



If all goes as hoped, Portland's famous arch, once used to haul brownstone in the local quarries, will be housed in a special pavilion by the Police Station on Main Street by this fall.

Pavilion Will House Historic Brownstone Quarry Arch

by Michael McCoy

An integral piece of Portland's history—the famous brownstone arch—will hopefully be making its way back to the center of town soon.

Once used to haul brownstone in the local quarries, the “arch” and the oxen used to pull it, are a familiar image to town residents, used on the Portland town logo among other places.

The arch is more or less a long wooden beam with a large wheel on each side. It is 31 feet long, and the wheels stand 8 feet high. The brownstone was slung underneath the beam and the whole contraption was hauled by oxen.

Most of the arches are long gone, but at some point in time, one of them was given to the town by one of the quarry owners and it has been treasured ever since for its local significance. According to local resident Howard Rosenbaum, the surviving arch most likely dates back to sometime in the 1800s.

For many years the arch was displayed on the lawn in front of what is now the Brownstone Intermediate School. Unfortunately, time and weather took its toll. “Because it was out in the rain and the snow, over the years, it deteriorated,” observed Rosenbaum.

In 1998, Eddie Chiabrero and Bill Long volunteered to see to the restoration of the old arch. Speaking of Chiabrero, Rosenbaum said, “He’s one of those guys who can do everything,” citing talents such as tobacco farming and smith work.

They obtained the proper lumber and carefully restored the arch to its original condition. It will eventually be returned to public display, but not with the previous disregard for the effects of Mother Nature. For now, the arch is being stored in a barn in town until the proper facility for display can be constructed.

The site for that “facility”—planned as an open-sided, covered pavilion—will be in the parking lot between the police station and Bank of America on Main Street.

A search for a suitable location began in 2003, a year after the restoration was complete, when the Board of Selectmen commissioned the Brownstone Quorum to find a site. The search was conducted by a five-person subcommittee chaired by Rosenbaum.

The subcommittee considered various locations, including sites behind the Town Hall and the front of Brownstone Intermediate School. One major consideration, however, was that the arch must be covered, which led the committee to settle on the parking lot between the police station and Bank of America on Main Street.

Plans for a protective pavilion were drawn up by Richard Staub at no charge. Opting for a mortise and tenon design, the arch pavilion includes, appropriately enough, a brownstone entryway. The pavilion will measure 20 feet in width by 40 feet in length, and will include a cement floor.

Town Engineer Jeff Jacobson prepared the site engineering drawings. In addition, the Public Works Department will donate their time to do the site work. “Rick Kelsey’s been great,” said Rosenbaum of the Public Works chief.

The subcommittee has received four quotes for the project and estimates a total cost of between \$50,000 and \$55,000. Last fall the Quorum received a state grant for \$25,000, and the town has pledged \$6,000 over the course of four years. In addition, the Police Union has donated \$1,000. Along with other donations, the Quorum has raised \$36,000. The committee has now begun to ask local businesses for contributions.

In addition to the arch itself, the pavilion will contain signage, telling of the history of the arch and the quarries. Markers will also recognize those who donate \$500+ and \$1,000+.

Finally, a brick walkway will lead up to the arch pavilion. Donors may purchase a brick for \$100, adorning it how they wish.

“We’d like to get this up by the Brownstone Festival in September,” said Rosenbaum.

To recognize their part in making this project possible, the Brownstone Quorum presented Eddie and Joseph Chiabrero with a plaque during a ceremony on April 17 in the First Selectwoman’s office.

Despite the wear and tear due to the elements over the years, Rosenbaum said the

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For many years the arch stood in front of the old middle school on Main Street. It is presently in storage awaiting construction of a pavilion to shelter it from the elements.

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arch has never been a target of vandals and graffiti artists in its years on display in front of the school. The Quorum hopes the pavilion's proximity to the police station will help to protect it from vandals or other mischief in the future.

"It's the primary artifact that is left from the quarries," said Rosenbaum of the arch's historical importance.

Anyone interested in donating to the Brownstone Arch Pavilion can make checks out to The Brownstone Quorum Arch Project. They may be sent to The Brownstone Quorum, PO Box 402, Portland, CT 06480 or to Howard Rosenbaum at 351 William Street. Checks are tax deductible. For additional information, contact Rosenbaum at 342-0771.

Colchester Woman Sentenced for Killing Husband in 2004

A former Westerly Terrace resident who was arrested for killing her husband back in 2004 has been sentenced to 25 years in prison.

Tracy Shumaker, 29, of 264 Westerly Terrace was arrested Oct. 13, of 2004 for the killing of her husband, Daniel, with a gunshot to the back of his head as he slept. Shumaker told police Daniel Shumaker had been mentally and emotionally abusing her and their children.

Shumaker faced up to 60 years in prison, but the sentence was reduced because she claimed abuse.

According to police, Shumaker walked into Troop K after the murder to report to police that she had just arrived home and found her husband lying on the floor with blood near his head. State Police and EMS personnel immediately went to the Westerly Terrace home

and found Daniel Shumaker, 31, lying on the floor. He was pronounced dead at the scene.

Tracy Shumaker was arrested 11 hours later and charged her husband's murder. Police secured physical and forensic evidence at the scene and conducted interviews, which led to the arrest.

Shumaker was held at Troop K on a \$500,000 bond.

Daniel Shumaker worked as a steam engineer at Hartford Steam Boiler and had one daughter with Tracy, who was a stay-at-home mother. Tracy also has two sons from previous marriages, a 7-year-old and a 12-year-old at the time of the killing, according to reports. The two younger children lived with the Shumakers. Neither was home at the time of the murder, according to reports.

Andover Voters Send Budget to Referendum

by Jim Salemi

Andover will hold its budget referendum Tuesday, May 22 at the Andover Elementary School gymnasium between 6 a.m. and 8 p.m.

Residents voted at a town meeting last Thursday to send a \$10 million proposed budget to referendum. The proposal represents an overall increase of approximately \$670,000 or 7.1% over current year spending.

Voters sent the budget to referendum by a vote of 30-22.

The education request going to referendum is approximately \$3.8 million, a difference of \$144,890 or 3.97% over the current year figures. The town budget request is \$2.4 million, an increase of \$397,000 over current year spending. The Andover portion for the RHAM budget is \$3.8 million, an increase of

\$127,000 over the current year.

Approximately 70 residents and officials were on hand for the meeting, and the predominant point of contention was a proposed raise for the first selectman.

The original request was for the salary not to exceed \$47,240. After considerable debate on everything from the dollar amount, to whether or not it should be phased in over two years, to whether or not the first selectman was worthy of a raise, the figure approved was \$2,240 less than requested.

The initial request was rejected by a vote of 36-31. Voters approved a raise of \$45,000 after a second vote of 33-32.

The vote to increase the town clerk's salary fared better. Voters approved a salary not to exceed \$39,900.

Marlborough Budget Approved in Uncontentious Vote

by Sarah McCoy

There was absolutely no controversy in Marlborough on Monday night. Sixty residents gathered for the annual Town Meeting to unanimously approve the 2007-08 budget.

The budget represents a 4.45% increase in spending over the current year. This includes a 3.33% increase to the local Board of Education budget, a 5.94% increase to Town Operations, and a 24% increase in Debt Services.

"Obviously I am very pleased that the budget passed," First Selectman Bill Black said after the vote. "It is a reasonable and well-thought-out budget and reflects the effort put forth by the boards of finance and selectmen."

Expenditures for next year are budgeted for \$19,956,074.

The Board of Finance used monies from the Undesignated Fund Balance and other town accounts to bring down the overall increase to 2.03%. The increase might be even lower depending on the actions taken on the Governor's proposed budget.

In their deliberations, the Board of Finance opted to keep the state revenues at flat levels from last year. If the Governor's budget is adopted, the town would see an increase in support. However, in order to plan conservatively, the BOF did not consider that possible additional revenue in their recommended budget.

Next year's budget focuses on maintenance to the town's buildings. An updated HVAC system will be installed in the Richmond Memorial Library. Renovations will also be done at Fire Company 2, the Public Works garage, and the Town Hall.

Also approved on Monday were two bonding items. The town will appropriate \$905,684 for road reconstruction and another \$233,300 for a small dump truck, a large dump truck, and a skid steer.

In his initial budget recommendation, Black had requested an additional \$130,000 for the purchase of a second large dump truck. The two new trucks were set to replace 17- and 18-year-old vehicles currently in the town's fleet. The second truck was eliminated during budget workshops earlier this spring.

"We have a detailed long-term plan and [the town] has not funded the plan as laid out," he said. "This means more dollars will be allocated to maintenance."

Board of Finance Chairman Catherine Gaudinski stood by the relatively small increase calling it a, "fiscally responsible budget."

The Board of Finance worked to minimize a tax increase while focusing on improved town services—especially facilities and roads maintenance," she said. "A continued low tax impact is important since the town will have increased bonding debt over the next few years for sewers and other projects," she explained.

Last year over 160 residents attended the Town Meeting. However, in prior years the town has seen as few as 10 residents attend the final budget vote.

Black called this year's turnout, "representative of the public at large."

Residents can expect to receive their tax bills in early July.

Portland Victim's Friend Charged with Reckless Driving

by Michael McCoy

A Portland teenager was arrested last week in connection with an incident that turned tragic on Halloween night last fall.

Brian Hanna of Butler Lane turned himself in to Portland police on May 9 and was charged with reckless driving, speeding and failure to drive in an established lane.

The arrest was linked to a fatal accident from the fall in which Hanna's friend, John W. Jarzabek, Jr., 17, also of Portland, was killed when his car went out of control on Route 66.

According to police, Jarzabek and Hanna, in separate cars, were driving east on Route 66 at a high rate of speed at about 10:30 p.m. Halloween night when Jarzabek lost control of his 1995 Acura Integra.

The vehicle smashed into a guardrail and careened across the roadway before coming to a stop across the westbound side of the roadway.

Jarzabek, who police determined was not wearing a seatbelt, was ejected from the car. He was taken to Hartford Hospital by Lifestar helicopter, but died of his injuries.

The crash caused two lesser accidents. The vehicle of a motorist who stopped to help Jarzabek was struck. Another vehicle was damaged by debris from the initial accident. The multiple accidents forced that section of Route 66 to be shut until about 2 a.m.

A six-month investigation led by Portland Police Officer Peter Paranzino found that Hanna and Jarzabek were both traveling "at speeds

well over 70" mph, according to Sgt. James Kelly.

The speed limit in that area is 45 mph, though the limit where the two teens started, closer to Main Street, is only 35 mph. The two drivers started around Pickering Street, according to police. The accident occurred a couple of miles east on Route 66.

Hanna saw the accident in his rear view mirror, said police, and his testimony indicated the two teens were "fooling around," said Kelly.

"He was driving in and out of his lane," Kelly said of Hanna.

Kelly also noted that Hanna admitted that driving in this fashion was something he and Jarzabek did from time to time.

Police spent considerable time investigating the accident. "Due to the fatal injuries," said Kelly, "the whole accident had to be reconstructed."

He added, "These specific charges related to Hanna were based on testimony from other motorists." The charges do not indicate that authorities consider Hanna directly responsible for his friend's death.

No one other than Jarzabek sustained any injuries during the event.

Hanna's court set bond was posted at \$10,000

The victim was a senior at Vinal Technical High School where he was enrolled in the Auto Body Shop program. He also worked at Home-town Garage, a Portland automotive company owned by his father.

Standoff Ends With Arrest After Ten-Hour Wait in Colchester

A standoff between police and a Shailor Hill Road resident ended peacefully last Tuesday after nearly 10 hours of negotiations between the man and police.

Police eventually stormed the residence after talks broke down and arrested the man, identified as James E. Gasser, 47, of 348 Shailor Hill Rd.

Gasser was charged with unlawful discharge of a firearm, use of a firearm during the commission of a felony, first-degree reckless endangerment, risk of injury and disorderly conduct, according to reports.

The incident is still under investigation, according to police.

Gasser is being held on a \$150,000 bond. According to reports, police were dispatched

to the home around noon, after a family member complained to police that Gasser had fired a gun in the house and was acting in a threatening manner.

Police stormed the home around 9:30 p.m. after attempts to persuade Gasser to surrender failed. Gasser was apprehended and brought to a hospital for evaluation.

Police closed off roads within a quarter-mile radius of the home because Gasser was believed to have weapons.

First Selectman Stan Soby said two residents have been in touch with him, expressing a concern that they could not get out of their homes to vote on the budget referendum. Soby said he checked with the state and found there is no recourse for those who could not vote.

Colchester Budget Soundly Rejected at First Referendum

by Jim Salemi

Voters Tuesday soundly rejected the town finance board's recommended \$47.9 million budget for the next fiscal year. The budget was rejected by a 2-1 margin.

The disparity between yes and no votes was the widest in recent memory.

Voting for all three of the town's voting districts took place at town hall. Voters for the first time cast their ballots for the budget on electronic optical scan machines.

"It's a mandate (by the voters)," said finance board Chairman Bruce Hayn about the referendum's outcome. "With a 2-1 margin, it's hard not to pay attention. Maybe there are some adjustments we can make, but one thing is for sure, we are going to cut the budget more."

Hayn would not unilaterally venture as to how deep the finance board may cut, saying the board needed to touch base with the boards of selectmen and education before making any reductions.

Board of Finance member Ron Goldstein said the town is still waiting on the legislature for a firm figure on how much state aid the town will receive.

"June 6th is the end of the session. Hopefully they'll act before the session ends," he said. "If it doesn't happen by the sixth it will

mean a special session."

At the finance board meeting Wednesday night, Hayn polled board members as to their thoughts on reductions and a date for the next referendum.

Board members agreed to take a tactful approach and ask the town and the Board of Education for lists of items that would be cut in each case of a quarter-mill reduction, half mill reduction, etc., without eliminating any personnel. The information would also include the consequences if a particular item were to be eliminated from the budget.

First Selectman Stan Soby reported to the finance board that he has heard considerable feedback, both verbally and in the way of comments left in a suggestion box by voters after casting their ballots. Much of the criticism, he said, focused on town employee pay raises in tough economic times that also happen to coincide with a revaluation year.

After the polls closed Tuesday, Soby told reporters that town employee raises are contractual and the town is obligated to honor the contract, negotiated with the employee unions.

"We try to negotiate what is fair and reasonable for the employees and the citizens," he said.

The board, recognizing voter concern about

the budget's impact on their taxes, agreed to wait on presenting a revised budget to the public until after the legislative session ends on June 6th.

Provided the legislature approves one version or another of an education cost sharing package and avoids going into a special session, the finance board will know for certain how much the town will receive from the state and can adjust the budget accordingly. The board has been conservative in its unofficial figure in the "income" column so not to inflate income to reduce the mill rate.

A town meeting is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, June 19, and a second referendum the following Tuesday, June 26.

Resident Linda Hodge, who is also a member of the Board of Education, told the board it was her feeling that the income figures used by the board representing unknown dollar amounts such as education cost sharing, are too conservative.

"If we don't have any real numbers (from the state) by the next referendum, the numbers should be increased," she said. "People arbitrarily (made motions at the town meeting to) cut the budget based on bottom line numbers. It's irresponsible to cut numbers."

But according to state statutes, citizens

can only make motions to reduce the bottom line of an education budget; motions for line-item reductions are allowed only for town budgets.

Those making motions to reduce the education budget also gave reasons for doing so—to bring the increase more in line with inflation and to bring the increase more in line with Gov. Jodi Rell's proposed cap of 3% on municipal budgets.

Superintendent of Colchester Schools Karen Loiselle told the board that the district still isn't spending enough per pupil, even in the current budget, based on the opinion of the legislative Education Committee and the Connecticut Teachers Association. Loiselle handed out copies of a March *Hartford Courant* article where Colchester was cited among towns ranked lowest in the state on education spending.

But it is the legislative education committee that decides on the redistribution of education dollars from local taxpayers. Colchester historically received between 50 and 60 cents for every dollar it sends to the state, in the way of education cost sharing "grants." City schools, conversely, receive more than a dollar for every dollar those municipalities send to the state.

Portland Selectmen Make Further Cuts to Budget Proposal

by Michael McCoy

Some Portland residents may have been surprised that the proposed town budget went down to defeat in voting last Monday.

First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield was not among them.

"I didn't think it would pass," she said, "primarily because this is a reevaluation year."

Many residents expressed shock this year when revaluation sent their property assessments skyrocketing.

The final tally in Monday's budget referendum was 682-529 against the \$24.8 million proposal.

The Board of Selectmen responded immediately, cutting close to \$400,000 from the proposal—including \$80,000 from the Education side—and agreeing to send it back to referendum on Wednesday, May 30.

Voter turnout Monday was 20.6%—substantially up from the 14% turnout last year when the budget passed 531-414 on the first attempt.

While Bransfield admitted she would have liked to see the budget pass on the first try, she said she finds some guidance in the definitive 153-vote margin. "That's actually what I like, because then it's a better indicator that more people agree with the decision."

The budget proposal was passed by the Board of Selectmen (BoS) on April 11 by a vote of 6-1 with John Anderson dissenting. The \$28.4 million total represents a 3.37% increase over the current budget.

The proposal that went to a vote had already endured \$346,000 worth of cuts from the original budget presented by Bransfield and Finance Director Rob Buden. In an attempt to further limit spending, the BoS also voted to enact a hiring freeze throughout all town departments.

The proposed budget carried an estimated mill rate of 27.53.

Bransfield was philosophical this week about the defeat. "Taxes affect people differently," she said, acknowledging the frustration of town residents. "People have had it, and I fully understand that."

The First Selectwoman also pointed out that Portland is far from the only town struggling with tax issues. "Property tax reform is a problem in the entire state of Connecticut," she observed. "As towns, we are agents of the state. They give us a lot of rules and laws to implement, but they don't always give us the help we need."

Despite her premonition—accurate as it turned out—that the budget might not pass, she said she feels there is little room for cuts.

"Knowing that we have two referenda, I put out budgets that are very conservative," she explained. But she couldn't ignore the obvious. "People still said 'no'."

Nevertheless, now Bransfield will try to accomplish what she feels the voters have called for—a reduction. "The bottom line is too high, and we want to pay less," she noted. "That's how I am interpreting that vote."

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Sally Doyen admitted this week that she had not been sure how the voting would go. "I honestly did not know what to expect," she remarked.

She did touch on the difficulties that could arise should more cuts be made to the Board of Education (BoE) budget. "It's difficult to pull out a piece when the whole thing is connected," she observed.

Selectman John Anderson, who cast the lone dissenting vote when the board okayed the budget for referendum, expressed some surprise at Monday's outcome.

"Yes, I thought it would pass," he said. "There wasn't that much opposition to it."

Anderson agreed with Bransfield on the likely cause for the defeat. "Reval would be the main reason," he opined.

The BoS sat down Wednesday to recommend a revised budget to the town. All of the selectmen were present, as was Buden, Doyen, members of the Board of Education, and a number of town department heads.

Bransfield came prepared with a written statement, suggesting a number of cuts that could be made. The seven items included

\$50,000 previously allotted to fix the entrance to the public library and improvements to various Parks & Recreation projects.

She also suggested cutting the \$50,000 slated to pay for the Connecticut VNA contract as well as over \$32,000 in road repairs, and almost \$52,000 from the Assessor's Office, leaving them with just a single employee.

Among other items, she included a further decrease of \$80,000 from the Board of Education budget.

Bransfield's document pointed out that these cuts would be on top of a number of already eliminated positions, such as one full-time Public Works position and five education slots. She later pointed out that the town has done away with seven positions since last year.

Her suggestions raised concerns. Buden counseled the selectmen, "A staff of one [in the Assessor's Office] will not be able to conduct a reevaluation."

Referring to the elimination of the Connecticut VNA money, which allows for a social worker, Selectman Mark Finkelstein worried, "In today's day and age, for us to not have a social worker is a bit frightening."

Asked if the Board of Education could absorb the proposed cuts, Doyen replied reluctantly, "We would live with it." She said the schools system would further look into options concerning energy costs, special education tuition, and transportation, three of the Board of Ed's chief accounts.

In the end, the Board of Selectmen unanimously voted for all of Bransfield's proposals.

Suggestions for further reductions followed, causing Bransfield at one point to say, "I'm getting a little nervous about shaving to close."

To this, Finkelstein, who proposed a number of small reductions, albeit reluctantly, responded, "It's clearly a reduction in services. There's no doubt about that."

Selectman Scott Adamsons suggested, "We need to go back to the people and say that we did everything we could."

Finkelstein's proposed cuts were numerous

but small, and included \$2,500 from the fire department, \$4,000 from the police department's overtime allotment, \$1,500 from Youth Services, and \$1,200 for tree removal.

Some asked what significance these meager sums would yield.

"I know these are small potatoes, but it's kind of spreading the pain around," said Finkelstein.

All of his suggestions, plus several more unanimously were adopted.

"One of the messages I got loud and clear from the town meeting is that people are concerned with the benefits packages and the costs for town employees," said Adamsons. "Many in the public sector receive more than those in the private sector could ever hope to get."

Prior to the meeting, Bransfield said the town recently completed collective bargaining sessions with both the police and library unions. The result has been to shift more of the health cost burden on the employee. Bransfield predicted that the town would continue to explore similar arrangements with many other town employees.

Finally, the Board of Selectmen voted unanimously for the revised budget proposal to go to referendum. The result is about \$11 million for the Education budget and \$17 million for the General Town budget.

The combined number comes to \$27,989,141, which represents \$391,898 in cuts to the proposal defeated by voters Monday. This reflects a 1.94% increase over the current year's budget. Buden estimated the mill rate would come to 26.99.

Many at the meeting remarked that the increase was the smallest that they could remember in town budget history.

Version #2 of the budget will go to referendum on Wednesday, May 30. Voting will take place from 6 a.m.-8 p.m. in the library's Mary Flood Room. A meeting of the Board of Selectmen will immediately follow the voting.

Should the proposal fail again, the 2007-08 budget will be set by the selectmen.

Portland Memorial Day Parade & Dedication Scheduled

Memorial Day weekend in Portland this year will be perhaps the most memorable in the town's history, starting with the traditional parade on Sunday and concluding on Monday with the dedication of the Portland Veterans Memorial.

The annual Memorial Day parade will commence at 2 p.m. on Sunday, May 27. The parade route will start at Firehouse 2 and follow Main Street past the reviewing stand at the Brownstone Intermediate School and then follow Freestone Avenue to the Portland Library driveway and end with the final ceremony at the Senior Center.

Any veteran can volunteer for the color guard by calling Jeff Kelsey at 342-2117 or Reg Farrington at 342-1818. All veterans are invited to march immediately behind the color guard, with or without uniform.

On Monday May 28th at 10:30 a.m. the dedication of the Portland Veterans Memorial will be held at the Town Hall. The ceremony will last about 30 minutes.

The three granite stones of the memorial are

inscribed with the names of all Portland men and women that have served in the armed forces during wartime from World War 1 until the current conflict in the Persian Gulf.

All town residents and friends of veterans are invited to attend the ceremony. The parking lot on the south side of the town hall will be reserved for *handicapped parking* only.

Following the dedication of the memorial, the Portland Historical Society will open its museum on Main Street with a display honoring the military through the years. This display will be open from Memorial Day until Veterans Day, Nov. 11.

Last, but not least, on Saturday May 26th the Brownstone Exploration and Discovery Park will have its grand opening with events taking place every day of the holiday weekend. The old brownstone quarries are located on Brownstone Avenue down by the banks of the Connecticut River. If you haven't happened by there lately you will be surprised at the amount of work that has been done to make the park a memorable experience.

Deadlines Loom for Colchester Land Trust

Colchester Land Trust is facing several deadlines within the next 45 days relating to the purchase of an 18-acre parcel along the Airline Trail.

The initial enthusiasm over acquiring the land now faces the reality of meeting the financial requirements needed to complete the transaction.

The parcel is adjacent to the Airline Trail and off of Bull Hill Road. A sign on the property asks, "Help Colchester Land Trust Purchase this Property."

"We need to raise \$190,000 by July 15 to satisfy our option to buy this property," said Lisa Hageman, president of the Trust. "We placed \$19,000 down to bind the option, so we need to seek grants, donations and loan funds by July 15 or lose the deposit."

The Trust has also received a \$10,000 "challenge grant" from an anonymous donor. The donor requires the Trust to raise a matching \$10,000 from "new" donors.

"Anyone who has never given to the trust before should consider a contribution now. A donor can double their gift through the generosity of this donor," states Hageman. The trust has until June 30 to make that happen. They have a little more than half the \$10,000 as of

this writing.

Among those who have been pitching in to help are local students. "Our students at Bacon Academy get the importance of this grant," remarked Chuck Toal, board member and grant coordinator of the Trust.

The Environmental Club at the high school is conducting a phone and door-to-door campaign to help the Trust raise the needed funds. Dawn Hathaway, senior at Bacon, observed "They have to get this money to save this property. It's important to us to be sure that happens!"

"These are amazing young adults," said Toal. "Their passion and enthusiasm are infectious. They know how important this is to their generation. Our school curriculum encourages community learning through activism and these students have chosen the Colchester Land Trust as their project. We are so fortunate these students are in our town. They 'get it'!"

Should anyone wish to contribute to this acquisition before the June 30 deadline, go to www.colchesterlandtrust.org for a contribution form, or mail a donation to Colchester Land Trust, PO Box 93, Colchester, CT 06415. For further information, call 267-6145.

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Westchester Marketplace Grand Opening Saturday

by **Jim Salemi**

Whoever said history has a tendency to repeat itself may very well have been talking about the new Westchester Marketplace in the Westchester Plaza.

The new grocery store will celebrate its grand opening this Saturday.

Forty years ago, Demar's father built the Westchester Plaza with a supermarket as an anchor store, which he also owned and ran. Now Pat Demar is following in his footsteps and re-opening a market in the plaza.

The store, which opened for business earlier this month, is somewhat smaller than the one his father opened in 1964. That's mostly because of the expense of rebuilding the store from the ground up with state-of-the-art controls for refrigeration and other equipment associated with a grocery.

The entire space, from the concrete slab floor to the roof, has been refurbished as part of the renaissance of the retail complex. The exterior of the plaza has also had a facelift recently.

"It's about half the space and twice the service," Demar said of his new enterprise.

"We specialize in customer service," he emphasized. "We have fresh produce, a New York style deli, hot and cold foods to go, a butcher's block in an open meat cutting room, and farm-fresh dairy."

Demar carries Angus certified beef and Brandt natural meats.

Twenty-three upright freezers line one wall with frozen foods and ice cream.

"I look forward to serving Westchester and the surrounding community," he said.

Demar is no stranger to the grocery business or procuring the best products for his customers.

He has been a restaurant owner, a meat cutter and a chef, which included cooking for Alfred's in East Hartford, and Foxwoods Casino, where he often would prepare nearly 200 prime ribs for 10,000 meals, with a staff of only eight assistants.

Demar learned meat cutting at the Portland Market where he worked as a young man. The market was also owned by his father. He also worked at the Colonial IGA in East Hampton.

He has been putting in up to 96 hours a week getting the new store ready, though his workload is easing up a bit now that his employees are settling in. He said he could not have gotten his store open without the help of his employees, family and customers.

"Not only is my wife Kathleen a hard worker, mother and wife, but she has supported me throughout everything," said Pat. He also thanked his children Matt, Jimmy and Brandon for their support in his new enterprise.

"My father and mother, Don and Rosanne, have been the rock of the family," he said. He made mention of his gratitude to his father and his father's business partner, Andy Andreo, for their support and guidance.

Festivities of the grand opening will begin at 1 p.m. on Saturday. Demar, with an eye for history himself, has a photograph of the winner of a black and white television set that was offered at a raffle during his father's grand opening of the store in 1964.

Portland Bank Robber Gets Five-Year Prison Term

A 29-year-old Portland man was sentenced to nearly five years in prison last week on bank robbery charges.

Samuel C. Guerard was sentenced by Chief U.S. District Judge Robert N. Chatigny to 57 months imprisonment followed by three years of supervised release. He was also ordered to pay full restitution to the banks—a total of about \$15,000.

Guerard, whose last reported address was 959 Glastonbury Tpk., Portland, pleaded guilty on Jan. 8 to three counts of bank robbery.

The indictment alleged that Guerard used "force, violence and intimidation" to rob a People's Bank branch in Glastonbury on June 13, 2006; a Sovereign Bank branch in West Hartford on June 19, 2006; and a Bank of America branch in Bristol on June 28, 2006.

Guerard was arrested on July 23, 2006 after

surrendering to West Hartford Police. He has been incarcerated since that time.

Police said Guerard used a knife to hold up the banks in West Hartford, Bristol and Glastonbury over a two-week period last June.

He reportedly obtained \$2,861 from the People's Bank branch in Glastonbury on June 13; \$3,500 from the Sovereign Bank Branch in West Hartford on June 19; and more than \$8,600 from a Bank of America branch in Bristol on June 28.

During one of the robberies, his photo was captured on surveillance tape. The print circulated by police showed him wearing a baseball cap and hooded sweatshirt and sunglasses.

Guerard faced a maximum term of imprisonment of 20 years and a fine of up to \$250,000 on each count.

Portland Police News

5/9 – Lucy Evans, 33, of 8 Whiting Rd., East Hartford, was charged with credit card theft, said Portland police.

5/9 – Charles Miffin, Jr. 37, of 256 Airline Ave., Portland, was charged with breach of peace and reckless endangerment 2nd degree, said police.

5/12 – Michael L. Kirby, 18, of 6 Grove Terr., Portland, was charged with permitting minors to possess alcoholic beverages, said police.

5/12 – Laura Kirby, 47, of 6 Grove Terr., Portland, was charged with permitting minors to possess alcoholic beverages, said police.

5/12 – Ronnie Kirby, 60, of 6 Grove Terr., Portland, was charged with permitting minors to possess alcoholic beverages, said police.

Obituaries

Colchester

Genevieve Kubas

Genevieve “Jean” (Grajewski) Kubas, 89, entered into eternal rest, Saturday, May 12, in Colchester.

She was born in New Britain, daughter of the late Martin and Helen (Abramowicz) Grajewski and had lived in Colchester for the past four years, formerly living on Lucyan Street in New Britain for most of her life. She was the beloved wife of the late John L. Kubas, Sr.

Jean worked for the federal government in the Veterans Administration and the local Social Security Office in New Britain until her retirement. She was a member of Sacred Heart Church, in New Britain and also a member of it’s Ladies Guild.

She is survived by her loving family, a daughter, Barbara Kalfin, of Gold River, CA; five sons, Martin Kawecki of San Clemente, CA; John L. Kubas, Jr. of Charlestown, RI; Ronald and his wife Joyce Kubas of Ellington; Daniel J. and his wife Tanja Kubas-Meyer of Barrington, RI; and Jeffrey J. and his wife Sara Kubas, with whom she made her home where she received loving and devoted care; a sister Joan Falvey of Southington; 15 devoted grandchildren and 10 great grandchildren and several nieces and nephews. She was predeceased by her first husband, Walter “Jimmy” Kawecki and a sister, Florence (Grajewski) Kubas.

Her funeral service was held on Wednesday, May 16. at the Burritt Hill Funeral Home, 332 Burritt St., New Britain, with a mass of Christian Burial at Sacred Heart Church, 158 Broad St., New Britain. Burial was in Sacred Heart Cemetery. Calling hours were at the funeral home on Tuesday.

Hebron

Denise Schaffer

Denise (Roy) Schaffer, 51, of South Windsor, beloved wife of Eric Kevin Schaffer entered into the arms of her Lord on Friday, May 11, at her home. Born in New Brunswick, Canada she was the daughter of Donat and Irene Roy.

Denise formerly lived in Hebron and had lived in South Windsor for the past seven years. She retired after 20 years of service as a manager in the JC Penney warehouse.

Besides her husband and parents, she is survived by her children Krista Jones and her husband Brian, Toni Cortese, Aaron Schaffer and his wife Shayla, and Tierra Schaffer; her grandchildren Brayden Jones and Joshua Schaffer; her siblings Ronald Roy and his wife Lucy, Ginette Gagnon and her husband Richard, Pauline Eurto and her husband Jim, and Nancy Blay and her husband David and many nieces and nephews. She was predeceased by her sister Linda Proto; her brother Robert Roy and her niece Jessica Proto.

Funeral services were held on Tuesday, May 15 from the John F. Tierney Funeral Home 219 West Center St. Manchester, with a service at the Church of the Living God 199 Deming Street Manchester, followed by burial in St. Mary’s Cemetery, Coventry. Calling hours were at the funeral home on Monday evening.

Memorial donations may be made to the Church of the Living God 199 Deming Street Manchester, CT 06042.

Colchester

Josephine LaChance

Josephine (Perruccio) LaChance, 91, of Colchester, formerly of East Hartford, widow of Paul C. LaChance, Sr., passed away on Sunday, May 13, after a brief illness.

She was born in Hartford, daughter of the late Paolo and Maria (Amenta) Perruccio and had lived in the area all of her life. She retired from United Technologies Division of Pratt & Whitney Aircraft after many years of service. She was a member of the Daughters of Isabella and the Colchester Seniors.

She leaves a son and daughter-in-law, Paul and Joan LaChance of Manchester; a daughter, Dolores Capone of Colchester; a daughter-in-law, Dorothy (Kamm) LaChance of Colchester; a brother, James and his wife Helen Perruccio of East Hartford; a sister, Pauline and her husband Thomas Cline of East Hartford; a brother-in-law, John Wocoski of Rocky Hill; a sister-in-law, Irene Milotte of Vermont; grandchildren, Robert LaChance, Jr. and his wife Kathy, Dawn and her husband David McDermott, Anthony Capone and his fiancé Michelle, Michael and his wife Melissa Capone, Kimberly and her husband Richard Brodeur, Vincent and his wife Carol LaChance, Renee and her husband Christopher George, Paul LaChance III, Robert and his wife Robin Jankowski; 21 great-grandchildren, and one great-great grandchild. She was predeceased by her son Robert LaChance; brother Paul Perruccio and sisters Lucy Gammo and Ann Wocoski.

Funeral services were Wednesday morning, from the D’Esopo East Hartford Memorial Chapel, 30 Carter St., East Hartford, with a Mass of Christian Burial at 10 a.m. in St. Mary’s Church, East Hartford. Burial was in St. Mary’s Cemetery, East Hartford. Calling hours were Tuesday evening at the East Hartford funeral chapel.

Colchester

Helen T. Chmiel

Helen T. (Kaminski) Chmiel, 90, of Stuart, FL, formerly of Colchester, died April 3 at the Martin Nursing and Restorative Care in Florida.

Helen was born Sept. 5, 1916, the daughter of the late Frank and Mary Kaminski. She was married to the late Chester Chmiel for 71 wonderful years. Mr. Chmiel passed away April 21. Together they owned and operated two package stores in Colchester.

Helen loved to knit, crochet and embroider.

She is survived by a son, Eugene and wife Florence Chmiel of East Hampton; two grandsons, Eugene and wife Andra of Clinton, and Jason and wife Julie of Florence, KY; four great grandchildren, Nicolas, Jesse, Kaitlin and Megan Chmiel; a sister, Andzia Hryszuk of Bellmore, NY; and many loving nieces and nephews.

A graveside service will be held Friday, May 18 at 10 a.m. in the St. Joseph Cemetery, Colchester. Belmont Funeral Home, 144 South Main St., Colchester, has been entrusted with arrangements.

East Hampton

Lori J. Lake

Lori J. Lake, 77, of East Hampton, passed away May 14 at Harrington Court in Colchester, surrounded by her family.

She leaves her loving husband Richard of 55 years and her loving and devoted daughter, Deborah and son-in-law Mark.

Born in Hamilton, Ohio on July 2, 1929, she was the daughter of the late Harold A. and Hazel Frazee. Before moving to East Hampton in 1990, she retired from the Ohio State Bureau of Unemployed Office where she was a case examiner. She enjoyed her new home in Connecticut and so loved the beauty of New England. She enjoyed the company of many special friends and spent many hours knitting and crocheting for others.

Besides her family, she is survived by her sister, Marjorie, and brother-in-law, Fred of Trotwood, Ohio, and Cousin Winifred Usery of Mason, Ohio.

The family wishes to thank the Middlesex hospital Home Care, Middlesex Cancer Center and the staff at Harrington Court. Should friends desire, contributions in her memory may be made to the Middlesex Hospital Office of Philanthropy or the East Hampton Ambulance Association.

Service is private and at the convenience of the family. Spencer Funeral Home has care of arrangements.