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Remembering Bill O'Neill

by Michael McCoy

"Billy was nothing but good, and I'm going to miss him."

East Hampton resident Russell Oakes used these words this week when he reminisced about one of Belltown's own – former Governor William Atchison O'Neill, who died Nov. 24 after a long bout with emphysema.

During the past week, O'Neill's life has been extensively discussed, including his time in the United States Air Force during the Korean Conflict, his efforts with the Connecticut General Assembly, his institution of "Yankee Doodle Dandy" as Connecticut's state song, and even being known as the "Harry Truman of Connecticut."

But it was the Democrat's 11 years as governor that were mentioned the most. O'Neill was called "the education governor," and was beloved for his tendency to acknowledge the merits of women and ethnic and racial minority groups when making appointments.

While no doubt many Nutmeggers have remembered O'Neill fondly this week, it is in East Hampton where perhaps his loss will be felt most deeply.

Born in Hartford in 1930, O'Neill grew up in East Hampton, and was a 1948 graduate of East Hampton High School. It was in East Hampton where his family opened O'Neill's Taproom, which, though sold in 2004, maintains O'Neill's legacy with its current moniker: The Governor's Tavern. For the past 20 years or so, there has even been a street named after him: Gov. Bill O'Neill Drive.

And it was also in East Hampton that Gov. O'Neill began his foray into politics, starting out as a member of the Zoning Board of Appeals and later moving to the Board of Finance. O'Neill also served on the Fire Commission.

East Hampton took a lot of pride in its "number one son," who lived with his wife Nikki in their home on Lake Pocotopaug right up until his passing. It's likely that everyone in town has some sort of fond memory of the Bill O'Neill.

"I think I've known him all my life," Town Council Chairwoman Melissa Engel said. Engel's father Peter went to school with O'Neill.

In the late 1980s, Engel also got to do something that few people have the chance to do: "I was lucky enough to be invited to the governor's mansion for a Christmas party."

Despite their difference in party affiliation – she's a Republican – Engel said she "spoke with him often concerning politics," and added, "He had a brilliant political mind." In fact, when Engel made a bid for state representative in 2004, it was O'Neill whom she called for political advice.

One of the biggest impressions O'Neill left on Engel was something he said in 1999: "Politics is the art of compromise," Engel recalled him saying. "I've never forgotten that."

It seems that many were enamored with O'Neill's lack of pretense, and Engel is no exception. "He was a real people person." She also mentioned something that most people do not normally link with O'Neill. "He had a great singing voice," she said.



Also, Engel said, O'Neill "had a great love for East Hampton.... I don't think he ever missed an Old Home Day Parade."

Russell Oakes has organized the Old Home Days Parade for the last dozen years. "As far as I'm concerned," he said, "there would not be an Old Home Days Parade without Bill O'Neill." Oakes also praised O'Neill for always bringing the Governor's Footguard Band to the parade.

"That was his band," Oakes recalled. "He loved that band." Oakes also remembered how, as soon as O'Neill would make his appearance for the day during parade formation, the Footguard Band would immediately play "Hail to the Chief."

"He and Nikki would do anything to help Old Home Days," Oakes said. "He never forgot his town; he never forgot his school."

Last year, Oakes headed an effort to install American flags along the Route 66 corridor in town. He remembers feeling great pride when O'Neill approached him and said, "They look good Russ; you did a nice job."

East Hampton Town Council member and fellow Democrat Christopher Goff remembers the first time he met the governor: in 1979, when he was seven years old.

The occasion was "O'Neill Day," an event that the Democratic Town Committee had put together. Goff was chosen to present Nikki with a pendant and deliver a short speech.

Goff had another run in with the governor during his youth. During O'Neill's time as governor, Goff's grandparents had a house on the lake. A teenaged Goff and some friends decided to go for a cruise out on the lake and then thought to say hello to the governor. As they docked, Goff recalls two imposing figures in suits – O'Neill's security detail – meeting the visitors at the dock. Goff lightheartedly recalled his anxiety before looking up toward the house.

"There were Bill and Nikki, waving and laughing," said Goff.

Though Goff said O'Neill "was very easy to talk to," he also recalled the presence that the governor carried with him. "You always knew when Bill was in the room."

When asked if, politically speaking, he was directly affected by the governor, Goff said, "Very much so."

O'Neill "was very much not in anything for personal gain," Goff said. "At the same

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time, he made it clear what his beliefs were." And, Goff added, "he did it in a very respectful way."

Goff also seemed quite impressed with the governor's temperament, which he called, "low-key."

"All the times I worked with him," Goff said, "I never saw him get angry or overreact."

Councilman Bill Devine issued a short statement on O'Neill's passing, which sounds humorous at first, but highlights the governor's humble, no-frills nature. "Bill O'Neill was the last of the true statesmen and the only governor to cook me French fries," Devine said.

Devine explained that in 1975, he enlisted the help of about 10 friends to aid in his move from Boston. After a long day of moving, Devine and his group stopped at O'Neill's Taproom. Every guy ordered the same thing: a hamburger, French fries, and a beer. Devine said that the bartender, balking at the string of food orders that late in the day, responded, "kitchen's closed." But O'Neill happened to be there and said, "No, no, no, no, no," and proceeded to make the whole party the food they ordered.

Ed Jackowitz, owner of American Distilling said, "He was certainly a gentleman and certainly a great governor. ... I enjoyed seeing him, especially at the Governor's Tavern." Jackowitz made special mention of the times he and the governor would chat over a drink at the bar. He added, "He was certainly interested in our business," recalling that O'Neill would always ask about it. "He was always interested in every way he could help in seeing our business grow in East Hampton."

Town fixture Red McKinney knew the governor 45 years. In fact, O'Neill attended his wedding in 1975. "You would be hard-pressed to find someone to say something unflattering about Bill O'Neill," adding "He makes friends wherever he goes."

McKinney said, "If one word could describe Billy O'Neill, I think it would be 'consistent'. His outlook on legislating has never changed."

McKinney also said O'Neill seemed to get behind any cause with merit, noting that he supported legislation that helped veterans and, most recently, had taken an interest in the cause to help Lake Pocotopaug.

"He was a big Irish gentleman," McKinney recalled, also noting that the governor was a lifelong attendee of St. Patrick's Church. McKinney said he most recently saw him there last Christmas Eve.

"Bill O'Neill was a man of utmost integrity, a person whom everyone felt was his friend," McKinney added. "He could walk into a wedding reception or a political convention and everyone there felt as comfortable as could be in his presence."

McKinney continued, "It's a rare thing when a whole town knows the governor by his first name, but that's the way it is in East Hampton."

Describing him as "East Hampton's favorite son," McKinney said, "It didn't matter which elected state office he held at the time, Bill O'Neill always did his hometown proud... He's going to be sorely missed."

Former town manager Alan Bergren worked frequently with the governor. "It's a sad day for our entire town," he said. "I don't think we'll see another governor quite like Bill O'Neill. He did so much for the state."

Bergren recognized how busy O'Neill was during his time heading the state, but remembered, "When he was governor, he always made time for his hometown." What's more, Bergren said, despite O'Neill's living in the governor's mansion during his time in office, "he always made time to come back in town to vote on the budget."

Bergren counted himself as one of those to directly benefit from knowing him. "I learned that it's an honor to work in public service," Bergren said, "and that's what he instilled in everyone he met."

During his tenure as East Hampton's town

manager, Bergren had occasion to attend a number of conferences and other events that O'Neill spoke at. Without fail, said Bergren, "He would always mention his hometown, and it made you proud."

Most people seem to say "Governor O'Neill" when speaking of him, but, as far as his hometown goes, Bergren laughed, "A lot of people called him Bill. He was a very down-to-earth individual." Bergren also credited the governor as "very approachable" and said, "He was certainly a person to emulate."

Also, Bergren said, O'Neill always made it out to Old Home Days. Bergren recalled that O'Neill would always greet all those he came across, but added that it was not a mere formality, as can often be the case with someone of O'Neill's stature.

"He was genuinely interested in how they were doing," Bergren said. "You didn't have to be someone important to talk to him."

The former town manager said he was always careful to use the proper channels of protocol and not to take advantage of the governor's affinity to his hometown. But, he remembered, "If they heard it was from East Hampton, we always got through."

Bergren also recalled with special fondness at least one occasion when he and several other town officials had business to tend to in Hartford. Bergren asked the others in his party if, while they were there, they wanted to stop in and say hello to Governor O'Neill. The others seemed hard-pressed to believe that the governor would have time to see them on a whim. However, Bergren convinced them it was at least worth trying.

So, after walking to the capitol, they approached the governor's secretary, and told them where they were from. "The next thing you know," remembers Bergren, "we're sitting there with the governor in his office." Bergren said O'Neill seemed more than happy to see them.

Bergren recalled that, whenever he would meet with state officials in the years following O'Neill's 1991 departure from office, they would always ask him about the former governor. "'How's he doing?'" Bergren remembered the officials as saying. "'We miss him.'"

Other times, Bergren said, when people would learn he was from East Hampton, the response would often be that it's "the town that Bill O'Neill's from, and he has a little tavern next to the town hall!"

Bergren seemed genuinely grateful to know the governor, and was proud to hail from his hometown. "That's a rare occasion for a small community to have someone come from their ranks to rise to the highest office in the state," said Bergren. "It was an honor for me to know him these past 25 and a half years."

Suggesting that O'Neill's legacy in town would never die, Bergren added, "In East Hampton, he'll always be our governor."

During Tuesday's Town Council meeting, a moment of silence was observed for O'Neill, followed by Goff's reading of a letter from Gov. M. Jodi Rell.

"He was first and foremost a genuine man," Rell said in the statement Goff read. "His accomplishments were many. They were far-reaching and long-lasting," said Rell. After referring to "his beloved hills of East Hampton," Rell said in the statement, "He truly did grow where he was planted."

Engel said the council would brainstorm to find some way to give the governor "a more permanent tribute."

Wednesday night and Thursday morning a host of mourners attended O'Neill's wake at Spencer Funeral Home in East Hampton. His funeral was held Thursday at St. Patrick's Church in East Hampton, with burial following at Middletown's Military Cemetery. East Hampton Town Hall was closed for part of the day Thursday, for O'Neill's funeral.

O'Neill's full obituary can be seen on page 34.



Shattered Endz Hair Salon recently sold raffle tickets to collect donations for breast cancer research. The salon wound up donating \$1,000 to Pink with Power, an organization created to raise funds for the fight against breast cancer. Pictured, from left, are Kathy Langella, the winner of the raffle; Debi Rushford, owner of Shattered Endz; and Sarah Van Dyke-Ewan of Pink with Power.

Colchester Hair Salon Makes Donation to Breast Cancer Research

During October, Debi Rushford and her team at Shattered Endz Hair Salon collected donations to go towards breast cancer research. They did so by giving an arm's length of raffle tickets for every \$10 donation, and raffling off a basket of beauty products. The hair salon also added a percentage of their October sales to the collection, and gave a combined total of \$1,000 in donations.

The winner of the basket, Kathy Langella, is a 12-year survivor of breast cancer. Langella typically gives funds and time each year towards breast cancer research. This year she was unable to participate in a fundraising walk, so when she heard that Shattered Endz was collecting donations she went to their salon and gave to the cause.

"The basket raffle was such a great way to raise funds," said Langella. "I'm really happy to have won it and will use it for good quality 'me time'. I think it was wonderful for the ladies of Shattered Endz to give this way."

The basket included over \$300 in products as well as certificates for a pedicure, pumpkin facial, shampoo, haircut and blow dry. All three members of the hair salon team gave items and services to the cause. They collected beauty products, candles, nail polish, tan towels, make-up, loofahs, a t-shirt, and even a cookbook designed for breast cancer survivors.

On the same day Langella was presented with the basket, the salon also presented Sarah Van Dyke-Ewan from Pink for Power with two checks, totaling \$1,000. Pink for Power is an organization created to raise funds for the fight against breast cancer. The organization sells "pink" products at www.pinkforpower.com. All proceeds are donated to the Connecticut Breast Health Initiative, a nonprofit organization dedicated to reducing breast cancer mortality throughout the state.

Van Dyke-Ewan told Rushford her donation was "amazing and will go to help so many people."

Rushford, owner of Shattered Endz and hair designer, is also a breast cancer survivor. She said that when she was first diagnosed with cancer she did not have insurance. She received help from many others in order to take care of her needs, and the basket and donation of sales was a way for her to give back to the community and to those that need help as well. The Shattered Endz team also includes Vicki Miorelli and Cindy Klaja, and all three women plan on coordinating the same fundraising effort next October.

Shattered Endz Hair Salon is located at 75 Norwich Dr. For more information on the salon, call 537-0353.

Marlborough Assessor's Contract Not Renewed

by Sarah McCoy

The Marlborough Board of Selectmen on Nov. 13 voted to renew the contracts of several appointed town employees – with one exception.

No motion was heard to reappoint Emily Chaponis as Marlborough's assessor.

The embroiled employee worked for the town for the previous six years, and generated vocal criticism from many Marlborough residents, ranging from accusations of unprofessionalism and lack of courtesy to allegations of improper tax assessments.

"When any issue comes up I consider what's best for the town," selectman Joe La Bella said. "I didn't feel sufficiently comfortable that the current situation was, in fact, best for the town."

The *Riverast* was unable to reach Chaponis for comment for this story.

First Selectman Bill Black said the town has started receiving applications to fill the now-vacant position. (The position became vacant immediately following the Nov. 13 meeting.) Until the Board of Selectmen (BOS) has an opportunity to review and interview the applicants, Black and other town staff will manage the assessor's office.

"Fortunately it's a fairly quiet time for that position," Black said. "There are no big de-

mands but there are a few items that we will need to contract out for or request an extension."

The majority of the town's administrative officers are appointed in conjunction with the BOS. The BOS voted on the re-appointments at its Nov. 13 meeting. Civil Preparedness Coordinator Ann Kilby, Director of Health Thad King, Tree Warden Chris Corsa, Constables Randy Ransom and Jay Kehoe, and Town Engineer Nathan Jacobs and Associates all had their contracts renewed for the coming four years.

Also at the meeting, the selectmen also deferred action on three additional items. Re-appointment is due for the town attorney position and, in lieu of taking action, La Bella made a motion to seek proposals from the current as well as competing law firms to ensure the town secured the proper fit for their needs; the motion passed unanimously. The Animal Control Officer position was also deferred until Black could speak with the Town of Colchester, as the two towns share this service. Also deferred was the Social Services Director position, until the BOS receives additional input from the Commission on Aging and Senior Center Coordinator Violet Schwarzmann.

Marlborough Child Appears on National Talk Show

by Sarah McCoy

Bella Prieto of Marlborough fulfilled one of her lifetime goals earlier this month when the nine-year-old appeared on *The Ellen DeGeneres Show*, showcasing a unique invention.

Last year, while making toast, Bella was struck with an idea. As she tried to scrape the last dregs of peanut butter from the jar she thought of an easier way to make her snack. "If there were lids at the top and bottom then you wouldn't have to get peanut butter all over your hands," she explained. She went on to create "Bottoms Up Peanut Butter," a peanut butter prototype with lids at either end, making it easier for the peanut butter consumer.

Bella then headed off to University of Connecticut, to present her idea at the state Invention Convention. On Nov. 6, the invention took her even further as Bella and her mother, Michelle, traveled to Burbank, CA, where the Elmer Thienes-Mary Hall Elementary School fourth-grader appeared on stage with Ellen DeGeneres and two other kid inventors from Ohio and Nevada.

"It was a lot of fun," she said. "I've always wanted to be on TV."

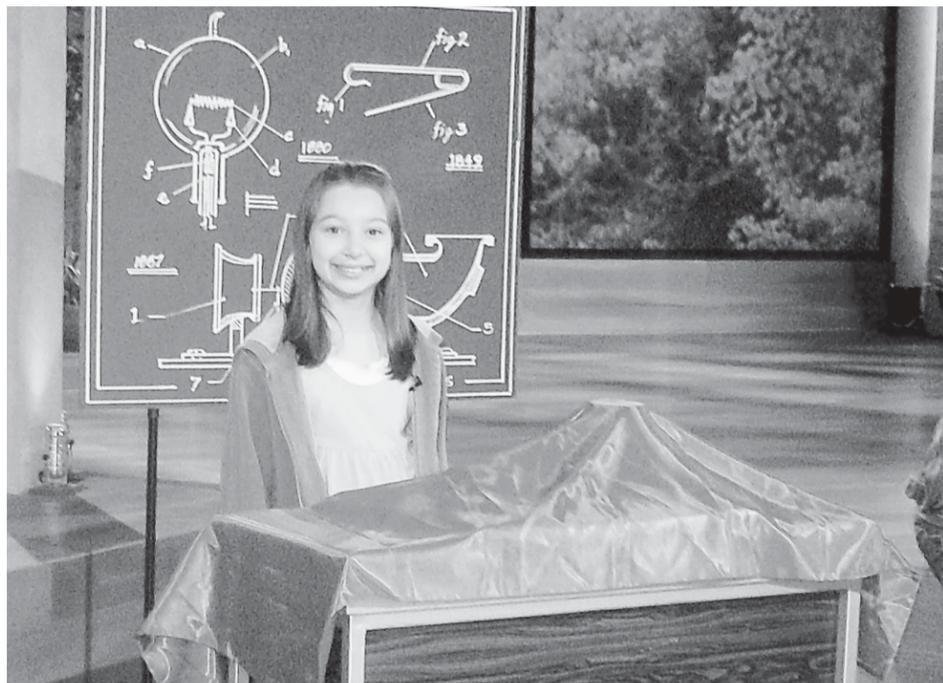
The journey to *Ellen* began months prior to the taping, when NBC contacted Connecticut

Invention Convention (CIC) President Charlie Baumgartner, asking him for recommendations of students. He then asked CIC coaches from across the state for suggestions; this prompted Marlborough Elementary School's coach Karen Brennan to recommend Bella. Bella had to videotape herself presenting her invention and then go through a series of phone interviews with NBC representatives before she got the nod to be on TV.

"My whole family was jumping all around and hugging each other when we heard the news," Bella said.

Bella and her mother flew from Bradley International Airport to Las Vegas. They then traveled to Burbank for the show's taping – as well as a few added perks. Bella got a chance to visit Universal Studios, soak in a jacuzzi, and fly on an airplane for the first time.

When Bella went on stage during the taping, it was the first time she met DeGeneres. But the nine-year-old didn't show any signs of stage fright as she explained her invention to the talk show host. At the end of the segment, Bella and the two other inventors, each received a surprise of their own, as DeGeneres presented them each with a brand new Dell laptop.



Bella Prieto, 9, of Marlborough, appeared on *The Ellen DeGeneres Show* earlier this month, presenting her invention "Bottoms Up Peanut Butter." The segment ran Nov. 8.

Portland Approves Ladder Truck Purchase

by Michael McCoy

Exactly two weeks after a minor procedural controversy, Portland residents approved the funding of a new ladder truck during a town meeting Wednesday.

For the past two years, Fire Chief Robert Shea and other fire department personnel have been working on acquiring a new ladder truck to replace their outdated 1980 model. The Board of Selectmen and fire department eventually came to an agreement on a \$653,723 custom-made Pierce model, and a \$35,000 down payment was approved during the budget vote in May.

The truck is a "quint-style" single-axle truck, and will yield greater access and maneuverability to firefighters. As for the old truck, Shea estimated it might fetch \$40,000 to \$45,000 by selling it to a Midwestern town in need of some sort of fire apparatus.

The ladder truck was originally to be voted on at a Nov. 14 town meeting, but that assembly was scrapped before a vote could take place. Shortly before that town meeting, selectman Carl Chudzick pointed out to First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield that any bond, note or other means of financing exceeding \$500,000 must be brought to a referendum as per town charter. After this discovery, the selectmen felt uncomfortable with proceeding with the vote.

Bransfield foresaw it being difficult to arrange such a referendum prior to the first bye of the year, and since Chief Shea estimated a \$60,000 to \$70,000 increase could result after that date, Bransfield on Nov. 20 proposed the selectmen increase the down payment, so the

remaining sum would fall below the \$500,000 cap. This would allow the town to proceed with a town meeting, as opposed to a referendum.

During the Nov. 20 Board of Selectmen's meeting, selectman Mark Finkelstein made a motion to appropriate \$155,000 from the capital non-recurring fund as a down payment on the truck. This cut the balance the town would owe to \$498,723.

So, this past Wednesday evening, residents assembled at Portland Library to vote on this amount, and it passed overwhelmingly, 69-2. The \$498,723 sum will be paid for as part of the town budget, over the next 12 years. In addition to the \$35,000 down payment in this year's budget, the town will pay \$35,000 towards the project in the 2008-09 budget, and then \$57,000 per year for 10 years after that.

The proceeding met with a minor hiccup when it was found that one more person voted than had signed in at the meeting. However, Selectman Mark Finkelstein and Town Clerk Bernadette Dillon waived a re-vote, since it would have no significant bearing on the result. (Though 70 residents signed in to vote, the project passed 69-2.)

Joseph Amend admitted that he had not realized he made an error in forgetting to sign up immediately prior to the vote. Later, during the Board of Selectmen's regular meeting, he poked fun at this. When standing to identify himself as a member of the town's Charter Revision Commission, Amend quipped, "Do I need to sign in anywhere?"

Robbery Reported at Portland Subway

by Michael McCoy

Portland Police are investigating the reported robbery of the Subway sandwich shop in town.

According to Police Lieutenant Ron Milardo, a 5'9" black male walked into the sandwich shop, located at 197 Marlborough St., at 7:51 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 24, and ordered a "cold cut grinder." However, Milardo said, "When the order was completed, he approached the register, brandished a switchblade-type knife, demanded \$20s, \$10s and \$5s, and said if it was done properly, no one would get hurt."

Milardo said the Subway employee complied, and the alleged robber immediately exited out the front door and proceeded past the rear of the building. The Portland Police Department K-9 Unit responded but lost the trail west of the scene, on the abandoned railroad track along Airline Avenue. (As of Tuesday, Milardo said the amount stolen had not yet been determined.)

According to Milardo, the knife was simply displayed on the counter and no one was injured.

Only two other people, both employees, were present during the robbery, Milardo said. He added that the police "put together a photo lineup" and said the employee who waited

on the alleged criminal was able to identify him. Milardo said the alleged robber had a salt-and-pepper beard and was wearing blue jeans and a dark-colored hooded sweatshirt.

Police said Wednesday the alleged robber has provided "a written confession to the incident," and said police are in the process of applying for the arrest warrant; Milardo said he is expected to arrest the suspect within a week or two.

Milardo said the suspect is "also being looked at by other towns for the same type of crime." He would not release the name of the suspect, but said he is from the Middletown area and has already confessed to a robbery in Middletown, and is also being considered for crimes in New Britain and East Hartford.

According to published reports, Jimmie Lee Schuler, 36, was charged this week in connection with a Nov. 15 robbery of the Webster Bank on Main Street in Middletown, and is also a suspect in four other reported robberies on Nov. 24, including the Portland Subway, the Dunkin' Donuts on Washington Street in Middletown, South Main Wine & Liquor on South Main Street in Middletown, and the Valero Mart on Route 17 in Durham.

Portland Police News

11/19 — Nelson Roman, 31, whose last known address was 70 Home Ave., Middletown, was charged with possession of less than four oz. Of marijuana and possession of drug paraphernalia, Portland Police report.

11/20 — Nicholas Moore, 20, of 457 Glastonbury Tpke., was charged with failure to respond to infraction, police say.

11/20 — Veronica Kirby, 20, of 6 Grove Terr., was charged with possession of less than four oz. Of marijuana, police say.

11/20 — Thomas Deban, 38, of 127 Pepperidge Rd., was charged with operating motor vehicle without valid license and no insurance, police say.

11/26 — Porter McAuliffe, 25, of 15 Taylor Dr., was charged with second-degree criminal mischief, police say.

11/26 — Kerry A. Sienna, 31, of 3 Heather Sq., Middletown, was charged with third-degree assault, police report.



In one of his final acts as First Selectman, Stan Soby, right, attended Skin Deep Beauty & Health Center's grand opening business. Also shown is Skin Deep owner Adrienne Davis.

Soby Helps Celebrate Relocation of Business

Skin Deep Beauty and Health Center, 11 Hayward Ave., held its grand opening event on Saturday, Nov. 10, and the festivities were attended by more than 100 people.

In one of his final acts as First Selectman, Stan Soby gave a speech and presented the business with a certificate, honoring them as a business in Colchester. Members of the Colchester Business Association, clients, and spagoers came together for a ribbon cutting, champagne toast, and a festive party.

"We're so happy to be a part of this wonderful community," said Adrienne Davis, owner of Skin Deep. "Thank you to the First Selectman, and all of you that attended. We hope we are able to serve your beauty and health care needs even more with our new location!"

Skin Deep was previously located on Norwich Avenue, and recently moved to Hayward Avenue. The new location boasts seven spacious rooms, wood floors, fireplaces, and is located on the Town Green. The seven rooms include separate areas for hair styling, registra-

tion, massage, facials, yoga and health classes, pedicures, and tea and catering services. The center is known for providing relaxing services as well as teaching clients how to take of their beauty and health care needs.

Attendees at the grand opening celebration entered three free raffles. The winners were: Jackie Dawson for a \$300 make-over, Terry Jacobson for a free Pilates class, and Alex Johnson for a free yoga class. Over 100 people entered the raffles.

Also, all attendees were eligible for a free 10 minute chair massage and special discounts. The first 10 attendees received haircuts at no cost.

Attendees filled all seven rooms and took turns receiving Mini Angel Readings, skin analyses, and a variety of treatments.

A reception was served that was provided by the Pepper Barn and Culinary Delights.

For more information on Skin Deep, call 537-5344 or visit www.skindeepbeauty.biz.

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Obituaries

East Hampton

William A. O'Neill

Governor William A. O'Neill, 77, of East Hampton, beloved husband of Natalie "Nikki" S. (Damon) O'Neill, died peacefully at his home, Saturday, Nov. 24. He was born in Hartford on Aug. 11, 1930, the only child of Joseph and Frances (Quinn) O'Neill. He served as the Governor of Connecticut for 11 years (1980-1991) and remains the longest serving Governor in more than 200 years.

O'Neill was a graduate of East Hampton High School and attended New Britain's Teacher's College (Central Connecticut State University) and the University of Hartford. An enlistee in the United States Air Force, he served his country during the Korean Conflict as a turret gunner, flying 12 combat missions on B-29 aircraft.

Proprietor of O'Neill's Tavern in East Hampton, he began his career in public service as a member of East Hampton's Zoning Board of Appeals and then as a member of the Town's Finance Board. In 1966, he won his first term as a state representative to the Connecticut General Assembly. He became a leader in the State House and the Democratic Party, first as Assistant House Majority Leader (1971-72), then Assistant House Minority (1973-74) and finally Majority Leader (1975-78). In 1974 he chaired the first campaign in the history of the United States to elect a female governor. In 1975 he became State Democratic Central Committee Chairman, a position he held until 1978 when he was elected Lieutenant Governor. O'Neill served with Governor Grasso until 1980 when he succeeded to the Governor's seat upon the resignation of Governor Grasso on Dec. 31, 1980.

As Governor for more than a decade, O'Neill established a record of successful leadership. He signed legislation that increased state funding for education, thereby improving educational quality, equity and accountability in Connecticut. He renewed state roads, provided additional resources for the care of the mentally ill and developmentally disabled, protected the State's drinking water and provided support for the State's elderly and its veterans. In 1983 he took the lead in tackling the State's homeless problem, forming the Governor's Task Force on the Homeless thereby setting an example for other state's to follow. On Thanksgiving and Christmas he visited soup kitchens where dinner was served to the homeless.

In 1984 O'Neill started the Governor's Care and Share program which involved all state employees in collecting food during the holidays for those in need. That program still exists today. He was the moving force and strong advocate for a Veteran's Cemetery in Middletown. His final request was to be buried there with his fellow veterans.

While Governor, O'Neill appointed the first female State Treasurer, the first female Attorney General, the first African-American Associate Justice and the first female Chief Justice to serve on the Connecticut State Supreme Court. He also appointed the first Chief Justices of the Supreme Court of Polish and Italian extraction. In 1990 he chose not to seek re-election to a full third term. Upon departure from office in January of 1991, he left behind an engaged, competent and diverse state government.

O'Neill was a life member of the American legion and the veterans of Foreign Wars. He served as chair of the New England Governor's Conference and the Coalition of Northeastern Governors, was president of the Council of State Governments and a member of the National Governor's Association. Following his government career, O'Neill served as a director of the ITT Hartford Mutual Funds, Inc. He received Honorary Doctor of Law degrees from Fairfield University, the University of New Haven, Briarwood College, the University of Hartford and the University of Bridgeport. In 2000 he was honored with the creation of the William A. O'Neill Endowed Chair in Public Policy and Practical Politics housed at Central Connecticut State University.

Lew Rome, who ran against Governor O'Neill in 1982 said this of the man who defeated him, "Despite his common man-Harry Truman approach, O'Neill surrounded himself with some of the most talented staff and commissioners in Connecticut government in 40 years."

Governor O'Neill leaves his wife, Nikki, of 45 years; cousins, Jim Wilson and Richard Wall; loving friends who were by his side in his final hours, Al and Janet Lane, Stasia D'Aquila, Bob and Lori Lanzi, Jim and Debbie Gaylord, Ruth Scharaf and Brad Bavis; plus the hundreds of friends he made during his lifetime. Special gratitude goes to Dr. Bimalin Lahiri, Dr. Surrendra Chawla, and Dr. Edwin Spath and their staffs; the Connecticut Hospice; and especially the nurses at St. Francis Hospital for their 27 years of care for Governor O'Neill.

Calling hours were Wednesday, Nov. 28 at Spencer's Funeral Home on Main Street in East Hampton and Thursday morning, followed by a Mass of Christian Burial at 11 a.m. at St. Patrick's Church, 457 West High St., East Hampton. Burial, with military honors, followed in the Military Cemetery in Middletown.

In lieu of flowers, contributions in the Governor's memory may be made to the New England Air Museum, c/o Bradley International Airport, Windsor Locks, CT 06096; Hospice of Connecticut, 100 Double Branch Road, Branford, CT 06405; the Valencia Society at St. Francis Hospital, 114 Woodland St., Hartford, CT 06111; or the East Hampton Ambulance Association, P.O. Box 144, East Hampton, CT 06424.

East Hampton

Judith Miller

Judith Miller of Bayfront Terrace, Sebastian, FL, formerly of East Hampton, passed away on Wednesday, Nov. 21, from ovarian/peritoneal cancer. She was 60. She is survived by her loving husband and soulmate of 43 years, A. David Miller. Judy fought a courageous battle with cancer for many years. With her cheerful positive attitude, she was truly an inspiration not only to those with cancer but to everyone's lives she touched. Judy created "Confidentially...Yours," a business of fitting women with mastectomy items in the privacy of their homes. She also designed and patented a breast form bar combination. Her hobbies were watercolor painting and gardening.

There will be a memorial service at St. Elizabeth Church, 901 Clearmont St., Sebastian at a later date. Judy has donated her body to research and at her request, there will be no calling hours. Arrangements by Seawinds Funeral Home & Crematory, Sebastian, FL. Condolences may be sent to Seawindsfh.com/obit.php.

Andover

George Allen White

George Allen White, 53, longtime resident of Andover and formerly of East Hartford, passed away unexpectedly on Tuesday, Nov. 20, in Rhode Island. George was born on May 8, 1954, in Rumford, ME, the loving son of Frank Allen and Marion Theresa (Gagné) White. He was raised along with his three sisters in East Hartford and graduated from East Hartford High School in 1973. He was a skilled tradesman working alongside his father for the Frank A. White Construction Co. and more recently for the Allstate Construction Co. He was an avid outdoorsman who loved nature, fishing, and hunting, along with landscaping his Andover property, "White Acres." He was a NASCAR fan and enjoyed old TV reruns of *Magnum P.I.* and other classics.

George leaves to mourn his passing his parents, Frank and Marion White, of East Hartford; his three sisters and their spouses, Gloria J. and John B. Jablonski, of Old Saybrook; Catherine A. and Donald J. Padegimas, of South Windsor; and Rebecca L. and Craig Landry, of Tolland; his six nieces, nephews and their spouses, James and David Jablonski; Jennifer A. and her husband, Derek A. Karcich; Alison M. and her fiancé, Fiorigio Fetta; and Amanda R. and Eric M. Landry. He also leaves his great niece and nephew Kaia M. and Braden D. Karcich, along with numerous extended family and friends here in Connecticut and in Maine.

Funeral services were Tuesday, Nov. 27, from the Newkirk & Whitney Funeral Home, 318 Burnside Ave., East Hartford, followed by a Mass of Christian Burial at St. Rose Church, 33 Church St., East Hartford. Interment followed in Silver Lane Cemetery. George's family received callers at the funeral home. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions can be made in his name to the Arthritis Foundation-CT Chapter, 35 Cold Springs Rd., Suite 411, Rocky Hill, CT 06067-3611 or Helen & Harry Gray Cancer Center, c/o Hartford Hospital, Fund Development Office, 80 Seymour St., P.O. Box 5037, Hartford, CT 06102-5037. To send a tribute or share condolences online visit www.mem.com.

Marlborough

Peter Abel

Peter Abel, 68, of Marlborough, passed away Tuesday, Nov. 13. He is survived by his loving wife Ingrid, son Alexander, daughter Andrea, her husband Todd Bourdon, son-in-law Frank DiBacco, and grandchildren Samantha, Christopher, Zachary, Nicole, and Joseph DiBacco.

Peter lived to serve others and that others may live in his death.

Those wishing to pay their respects, please remember him kindly in your thoughts and prayers.

Marlborough

Robert E. Welch

Robert E. Welch, 78, beloved husband of Elizabeth (Estabrook) Welch, passed away peacefully at his home in Marlborough on Thursday, Nov. 22. Born in Portland, ME on Sept. 15, 1929, he was the son of the late William and Doris (Chaffee) Welch. Bob graduated from Portland High School in 1947 and enlisted in the U.S. Air Force where he served as a Staff Sergeant stationed in North Africa during the Korean War. During his professional career, Bob worked for Niles, Bement and Pond Manufacturing; Goss and DeLeau Manufacturing and most notably as manager of Marlborough Country Barn for over 30 years.

Bob was an avid golfer, tennis player, and bowler. He had a distinct love for gardening and a passion for music, especially Blues. In addition, Bob was a Master Craftsman of Shaker furniture. Daily he admired the birds perched on his many feeders and devoted much of his time watching golf, tennis, baseball and basketball. He was an especially avid fan of the Boston Red Sox, Dallas Cowboys and UConn basketball.

Besides his wife of 55 years, Elizabeth (Estabrook) Welch, Bob is survived by his three daughters, Robyn Johnson and her husband Kent of Marlborough, Erin Fournier and her husband Paul of Andover, Maureen Welch and her companion Michael Smith of Maine; a son, Daniel Welch and his wife Theresa of Tennessee; a brother and sister-in-law, William and Rosemary Welch of Maine; nine grandchildren, Katie Hoisington and her husband Ryan, Adam Johnson and his wife Jocelyn Dunnack, Brittany Behrmann, Simone Fournier, Lauren Behrmann, Neil Johnson, Clayton Behrmann, Robert Welch, and Meghan Welch; two step-grandchildren Jonathan and Austin Potter; five great-grandchildren Hanna, KaLyn, Shae, Ella, and Rohan; also several nieces and nephews.

A Memorial Mass was celebrated Wednesday, Nov. 28, at St. John Fisher Church, Marlborough. Burial will be at the convenience of the family in Marlboro Cemetery. There are no calling hours. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions can be made to the Salvation Army, 855 Asylum Ave., Hartford, CT 06105. The Spencer Funeral Home 112 Main St., East Hampton has care of arrangements. To leave online condolences or for directions visit www.spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Colchester

Despina Rose Rychlovsky

Despina Rose Thalasis Rychlovsky, 86, of Middletown, died early Wednesday morning, Nov. 21, at Middlesex Hospital Hospice Unit. She was the widow of Robert M. Rychlovsky. Despina Rose Rychlovsky was born Jan. 19, 1921, in New York City, a daughter of the late George and Alice Doulgaris Thalasis. For many years she had worked as a seamstress for the Levine and Levine Company in Colchester. She and her husband had lived in Colchester and East Hampton before retiring to Dennis, MA. She returned to Connecticut in 2000.

She leaves behind a son, Robert Rychlovsky and his wife Sally of East Hampton; a daughter, Betty Lynn Landry and her husband Robert of East Dennis, MA; four grandchildren, Jessica Loffredo and her husband Richard, Bobby Landry, Jillian Davidson and her husband Matthew, and Christine Landry; and many cousins, nieces and nephews. Her family received relatives and friends in the Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland, on Sunday. Funeral services were held Monday from the Portland Memorial Funeral Home and at the Church of Saint Mary for a Mass of Christian Burial. Interment followed in St. Joseph's Cemetery in Colchester. In lieu of flowers, gifts in her memory may be sent to the Church of Saint Mary, 51 Freestone Ave., Portland, CT 06480 or to the Middlesex Hospital Hospice, c/o Office of Philanthropy, 28 Crescent St., Middletown, CT 06457. For online expressions of sympathy, visit www.portlandmemorialfh.com.

Colchester

Marian Agnes Jones

Marian Agnes Jones, 94, of Colchester and formerly of Montague, MI, widow of the late Freeman Mayville Jones, passed away Monday, Nov. 26, at the Nutmeg Pavilion Health Care Center in New London. Born May 12, 1913 in Erie, PA, she was a daughter of the late Herbert and Mabel Golden. Marian attended the former Seton Hill College in Pennsylvania, where she earned her bachelor's degree. On Nov. 18, 1939, she and Freeman were married in Evanston, IL, and shared 60 wonderful years before he predeceased her on Jan. 3, 2000.

She loved her home of over 30 years on White Lake in Montague, where she enjoyed cooking, entertaining and boating. Mrs. Jones was also an early environmental advocate along with her husband, taking on large issues in the area in the 1950s. She was a member and Past President of the Michigan Chapter of the Women's Clubs of America and a supporter of the Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp. In her spare time, she was an avid bridge player, but found her greatest joy in her family, to whom she was ever devoted.

She is survived by her two sons, Kevin R. Jones of Fayetteville, NC and Gregory R. Jones of Lebanon; four grandchildren, Sarah Valentin and David, Matthew and Daniel Jones and her great grandson, Jacob Jones. In addition to her husband, she was predeceased by her sister, Jeanne Stephens. Donations in her memory may be made to the Alzheimer's Association, 96 Oak St., Hartford, CT 06106. Care of private arrangements has been entrusted to the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester.

Marlborough

Levinnia Jane Hayes

Levinnia Jane (Button) Hayes, 85, of Marlborough passed on to her eternal home on Monday, Nov. 26, peacefully at Marlborough Health Care Center. She was born Dec. 1, 1921 in Cromwell, the daughter of the late Milton and Ellen (Johnson) Button. Her husband Emmett E. Hayes preceded her in death in 2005. They were happily married for over 60 years and raised their six children in Manchester until moving to Marlborough. She was a lifelong lover of Pink Squirrels, Teddy Bears and music and dance. During her time as a resident at Marlborough Health Care Center, friends and family visited regularly. Her genuine warmth, sense of humor and optimism and her prayers were her legacy. She and her visitors enjoyed talking about the best parts of life, food, fun and family. She touched the hearts of the people who had the good fortune to meet her.

She leaves behind to cherish her memory three sons, Robert E. Hayes and wife Janice of Rush, NY, William E. Hayes and wife Martha of Vernon, and Barry D. Hayes and wife Rita of Manchester; three daughters, Beverly J. Hilliker and husband Benford of East Hampton, Beth E. Ober and husband Brian Devine of Moosup and Barbara Dimock and fiancé Richard Rice of Coventry; two brothers, Milton Button and wife Eleanor of Hebron and John Button and wife Jeanette of Florida. She also leaves 18 grandchildren, 24 great grandchildren and 2 great great-grandchildren and several nieces and nephews. Hers was a life well lived. She will be greatly missed by all and always be our sunshine. The Hayes family would like to thank the staff of Marlborough Health Care Center, the Hospice care providers and VNA Nurse Carol for their care and compassion.

A funeral service was held Thursday, Nov. 29, at the Rose Hill Funeral Home, 580 Elm St., Rocky Hill. Burial will be in Rose Hill Memorial Park. Friends called at the funeral home just prior to the service. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to Marlborough Health Care Center Recreation Fund, 85 Stage Harbor Rd., Marlborough, CT 06447

East Hampton

Patricia Ann Muhl

Patricia Ann Muhl, 65, of 889 Laurel Ridge, East Hampton, formerly of Clinton, died Nov. 21 at St. Raphael's Hospital, New Haven. Born on June 26, 1942, in Brooklyn, NY, she is the daughter of the late Ralph and Adeline (Palacastro) Leone.

Pat is survived by her husband Richard; her son Frederick and his wife Virginia Muhl of Colchester; her daughter Adel-Marine and her husband Donald Cerri of Pelham, NH; her grandchildren Lydia Muhl and Kayla and Ranae Cerri. Pat is also survived by her brother Joseph Leone of Elmont, NY; three nieces and one nephew. Besides her parents, Pat is predeceased by her sister Maria Vassallo.

Pat was involved with the Clinton Fire Department Women's Auxiliary and worked at the Morgan High School for many years. She was very proud to help at the high school as a Teachers Aide. Pat was also a member of St. Mary's Church in Clinton.

Family and friends called at Swan Funeral Home, 80 E. Main St., Clinton, on Friday, Nov. 23. A Mass of Christian Burial was held Saturday, Nov. 24, at 10 a.m. at St. Mary's Church. Burial followed in St. Mary's Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the CT Autism Spectrum Resource Center, 101 North Plains Industrial Road, Harvest Park Bldg. 1A, Wallingford, CT 06492 or www.ct-asrc.org

East Hampton

Stanley Guzauskas

Stanley E. Guzauskas, 82, of East Hampton and formerly of New Britain, widower of Elizabeth W. Guzauskas, died Friday, Nov. 23, at Marlborough Medical Center.

Born Feb. 11, 1925 in Granby, he was the son of the late William and Anna (Utza) Guzauskas. Stanley had lived in New Britain for most of his life where he had worked as a bartender at the Cameo Bar. Stanley had served his country proudly as a Merchant Marine.

Besides his parents and wife Elizabeth, Stanley was predeceased by his daughter Karenann Ruel.

He leaves to mourn his passing his devoted son-in-law Richard Ruel of East Hampton; two brothers, Martin Guzauskas and Raymond Guzauskas; three sisters, Amy Kosiuk, Elizabeth Guzauskas and Viola Guzauskas; his two grandchildren, Raquel Walton and Ryan Ruel; and three great-grandchildren, Pierce and Lauren Walton and Alexandra Ruel. Stanley was predeceased by sisters Josie, Helen, Julia and Rose.

A graveside service was held Tuesday, Nov. 27, in St. Mary's Cemetery, New Britain, with the Rev. Charles LeBlanc officiating. In lieu of flowers memorial donations may be made to the American Cancer Society, 538 Preston Ave., P.O. Box 1004, Meriden, CT 06450. The Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, is assisting the family with arrangements. To leave online condolences or for directions visit www.spencerfuneralhomeinc.com

Hebron

Judy Laking

Judy Laking, 60, of Hebron, passed away Monday, Nov. 26 at her home in Hebron. She was born on Jan. 4, 1947, in Hartford, daughter of the late Clarence H. and Carolyn M. Chillson Laking.

She was a devoted LPN and was employed at the Harrington Court Genesis Health Care of Colchester for 24 years. Judy loved to go to the beach and enjoyed horseback riding.

She is survived by three sisters, a twin sister Nikki Adams of Melbourne, FL, Pamela Palmer and Corliss Walsh, both of Hebron; her niece Karen, nephews Shawn, Andrew and William.

Funeral services are private; there are no calling hours. Belmont Funeral Home of Colchester is in care of arrangements.

Marlborough

Glenn H. Herrmann

Glenn H. Herrmann, 65, of Marlborough died suddenly at home on Nov. 27. He was employed as Production Supervisor at the *Glastonbury Citizen/Rivereast* newspapers in Glastonbury. Glenn was a hard worker and a handyman extraordinaire. He loved to laugh and play practical jokes on his family and friends. He was always there to help his friends and neighbors and those who knew him felt his generous spirit. He enjoyed spending time with friends of various organizations, gardening, camping, wildlife, Mrs. J's sweet potato pie and was intrigued by how things worked, which led him to his hobby of "customizing" his cars and lawn equipment.

Glenn will be dearly missed by his wife of 40 years, Linda, his daughters Jennifer Herrmann, Tracy Darna and son-in-law Kevin Darna, his mother-in-law a.k.a. "Ma" Elizabeth Rogers, three brothers-in-law, William Rogers and his wife Shirley, Richard Rogers and James Rogers all of Connecticut, nephews Michael and Nicholas Herrmann of New Jersey and nieces Gina Herrmann of New Jersey and Cameron and Taylor Rogers, as well as their mother Carolyn of Connecticut. He also leaves his cousins Nancy LaRue and her husband John of Maryland, Peter Masterson and his wife Barbara of Arizona and Paul Masterson, his wife Leslyn and their daughter Park of California.

Glenn will also be missed by his "extended" family Cheryl and Hannah Foley, Diane, James, Kerry and Daniel O'Brien, Bob, Linda and Ian Gechas, Rob, Carl, Bruce and Pam, as well as his co-workers at the *Glastonbury Citizen*. Friends may call at the Glastonbury Funeral Home at 450 New London Tpke. on Friday, Nov. 30, from 6-9 p.m. Burial will be at the convenience of the family. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the National Wildlife Federation, 11100 Wildlife Center Dr., Reston, VA 20190.

