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Teens walk out for gun control

Gather at library

Text & Photo
By KEN CASHMAN

The students knew what they wanted to do on the anniversary of the Columbine shooting, but they didn't know where they could do it. The high school was off limits. A demonstration on April 20, which was a school day, would have been a distraction.

With time running out, 12th-grader Tara Rao called the Cornwall Public Library, where she works as a volunteer. She spoke to Youth Librarian Liz Fischer, who referred the request to Mary Lou Carolan, the library director.

"We want to show... that teenagers have a voice."

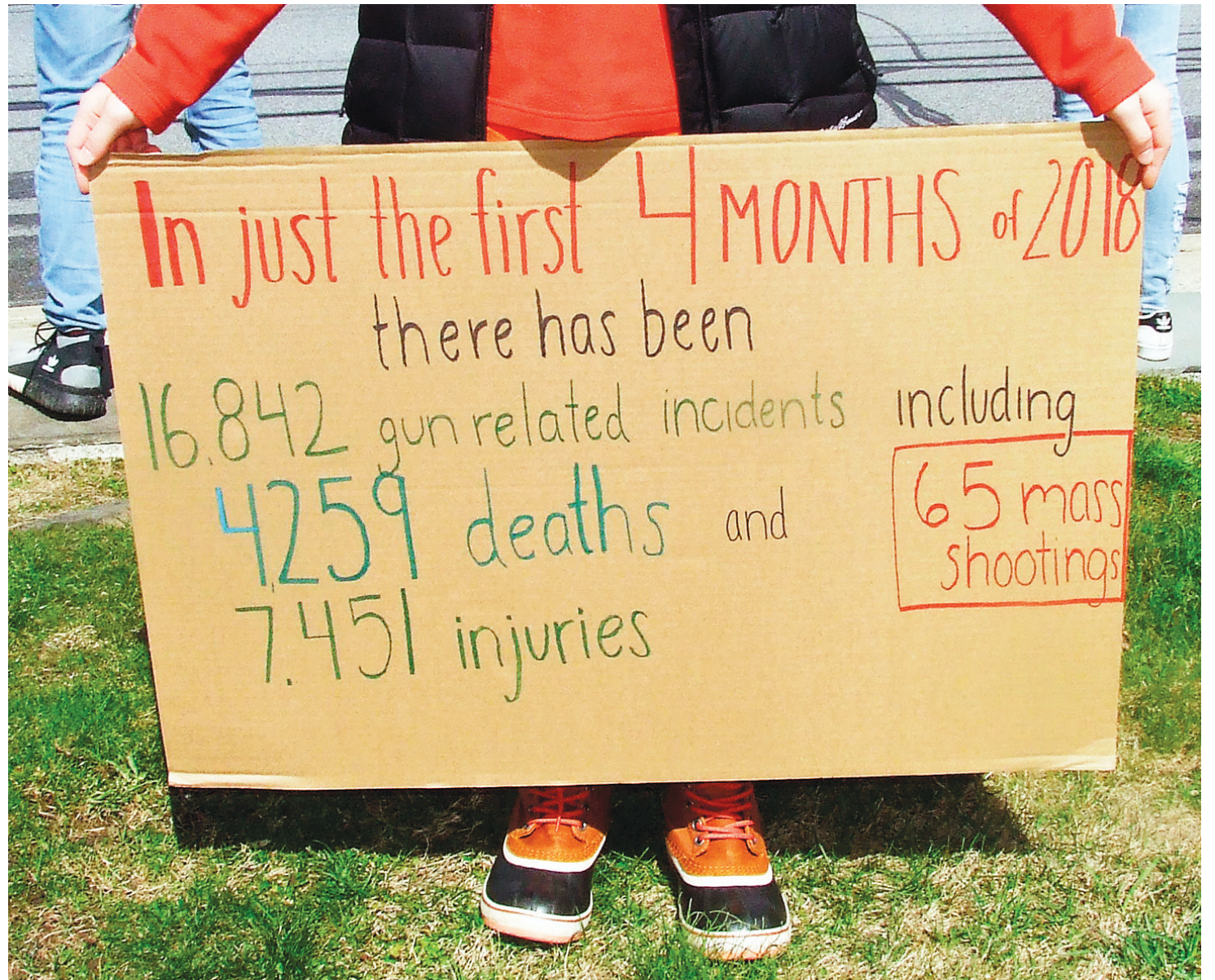
ANA MARTINEZ

The response was positive. "It's public property," the director said. "You're free to be here and conduct your business." The message was delivered at 5 o'clock on Thursday afternoon.

The next day 17 students (many of them members of the National Honor Society) assembled at the library. They had a precise schedule of what they would do.

They would spend most of their time on the front lawn, holding up signs for passing motorists on Hudson Street. The signs, referring to mass shootings, said "enough" and "never again." Several drivers hit their horns to show their support.

The students were silent for a full 13 minutes as a tribute to the 13 people killed in Columbine. The teens used the library's Community Room to write letters to
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One of the signs motorists saw on April 20 as they drove past the Cornwall Public Library. Seventeen students took the day off to campaign for stricter gun control.

Schools and Town differ on SROs

Board adopts budget

Text & Photo
By KEN CASHMAN

Not everyone goes home when school is over. In an average year, the district hosts 2,000 community or extracurricular activities. To bolster security at these events, the school board added \$50,000 to next year's budget.

The board made one other minor change at its April 19 meeting -- altering the way it would account for a promotional increase in the Buildings and Grounds Department. The result was

- a \$71,475,416 budget and
- a \$48,308,736 tax levy
- an increase of 3.14% over the previous year

The budget proposal passed 8-1, with Rafael Ortiz voting "no," because he disagreed with the plans for School Resource Officers (SROs).

The district intends to obtain officers from the Sheriff's Department and place one in each building.

They would be retired policemen, who would carry a gun and work up to 1,040 hours a year. Harvey Sotland, the assistant superintendent for business, allowed \$225,000 in next year's budget for SROs.

Mr. Ortiz favors a suggestion from Town Supervisor Richard Randazzo, who proposed a "hybrid approach" to security. He suggested getting SROs from the Sheriff for the three elementary schools, and using Town Policemen in the middle school and high school.

The plan would add \$160,000 to the SRO allowance. But Mr.

Randazzo believes that the Town officers "would provide a much broader spectrum of service" as opposed to the SROs from the Sheriff. Mr. Randazzo suggested that the district could cover the extra expense with money from its unappropriated surplus.

SROs are expected to develop a rapport with students and have a sense of what's happening in the building so they can defuse problems before they occur. Mr. Randazzo doesn't believe the officers hired by the Sheriff will do that. He expects them to just be armed security guards.

But Mr. Sotland disagrees. He considers the Sheriff's option, "the best resource at the most economic price." In a separate interview, he said the

Sheriff's people will do everything SROs are supposed to do, except teach classes. And you wouldn't want them in a classroom. You would want them near the entrance.

In casting his dissenting vote, Mr. Ortiz remarked "There's value added when you place an embedded officer who is a member of the

see **SCHOOLS** page 3A

AROUND TOWN Photo by Jason Kaplan



Exerting energy

Halle Lanier tests out the power pedal bike during the Hudson Highland Nature Museum's annual Earth Day celebration on April 21. Pedaling the bike fast enough illuminates a light on the handlebar, but, on average, children are only able to keep pedaling for about 20 seconds before succumbing to exhaustion. The exercise is designed to teach children to remember how they felt as they take that same 20 seconds to walk from their bedroom to the kitchen without turning off the light as they exit.

Lowry excels in Boston Marathon

Places in top 50

By JASON KAPLAN

It was a gloomy day. The rain was falling and temperatures hovered in the 40-degree range. In the history of the Boston Marathon, weather-wise it was one of the worst days on record. Many of the 30,000 runners dropped out early or didn't finish the race. Not Dylan Lowry. The former Cornwall High School runner finished in 32nd place with a final time of 2:32:50.

"I'm still in shock," Lowry said a few days after the April 16 race. "It's definitely the highlight of my running career so far. I never thought I'd finish in the top 50 in the biggest marathon in the world."

For Lowry, mainly an 800 and 1600-meter runner in high school and college, the Boston Marathon marked only the second time he had

run a 26.2-mile course. The first was back in May, running in a qualifier in Buffalo.

"I wanted to see what I could do in longer races," Lowry said. "I began doing road races like 5k/10k. I did a few half marathons. Boston was on my bucket list. I knew I would qualify."

Qualifying time was 3:05 and Lowry finished the race with 30 minutes to spare. The time put him in 298th place to start the Boston Marathon.

A registered dietician and personal trainer in Charlotte, N.C., Lowry began training for the marathon four months in advance. He logged about 105 miles a week and between 20 to 22 miles a day.

Although it's warmer in North Carolina, Lowry said living in New
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