



POSTAL CUSTOMER
LOCAL

RIVEREAST

News Bulletin

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

Volume 31, Number 44

Published by The Glastonbury Citizen

January 12, 2007



Tony LaMalfa gives his six-month-old grandson Joseph his first haircut. Tony recently closed the doors to Pete's Barbershop in Portland after 47 years.

Tony LaMalfa Hangs Up His Scissors

by Michael McCoy

For the first time in 63 years, there is no barbershop on Main Street in Portland. Tony LaMalfa has called it a day.

Pete's Barbershop, long a gathering place for locals and an icon on Main Street, has closed its doors.

"I'm an old man. I'm 69," says LaMalfa, who has been cutting hair for 47 years. Due to this and some health concerns, he waited on his last customer in September, and closed up the shop for good at the end of December.

Some of his loyal customers are having trouble coming to terms with finding a new barber. They chide LaMalfa, assuring him that they are waiting until he comes back to get another cut.

Tony responds, half-kidding, "Guys, I ain't coming back; you better go somewhere else."

In the past, when LaMalfa would temporarily close the shop for vacations, sick days or other unexpected events, local patrons would worry that he was closing up for good. He always responded the same way: "Once the barber's pole is off the building, you know it's all over."

Now that the pole sits in LaMalfa's basement, he says, "People go by now and say, 'This is it.'"

Born in 1937 to Antonio and Frances LaMalfa, both Sicilian immigrants,

LaMalfa grew up on Court Street in Middletown. Immediately upon graduation from Middletown High School, he was drafted into the Navy, where he served until 1958.

When he returned from the Navy, LaMalfa recalls his father telling him: "I've been working in a factory all my life. I want you to be better off than I was." So he sent Tony to Vaughn's Barber School in Hartford.

Tony's older brother Peter had gone to the New Britain Teachers College, but had always worked part-time at Napoli's Barber Shop in Portland. The shop was run by his uncle, Charlie Napoli. However, in 1956, 12 years after opening the shop, Charlie passed away.

"At the time, teachers were making less than barbers," points out Tony. So, Peter assumed ownership of the business, changing the name to Pete's Barbershop.

After completing a three-year apprenticeship and two years as a journeyman (all at Pete's) Tony became a master barber, and stayed to work alongside his brother.

"Things were going along just fine until the mid '60s when long hair came into style," says Tony. "We didn't know how to cut it."

Adding to their barbering problems,

most men traditionally had opted for a cut about every two weeks. The new trend toward long hair extended the period between cuts to months.

"Hundreds of thousands of shops throughout the U.S. went out of business," says LaMalfa.

As a result, Peter figured a change might be in order. "I wanted to go into real estate, with the plan that I can come back if I don't make it," recalls Peter.

"Needless to say, that was the last I saw of Peter. He was history," Tony jokes about his brother who went on to open and run the very successful LaMalfa Agency/Realtors.

Tony does remember the transition period where Peter was trying to work both careers. Peter would let Tony know that he had to show a property and would return in about 15 minutes. "People would come in who wanted Pete to cut their hair," says Tony. "I'd say, 'Oh, he'll be right back.' Thirty minutes would go by. One hour. Two hours."

Though Pete threw in the barber's towel 37 years ago, he has retained his barber's license to this day.

As for the barbershop's name, Tony figured, "I just think I'll leave it 'Pete's.' If things get bad, I'll change it." Of course,

Continued on Page 2



Now relegated to the LaMalfa basement, this chair graced Napoli's Barbershop when it opened in 1944.

Continued from Front Page

it never changed. That was 1970.

Over the years, Pete's Barbershop has shared a building with neighbors ranging from the Board of Education to a drugstore. At one point the drugstore approached the landlord hoping to take over the whole building, including the barbershop space.

The landlord refused. "I can't do that, they've been here since the '40s," he said of the barbershop.

The shop has moved from time to time over the years since Charlie Napoli was cutting hair. The LaMalfas moved next door to the original building in 1968.

Other things have also changed over the years. In 1959, Pete's charged \$1 per cut. In 2006, it was \$15 (\$13 for retirees.)

In 1959, the 5,500 Portlanders were enough to support five barbershops. In later years, with the population nearly double that, Pete's was the only one left standing. "I outlived them all," declared Tony.

A new shop, Brownstone Barbershop, just opened within the past few years.

It cost Antonio LaMalfa somewhere between \$250 and \$500 to send his son to

barber school. Today, that one year program costs around \$20,000 and graduates receive their license immediately.

Tony LaMalfa has survived all the changes of the times, from men desiring long hair to women desiring short hair. The gradual migration of men to salons was another hit to the business, but Pete's was still there.

The day of the straight razor has been replaced with requests for Mohawks and other more flamboyant styles and that has changed barbering dramatically. "I don't think that there's a barber school left in Hartford," says Tony, when asked about Vaughn's.

Longtime customer Sal "Tootie" Pitruzello has frequented the shop for about 50 years. "That was the best place to get up on what was going on in town," said Pitruzello. He remembers chatting about classic cars with LaMalfa and even collected the calendars that the barber posted, once they had gone out of date.

"I used to always kid him that instead of cutting my hair he should put more on," remembers Tootie.

LaMalfa would respond, "If I could do that, I wouldn't have to work for a living."

Pitruzello remembers how LaMalfa loved the Italian cookies that his wife sent in for him at Christmas time.

"Well, I miss him now," says Pitruzello. "He always gave me a good haircut...I wish him well."

LaMalfa has been married to his wife Terry since 1945, and they have lived in town since 1966. Together they have three sons and a daughter, all of whom live in Portland. They have 11 grandchildren.

Since 1965, Tony has always cut the hair of all of his sons and grandsons. In fact, his 42-year-old son Tony just recently went to another barber for the first time in his life.. Tony and Peter still cut each other's hair to this day.

It's been a long and successful career and if Tony has any regrets, it's that he won't be seeing as much of all the friends who dropped into the shop over the years for a trim.

"I would love to show all my appreciation to all of my customers who have been with me over the years," he says.



Serving as Director of Governor Rell's Eastern Office, Catherine Marx (right) with Governor Rell planned Connecticut's first Inaugural Ball of the new millennium. The event, held on Jan. 3, drew over 1,500 attendees.

Hebron Resident Has a Ball!

by Sarah McCoy

As the Director of Governor M. Jodi Rell's Eastern Office, Catherine Marx is used to wearing many hats. Her general job responsibilities include serving at the pleasure of the Governor. This can mean handling constituents concerns or public affairs but never in her wildest imagination did Marx think her duties would include organizing a gala event.

But that's exactly what happened. For the past month Marx, along with two additional staff members, planned and organized the Inaugural Ball.

The Ball, held on January 3, has been a state tradition since 1791. In the past, the Governor's Foot Guard has hosted the event as one of their largest fundraisers. Due to changing ethics regulations the Foot Guard notified Governor Rell at the beginning of December that they would not host the event in 2007.

Late in 2006 the Inaugural Ball became classified as a state event. This left the Foot Guard with, what they felt, was too little time to seek legal counsel as to the ramifications of the classification and plan for the Ball.

With t-minus 31 days, Marx received her assignment: plan and execute the state's first Inaugural Ball of the new millennium. (Former Governor John Rowland elected not to hold an Inaugural Ball after his election in 2002.)

Luckily, Marx did have help. Eric Ducey and Haley McConaghy, both staff members who assisted with Rell's election campaign, were there to lighten Marx's load.

Before the 600 pounds of rib eye beef could be ordered, and 9,000 hors d'oeuvres were made, Marx needed to find a venue. With just weeks remaining before the event, she secured the Connecticut Expo Center.

"The music, the flowers, the food," Marx listed. "It all had to be taken care of. There was no time for second-guessing. We just hoped to cross some of the things off our list each day."

In the end, Marx said, she couldn't have been happier. "We surpassed every goal we had," she stated.

In terms of ticket sales, the trio had set a goal of 70 tables and 75 general admission tick-

ets. Table number 70 was purchased the day of the Ball and about 240 individual tickets were sold.

All of the proceeds from the event will go into the state's general fund.

In terms of the overall atmosphere for the Ball, Marx said she felt that the importance and tradition of the event had been executed to perfection.

The Inaugural Ball is much more than a large party. Throughout the night there are various procedures and customs carried out to honor the new class of public servants. Supreme Court justice, Constitutional officers, legislative leaders, Lieutenant Governor Michael Fedele, and Governor Rell were ushered into the Expo Center with military escorts.

Rell then gave a short speech to thank those in attendance and those who made the evening possible. Then the entire body of Connecticut dignitaries opened the dance floor as they danced to Ben King's "Stand By Me."

Marx, who has served in her current capacity since the winter of 2004, said that hosting the event was her most challenging task to date. "At time I felt like I was on The Apprentice," she said. "I had to use my managerial, logistics, and personal skills to get the job done."

In the end Marx stands by her accomplishment proudly. "I was part of continuing the tradition and importance of the Inaugural Ball," she stated. "That is something I will treasure forever."

If the situation arises again in four years, Marx said she would be hesitant to reassume her position as Ball coordinator. But, she noted, in the coming weeks she will leave stacks of documentation for whomever has the job next. Since it had never been a state run event in the past, Marx, was treading in unknown water. Now, with the experience she has gained, she hopes the next person won't have to reinvent the wheel.

"It truly was a magical event," Marx said smiling. "One that will be remembered for years to come."

Suspects Sought in Colchester Blimpie's Robbery

Police are searching for two women who robbed the Blimpie's restaurant on Main Street shortly after 7 p.m. last Wednesday night.

Police said a handgun was brandished during the robbery. The women—believed to be in their late teens or early 20s—fled the scene with an undisclosed amount of cash.

They fled in an early-model burgundy Pontiac Grand Am with a green license plate, possibly a Vermont plate.

Though police responded to a 911 call placed shortly after the robbery took place, they were unable to locate any suspects upon arriving at the scene.

One suspect is described as 5'4" in height,

120 pounds with brown hair and a thin build. The other is described as 5'3" in height with a heavier build, about 135 pounds, and blond hair. The two were wearing dark clothes and used scarves to cover their faces.

Links to photos from a surveillance camera are posted on the state Department of Public Safety's web site at: <http://www.ct.gov/dps/cwp/view.asp?A=11&Q=330480>.

Police suspect the pair is responsible for two similar robberies that took place in Glastonbury and Columbia.

State Police are asking anyone who has any information regarding this robbery to contact State Police at 1-800 546-5005. All calls will be kept confidential.

Colchester Wastewater Plant Needs Major Overhaul

by Jim Salemi

The town's wastewater treatment facility is beyond its usable life, according to Public Works Supervisor Mark Decker.

Emergency repairs were performed recently on the facility's holding tanks. According to Decker, future repairs—both preventative and emergency—will be necessary until the facility is overhauled.

He also said demands by the town and region have outstripped the facility.

Decker reported to the Board of Selectmen at its last December meeting that his office is in the process of applying for a \$2 million STAG grant to overhaul the facility. If awarded, the grant would require \$1.6 million in matching funds from the town.

STAG (State and Tribal Assistance Grant) is a program under the auspices of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency "to help states and tribes implement environmental laws and regulations" as outlined in the Clean Water Act, according to the EPA's website.

"What we're looking at is trying to obtain as much money as we're entitled to in the Clean Water fund," Decker said after the meeting.

The grant, if awarded, would pay for a small fraction of the overall project, which bears an estimated cost of approximately \$25 million.

Towns have little choice but to perform upgrades in phases as they are able to secure money. Decker said that \$80 million in state money that was originally earmarked for such municipal projects was later taken away by the legislature.

"We looked for money in the state's clean water fund. There are not many opportunities," Decker told selectmen.

Up until the 1990s, the state Department of Environmental Protection typically provided an 80% grant for the cost of town wastewater projects, with the town responsible for the remaining 20%.

By the 2000s, that formula was reversed, with the state providing 20% of the cost of

the project and the towns coming up with 80% of the cost. Today, the state money is all but gone.

A committee was previously appointed to compile a regional facilities plan and make recommendations on what would be needed to get the treatment plant through another 20 years. The committee released its findings last year. There was no easy fix.

"We looked at the age of the facility, [state Departments of Health and Environmental Protection] regulation changes, both recent and anticipated future regulations, and the projected growth of the communities," said Decker. "Basically we're looking at a whole rebuild," Decker said.

While the STAG grant doesn't look like much money in light of the overall anticipated cost of the project, it could have greater benefits. Being selected for the grant would open the way for special consideration when applying for future grants, said Decker. Organizations that make such grants available are more inclined to award them to municipalities that have already made a commitment to upgrade facilities, he said.

Decker said that in an ideal situation, where the entire project could be financed all at once, it would take about a year to plan and complete it.

By upgrading the facility in phases, it is impossible to determine how long the project will take, Decker said. He said completion—not to mention the individual phases—would be determined on a case-by-case basis, driven by how many grants the region could secure, the amounts of the grants awarded and local approval of funding for its share, among other factors.

Colchester is part of a regional pact among the towns of East Hampton, Marlborough and Hebron, with Lebanon likely joining in the future.

Marlborough Firemen Pleased with New Truck

by Sarah McCoy

After almost 40 years, the Town of Marlborough has updated one of its oldest vehicles. In its place stands a brand new gleaming red fire engine.

"It's quite a change and it's something we're all proud of," Fire Chief Bill Lord said of the new vehicle.

At the end of 2006 the department finally received its new engine, a year after the vehicle was initially bonded. Because of the specificity of the features, each fire engine is made to order and usually takes close to a year for production.

The engine replaces a 1968 engine that Fire Commissioner Mike Kelly politely called "past its expiration date." He reported that an engine can "realistically expect to last 20 years."

This new vehicle will allow the department to carry four firefighters in the cab of the truck. It also provides increased storage and organization for efficiency. "Firefighters are not going to have to open each and every hatch to locate what they need," Lord explained. "This engine allows us to keep most of the equipment in the cab."

Also included on the new model is the capacity to fight fire with both water and foam. Lord explained that foam is used to handle situations caused by flammable material or combustible liquids, traditionally typical of car fires. Prior to the arrival of the new truck, the Marlborough department had this resource on only one other vehicle.

The fire department began asking for the new engine at the turn of the century. Voters approved the \$300,000 purchase in May of 2004. Over the next 19 months the town

worked to piece together the final details of the machine. It went out to bid in mid-2005.

Since the vehicle arrived in Marlborough at the close of October, the Marlborough Volunteer Fire Department has trained extensively with it. The intention is for every firefighter to know the ins and outs of every vehicle to streamline their efficiency.

After a month of training the new engine was introduced into the fleet. Its inaugural "extinguishing" occurred in December as firefighters were called to a car fire on Route 2.

Some of the main features of the new engine include a jump to 1250 gallons-a-minute of water propulsion and an automatic transmission.

"Back when this town had farmers an automatic transmission wasn't necessary," Kelly explained. "Everyone could drive anything. Now we are seeing firefighters who can't drive standard. This engine will enable a new wave of drivers and cuts down on some of the training so we can focus on other things."

As a part of their firefighting training, all members of the Marlborough Volunteer Fire Department are required to hold a special license to drive a vehicle of this magnitude.

Lord reported that the biggest advantages to the new engine come in the area of safety. "It's safer for firefighters to be using and that, in turn, makes it safer for all of our residents," he said.

Come this fall the town will add one more vehicle to its catalog. A new tanker is expected for delivery later this fall. It will replace a 1975 model.

Hebron Experiments With On-line Tax Payments

by Sarah McCoy

Paying taxes isn't any more fun but it certainly has gotten easier for Hebron residents. For the first time, the town is accepting online payments directly through a resident's bank account.

"In the past we have offered online payments through credit cards but that convenience came at a price," Revenue Collector Gay St. Louis said. "Now residents can pay their tax bill with only a fifty cent processing fee."

After gas, time, and a stamp, St. Louis figures most residents spend over fifty cents each time they pay their bill.

The fee for paying with a credit card remains 3%.

This recent addition means that Hebron residents can pay in just about any manner. Checks and cash are accepted at the Town Hall while credit cards and bank account payments can be handled via the Internet.

Because it is a new service, the online service will only be offered in January and July,

the busiest tax months. This month motor vehicle supplemental bills and the second installment of real estate taxes are due. Late fees will be assessed after February 1.

St. Louis said reported that the hope is to make the service available yearlong but the town will wait for feedback on the new service.

"We are always looking for ways to make tax payment easier on residents and increase our collection rate," she said. "Online payments should help to accomplish both of those goals."

The process for accepting the new payments is slightly more cumbersome for St. Louis and her staff. But, she figures it is well worth it in the end. "It is just like anything else, you have to adjust to new practices," she said.

To pay tax bills online, go to www.hebronct.com. There is a link at the center of the page to the new service.

Free House Number Signs for Marlborough Seniors

by Sarah McCoy

The Roy G. Pettengill Ambulance Association recently approved a proposal that would provide senior citizens with new house number signs.

Effective immediately, any Marlborough senior citizen can order a reflective house number sign from the Parks & Recreation Department and the Ambulance Association will pick up the tab.

The town began selling the signs last year in an effort to both raise money for repairs to the Blish Park playscape and to better mark each house for emergency personnel.

Currently over 130 signs have been sold but the goal had been much higher.

"I know they aren't all that ascetically pleasing, but the signs can mean the difference between life and death if emergency personnel aren't able to locate a victim's house," EMS Chief Mark Merritt explained.

The vertical signs measure 8" by 24" and are made of blue reflective metal. They can be attached to mailbox posts or placed on a separate metal stake.

The idea for the community outreach came at a recent EMS board meeting and Merritt said he is thrilled at how the plan is coming together.

"This is a great way to help everyone involved," he said. "Parks and Rec will get an added boost in their fundraiser; we will be able to better locate homes, enabling us to reach each victim sooner. It seemed like the perfect way to give back to the community."

The EMS volunteers are giving more than just money though. They have also offered to install any sign for seniors in need. Merritt asks that residents specify if they need installation services when they place their order.

Senior citizens can place their order with Barbara Lazzari at 295-9527, Vi Schwartzman at 295-6209, or with Merritt at 295-9692.

All residents are encouraged to purchase the signs to aid in house location. They are \$20 and can be purchased by calling the Parks & Recreation Department at 295-6203.

Marlborough Police Log

1/7—Therese Daley, 52, of Vernon, was arrested for breach of peace and interfering with police after police said she became disruptive while being treated at Marlborough Medical Center. According to reports, a doctor working at the clinic called police asking for assistance with a patient who was "out of control." Police said Daley appeared intoxicated and threw a beverage at police upon their arrival. She refused to be handcuffed, police said, requiring them to use a stun-gun on her to subdue her.

Andover Police Log

1/8—Police are investigating a burglary at a residence on Route 87. Anyone with any information is asked to call Trooper Melanson at 537-7555, ext. 4071.

Colchester Police Log

1/3—Brittney Price, 18, of Oakdale, was arrested for disorderly conduct and 3rd degree assault following a domestic dispute. Daniel Kirk, 19, of Montville, was also arrested for disorderly conduct in the same incident, according to reports.

1/6—Police are investigating the reported theft of a wallet and cell phone from a car parked at the Route 149 commuter parking lot.

Hebron Police Log

1/6—Brian Poulin, 34, of 450 Church St., was arrested for threatening, interfering with police and disorderly conduct after Hebron Fire Department personnel tried treating the man for a cut, who became combative in the ambulance, according to police.

wall that didn't resemble anyone he thought was living there."

At that moment, Engel realized that he was at the wrong residence.

Meanwhile, a neighbor had seen Engel breaking through the front door and notified the police at around 11am.

Officer Gary Jarzabek was in the vicinity and he pulled over the Ford pick-up truck operated by the two men.

Engel was charged with burglary in the 3rd-degree and criminal mischief and was held on a \$1,000 non-surety bond. Moore was charged with conspiracy to commit criminal mischief and held on a \$500 non-surety bond.

Both men are set to appear in court in Middletown on January 23.

Milardo praised Officer Jarzabek for his quick action and the witnesses who reported the incident.

Two Arrested After Breaking into 'Wrong House'

by Michael McCoy

Two Portland men were arrested on Monday, Jan. 8 following a break-in at a Coe Avenue Extension residence.

Joseph Engel Jr. and Brian Moore, both 20, were charged in connection with the incident in which they thought they were breaking into the house of an acquaintance, but went to the wrong residence.

According to Lieutenant Ron Milardo, Engel owed an acquaintance some money. That acquaintance was apparently phoning Engel frequently to remind him of his debt.

Milardo said Engel and Moore, decided to steal some items from the caller's home as a form of payback for the harassing calls. On Monday they went to what they thought was the party's residence at the Coe Avenue Extension in Portland.

Using a sledgehammer, Engel smashed out some paned-glass from the front door, said police. "As Engel was in the residence," says Milardo, "he noticed some pictures on the

Obituaries

Colchester

Joanne Miner

Joanne Miner, 65, formerly of Lebanon Ave., Colchester died Friday, Jan. 5 at the Hospital for Special Care in New Britain after a long illness. She was the wife of the late Donald A. Miner.

Born in Hartford the daughter of the late George Stevens and Antoinette F. Stevens Slones. She was a member of St. Andrews Church.

She is survived by a brother, Leo J. and his wife, Karen Slones of Southington; a sister, Trena and her husband, Richard Nelson of Ocala, FL; four nephews and several great nieces and a great nephew. She was predeceased by a brother, William Stevens.

A memorial service was held on Monday, Jan. 8, at the Della Vecchia Funeral Home, 211 N. Main St., Southington. Donations may be made in her memory to the Hospital for Special Care, 2150 Corbin Ave., New Britain, CT 06053 f

Hebron

George J. Hills, Sr.

George J. Hills, Sr., age 67, passed away peacefully Monday, Oct. 30, 2006 at his home in Mountain, WI. He was born on March 2, 1939 in Hebron, CT.

He served our country in the U.S. Army from 1955-1969 and was honorably discharged. He was a decorated war hero, receiving the Silver Star medal, Bronze Star medal with V for valor device and Oak Leaf Cluster, Purple Heart, Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal with device 1960 and the Combat Infantryman Badge.

Survivors include his three sons, George Hills, Jr., Kenneth Hills, John Hills; two daughters, Debbie Metcalf and Michelle Osmulski; and 11 grandchildren. He is also survived by his three brothers, Herb of Glastonbury, CT, Howard of Melbourne, FL, and Richard of Tolland, CT, and a sister, Florence Palmer of Andover, CT. He was pre-deceased by three brothers Myron, Frank and Raymond, and four sisters, Ellen Ofiara, Mabel Cobb, Elise Surwell and Pinky Trousdell. He will be greatly missed by his many relatives and friends who loved him dearly.

Colchester

Michael Dawson

Michael "Mike" Dawson, beloved husband of Gerrie Dawson of Windham Ave., Colchester, finally lost his four-year battle with cancer and passed away peacefully in his home on Sunday, Jan. 7, two days after his 66th birthday.

Born in Middletown, on Jan. 5, 1941, he was the son of Walter and Ruth (Dudek) Dawson, both life-long residents of Colchester. On Jan. 26, 1963 he wed his one and only true love and his best friend, Geraldine (Babek) Dawson. They continued the tradition as life-long residents of Colchester and spent more than 45 wonderful years there together.

Mike worked for many years as an Operating Engineer and retired from the construction industry in 1998 as a 30-year veteran of the Operating Engineers Union Local 478.

Mike leaves many family and friends to cherish his memory: his wonderful wife, Gerrie who was with him to his last breath; his daughter and son-in-law, Beth (Dawson) Coleman and Michael Coleman along with Mikes only grandchildren, Olivia, Matthew and Melanie Coleman. He is also survived by his mother-in-law, Mollie (Kmick) Kopp; his sisters, Judy Wozniak, Sharon Baack and her husband, Gary; his sister, Pat Brown and her husband, Fred; his two brothers-in-law, Charlie Babek and his wife, Phyllis and Jim Babek and his wife, Tencia. He will be missed by his countless nephews, nieces and his many friends all over the state. He was predeceased by his only son, Brian Dawson.

A service in memory of Mike Dawson will be held Saturday, February 17, at 11a.m. at the Westchester Congregational Church, Rte 149 Colchester. Burial will follow at the Waterhole Rd Cemetery. A reception will then be held at 54 Waterhole Rd. at his daughter's home.

In lieu of flowers, the family would prefer a memorial donation to be made in his name to the Westchester Congregational Church in Colchester or to the Middlesex Cancer Center in Middletown.

Hebron

Raymond W. Griswold

Raymond W. Griswold, Sr., 79, of Amston, died Monday, Jan. 8, at a local convalescent home. He was born in Hartford.

He was self employed, owning The Griswold Excavating Co. He was a lifetime member of the Rocky Hill Fire Dept., member of the Congregational Church in Rocky Hill, was a part of the family owned Sunny Crest Dairy Farm, helped organize the Hebron Colt Baseball League, was on the Board of Trustees at Farmers & Mechanics Bank in Cromwell, on the Building Committee for the West Hill Elementary School in Rocky Hill, and served on the Hebron Fire Truck Committee.

He was the widower of Barbara (Gohr) Griswold.

He is survived by three sons and their wives: Raymond W. Griswold Jr. and wife Louise of Wilmington, NC, Arthur J. Griswold and wife Denise of Danville, NH, and Mark E. Griswold and wife Laura of Hebron; five sisters and their husbands: Margaret Sheldon and husband Robert of West Suffield, Ruth Peters and husband William of Plymouth, MN, Leona Dunham and husband Rev. Arthur Dunham of Manchester, Helen Griswold of Rocky Hill, Mary Van Scoyk and husband Robert of Eden, UT; a sister-in-law, Leona Griswold of Wethersfield; a close family friend, Eleanor Mahar of Rocky Hill; five grandchildren; and many nieces, nephews and cousins.

Funeral services will be today (Friday, Jan. 12) at 11 a.m. at the Rose Hill Funeral Home, 580 Elm Street, Rocky Hill. Burial will be in Center Cemetery, Rocky Hill. Calling hours were at the funeral home Thursday evening. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be sent to charity of donor's choice or to Rocky Hill Volunteer Fire Dept.

Portland

Joseph D. Pritchard

Joseph D. Pritchard, 80, of Portland, husband of the late Gloria Ann (Bendsley) Pritchard, died Tuesday, Jan. 9, at Middlesex Hospital.

He was born in Middletown, the son of the late Joseph F. and Mary Ellen (Cashman) Pritchard. A veteran of World War II, he served with the U.S. Navy in the Atlantic and the Pacific.

Joe was an owner/operator of the former J&T's Autos and later retired after 33 years from Pratt & Whitney Aircraft, Middletown. He was a member of the B.P.O. Elks Lodge # 771 and a member of Hillside Football Gang.

He is survived by his son, Daniel Otto Pritchard and his wife Jannah of Cromwell; his daughter, Joann Gouin and her husband Wayne of Portland; a sister, Margo Roberts of Middletown; a sister-in-law, Natalie Pritchard of Middletown; also several nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by a brother, Robert Pritchard; and a sister, Mary Sonntag.

Funeral services will be today (Friday, Jan. 12) at 10 a.m. at Biega Funeral Home, 3 Silver St., Middletown. Burial, with military honors, will be in the State Veterans Cemetery. Calling hours were at the funeral home Thursday evening. In lieu of flowers, those who wish may send memorial contributions to Trinity Church Renovation Fund, 345 Main St., Portland, CT 06480.

Hebron

Linda S. Vacanti

Linda S. Vacanti, 58, of Manchester, formerly of Hebron, passed away suddenly Monday, Jan. 8, at Manchester Memorial Hospital.

Linda was born Sept. 22, 1948 in Manchester, daughter of Iris (Petrie) Vacanti of Manchester and the late Samuel R. Vacanti. She was raised in Manchester, attended local schools then moved to Hebron where she raised her family, returning to Manchester almost ten years ago.

She was presently employed at Macy's in Manchester as a retail sales associate and previously owned and operated the Pelle Salon on Main St. Manchester.

Besides her mother, Linda is survived by a son, Derek Souza and his wife, Kristen of North Attleboro, MA; a daughter, Heather Souza of Manchester; a granddaughter, Kendall Souza; a sister, Laurie Vacanti of Bluff City, TN; a niece, Kelly Moore and two nephews, Scott Cahill and Mark Cahill. Besides her father, Linda was predeceased by a sister, Nancy Cahill and a brother, Samuel Vacanti.

Calling hours were Thursday evening at Holmes Funeral Home 400 Main Street Manchester. Private burial will be in East Cemetery, Manchester.

East Hampton

Cathy L. Christian

Cathy Louise (Cheney) Christian, 50, wife of Francis J. Christian of Browns Mills, NJ, passed away on Saturday, Jan. 6, after a courageous battle with cancer.

Born and raised in Glastonbury and later East Hampton, Cathy had resided in New Jersey for the past 16 years. She was a decorated US Air Force veteran, retiring in 1998 as a Master Sergeant with over 20 years of service to our country.

Her hobbies included sewing, music, writing and drawing and she was especially fond of anything with a ladybug on it.

Cathy is survived by her husband, Francis J. Christian; a daughter, Carrie Christian; a granddaughter, Camryn and a grandchild due in April, all of Browns Mills, NJ.

She is also survived by her sister, Linda Costa of Old Saybrook; a brother, Michael Cheney of Middletown; and a sister, JoAnn Magyarik of Colchester, as well as numerous nieces, nephews, aunts, uncles and cousins.

She was predeceased by her father, Robert S. Cheney, her mother, Barbara L. Cheney, her brother, Robert M. Cheney, and her brother, Donald C. Cheney.

A memorial service honoring and celebrating her life will be held at the Congregational Church in East Hampton, CT on Jan. 27 at 10 a.m. All are invited to attend.

East Hampton

Gerald R. LePage

Gerald R. LePage, 71, of East Hampton passed away Monday, Jan. 8.

Born on March 28, 1935 in Putnam to the late Romeo and Medora (Benoit) LePage, he attended Hartford public schools and served in the U.S. Marine Corps during the Korean War.

He was a gifted artist and was passionate about antiques and fine art. For 25 years he worked as a commercial artist and later as a designer and manufacturer of reproduction Early American furniture and lighting.

He is survived by his beloved wife, Suzanne. He also leaves two step-children, Bill Smigel and son Matthew; and Peggy Sue Harbec and husband Douglas and sons Leo and Lance. He also leaves his beloved cats, many friends, cousins and his favorite uncle, Roland Benoit and wife Barbara. In keeping with his wishes no services will be held.

East Hampton

David Earl Clare, Sr.

David Earl Clare Sr., beloved husband of 60 years to Bettye McIntyer, died Monday, Jan. 8, at the Cobalt Lodge after a brief illness.

He was born on Feb. 14, 1922, in Lewistown, PA, the son of Phoebe Yangst and Walter Yorkom Clare. He worked at Capital Pipe as a foreman for many years. He was a veteran of World War II as a gunner on a B17 bomber.

David was an avid woodworker and backyard birder, making his own bird feeders and lawn art, which he happily shared with his family and friends.

He is survived by his sons, David Clare Jr. and his wife Susan Ann of East Hampton and Frank Clare and his wife Susan of Meriden; a daughter, Debby Bassett of Portland; a sister, Sarah Snyder of Pennsylvania. He is also survived by his grandchildren, Victoria Clare, Kim Kuca and her husband Jim, Chris Clare and his wife Jodi and Jordana; great grandchildren, Jamie and Ashliegh Kuca. He was predeceased by a grandson, Daniel Clare.

Funeral services, with military honors, will be held this Saturday, Jan. 13, at 11:30 a.m. in the State Veteran's Cemetery, Middletown. D'Angelo Funeral Home, 22 South Main St., Middletown is in charge of arrangements.

East Hampton

Donald R. Rittman, Sr.

Donald Richard Rittman, Sr., 77, of East Hampton, passed away peacefully after a long battle with ALS (Lou Gehrig's Disease) on Jan. 9 with his family by his side.

He was born Sept. 24, 1929 to the late Herbert and Mary (Barbour) Rittman and was a lifelong resident of East Hampton. He married his beloved wife Maxine (Johnson) Rittman on March 25, 1950 with whom he spent over 56 loving years.

He leaves behind a son, Donald R. Rittman Jr. and his wife Carol of East Hampton, a son, Bruce Rittman of East Hampton; a daughter, Pam Weir (who devotedly cared for her dad during his long illness) and her husband Ron of Cobalt, a daughter Tami Fraulino and her husband Joe of East Hampton; and a daughter-in-law Mary Rittman of Cromwell; grandchildren, Dene Rittman of North Carolina, Justin Rittman of Florida, Jody Rittman of Pennsylvania, Shannon Stockburger of Marlborough, Rebecca Rittman of Manchester, RJ and Rachael Weir of Cobalt, Joey, Krista, and Nicholas Fraulino of East Hampton; great grandchildren, Jason and Makayla Rittman of Pennsylvania, Talan Stockburger of Marlborough; a sister, Joanne Monstream of Washington; a brother, Paul Rittman of East Hampton and Elizabeth Britney of Middle Haddam who he thought of as a granddaughter and many loving nieces, nephews, cousins and in-laws. He was predeceased by his son, Kenneth Rittman, his grandson, Jason Rittman, his granddaughter, Brittany Weir, and his brother, Herbert Rittman.

Donald worked at Starr Net and G&S Service in East Hampton. He cherished the friendships that he made with many of the townspeople while at G&S Service. After his retirement in 2000 he became an avid Yankee, UConn and NASCAR fan. His greatest love was being with his wife, his children and his grandchildren. He enjoyed the simple life of watching his grandchildren play, taking morning road trips and shopping. He also enjoyed his frequent visits from family, friends, and neighbors.

Don's family will receive relatives and friends on Saturday, Jan. 13, from 9-11 a.m. at the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton. A memorial service will follow at 11 a.m. in the Spencer Funeral Home with the Rev. Charles LeBlanc officiating. Burial will be at the convenience of the family.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions can be made to ALS Association Connecticut Chapter, 4 Oxford Rd. Unit D1, Milford, CT 06460 or to Middlesex Hospice & Palliative Care, 28 Crescent St. Middletown, CT 06457.