

RIVEREAST

News Bulletin

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The VINE Worship Center, located at 52 Mill St. in Colchester, is reopening this Sunday. The church is led by the Reverends Gerald and Susan Nikirk.

Colchester Church Reopens on Sunday

by Kristina Histen

The VINE Worship Center in Colchester is back – this time with a new focus.

The worship center, located at 52 Mill St., is reopening this Sunday, Feb. 3, at 10:30 a.m. – but football lovers can rest easy; they'll be back in time for the Super Bowl.

The Judaeo Christian, non-denominational church is under the leadership of Rev. Gerald Nikirk, Senior Pastor, and his wife Rev. Susan Nikirk, who live their life by faith. They feel that, by the leading of the Lord, this is the time to reopen. The church used to emphasize the teaching of the Hebrew roots of Christianity, but now the Nikirks will be teaching The Word of Faith from the Bible, and how to apply the scriptures in everyday life.

"I feel that I can feed the people more," Gerald said. "This is easily more understood, and people will receive it a lot better."

About five years ago, the Nikirks faced the unimaginable. Susan's health began to diminish, and doctors around the country had no idea why. For two and a half years, they traveled across the United States to see different doctors, but still, no one could figure out what was wrong.

"It was very hard to pastor and be gone

all the time," Gerald said. "And when that happens in a congregation, for the lack of better words, people get spooked. They just don't understand what's happening, so it was just wise to close the congregation [in 2005]."

Susan's illness eventually left her unable to walk and confined to a wheelchair. This was incomprehensible for a former dancer; she started in show business at a young age, performed and toured with the Beatles as part of a dance act in the mid-1960s, had a successful dancing career on Broadway and television, and was a theatrical ballroom champion and choreographer.

"I would dream about dancing," Susan said, "and I had this vision that I was going to dance again."

In January 2006, Susan was diagnosed with Lyme disease. After two weeks of detoxification, under the care of a specialized doctor of Lyme disease in Arizona, she was cured.

"If people are looking to get a miracle from the Lord, it can happen. I'm living proof of that," Susan said. "I mean, I was in a wheelchair, I could not walk. It looked hopeless, but what I did is, I held on. There's days, of course, when your faith fails, but you hang on to the scriptures.

Jesus bore our sicknesses. [Scripture] says 'By His stripes we are healed.' You may not feel or see it, but it's really the truth... You have to be a believer and you have to be a fighter... Faith is a fight."

And eventually, Susan got her groove back. In November – less than two years after her diagnosis – she performed a dance she choreographed herself.

"God is in the miracle business, and you have to have a lot of faith and you have to believe," Susan said. "It's not always easy when you don't see things happen or change."

The church building on Mill Street is currently up for sale. It was actually sold last summer, but, two weeks before the closing, the Nikirks got it back because of a partnership problem from the people that bought it.

"That's when my husband started praying. 'Ok Lord, are you saying you want us to still do something up here?'" Susan said, with a laugh.

The Nikirks believe that God has been very faithful to them. They strive to bring God's voice to his people, and lead them towards godliness and holiness. They have ministered nationally, and internationally, being a prophetic voice to the nations,

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strengthening churches and leaders to fulfill their call. They have seen many saved, healed, and delivered under the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

Gerald and Susan are also the founders and hosts of the television broadcast *Voice In New England*, reaching the hearts of the lost as well as believers, and destroying the works of religious tradition.

The Nikirks are hoping, and expecting, a good turnout for Sunday. Since the church has closed, people have continually asked when they will re-open. Before they closed, the Nikirks' congregation consisted of about 40-60 members, with people from all over the area, traveling from as far as Groton.

Their service is far from the norm; people are encouraged to dance around and sing to their heart's content, remembering to respect the holiness of the Lord. "We have some wild services!" Susan said. "If you read the book of the Bible, it says, 'make a joyful noise to the Lord,'

and all of this is supposed to be done in church. Church is supposed to be fun."

The church name VINE was created from the Book of John, when Jesus said, "I am the vine, and you are the branches those that cling or abide in me shall bear much fruit." Coincidentally, VINE is also an acronym for *Voice in New England*, the name of the Nikirks' television show.

"There are a lot of hurting people: physically, emotionally, financially," Gerald said. "We're in the same boat here. There is a pathway of relief, a pathway for success. It's what we've always ministered. God just wants a relationship with people. The Holy Bible is the inspired work of God, that's why it's still around, that's why it still works. It's God speaking to us, and you can really take it personally. That's how you learn to communicate. What I feel and what I minister is, the more you learn and understand what the scripture is trying to say, you're going to get to the spirit of God."

Hodge Pleased with Colchester Community Chat

by Kristina Histen

Despite the chance to sleep in during last Monday's holiday, seven early risers instead took advantage of free coffee – and the opportunity to talk face to face with the first selectwoman.

Bagels and Beyond was the site for the first of several planned "Coffee with Linda." Twice a month, at different times and locations around town, the public is able to meet with First Selectwoman Linda Hodge, and other town officials, on a one-to-one basis to discuss their issues and concerns with coffee provided.

Seven people – including two selectmen, asked by Hodge to come – showed up to last week's inaugural coffee, which was held Martin Luther King Day, at 7 a.m. Residents asked a variety of questions, and Hodge and the selectmen shared information.

"It went really well," Hodge said. "These coffees are beneficial if one or 50 people show up. It is imperative for government officials to meet with the residents."

"Coffee with Linda" is one step forward in achieving the town's goal of communication, Hodge said. She said it provides citizens the opportunity to talk to appointed officials about their concerns at places and times comfortable for them. There is no agenda, she said, and people are encouraged to speak their minds.

"If I don't know the answers," Hodge said, "I know where to find them."

Also, Hodge is implementing a "Door to Door" policy next month, similar to the

"Coffee." Residents will be told when the First Selectwoman is in their neighborhood, again, allowing them to express their issues and concerns. It will also help town officials see how they are doing in the eyes of their community.

The next "Coffee with Linda" will be held on Wednesday, Feb. 13, at 4 p.m. at Café Mangia, 68 Linwood Ave. Hodge will be joined by Town Planner Adam Turner. In the future, Hodge hopes to bring the Town Assessor, the Tax Collector, or members of the Board of Finance. If residents want particular people to be at the meetings, contact the First Selectman's office.

Any restaurant interested in hosting a "Coffee with Linda" should also contact the First Selectman's office for scheduling. Participating eateries are asked to provide coffee and space available for Hodge to meet and greet residents regarding questions, concerns, or friendly hellos. No food is necessary. Hodge said she hopes that all local restaurants, including those in Westchester, will be eager to participate within the upcoming months. The number is 537-7220.

In addition to the Feb. 13 coffee, there are also coffees scheduled for Thursday, Feb. 28, at noon, at Conference Room No. 3 at Town Hall, 127 Norwich Ave.; Tuesday, March 11, at 10 a.m., at Pepperbarn, 11 Hayward Ave.; and Friday, March 28, at 4 p.m., again at Café Mangia.

Hebron PTA Announces Reflections Award Winners

The Gilead Hill School and Hebron Elementary School PTA have announced the winners of the annual Reflections program for students in pre-kindergarten through grade 6. The theme for the 2007-08 national PTA program is, "I Can Make a Difference By."

For visual arts, the primary division award winners (students in grades Pre K-2) were: Abby Sanstrom, first place, for her work, "I Can Make a Difference by Sharing the Word of God;" Catie LoBianco, second place, for her work, "Helping, Growing, Sharing;" and Nicole Rogers, third place, for her work, "Recycling."

In the intermediate age category (grades 3-5), the visual arts winners were Zachary Blume, first place, for "Trash Picker;" Cassandra Michaud, second place, for "I Can Make a Difference by Rescuing Abandoned Animals;" and Devon Rogers, third place, for "The Quilt that Makes a Difference."

The junior division featured work by students in Grade 6. First place went to Kylie Flanagan for her drawing, "Treating Others Fairly;" Gregory Onofri, second place for "I Can Make a Difference;" and third place to Virginia Massa for her work "Keeping the Beach Clean."

For photography, the primary age winners were Aaron Ouellette, first place for his collage of photos, "I Can Make a Difference by Making People Smile." David Kasper took second place for his photos of "My Little Sister and Me," and Jack Bordick placed third for his collage, "Self Portraits to Make You Laugh."

The intermediate ribbons went to Loren Escott, first place for her work, "Pitch In!" Emily Quesada took the second place ribbon for her photos "Protecting the Animal Population," and Zachary Blume, third place for "The Banana Peel Cycle."

In the junior division, Lander Aramendi's "Strengthening the Community We Live In" took first place and Sam Golino earned second place with "I can Make a Difference by..." and Lian Russo earned third place for his photos in "Supporting and Making People Aware of Heifer International."

There were also musical composition awards in the intermediate category. Michael Kasper placed first for his vocal composition titled, "When I Play My Music;" Kristina Kasper placed second for her vocal, "My Baby Sister;" and Maeve Howard, placed third for her instrumentation entry, "Make a Friend." First place in the junior division was Dominic Marino for "I Can Make a Difference... if we all work together we can get this job done."

For literature, the primary age winners were Kylie Heneghan, first place, for her piece entitled, "I Can Make a Difference by Working in a Soup Kitchen;" Emma McCormack, second place for her illustrated poem "Hugs and Love;" and Gretchen Kron, won the third-place ribbon for her illustrated book, "Recycling Can Save the Earth."

In the intermediate category, the story "Saving More Rescue Dogs," by Carly Spellman, took first place. Maeve Howard, for her poem "Smile," took second place; and Olivia Babick took third for her essay, "Making the Earth a Better Place."

In the junior division, first place went to Catherine Veschi for her story, "Diary of an 11 Year Old Girl;" second place to Maggie Storck for her essay on "Mitchell Farm," and third place to Lander Aramendi for "Playing a Song."

New arts categories for this year's program were Dance Choreography and Film/Video Production. Caitlyn Lovejoy received first place



More than 70 kids from Gilead Hill and Hebron Elementary took part in the annual Reflections program this year. Contest winners were recently announced.

honors in the intermediate division for her dance entitled "Stand for What You Believe In." Nathan Kane received first place honors in the primary division for his film scenes inspiring us to take care of animals. Gabriella Billiter received first place honors in the intermediate division for her film "I Can Make a Difference, and so Can You!"

Reflections is a program of the national PTA. It is intended to encourage students to create works of art for fun and recognition. Seventy-three Hebron students participated in the Reflections program this year. Participants were

recognized and awarded certificates at the Jan. 11 awards ceremony at Hebron Elementary School. First place award recipients will continue on to the statewide competition.

The Gilead Hill School and Hebron Elementary School PTA has issued thanks thanks to the volunteer efforts of judges Joe Gilbey, Nicole Bernier, Denise Thompson, and Cheri LaBombard, Colleen Pattavina and Matthew Troy. The PTA also thanked Ted's IGA Market, Dunkin Donuts, and Class Act Movies and More in their support for the recognition of all our participants.

Former East Hampton Town Hall Secretary Killed in Farmington

by Mike Thompson

Resident Joyce Krauth, the former secretary for the town manager, was killed Tuesday when a car struck her in the parking lot of the UConn Health Center in Farmington.

Krauth, 71, was walking through a visitor parking lot in front of the main entrance at the health center at about 4 p.m. Tuesday, when she was struck by a vehicle operated by another visitor to the hospital, UConn Health Center spokesman Chris DeFrancesco said Wednesday.

Paramedics responded to the scene and Krauth was taken to the hospital, where she died approximately five hours later, DeFrancesco said. DeFrancesco would not disclose the types of injuries Krauth sustained in the accident.

DeFrancesco identified the driver of the vehicle that hit Krauth as Jose Guerrero, 45, of Flushing, NY. DeFrancesco said the UConn Health Center Police Department is investigating the accident, and that at this point no charges have been filed against Guerrero. The type of vehicle he was driving has not been released, DeFrancesco said.

Media reports have indicated Guerrero was

backing into a parking space when he hit Krauth, but DeFrancesco could not confirm those reports.

The UConn Health Center Police Department is investigating the accident, DeFrancesco said, and the investigation could take "several weeks" to conclude.

"The UConn Health Center community is saddened by this unfortunate event, and our thoughts go out to the family of Ms. Krauth," DeFrancesco said.

Krauth worked at Town Hall for 31 years – the last 11 of which were spent as executive secretary in the town manager's office. She retired in December 2006.

Former Town Manager Alan Bergren, who worked with Krauth during all of her 11 years as executive secretary, described Krauth as "a wonderful, wonderful person, a dear friend, a



Joyce Krauth

consummate professional."

"I'm just beside myself," Bergren said Wednesday. "It's just devastating. My heart goes out to her family."

Bergren said he learned of Krauth's death Tuesday night, from her son-in-law.

"I just couldn't believe it," he said. "It's still hard to fathom how something like this could happen to such a wonderful person."

Bergren said that, when people would enter Town Hall, Krauth was "the first person you'd see." He said she really enjoyed helping people.

"She was always a smiling face, a caring person," he said. "She made people feel very welcomed, and that's very important in a community."

Bergren said he spoke with many people at East Hampton Town Hall during the day on Wednesday, and said "everyone's heartbroken.

They're just devastated."

"Town Hall is stunned, to say the least," Town Council chair Melissa Engel said Wednesday. "She was a fixture in Town Hall for many years, always a very welcoming, friendly, warm woman."

Before moving to the town manager's office, Krauth worked in the tax office, as assistant to Tax Collector Marie Durkin.

"She was an excellent worker, and wonderful with people and a very good friend," Durkin said Thursday. "It's very hard to get my mind around what happened. We're all just devastated. We will miss her dreadfully."

Bergren, who is now city manager in Norwich and leases an apartment there, still comes to East Hampton on weekends. He said he just spoke with Krauth last weekend.

"She took very good care of me as manager, and very good care of the public," Bergren said. "It's a great loss, a loss to East Hampton Town Hall staff, it's a loss to officials and it's a loss to the community."

Anybody who may have witnessed anything in regards to Tuesday night's accident is asked to call the UConn Health Center Police Department at 860-679-2121.

New East Hampton Salon Seeks to Soothe from Fingers to Toes

by Michael McCoy

Yuna Park seems to be full of energy as she returns to operating a business. Her latest venture, Creative Nails, opened last week.

Park broke into the nail industry 17 years ago while living in New York City, where a good friend of the family owned a salon on 7th Avenue. Though licensing for nail technicians is not required in Connecticut, it is in New York, where Yuna attended the National Institute of Nails.

In 1998, she and her family – which includes her daughter Jennifer, 14, and son Michael, 8 – moved to Glastonbury, where they still live today. In 1999, she bought Nail Design By Cindy, a Glastonbury salon, but in 2001, family issues caused Park to sell the business. "When you're an owner of a small business, it's hard to have any personal problems," lamented Park.

Six months later, Park resumed work in her field, this time at Silk Nails in West Hartford. When plans for the Shaw's in East Hampton began to surface, Park hoped to secure a spot in that plaza, but everything had been filled by the time she explored the idea.

But last spring, Theatre Square was built on North Main Street, just across from Shaw's. Park thought it was a prime spot to open her salon, so she inquired about it. Though she knew several other parties who called the owner, in hopes of securing a space, Yuna ended up signing the lease in September.

When asked why she had her eye on East Hampton for opening her salon, Park responded, "There are none," although she noted that there are a couple in Portland and Marlborough. Also, Park added, "I really think this town is quite charming."

Though Park had previously owned a salon, this was the first time she was starting a business at a brand new location. The most immediately impressive feature upon entering the

salon is the pedicure area, complete with six state-of-the-art Petra 900 stations, manufactured by JNA. In this business, said Park, "You have to be high tech; you have to be updated."

Park and senior technician Andy Jeong began getting the salon ready the week of Christmas, and opened a month later. The business opened with a staff of just two, but Park hopes to hire another two to three technicians before long.

Though Park wished she could have opened the store in time for Christmas, the winter, being the industry's slowest time, is probably not a bad time for a transition. According to Park, things really pick up in April, not just because of the warm weather's encouragement of open-toed footwear, but because of proms and weddings as well. Then, just a month later, Mothers' Day is always busy too. In fact, Park said, all major holidays were big times for nail salons.

Park said she is "very particular about sanitization," and added, "All tools we use will be sterilized." Park has even implemented a filing system, so that a given set of tools will only be used on one client.

Creative Nails offers manicures, pedicures, waxing, and artificial nails. Though Park is willing to accommodate clients who have gone with acrylic nails, she doesn't prefer them herself, calling them unsanitary. Instead, Park champions something called silk nails.

"Some people don't have good nail beds to begin with," Park said. Silk nails actually involve applying a small piece of silk to the bed, strengthening the nail, and making it easier to grow nails out naturally.

Creative Nails also features "a variety of different spa pedicures," Park said, several of which involves products from U.S. Crystal, Inc. These include a pearl spa pedicure, an aroma spa, and a jelli-pedicure. The jelli-pedicure in-



Yuna Park is shown in front of the indulgent pedicure stations at her new business, Creative Nails.

volves adding an agent to the water, turning it into a "squishy jelly." When the treatment is completed, the addition of another agent dilutes it. Park said this particular pedicure is especially good for treating calluses and "it makes your feet feel very good."

The salon also sells skin and nail products by OPI, including lotions, polishes, and nail strengtheners.

Looking far into the future, Park said she would like to spend her retirement running a mobile business that could cater to senior citi-

zens in their own homes, especially those at a financial disadvantage. "My heart goes out to all the old ladies who don't have the means to do it themselves," said Park. "That would make me feel so good."

Creative Nails is located in Theatre Square on North Main Street and accepts walk-ins as well as appointments. It can be reached by phone at 267-6777. The business is currently offering several promotions, including a coupon in this week's *Rivereast*.

Colchester Rec Plex Ice Rink Victim of Vandalism

by Kristina Histen

The town's Parks and Recreation director said Wednesday the community "is just as disappointed as we are" by last week's destruction of the temporary ice rink at the Recreation Complex.

The rink was destroyed by vandalism last Thursday night, Jan. 24, Parks and Recreation Director Jason Cohen said.

Cinder blocks found in the area were used to smash up the ice; so deep it tore through the liner, and could not be repaired via patching. Once the liner is torn and the ice starts to melt, water begins to leak out. Cohen said he doesn't expect resolution on who did the vandalism.

Each winter, the temporary ice rink is put in at the complex, located at 215 Old Hebron Rd., with lights installed for night use. The lights were on from 5 to 8 p.m. last Thursday, Cohen said, and he believes the damage was done sometime after the lights were turned off.

When the rink opened at the beginning of the season, the Parks and Recreation Department held a bonfire that included free hot chocolate and coffee. Residents were encouraged to take advantage of skating before the weather

warmed up.

Since last week's vandalism, the town has received a number of phone calls from people willing to donate for repair, Cohen said, but it looks as though that won't be happening, for a few reasons: all liners have been sold out for the season, he said, and because of all the ice and water involved, the rink needs to be disassembled, drained, and refilled. Also, the rink is weather-dependent, which means once it is all put back in place community members still must wait until it re-freezes.

"We are hoping to make repairs," Cohen said, "but the weather fluctuates, and it hasn't been cold enough."

Fortunately, most of the damage was done at one end of the rink, so it is possible to try to cut that part off, which would shrink the rink but still allow use, Cohen said. Repairs are being attempted this week, but once the rink is re-filled, it will depend on if the weather is willing to cooperate in freezing it over. Living in New England brings weather unpredictability, and a warm week is in the forecast.

"We appreciate [the community's] understanding," Cohen said.



The ice rink at the Recreation Complex is now closed, after it was attacked by vandals last week.

Colchester Police News

1/23-Edmund Gaines III, 47, of Shrewsbury, VT, was charged with carrying a firearm while intoxicated, firearm without permit, carrying a dangerous weapon, possession of marijuana, and possession of drug paraphernalia, State Police said.

1/24-State Police are investigating a bed stolen from the house of Christine Venditto of Cabin Rd., State Police said.

1/24-Mathew Vik, 19, of 96 Hammond Ct., was taken from his home by State Police because of an arrest warrant for second-degree failure to appear, State Police said.

1/24-Willie Jefferson, 53, of 26 Sanford St., Hartford, was charged with driving under suspension and speeding, State Police said.

1/25-Carmen Baldomero, 37, of 4 Old Plains Rd., Windham, turned herself in to State Police for charges of injury or risks of injury/impair the morals of a child and breach of peace/fight/cause/capable of causing minor injury, State Police said.

1/25-John McNally, 44, of 37 School House Rd., Middle Haddam, turned himself in to State Police on charges of breach of peace/threatening, first-degree harassment terrorize/threaten, and threatening, State Police said.

Hebron Police News

1/21-Joanne Connolly, 47, of 10 Brighton Rd., was charged with disorderly conduct, State Police said.

1/24-Police are investigating unknown persons that made two online purchases with Crystal Batignani's bank debit card number, State Police said.

East Hampton Police News

1/8 — A 16-year-old male juvenile was arrested for third-degree assault, East Hampton Police say.

1/10 — Lisa L. Bruno, 22, of 36 Summit St., and Jill T. Ohagan, 65, of 74 Bigelow Rd., Colchester, were involved in a two-vehicle accident at the intersection of Summit Street and Flanders Road, police say. Police report Bruno was issued a ticket for following too closely.

1/13 — Samuel R. Flora Jr., 72 of 4A Sunrise Rd., Westport, was issued a ticket for improper passing, police report.

1/15 — Violet T. Murphy, 89, of 4 Haddam Neck Rd., was issued a ticket for failure to obey a control signal, police report.

1/16 — John A. Innes, 53, of 47 Barton Hill Rd., was issued a ticket for failure to renew license, police say.

1/19 — Tammy J. Sperry, 32, of 7 Luring

1/26-Jason Pangretic, 28, of 105 Liberty St., East Hartford, was charged with second-degree larceny motor vehicle theft, operating under influence of drugs/alcohol, operation of motor vehicle when registration or license is refused/suspended/revoked and first-degree criminal damage to motor vehicle, State Police said.

1/28-Benjamin Davis, 18, of 20 Gustafson Rd., was charged with evading, weapons in motor vehicle, risk of injury to a minor, first-degree reckless endangerment, and possession of drug paraphernalia, State Police said.

1/29-Lisa Phillips, 44, of 30 Barry Cir., Bloomfield, was charged with operating under the influence of drugs/alcohol, failure to have lights lit and devices illuminated, and emergency vehicle failure to stop on right, State Police said.

1/29-Erin Wadsworth, 26, of 36 Stonewood Terrace, Vernon, was turned in to State Police by Willimantic Police for fourth-degree larceny, State Police said.

1/29-Paul Mccomiskey, 29, of 104 Pleasant St., was charged with operating under the influence of drugs/alcohol and failure to drive right (non-wide-load vehicle), State Police said.

Andover Police News

1/27-Kenneth Easton, 43, of Crystal Rd., Windham, had an active warrant for violation of probation when stopped by police, State Police said.

Portland Police News

1/18 — Damon L. Carabetta, 28, of 376 Main St., 2nd fl., was charged with evading responsibility, traveling too fast for conditions and operating a motor vehicle without insurance, Portland Police say.

1/23 — Frederick Dart, 19, of 225 W. Main St., Chester, was charged with third-degree larceny, third-degree criminal mischief and third-degree criminal trespass, police say.

1/24 — Tracey Hardman, 37, of 1 Scenic Dr., was charged with operating a motor vehicle under suspension, operating an unregistered motor vehicle and failure to obey a stop sign, police report.

Obituaries

East Hampton

Hilding Hanson

Hilding G. "Gust" Hanson, 81, of East Hampton, beloved husband of Anna (Zaiko) Hanson, died Wednesday, Jan. 30, at his home. Born Oct. 14, 1926 in East Hampton, he was the son of the late Jarl and Olga (Isacson) Hanson.

He was a lifelong resident of East Hampton where he had been employed as a Tool and Die Maker for Gong Bell Manufacturing, J.C. Barton C., and Bevin Brothers Manufacturing before his retirement. He served his country in the U.S. Navy during World War II. He was a member of the American Legion Treadway-Cavanaugh Post #64 in East Hampton.

Besides his wife, he is survived by his son, David J. Hanson of East Hampton; two daughters and their husbands, Deborah and Gordon Champion of deep river and Sandra and Raymond Curry of Strubridge, MA; a brother, John Hanson of East Hampton; three grandchildren, Eric, Mark and Christopher; and several nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by two brothers, Ebert Hanson and Gilbert Hanson.

Friends may call at the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, tonight, Friday, Feb. 1, from 6-8 p.m. Funeral services will be private at the convenience of the family. Burial will be in Lakeview Cemetery, East Hampton.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Bethlehem Lutheran Church, P.O. Box 31, East Hampton, CT 06424 or Middlesex Hospice Program, 55 Crescent St., Middletown, CT 06457. To leave online condolences or for directions visit www.spencerfuneralhomeinc.com

Salem

Valerie Stanavage

Valerie FitzGerald Stanavage, 66, passed away in her home in Cheriton, VA on Wednesday, Jan. 23. A Lyme native, she was born March 13, 1941 in Norwich, the daughter of the late James Paul FitzGerald and Anne Gertrude FitzGerald of Lyme. Valerie was a loving wife, devoted mother and proud grandmother. She lived in Salem and was the co-founder of Zoe Bottle Gas & Appliance Inc. of Colchester for 22 years. She was an accomplished breeder of Boston Terriers and an active member of the Boston Terrier Club of Connecticut.

Valerie was passionate about horticulture and wildlife. She will be remembered by those who knew her as a kind person with a fiery sense of humor and a heart that wouldn't quit. Valerie was resilient and vibrant in any situation. To know Val was to love her.

Valerie is survived by her loving husband of 27 years, Hyler A. Stanavage; Daughter, Megan A. Falcone of St. Paul, MN; Daughter, Candace V. Morell and her husband Glenn R. Morell of Hampton and cherished granddaughter Kaya Jun Morell; Three sisters, Meredith Brunette of Longmeadow, MA; Kathy Volkening of Hampshire, IL.; Beth Leino of Savannah, GA.; and brother, James Paul FitzGerald of Mashpee, MA.

Services were held at the Potter Funeral Home, 456 Jackson St., Rte. 195, Willimantic, on Wednesday, Jan. 30. Burial followed in the South Cemetery, Hampton. In lieu of flowers donations can be made to two of Valerie's favorite charities: Running Strong for the American Indian Youth, PO Box 670, Raton, NM 87740 or Sisters of the Order of St. Basil the Great, 710 Fox Chase Road, Fox Chase, PA 19046. Visit www.potterfuneralhome.com for online memorial guestbook.

Portland

Eleanor Pellegrini

Eleanor Zerill Pellegrini, 87, of Wagon Wheel Lane, Portland, died Friday, Jan. 25, in her home. She was the wife of the late John J. Pellegrini. Born in New London, Oct. 22, 1920, the daughter of the late Caroline Gropelli Eastman and the late Angelo Zerill, she was a Portland resident for many years. She had been employed as a dietary supervisor for the Connecticut Valley Hospital, in Middletown, for 21 years until her retirement in 1973. She was a parishioner of the Church of Saint Mary.

Mrs. Pellegrini is survived by her daughter, Barbara Larson and her husband James of Portland; her son, John Pellegrini and his wife Joan of Gilbert, AZ; her sister, Caroline Bond and her husband John of Sarasota, FL; her grandchildren, Michael Larson, Kurt Larson, Carrie Larson, Chris Pellegrini, and Robin Towt ;and her 10 great-grandchildren; and several nieces and nephews. She will be fondly remembered as a loving wife, mother, nana, and friend. Her family will receive relatives and friends in the Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland, Sunday from 6-8 p.m.

Funeral services were held Monday from the Portland Memorial Funeral Home and in the Church of Saint Mary, where a Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated. Interment will follow in St. Mary's Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, gifts in her memory may be sent to the Eleanor B. Larson Scholarship Fund c/o Portland High School, 95 High St. Portland, CT 06480.

Colchester

Roger DuBois

Roger DuBois, 57, of Ormond Beach, FL and formerly of Colchester and Lebanon, passed away unexpectedly Jan. 3, 2008. He collapsed at work that day, and was rushed to a nearby hospital. Doctors worked to save him, but could not. It is believed that he suffered a massive stroke.

He is survived by his sister, Sharon DuBois and his aunt and uncle, Roland "Unc" and Helen DuBois, all of Ormond Beach, FL; dear longtime friends, Eric Backbom of Manchester, Will & Laura Sapia of Hebron, Joseph Campbell of Lebanon and Philip Gladue of Colchester; and countless other friends.

Roger had been a longtime resident of Lebanon. He graduated from Penney High School in East Hartford with the Class of 1968, and went on to study at Manchester Community College. Some of his many accomplishments were as owner and partner of Deep Hole Drilling in Glastonbury and the Marlborough Pit Stop. He was also an avid woodworker and auto mechanic and enthusiast...always giving a hand to friends and neighbors on various projects that could be anything from building a deck to restoring an antique car.

Roger had been employed at Hope Plumbing & Hardware in Colchester from 1994 until his early retirement in 2006. He was often found at the counter helping many a customer figure out & solve some unique plumbing, hardware, wood-working or painting project (just to name a few). When Roger left Hope in August 2006, it was to retire in Ormond Beach. But being the energetic hands-on person he was, that didn't last too long. He had decided to go back to work part time.

Roger was so much more than an employee at Hope. He was a friend to all, brother to his fellow co-workers, and mentor to anyone interested in learning. You always saw him with a smile on his face and eager to help where needed. We will miss him dearly.

A memorial service to honor and celebrate his life will be held at 7 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 13, at the Abundant of Life of the Assemblies of God Church, 85 Skinner Rd. (at the jct. of Rte. 16), Colchester. The Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester is assisting with local arrangements; for online condolences, visit www.auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

