GOP primary, MacCormack defiant in defeat

PRIMARY
Continued from pg. 1

registered Republicans in Eastford, yielding a 16.29-percent voter turnout.

MacCormack, 23, was declared the Republican candidate in May, and was originally slated to run unopposed in the Primary and go on to challenge Democratic incumbent Pat Boyd (D-Pomfret) in the State House of Representatives' 50th District, which covers the towns of Ashford, Brooklyn, Eastford, Hampton, Mansfield, Pomfret, and Woodstock. The election is slated for Tuesday, Nov. 3.

However, in a social media post on June 2 titled "Happy Straight Month," MacCormack stated he would "stand against the transgender and LGBT movement that has for too long corrupted our families, undermined parental authority, and eroded the foundational values of our society." He added he would "fight relentlessly in the state legislature to protect our children from premature medical interventions, indoctrination in schools, and the normalization of perverse ideologies that threaten the innocence of the next generation."

The post drew immediate backlash from both sides of the aisle, especially when further comments by MacCormack were featured on an episode of "Reese on the Radio," on WTIC NewsTalk 1080 on June 3. In the episode, MacCormack confirmed his support for the death penalty for "sodomites," confirming a post made on the social media site X on Aug. 11, 2025, replying to Dominic Michael Tripi's post about the Supreme Court considering overturning a gay marriage ruling with a picture of a noose with the caption: "The Bible has a better idea."

"I want to bring us back to the old past and the truth of what made America the land of the free," MacCormack said on the "Reese on the Radio" episode June 3. "When it comes to putting on the death penalty, we need to focus on what is proper. We can't have people molesting children.

Perverts, these horrible people, they should get the death penalty too. I believe every sodomite is a pervert."

The Connecticut GOP released a statement later that week that sought to distance itself from MacCormack's statements.

"The Connecticut Republican Party strongly condemns any rhetoric, explicit or implicit, that can be interpreted as encouraging hostility, intimidation, or violence toward any individual or group," the statement read. "At a time when our nation continues to witness the real-world consequences of inflammatory political discourse amplified through social media, candidates for public office have a heightened responsibility to choose their words carefully and to promote civil, respectful debate. The recent statements made by [MacCormack] fall far short of that standard."

Facing calls to withdraw from the race, MacCormack remained defiant, stating publicly that he had no regrets and that he would "never withdraw." In a social media post on June 4, he doubled down on his statements.

"On America's 250th anniversary, I see this issue as a major turning point for the country, but for local communities especially, one rooted in the founding principles of Connecticut," he stated in the June 4 post. "I will never withdraw. I plan on running the most impactful campaign of this election cycle ... I stand by every word. Those who oppose my statements have immoral judgment and are not upholding the founding principles of Connecticut."

In the days after the comments, news began to emerge that Emilio would be collecting signatures across the district to challenge MacCormack in the primary. The minimum number of signatures required was 238, and Emilio collected 340 — including some at Experience Eastford on June 6. Emilio officially joined the ballot for Aug. 11 and began to campaign.

Christopher Bowen, chairman of the Republican Town Committee, promoted the petition before

Experience Eastford and spoke to the effect the controversy has had in town.

"The positions [MacCormack] has been promoting are rooted in division and hostility, and they run counter to the basic values of respect, dignity, and liberty that hold communities together," Bowen said. "When public voices spread messages that demean and attack others, it harms more than individuals; it erodes the sense of safety that we all deserve. ... Adding your name to the petition is a simple but meaningful way to push back against the hate and support a better future for everyone."

Although the turnout for the primary was relatively small, the support for Emilio was clear. After the victory, Emilio reflected on the results in a post on social media on the evening of Aug. 11.

"I am incredibly grateful to the voters of the 50th District for placing their trust in me and our campaign," Emilio said. "Tonight's victory is a tremendous honor, and I am proud to be heading to the general election as our Republican nominee. Throughout this campaign, I have heard from residents who want a representative who will listen, work hard, defend our towns, and focus on results. I hope to bring integrity back to this role and provide the 50th District with the full attention, common sense, and steady leadership it deserves."

"Public service is about much more than winning political points," Emilio continued. "It is about respecting every resident, listening to different perspectives, and working together to find solutions that strengthen our communities. As I look ahead to the general election, I will work to earn the trust of residents across the entire 50th District, regardless of party or political affiliation. Thank you to my family, our volunteers, supporters, and everyone who cast a ballot. I am humbled by your support and excited to continue this campaign toward November."

After the defeat, MacCormack remained defiant, declaring he intends to shift his focus to running for Congress in 2028, while also



Anthony Emilio

maintaining a fiery offensive on his primary opponent.

"I am the true winner in this Republican Party," he said. "I have seen and exposed scandals while calling out unethical behavior. I have not backed down and never will. Connecticut needs the 2nd Congressional leadership I have already demonstrated. Full sights set on 2028. A small district race with fewer than 500 votes cast is a clear reflection of the Republican Party's failure. Thirty-plus uncontested Democrat seats across the state, while the GOP scrambles to field a candidate in three days, tells the whole story. I will reform this party and Make America Straight Again. God is on my side, and I know many supporters remain. As for 'Troubled Tony,' you may have won the battle, but go back to the retirement home you came from. We do not need leaders with one foot already in the grave. [Being a man] who never wanted to run until someone became 'controversial' and the GOP needed a last-minute handout doesn't make you a patriot but a pathetic pawn."

In other Primary results, incumbent Democratic Gov. Ned Lamont defeated challenger Josh Elliot, 74,576 (67.4 percent) to 36,092 (32.6 percent). In Eastford, Lamont emerged victorious with a 64-44 win. According to Wolfe, there were 60 machine poll votes on Aug. 11, with seven absentee ballots, and 41 early voting ballots. In total, 108 Democrats voted out of 264 registered Democrats in Eastford, yielding a 40.91-percent voter turnout.

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