



US. POSTAGE
PAID
GLASTONBURY CITIZEN, INC.
PRESORTED STANDARD

POSTAL CUSTOMER
LOCAL

RIVEREAST

News Bulletin

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

Volume 32, Number 51

Published by The Glastonbury Citizen

March 7, 2008



Russ Schaller, owner of Woody Acres Sugar House, answers questions inside next to his sap evaporator during last year's Maple Fest. Schaller said it takes, on average, 42 gallons of sap to make 1 gallon of syrup. He will open his sugar house doors again this weekend for the 18th annual Hebron Maple Festival which runs this Saturday and Sunday, March 8 and 9, from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. both days.

Hebron Maple Festival Returns This Weekend

by Sarah McCoy

With cans hanging from trees trunks and temperatures warming, it can only mean one thing in Hebron: it's time for the Maple Fest.

The 18th annual Hebron Maple Festival will take place this weekend, as visitors will have the opportunity to tour working sugarhouses and partake in activities up and down Main Street.

This year, four sugarhouses will be open for tours and demonstrations in addition to selling a wide array of maple treats. Winding Brook Sugar House will close its Skinner Lane location and, instead, will be featured at a booth along Main Street for demonstrations on how sap becomes syrup.

Jean and Craig Cyr, who run the Hope Valley Sugar House, have helped organize the event since its inception. They became interested in making syrup almost 30 years ago when they bought their house in Hebron, which features countless maple trees around the property. Soon Craig began learning the trade and wanted to pass it on to others.

"We wanted to have a fun Hebron thing that would get people out of the house and

that wouldn't require families to dig deep into their pockets," Craig said in explaining the idea behind the Maple Fest.

Last year's Maple Fest was one of the most successful in recent memory due, in large part, to the cooperation from Mother Nature. That was somewhat ironic, considering it was the worst year for syrup making in years.

"So far this year looks to be a normal year," Craig said. "We should produce about 100 gallons of syrup a year. Last year that number was around 50 [gallons], but we appear to be back on track now."

In addition to the syrup happenings, visitors will have opportunities to watch dog sledders, stand in awe of birds of prey, admire antique quilts, and eat anything imaginable.

Christ Lutheran Church will host the Connecticut Valley Siberian Husky Club, which will put on a dog sledding exhibition on Saturday. This is a free event that will run from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. on Saturday.

AHM Youth and Family Services will host the Birds of Prey show at its Pendleton Drive location. Shows will start at 1 and 2:30 p.m. on Sunday afternoon. Tickets are

\$5 for adults and \$3 for children and seniors, and sell-out crowds are expected.

The Hebron Historical Society will again host a Historical Quilt Exhibition and Sale. It will be held at Old Town Hall on Saturday and Sunday, with tickets costing \$2. Additionally, quilter Sharon Buckley will do quilt appraisals on Saturday afternoon, from 12:30-3:30 p.m.

Visitors to the Maple Fest are urged to come hungry, as various groups and organizations will be selling treats throughout the weekend. This includes maple cotton candy and maple muffins at the firehouse on Main Street, chili at the American Legion Hall, chowder at St. Peter's Church, and traditional Jewish baked goods at the United Brethren of Hebron Synagogue.

The Hebron Map Festival program with maps and a schedule of events can be found at the Hebron Town Office Building. More information can be found by visiting www.hebronmapfest.com.

If people can't make it to the Maple Fest this year, they'll still have plenty of opportunities to indulge their sweet tooth, as maple syrup is available year-round from the sugarhouses around Hebron.

New Daycare Opens on Route 66 in Portland

by Michael McCoy

After a curious closing in November, 1255 Portland Cobalt Rd. is once again home to a daycare center.

Children's Lighthouse Childcare & Learning Center is owned and operated by Stacy Stein, who brings 10 years experience of working in the childcare profession with her. Stein is also certified in CPR and First Aid, and has also received her head teacher certification from the Department of Public Health.

"Not only am I the owner operator," says Stein, "I'm the director as well." Stein mentioned that though she may hire another director sometime in the future, she would be on the premises daily, and only lives one town over.

Last November, Babies and Up Too, a daycare center that operated from the same address, closed suddenly, two and a half years after it opened. Sean May was one of the parents left hanging after the daycare's sudden shuttering, and, according to Stein, he is excited to send his two youngsters to Children's Lighthouse when it opens.

Though, Stein cannot be certain just what her staff will look like until she has an idea of how many kids she will be caring for, she will enlist education, nursing, dental, and social services consultants. She also explained that state law requires her to employ one teacher for every 10 children aged three and up and one teacher for every kid under four.

The center is composed of two buildings and outside play areas. The front building is called the Little House, for children six weeks old to three years. The Big House cares for kids ages three through 12.

Children's Lighthouse also offers a curriculum that includes music, science, math, arts and crafts, language development, dramatic play, health and safety, and physical fitness. Pre-school is offered as well.

Stein said the center would address topics that are age appropriate to each child. Some of the youngest kids may receive instruction concerning eating, dressing, or adapting to new situations, while the older kids might be devoting time to their homework.

Stein is originally from Illinois, and after graduating from high school in 1988, went on to receive her bachelor's degree in public relations, while also carrying a focus in early childhood development.

She eventually moved to Florida, where she met her husband; they married in 1999. The couple has two children, ages five and three, together. Stein declined to share much about her family due to her husband's line of work being in law enforcement.

In 2000, Stein and her family moved to Tolland and now live in East Hampton. Though she has worked at several daycare centers and has served as head teacher, Stein most recently worked as marketing director for a collision repair outfit.

When Stein heard about the sudden closing of the previous operation she remembers saying to her husband, "Oh my god! I can't believe that somebody did that to those kids!" Her husband replied, "We should buy it."

On Dec. 4, the couple toured the facility, and they bought it by the end of the week.

Both Stein's and her husband's parents contributed to the effort. "We wouldn't be doing this without my parents," Stein said; her family provided much of the capital needed to start such an endeavor. Meanwhile, her husband's parents have been with them every step of the way as they spent the last three months doing improvements to their property.

The family affair seems quite appropriate since, Stein said, "Opening a childcare center was something my dad and I always talked

about."

Upgrades to the building include a new video surveillance system to "make sure everything's on the up-and-up." Stein elaborated that the new system would serve as both security for the kids and a way for Stein to monitor her employees.

Stein has also installed new emergency lighting and lever handles on all doors, and repainted most of the interior.

Also, Stein said, "I want to make sure my kids are in a safe environment," said Stein, and noted that she has installed a "state of the art electronic key-code entry system" and will use a computerized check-in station that keeps track of who is in the building and at what times.

As for the name of the center, Stein said, "I've just had an affinity for lighthouses my whole life. They're kind of a beacon of hope." She added that lighthouses have been sort of a fixture in her family, and she has a collection of miniatures. She said lighthouses also tie right in with her slogan, "creating bright minds."

"I have always just loved working with kids ever since I was eight years old," Stein said. "I always knew I wanted to be a mom. Working in a daycare was the closest thing to it before I got married and had kids of my own."

Stein is still waiting for the state to finish processing the center's license, but she aims to open the doors at the beginning of April.

However, Children's Lighthouse will host an open house on Saturday, March 15, from 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. "It's basically for parents to come meet me," Stein said, though, she added, there will be fun activities for the kids. Parents will be able to tour the facility as well. Refreshments will be served.

Those impressed with Stein and the center will have a chance at a couple opportunities. Parents who sign their children up by March 22 will be entered into a drawing to win a num-



Stacy Stein

ber of prizes. Furthermore, those signing up by that date will also receive their first week of care for free.

Children's Lighthouse Childcare & Learning Center will be open Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. and will close for major holidays. Pricing can be attained by contacting Stein, who assured parents she would be flexible in meeting the needs of different families.

The daycare also has its own web site, ChildrensLighthouseChildcare.com. Though currently only the logo and a contact number exist on the website, it will soon offer more information about the center. Interest parents may contact Stein at 342-CARE (2273).

Bransfield's Portland Budget Proposal Comes in Under Five Percent

by Michael McCoy

At Wednesday's Board of Selectmen's meeting, First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield presented her proposed 2008-09 budget, a \$29.35 million spending plan that would be a 4.85 percent increase over the current year's budget.

The budget proposal, which Bransfield and Finance Director Rob Buden worked hand-in-hand on, comes about a month and a half after the Board of Education (BoE) unanimously passed its budget. That figure came to \$17.8 million, identical to the one Superintendent Sally Doyen had presented to the school board earlier in January. This spending plan was included in the package Bransfield presented Wednesday night. (The general government side of the proposed budget is \$11.5 million.)

The Board of Education's proposed budget was left untouched in Bransfield's \$29.35 million spending package. She said she and Doyen "put together budgets we believe to be very lean and trim."

Certainly the biggest increase included in the town's budget proposal comes in the form of employee health insurance; not surprising, since this made up for the lion's share of the school board's increase as well. Insurance costs are up 22 percent this year at the town level, for one simple reason: the town has been using it and the companies want their money back. "Over

the last three years, we have had some very ill employees," Bransfield said. "Fortunately, we have insurance that takes care of them and helps them get better.

"Because we're a small pool, when we have extra costs, our rates go up," Bransfield continued. "It's just a very difficult situation for our country and our town." She also said she would be working hard in the coming weeks to secure a better figure than the one in her budget.

Bransfield also mentioned that employee co-pay is up as well, so they are bearing some of the burden too. In addition, Bransfield is hoping to one day take advantage of the Municipal Employees Health Insurance Program (MEHIP), started by State Comptroller Nancy Wyman. This would allow municipalities to band together, increasing the size of their pools, so they may save on insurance costs.

Claims have also caused Workmen's Compensation to increase by six percent as well.

Bransfield has also proposed bumping the Fire Marshal pay by \$9,000, to bring it up to a 20-hour per week position. Currently, that position operates on an as-needed basis. The proposed spending plan also features another full-time police officer position, which would bring the department up to 11 sworn officers. The officer's first-year salary would come to

\$23,000. (As the new officer would not start until January 2009, the budget only includes half a year's salary.)

The budget does not include any contribution from the fund balance. In the current year's approved budget, that number was \$115,000.

As is the case in most towns, the majority of the proposed 2008-09 budget consists of education expenses. Last week, on Feb. 27, Bransfield petitioned the appropriations committee of the state's general assembly to bear more of the education burden. She concluded her address by saying, "Local education costs are overwhelming our towns and cities, and they're severely harming our taxpayers and their municipalities. Please help us: raise the foundation, remove the cap, and provide more meaningful levels of K-12 and special education funding support."

Though not specifically included in the spending plan, Bransfield made special mention, in the budget packet she presented to the Board of Selectmen, of several upcoming projects that she looks forward to. These included the Department of Environmental Protection Boat Launch, which is currently in exploratory stages, and the Portland Station project, which would bring a large commercial

endeavor to the old Elmcree Hospital property. Though she did not expect Portland to reap the property tax benefits of the latter project in the coming fiscal year, Bransfield did expect to see a significant increase in collected fees.

The budget presentation comes on the heels of the Assessor Nicole Lintereur issuing the 2007 Grand List, which came to \$835,932,890. This is a 1.28 percent jump from 2006, a number Bransfield deemed low. "I think the reason that is low is we just came through a reevaluation," she said.

This brings the estimated 2008-09 mill rate to 27.77, a 2.87 percent increase over the previous year's 26.99.

Acknowledging the process still ahead for the spring's budget season, Bransfield said, "I can't stress enough that this is the very beginning of the budget cycle."

The budget next goes to a public hearing at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, March 11, in the Portland High School auditorium, 95 High St. This will be followed by workshops with the various departments, boards, and commissions, taking place from March 18 to April 2.

The Board of Selectmen must approve a budget by April 9, and a referendum is set for May 12.

Low Grand List Growth Means Tax Increase Likely in Hebron

by Sarah McCoy

Expect taxes to rise.

That's the message given by Hebron Assessor Robert Musson in response to the 2007 Grand List. The list showed a growth of only 1.29 percent, bringing it to \$857.11 million. This percentage increase which is likely to be lower than the budget increase that residents will vote on at the May 6 referendum.

The Grand List represents the net value of taxable real estate, motor vehicles, and personal property in the town. The figure is used to calculate the tax rate for the upcoming 2008-09 fiscal year.

The most significant amount of growth on the 2007 Grand List came in the area of motor vehicles. The net value of the registered motor vehicles in Hebron rose to \$65.96 million, an increase of \$1.67 million.

Real estate showed a modest increase in 2007, going from \$768.9 million to \$778.5 million, a growth of 1.25 percent.

Personal property assessments across Hebron actually went down in 2007, due to a shift in the way AT&T declares its resources in town. Musson said that instead of paying taxes to each individual town for its cell phone towers, AT&T declared the property to the State of Connecticut. "The towns lose and the

state wins again," Musson said of the change in procedure.

Included in the personal property assessments are farm machinery, unregistered motor vehicles, equipment for utility companies, and other items used for business operation. In total, Hebron's net total of personal property assessment decreased by 2.59 percent, or \$322,205.

The Hebron Board of Assessment Appeals (BAA) has yet to hear any appeals on the 2007 tax assessments, so, according to Musson, this is most likely not a final number that the Board of Finance will use to set the mill rate. The BAA convenes in March to hear appeals.

There wasn't much of a shift in the top 10 tax assessments in Hebron for 2007. Leading the way was Connecticut Light and Power at \$4.56 million, Blackledge Country Club Inc. at \$4.2 million, Foothills Farms Inc. at \$2.87 million, Village Shoppes LLC at \$2.12 million, Birmingham Utilities at \$1.62 million, Hebron Properties LLC with a tax assessment of \$1.54 million, B.I.S.S. Inc. at \$1.49 million, Loveland Farms LLC at \$1.38 million, Blackledge East at \$1.31 million, and Hebron Country Manor Limited at \$1.19 million. Only Hebron Country Manor Limited was a new addition to the tax assessment top 10.

Grand List Grows by 1.4 Percent in Andover

by Sarah McCoy

The Andover Grand List saw a typical increase in 2007, according to the town's Assessor John Chaponis.

The 1.4 percent total increase was mainly due to an increase in motor vehicle assessments.

Of the \$3.74 million increase in tax assessments, \$2.24 million was due to an increase in the motor vehicle account. That's an increase of 1.02 percent over 2006. Chaponis said that it is typical for motor vehicles to show the largest increase because of the frequency that individuals update their cars.

Personal property assessments in Andover increased by 4.2 percent, or \$212,150. This includes items such as utility company equipment, unregistered motor vehicles, and other items used for business operation.

The smallest increase in the 2007 Grand List was in real estate, which grew by only .6 percent, or \$1.47 million.

"I think you're seeing a typical Grand List for the area considering the way development has been," Chaponis said. He noted that Andover never had the big developing boom

that other towns experienced, so there hasn't been a steep drop-off.

"In Colchester we had about 10 years with 4-5 percent increases in the Grand List because of all the new building," Chaponis, who also works as the assessor for Colchester, said. "In Andover we never really had that so we are seeing a Grand List that is consistent with past years."

The Grand List represents the net value of taxable real estate, motor vehicles and personal property in the town. The figure is used to calculate the tax rate for the upcoming 2008-09 fiscal year.

The top 10 tax assessments in Andover are Martin Marshall at \$958,300, Whispering Hills LLC at \$887,200, New Samaritan Housing Group at \$844,400, Hillside Self Storage Center LLC with a tax assessment of \$768,100, B&B Realty at \$590,200, Jab Group LLC at \$570,000, Ellen Post, trustee, at \$520,240, Andover Plaza LLC at \$499,200, Marie Bialowas at \$484,730, and Beth Ann Belanger with a tax assessment of \$482,600. Bialowas and Belanger are newcomers to the list in 2007.

Tax in 2006 Results in Revenue Excess for Andover

by Sarah McCoy

The Andover Board of Finance last week was presented with the audit findings from the 2006-07 fiscal year and, as expected, the town showed an excess of revenue.

The excess was mainly due to the supplemental taxing that occurred in July 2006 to offset the overspending of the previous administration.

Stephen Hopkins, the town's auditor, presented his findings at Wednesday night's meeting. He found the town had \$931,000 more than projected in its accounts. First Selectman Bob Burbank said, "To call this a surplus is a fallacy." Instead, Burbank classified the money as "working capital."

Of the \$931,000 excess, \$676,000 came from the supplemental taxation. The other major areas of underspending were in road maintenance, which came in \$65,185 under budget, and the Board of Education, which returns \$140,827 to the town. The town will use the money to pay off the loan taken as a result of the almost \$700,000 debt Andover found itself in 2006.

The remaining money, which Burbank estimates to be around \$300,000, will most likely be put towards the town's contingency fund. "You have to have some money in reserves," Burbank said. "Typically this number is about eight percent of the budget, but it will be up to the Board of Finance how they want use the money."

Burbank added that the money not used for the reserve fund would be applied to the next year's budget.

At last week's Board of Finance meeting, Hopkins outlined eight problematic findings he encountered in his audit report. The absence of a policies and procedures manual for the financial workings of the town is something, he considers, to be a substantial weakness for the town of Andover. This manual would provide guidelines for the "general functions and specific duties involved in the accounting, cash receipting, and bill paying system of the Town," Hopkins wrote in his audit report.

Hopkins said it isn't uncommon for small towns to lack this document but he recommends all towns to have it. Ideally, according to Hopkins, this would be created by the town's finance department and later be evaluated and approved by the Board of Finance.

Burbank said the creation of a policies and procedures manual "is one of the things we will be looking into next year."

Further procedural issues raised by Hopkins included the town's reconciliation practices. He recommended the town install a checks and balance system for checking accounting. This would entail one person signing all bank reconciliations and another person outside of the finance department verifying the amounts. "Without this, the town is asking for something bad to happen," Hopkins warned.

Burbank said that changes in this procedure are already in the process of being implemented. "This report, you have to realize, was for the 2006-07 budget," Burbank said. "Since then we have been transitioning from one administration to another and many new accounting procedures have been or are in the process of changing."

One of Hopkins' final recommendations was in the manner in which the town handles its recording of fixed assets. Hopkins said the town's estimate on its fixed assets is probably high because there isn't a working document that reflects items' depreciation. Burbank said that this is a matter of taking the current manual system and transferring it to an electronic database.

In closing, Hopkins called Andover, "a normal town" in terms of its financial operations. After the shortage two years ago followed by the process of digging themselves out of debt, Burbank can live with being a normal town. "We had a lot more violations a year ago," he said. "We took care of the immediate concerns but we're still in the process of eliminating all the kinks."

Marlborough Grand List Increase Lowest in Years

by Kristina Histen

The Oct. 1, 2007, Grand List featured the lowest increase in years, which the town assessor attributes partly to a slowing economy.

The grand list of taxable properties totaled \$621,641,767, according to Town Assessor Marie Hall.

The figure represents a 0.9 percent increase over the 2006 net grand list, Hall said. It is the lowest increase the town has seen in comparison to past years because the economy has been really slow, she said, "and not as many people took out permits this year."

The increase the grand list did see Hall attributed to the construction of new subdivisions and the building of brand new houses by residents scattered throughout town.

Growth was noted in each of the three categories of taxable property: real estate, personal property and motor vehicle.

The biggest dollar jump occurred in real estate, a 0.87 percent net increase over last year. The motor vehicle portion of the grand list was the second largest, growing by 0.89 percent. Finally, personal property increased by 1.03 percent over last year.

Comparisons of the 2006 list with the 2007 list show real estate rising from \$560,483,470 in 2006 to \$565,397,030 in 2007, an increase of \$4,913,560; motor vehicle assessments went

from \$46,719,132 in 2006 to \$47,135,815 in 2007, an increase of \$416,683; and personal property rose from \$9,015,354 in 2006 to \$9,108,922 in 2007, an increase of \$93,568.

The combined total of \$616,217,956 in 2006 went to \$621,641,767 in 2007, an increase of \$5.42 million over the previous year.

The top 10 taxpayers on the 2007 grand list is led by Both LLC, with a total net value of \$3,585,890, and comprises 0.57 percent of the total net grand list. The second highest taxpayer is Connecticut Light and Power Company. The utility's property has a net value of \$3,137,780, which makes up 0.504 percent of the total grand list. In third place is the Marlborough Health Care Center, totaling \$3,128,860 in net value, or 0.503 percent of the grand list.

The remaining seven top taxpayers own property ranging in value from just over \$2 million to just under \$1 million.

They are: Elliott Enterprises LLC at \$2,824,030; Country Barn Properties LLC at \$1,985,340; Robert H. and Mary C. Soleau at \$1,930,190; Robert M. Elliott at \$1,881,670; C and B Marlborough Associates LLC at \$1,637,860; 369 North Main Street LLC at \$1,185,030; and Richard P. Meduski at \$996,520.

Everything's Fine for Portland Girl After Brief Medical Scare

by Sarah McCoy

Four year-old Grace Darby is back to her spunky, cheerful self.

The Portland girl was happy to be home playing this week after a fall from her bed last weekend landed her in the Intensive Care Unit at Connecticut Children's Medical Center.

It was Saturday afternoon when Kerry Darby, Grace's mom, heard a thud from the upstairs room where her daughter and six year-old son, Cole, were playing. When she went to investigate Kerry said she found her daughter whimpering on the floor near her bed.

"She said that she wanted to lie down and take a nap," Kerry recalled. "Immediately I knew something was up."

Kerry called 911 and was assisted by Portland volunteer emergency personnel who examined Grace. Initially the EMTs prepared to transport Grace to the hospital via ambulance but, instead, opted to call in Lifestar.

Kerry said she "was shocked" when she heard Lifestar was being dispatched for her daughter. "Kids fall off the bed, it happens, but

I trusted their decision."

When she was in the medical helicopter, Grace was falling in and out of consciousness and a breathing tube had to be inserted. She spent Saturday night in the ICU of Connecticut Children's Medical Center.

The following morning Grace's condition improved rapidly. Doctors were able to remove the breathing tube in the morning and then release the Portland youth later that day.

Doctors diagnosed Grace with a concussion, but they're puzzled by the intense reaction she showed from such a short fall. "They're thinking maybe a seizure caused the fall, or the fall caused a seizure," Kerry said.

Whatever the case, though, Grace has been given a clean bill of health and should show no signs of last weekend's ordeal. Her parents are just grateful everything unfolded the way it did.

"It was really comforting to see someone you recognize from around town," Kerry said of the Portland emergency personnel that responded to her call.

Residents Assemble Again to Fight Belltown Place

by Michael McCoy

Exactly one week after Belltown Place, a potential development to be located off of South Main Street, drew a crowd to the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency (IWWA) meeting, even more people came out to speak out against the project at Wednesday night's Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC) meeting in the middle school commons.

More than 100 people assembled for the meeting, which turned rancorous at times.

"Belltown Place: A Townhouse Community" is a 127-unit residential development being proposed by Pelletier Development of Glastonbury. The original plan was submitted last November.

One-third of the homes that would be built would qualify as Housing Opportunity Development (HOD), which are not federally subsidized like low-income housing, but are meant to allow families to live in areas they would not otherwise be able to afford to live in. They are designed for families that make no more than 80 percent of a town's median income.

Pelletier attorney Mark Branse explained Wednesday that in East Hampton, 80 percent of the median income would be \$64,000. According to him, 15 percent of the homes will be aimed at those people, while 15 percent would be aimed at families who make no more than 60 percent of the median income, which comes to \$48,000.

Wednesday night, Branse said, "I would wager that many people in the room tonight would qualify for this housing," citing secretaries, librarians and teachers as some of those whose salaries would fall below the median income.

With the HOD homes, the developer takes 30 percent off of the fair market value of the house. "Basically, the developer loses money," remarked Branse. This comment was immediately met with a roar of laughter from the audience, including someone who yelled, "Can you say that with a straight face?" This was one of several times throughout the evening that ei-

ther PZC chairman Mark Philhower or commissioner Ray Zatorski reprimanded the audience on their behavior.

The developer would recoup its lost money through the allowance of building more units per acre than they would be allowed if HOD were removed from the equation. East Hampton's current HOD regulations allow for no more than five units per acre; however, one of the regulation changes that the applicant is seeking would increase that number to six. A similar development that was not an HOD would be allowed no more than three.

In addition to amending the zoning regulations, Pelletier also seeks the zoning of its property to be changed from R-2/R-4 to HOD.

In addition to Branse, the applicant also brought engineer Jim Dutton and traffic engineer Bruce Hillson to Wednesday's meeting. Fire building code consultant Mike Sinsigalli also represented the applicant.

Branse said that across the state residents say they are all for affordable housing, but they always seem to want it "somewhere else," and "somewhere else we'll never find," Branse said.

After a five-minute recess, the hearing was opened up to the public – and not one resident spoke in favor of the proposed development.

Philhower limited each resident's comments to three minutes, a policy that raised the ire of the crowd during the evening. At one point someone shouted, "This is America!"

The chairman also found himself in a verbal dispute with resident Rich Kochuk, who at one point yelled comments from his seat in the audience, without waiting for his turn at the podium. After Philhower attempted to rein him in by banging his gavel on the table, Kochuk said, "Take that thing and shove it."

Philhower then acknowledged the presence of Sgt. Tim Dowty and issued Kochuk a warning, alerting him that one more outburst would render him out of order.

Zatorski then reminded residents, "If we allow this hollering and yelling to continue, we

are creating a hostile environment for the applicant," and elaborated that such record would not reflect favorably on the town, should the matter go to court.

More than a few residents offered to relinquish their three minutes and hand them over to another resident — a practice that Philhower allowed throughout the evening.

And when most of the residents spoke, their comments were met with applause. Visibly frustrated by this, Zatorski admonished the audience, commanding them to cease clapping.

Resident Jon Hines petitioned the PZC not to amend their regulations for one applicant, he said, "The Plan of Conservation and Development is the town's social contract with the residents."

Kochuk, noting the development's potential influx of children, later commented, "Is [Pelletier] going to build a new school? I'd like to know why we need this" development.

Lori Weech, one of the town's school bus drivers said, "I pick these kids up every day," and worried how the potential increased traffic patterns in the area might affect children walking from the bus to their homes.

Commenting on the current HOD regulation, Diana Marsh said, "The developer is trying to change a forward-thinking standard proposed by the town," continuing later, "They have it backward. I believe the project is supposed to fit the regulation."

Much of the evening's focus was on water issues. Don Markham, whose property abuts the proposed development, said, "We have water problems already on South Main Street."

Earlier in the evening, Branse had mentioned that Pelletier would construct a water system on the property, which would eventually be turned over to the town. But, during public comment, resident Jim Berg said, "My mind is boggled as to why the town wants to take this over."

Resident John Hanson, who has worked on

wells professionally for years, told the developers, "You are going to run out of water. Believe me."

State Representative Gail Hamm, who lives on Spice Hill Drive, called her neighborhood "part of a Pelletier subdivision that had water problems..." Addressing the PZC, she said, "You live here gentlemen; you know that this town's biggest issue is water. It is the number one concern that I get." She told commissioners the allowance of this project would be "a simple breach of your responsibility, to be very candid."

Steve Jeffries, who lamented some of the changes made in his former town of Bristol said, "Developers come in and make a lot of empty promises." He continued, "While we might be silenced here tonight, we won't go quietly... The needs of the many really do outweigh the needs of the few or the one."

However, Zatorski responded, "In no way do I want anyone's opinion to be silenced, squelched, or suppressed."

Addressing Branse's earlier comments concerning HOD qualification, lifelong resident Paul Marsh said, "I knew where my schoolteachers lived; I knew where my police officers lived... Those houses are already here. They're just not labeled HOD."

Keith McLaughlin said, "I didn't plan on speaking tonight, but I live in East Hampton." While clearly not a reporter, McLaughlin said he was "on assignment with Channel 3," one of two news stations present. Despite his home being nowhere near the proposed development, he commented, "I feel you've got to reign in residential development period... you've got to make the developer jump through every hoop in the book as far as I'm concerned."

Around 10:30 p.m., when no one else wished to speak, the PZC voted to continue the hearing to its next meeting on April 2. The IWWA will continue its own public hearing on Belltown Place at its March 26 meeting.

Is the Marlborough Board of Education Settling?

by Kristina Histen

The Board of Education (BOE) last week approved a \$7.21 million 2008-09 budget, a spending plan that the school board chair said represents a "realistic and responsible budget" to the community.

But not everybody in the community seems to be thrilled with it.

The budget represents a \$340,117, or 4.95 percent, increase over the current year's spending. It will be presented to the Board of Finance sometime in the next few weeks.

"This budget doesn't have any 'fluff,'" Superintendent of Schools Sal Menzo said. "We tried to make it as fiscally responsible as possible and have done a lot with a little." Thursday also marked the three-year anniversary for Menzo as the superintendent of schools.

In January, Menzo presented the budget at a BOE subcommittee meeting, which at the time called for a 5.91 percent increase. It has been reduced to a 4.95 percent increase because of dropped insurance rates, grants required like the Direct Demand System generator reimbursement for ISO New England, a reduction in special education transportation, and the involvement of the school in energy conservation programs. For example, electricity cost has decreased based on year-to-date performance as part of the energy consortium and Direct Demand program saving about \$10,000 and telephone and internet services have been reduced by \$5,451 due to E-Rate and negotiated contracts.

Eighty-three percent of the proposed budget is due to staff salaries and benefits. This includes the additional staffing of a 1.0 FTE Math/Science Specialist and a financial assistant clerk. Menzo said the math/science specialist would address mathematics/science instruction for grades preK-3 and 4-6, dividing intervention and supporting responsibilities. The two-day a week financial clerk is needed, Menzo said, due to the increased invoicing of outside user groups of the building, as well as increased federal and state accounting requirements.

The proposed budget will reduce a school-wide enrichment paraprofessional to a .5 FTE based on an analysis of services and reduce a kindergarten paraprofessional to a .5 FTE based

on five sections being offered.

Two BOE members abstained from voting: a newer member of the board, John O'Toole and Chairwoman Maria Grove. Two school board members were also not in attendance.

"The reason that I abstained from the vote was not because I did not support the budget (which I do wholeheartedly) it was to support the board members who still had some outstanding questions regarding the budget," Grove said Monday in an e-mail. "I thought it was appropriate to be neutral in this issue. But to be clear, the budget is good- good for the school and for the community. I hope that in the future we can add more staff and initiatives to the budget, but we thought that it was best to present this type of budget to be respectful to the community and the economic climate."

A recurring issue that came up again seems to be the issue of additional staffing. There is a need for a physical education teacher and a math/science specialist, stemming from last year. The math/science specialist was decided to be more beneficial and was therefore opted over the P.E. teacher in the 2008-09 proposed budget.

Resident Shawn Fischer said he felt that the BOE members were "settling for the lowest denomination and should be bigger than that," adding that it was up to the Board of Finance to make the cuts, and the BOE should try "pushing the envelope just a little bit."

"It is certainly indisputable that an elementary school have at least one additional P.E. teacher, but it extends beyond that," Fischer said, questioning "whether the philosophy [of the BOE] is to tread water or move forward."

He added, though, that Menzo and Elmer Thienes-Mary Hall Elementary School Principal Loraine Giannini are doing "a remarkable job with what they are being given."

"The BOE educational leaders, the superintendent, and the principal are very excited and committed to the children and our community and do have high aspirations," Grove said, "but we are also realistic, and our duty is to present a realistic and responsible budget to our community."

Compromise Reached in Marlborough Orchard Saga

by Kristina Histen

A compromise has finally been met between the Conservation Commission and property owner Joseph Sanford after nearly two years of deliberation.

With a creation of an orchard in mind, Sanford purchased about 50 apple trees in the spring of 2006. Some of them had already been planted on 17 Old Cider Mill Ln. without permission from the town. This caused an outrage among community members and the process was halted.

But, on Monday night, an agreement was reached between Sanford and the Conservation Commission where only about five residents attended to hear the final ending of the orchard saga.

"I'm glad we're through," Sanford said, "it is a reasonable compromise with everyone and I'm glad to get started."

The application approved was for 17 Old Cider Mill Ln. but it also included activity on 11 Old Cider Mill Ln. proposing a pavilion and wetland mitigation area. Sanford is in the process of owning the adjacent property, but rather than require a new application for 11, the commission said "prior to initiating any activity on 17, the mitigation area on 11 shall be constructed in conjunction with the immediate mitigation area on lot 17." The pavilion will not be placed in wetland soil.

About 16 apple trees will be allowed to remain on the property, some in an "ornamental fruit tree area," and the rest to act as a buffer to the adjacent properties. There will also be apple trees along Old Cider Mill Lane to add "an artistic symbolic quality," as stated by Chris Ferrero, landscape architect, at the Feb. 4 meeting.

Sanford was disappointed in the community's original reaction to the orchard, as the apples were intended to be donated to the local food bank.

"The people of Marlborough just aren't stepping up to the plate," he said.

The commission will also require a proposed walkway on the property to be moved as suggested by member Yvonne Bolton so it is kept out of existing wetlands. They recommend it to follow on the plans of the south side of a proposed stonewall and through created wetlands on 11 Old Cider Mill Ln. The stonewall line will also need to be extended to the shoreline and to existing side yard property lines.

The biggest concern of Conservation Commission chairman Don Hautman was the use of fertilizers and pesticides in the lake area. After discussion with other members and advice from Peter Hughes, AICP, Planning and Development Director, it was decided upon that organic care fertilizers and pesticides can only be used the first calendar year.

Any need after that will have to be approved by the Commission. Because native planting is proposed, commission member Gordon Isleib said there should not be a need for continual fertilization.

A monitoring plan for the restored and created wetland areas will also need to be approved by the Conservation Commission by submitting yearly reports to the town for the next three years commencing activity. Sanford must specify an appropriate specialist who will perform the monitoring program.

As on 9 Old Cider Ln., all lighting fixtures must be fixed to raised walkways or the pavilion. Also, Sanford must post an estimate bond determined by town staff prior to construction. This will act like a security deposit to ensure that once the project begins development, the work will be concluded.

Sanford hopes to begin work as quickly as possible as construction is weather-dependent, but no activity can be begin until the final plans are updated.

"I will be able to have the home that I want," Sanford said, "and all those that opposed will have me as a neighbor, whether they like it or not."

Colchester Police News

2/27-Richard Miller, 47, of 16 Golden St. Apt. 2, Norwich, turned himself in for charges of criminal violation of restraining order, breach of peace, two counts of violation of probation and second-degree failure to appear, State Police said.

2/28-Rhonda Lami, 35, of 66 Pinebrook Rd., was charged with second-degree failure to appear, State Police said.

2/28-Steven Vezina Jr., 27, of 5 South Wagonk Trl., East Hampton, turned himself in for the charge of second-degree failure to appear, State Police said.

2/29-Timothy Ratta, 31, of 41 Meadow Ln., Salem, was charged with second-degree failure to appear, State Police said.

3/1-Eric Perry, 18, of 12 Merry Ln., Gales Ferry, turned himself in for the charge of sixth-degree larceny theft from building, State Police said.

3/3-Peter Kevorkian, 53, of 44 Brainard Rd., was charged with third-degree criminal mischief, sixth-degree larceny theft from building

and possession of controlled substances/narcotics, State Police said.

3/3-A 17-year-old youth offender was charged with third-degree assault and disorderly conduct, State Police said.

3/3-Crystal Littlefield, 20, of 30 South Main St., Jewett City, turned herself in for the charges of third-degree burglary from a motor vehicle and third-degree larceny from a motor vehicle, and was charged with injury or risk of injury/impair the morals of a child, fifth-degree larceny from a motor vehicle and sixth-degree larceny from motor vehicle, State Police said.

3/3-Kelly Michaud, 26, of 23 South Main St. Apt. 2, Jewett City, turned herself in for the charges of third-degree burglary from a motor vehicle and third-degree larceny from a motor vehicle, and was charged with injury or risk of injury/impair the morals of a child, fifth-degree larceny from a motor vehicle, sixth-degree larceny from a motor vehicle, credit card theft and breach of peace, State Police said.

East Hampton Police News

2/21 — Dona Gioco-Hoff, 50, of 139 Mill Rd., Colchester, was issued a ticket for operating a motor vehicle while on a cell phone, East Hampton Police report.

2/25 — Lindsey Carpino, 21, of 159 Main St., was arrested for fifth-degree larceny, police report.

2/26 — Chad D. McNaughton, 33, of 9 Maple St., Mirza H. Baig, 46, of 242 West Rd., Marlborough, John C. Roy, 59, of 137 Martin Rd., Hebron, and Linda L. Dewhurst, 40, of 20 Tarragon Dr., were all issued tickets for using their cell phone while operating a motor vehicle, police say.

2/26 — A 15-year-old male juvenile was re-

ferred to Juvenile Court for sixth-degree larceny, police report.

2/26 — Russell Trombley, 41, of 425 Colony St., Meriden, was arrested for traveling too fast for conditions, operating an unregistered vehicle, misuse of plates and unsafe tires, police say.

2/28 — Tasha Saltus, 23, of 24 Middletown Ave., was arrested pursuant to a warrant for driving under suspension, fifth-degree larceny and conspiracy to commit sixth-degree larceny, police report.

2/28 — Coty Rugar, 20, of 9 Brook Hill rd., was arrested for violation of a protective order, police report.

Portland Police News

2/25 — A 17-year-old male was arrested on charges of possession of less than 4 oz. marijuana, Portland Police say.

2/25 — A 14-year-old female was arrested on charges of possession of less than 4 oz. marijuana, police say.

3/1 — Edward Williams, 46, of 7 Chatham Court, was charged with DUI, police say.

3/2 — Amy G. Kiernan, 29, of 203 William St., Glastonbury, was charged with failure to appear, police report.

Obituaries

East Hampton

Linda L. Sorvillo

Linda L. Sorvillo, 67, of East Hampton, passed away Saturday afternoon, Feb. 23, at Middlesex Hospital. She is survived by her husband, Donald F. Sorvillo; her three children, Cynthia, Donald and Robert; and seven grandchildren.

There will be no funeral services at this time. A memorial Mass will be held at St. Patrick Church in East Hampton on Saturday, April 5, at 11 a.m.

Memorial donations may be made to the Salvation Army.

Hebron

Nancy C. Hoskins

Nancy C. Hoskins, 70, of Hebron, formerly of South Windsor, passed away on Thursday, Feb. 28, at the Middlesex Hospital in Middletown. She was the beloved wife of the late Jonathan Hoskins. She was born in Connecticut, where she has lived all of her life. Nancy worked for the Connecticut Humane Society with her husband for many years. One of her favorite pastimes was camping with "The River Rats" at Bald Mountain Campground in Vermont.

She is survived by her son, Mark and his wife Debbie of Hebron; the apple of her eye, granddaughter, Chelsea; her sister, Cheryl Sloan and her husband Richard of Maui and her niece Kim. She will be missed by family and friends and her beloved dog and companion, Jasper.

A funeral service was held Thursday, March 6, at the Samsel & Carmon Funeral Home, 419 Buckland Rd., South Windsor. Burial followed in Old South Cemetery, Glastonbury. Her family received friends on Thursday, prior to the service. In lieu of flowers memorial donations may be made to the American Cancer Society, Memorial Dept., P.O. Box 1004, Meriden, CT 06450-1004. Visit www.carmonfuneralhome.com for online condolences.

East Hampton

John C. Russell

John C. "Jack" Russell, 78, passed away Saturday, Feb. 23, in the comfort of his home, surrounded by his family, in East Hampton after a long, courageous battle with cancer. He was the beloved husband of Diane (Watson) Russell for 51 years. Born in Schenectady, NY on Jan. 18, 1930, he was the son of the late John H. and Dorothy (Hetu) Russell.

Jack spent his youth on the family farm in Melrose, NY. He had an ear for music and learned to play the piano and violin. He attended Lansingburgh High in Troy, NY. He was a graduate of St. Michael's College in Colchester, VT, with a B.S. in Biology. He then served four years in the U.S. Air Force while stationed in Wichita Falls, TX. After serving his country, he attended Texas A&M University in College Station, TX and graduated with a B.S. in Civil Engineering. Jack was proud to be a Texas A&M "Aggie" and loved to reminisce about the many "Aggie" traditions.

He married Diane on Sept. 1, 1956, and moved to Connecticut. He was briefly employed by the State of Connecticut; he then worked 33 years at Hartford Hospital, retiring in 1993 as Director of Facility Development. He was a former member and past President of the East Hampton Rotary Club. He loved sports and had a passion for golf. He loved to play golf with his sons and friends, particularly his buddies at Hartford Hospital. Jack also spent his retirement years traveling domestically and abroad with his wife, Diane, and friends. Jack was a man of honesty and integrity who was respected by all who knew him. Nothing was more important to him than his family.

In addition to his beloved wife, Diane, he is survived by three sons and a daughter: John C. Russell Jr. of South Glastonbury, Michelle (Russell) Lisella and her husband John of Littleton, CO, Bradford D. Russell and his wife Marisol of Manchester, and Todd S. Russell and his wife Yadira of East Hampton. Jack was also blessed with seven grandchildren: Rachel and John C. Russell III, John and Julia Lisella, Daniel Russell, and Gyanna and Jacquelyn Russell. He also leaves behind his brother, Norman K. Russell.

He was simply "Papa" to his grandchildren

whom he adored. They were his greatest source of pride and enjoyment in his retirement years. The family extends its heartfelt thanks to Dr. Anca Bulgaru for her warm and compassionate care, also to Eastern CT Hematology and Oncology Assoc. and all the staff at the William W. Backus Hospital.

A memorial service will be held Saturday, March 15, at 11 a.m. at St. Patrick's Church, located on 47 West High St., East Hampton. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the East Hampton Ambulance Assoc., PO Box 144, East Hampton, CT 06424. The Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, has care of the arrangements. To leave online condolences visit www.spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Portland

S. Peter Barry

S. Peter Barry, 81, of Biddeford, ME, died Saturday, Feb. 9, at Maine Veterans Home in Scarborough, ME. Peter was born in New London, a son of Carlos and Grace (Willett) Barry, III. He grew up and was educated in Portland (CT) schools, graduating from Portland High School in 1944. Mr. Barry served in the US Navy from 1944 until 1946. He received his bachelor's degree in business Administration from the University of Connecticut in 1950. He then moved to California and worked in the defense industry for many years. Upon his move to Maine, he worked for Fiber Materials in Biddeford until his retirement.

He was predeceased by his parents and his brother, Carlos Barry. He is survived by his companion of many years, Eunice L. Barnes, previously of Watertown and his two nephews, Jeffrey C. Barry of New Hampton, NH, and Peter A. Barry of Hartford. A graveside service will take place on Saturday, March 29, at 10 a.m. in the Trinity Cemetery of Portland, CT.

Colchester

Daniel C. Arch

Daniel C. Arch, 76, beloved husband and best friend of Janice A. (Weiss) Arch, of Colchester, died peacefully Wednesday afternoon, Feb. 27, at Backus Hospital surrounded by his loving family. Born on Dec. 1, 1931 in Wilkes-Barre, PA, he was the son of the late Anthony and Helen (Lovendusky) Arch. He has lived in Colchester for the past 40 years.

On Oct. 24, 1959, in Wilkes-Barre, PA, he was united in marriage to Janice A. (Weiss) Arch. Mr. Arch was a Korean War Veteran serving with the United States Army. After returning home, he attended night school and earned his associate's degree at the University Of Hartford School Of Engineering. Prior to his retirement in 1992 he was employed at Pratt & Whitney Aircraft in East Hartford as a draftsman for over 34 years. Daniel was an avid organic gardener, an active member of the Divine Providence Church in Norwich, and served on the town of Colchester's Board of Finance for six years, acting as chairman for two years.

Surviving are his wife, three daughters, Valerie J. Arch and her husband Richard R. Ciarlo of Shelton, Sherry L. Roush of New London, and Karen D. Nichols of Colchester; two grandchildren, Coty Nichols of Colchester and Thomas Roush of Montville; a sister, Eleanor Eppley of Dallas, PA; and several nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by a brother Anthony Arch.

Visitation was held Monday, March 3, at the Labenski Funeral Home, 107 Boswell Ave., Norwich, followed by a Funeral Mass in Divine Providence Church. Interment followed with military honors in Divine Providence Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the Divine Providence Church, 11 Silver St., Norwich, CT 06360.

Colchester

Mark Savoie

Mark Savoie, 54, of North Canterbury Road, died Thursday, Feb. 28, at the William W. Backus Hospital in Norwich. He was born in Putnam June 22, 1953, son of Gladys (Harrington) Dietch of Colchester and the late Armond Savoie. He was married to Emily Logee on Feb. 26, 1982; she survives him.

Mr. Savoie formerly resided in Colchester and was a 1972 graduate of Bacon Academy. He had

been employed at Long Lane School, Mansfield Training School, formerly owned his own carpentry business and had most recently been employed at Louis Reguin Construction in Lisbon. He was a member of The First Congregational Church of Canterbury, a very active member of The Happy Herdsman 4H Club and an avid motorcycle rider who loved to spend time at the ocean.

Besides his wife, Emily, of 27 years and his mother, he is survived by two daughters, Faith B. Savoie and Haley L. Savoie, both of Canterbury; his sister, Linda White and her husband Allan of Windham, several nieces and nephews and his beloved dog Neikko. He was predeceased by his brother, James Savoie and stepfather Al Dietch. In a unique act of kindness and willingness to give the gift of life to others, Mark was an organ donor.

A celebration of Mark's life was held Tuesday, March 4, at The First Congregational Church of Canterbury, Center of the Green, Canterbury. Burial will be at the convenience of the family. There are no calling hours. In lieu of flowers donations in his memory may be made to, Reason to Ride Flag Run, c/o VFW Post #5446, 7 Winsor Avenue, Plainfield, CT 06374. Tillinghast Funeral Home, 433 Main Street, Danielson is in charge of arrangements.

Colchester

Nathan Harrison

Nathan Charles Harrison, 24, of Lynn Street, Colchester, went to be with the Lord on Saturday, March 1. Born Dec. 22, 1983, in Manchester, he was the beloved son of Matthew and Katherine (Gleason) Harrison of Colchester.

Nathan was a 2002 graduate of Bacon Academy and went on to study Computer Science at Three Rivers Community College. He was a Computer Technician for TRUMPF, Inc. and had also worked for both Noel's and Mackey's in Colchester.

Nate was a gifted intellectual with many talents and interests. Although he excelled with and formally studied computer science, he held a true love and deep appreciation of music and literature – he was rarely found without a book or his acoustic or electric guitar. Nate was an avid Bible reader, and had planned to return to school and study theology and literature, which he had been studying privately for several years. Most importantly, he will be remembered for his love, caring, sensitivity and generosity – he will be greatly missed.

In addition to his loving parents, he is survived by his paternal grandparents, Alan and Nancy Harrison and Betty Gillespie, all of Alton, IL; his great grandmother, Ruth Bartlett of Jerseyville, IL; very loyal and supportive friends, John Willwerth and Pat Madden; his beloved dogs, Spot, Pepper and Agent 99; and numerous extended family and friends. He was predeceased by his maternal grandparents, Milton and Helen Gleason, late of Colchester.

Friends called Thursday, March 6, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. Funeral services were to be at 11 a.m. today, Friday, March 7, directly at The Congregational Church of Salem, 244 Hartford Road (Rte. 85), Salem, with Pastor Timothy B. Dubeau, officiating. Interment will be private and at the convenience of the family.

In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory may be made to the church.

Colchester

Frances Hayden Leonard

Frances Hayden Leonard, 96, went home to be with the Lord on Sunday, March 2, the birthday of her first of five daughters, at Douglas Manor in Windham, surrounded by her three devoted surviving daughters. Born in Beverly, MA on Dec. 11, 1911, she was the daughter of the late Samuel and Mabel Frances (Hayden) Bradbury, and lived in Hartford's South End for many years prior to moving to Rocky Hill for 38 years, spending most summers at Meig's Point. She was the soul mate and wife of the late Harry Walsh Leonard for close to 60 years prior to his death on March 17, 1998.

She loved camping, watching Harry fish and being by the ocean. She passed that love of the ocean on to all of her children. She most recently lived in Colchester and Columbia before needing the special help of Douglas Manor. Frances was an active, spunky woman with a personality and wit to match. She was an active member of St. Augustine Parish in Hartford, participating in the St. Augustine's Girls Brigade and then was active in St. James Parish after she moved to Rocky Hill. Her purpose in life was primarily raising and being there for her five daughters, Joanne, Carolyn, Diane, Deborah and Bethany.

Frances is survived by three daughters: Joanne Campominesi and her late husband Richard, Carolyn Jarvis and her late husband, Ernie, both of Windsor and Bethany Boivin and her husband, Gary of Columbia, a son-in-law, Robert Kotch of Marlborough, and 11 grandchildren, Robin, Steven, Matthew, Rachel, Timothy, Heidi, Stacey, Heather, Shannon, Gary, Jr. and Dominic. Francis also leaves seven great-grandchildren, Jonathan, Lauren, Michael, Rebekah, Hannah, Joshua, and Micah. She was predeceased by two daughters,

Diane Leonard and Debbie Koch and a grandson Christopher.

The family would like to thank Janis Schleganhauf of Columbia who helped make her final years happy and fulfilling. Francis always felt like a daughter. The family would also like to thank all the staff of Douglas Manor in Windham for all the special care they gave Frances when she needed it the most.

Funeral service was to be today, Friday, March 7, at 11:30 a.m. at the D'Esopo Funeral Chapel, 277 Folly Brook Blvd, Wethersfield, CT 06109. Burial with her soul mate, with whom she believed they lived and loved together so they should be buried together, will be private at the convenience of the family. Friends called on Friday at the funeral home one hour prior to the service, from 10:30-11:30 a.m. Memorial donations may be made to the Columbia Volunteer Fire Dept, Rt. 66, Columbia, CT 06237. She was extremely grateful for their expertise, promptness, and skill levels they are known for. For on line expressions of sympathy, visit www.desopo.com.

Colchester

Carol A. Harding

Carol A. (Wolak) Harding, 51, most recently of Mt. Juliet, TN, and formerly of Colchester, died peacefully Jan. 29, surrounded by family and friends. Although unable to win her battle of re-occurring cancer, she fought with courage and dignity to the end.

Carol was preceded in death by her parents, Al and Rose Wolak of Middletown. She is survived by her children, son Charlie Harding and wife Kim; her daughter Cristen Harding, of Mt. Juliet, TN; a brother, Bernie Wolak of Denver, CO; her former husband, Charles Harding of Ashville, NC, as well as extended family and many dear friends.

Although Carol was born and raised in Middletown, she had a southern soul, so it wasn't surprising that she left Connecticut to "find her heart's desire" after raising her children and working in Colchester.

Although burial services were held in Ashville, NC on Feb. 2, with a subsequent memorial service in Mt. Juliet, it was her last wish to allow her Connecticut family and friends the opportunity to say goodbye. Therefore, a "Service of Remembrance and Celebration" will be held Saturday, March 15 at 11 a.m. at the East Hampton Congregational Church, Main Street, East Hampton.

Colchester

Albert E. Verrill

Albert E. Verrill, 86, widower of the late Jane (Cummings) Verrill, of Colchester, passed away Tuesday, March 4, surrounded by his loving family at the Harrington Court GHC Center in Colchester after a short convalescence. Born June 24, 1921 in Auburn, ME, he was a son of the late Beede and Clara (Anderson) Verrill. On June 28, 1942, he and Jane were married in Eastport, ME. Together, they shared 62 years of marriage before she predeceased him on Nov. 21, 2004.

A proud veteran of World War II, he served with the U.S. Marine Corps and was a member of the Adler-Boluck Post 6990 VFW in Colchester. Mr. Verrill was an aircraft mechanic for Pan-Am of New York and later at Pratt & Whitney as a supervisor for 30 years before his retirement. Al was an avid restorer of antique one-lung engines, participating in many shows and exhibitions. He also loved to hunt and fish and was a tireless fan of UConn Girls Basketball and the Boston Red Sox. Mr. Verrill was a longtime member of the Westchester Congregational Church and the Wooster Lodge of Masons No. 10 A.F. & A.M. of Colchester. Of all his attributes, he will be remembered most by his family as a loving, kind and devoted husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather.

Survivors include a son, Richard and his wife, Lynda Verrill of Colchester; a daughter, Teri Davis and her partner, Vincent Savalle of Colchester; six grandchildren, Kevin and Kenny Verrill, Kelly Verrill Martinez, Nicole, Christopher and Jessica Davis; six great-grandchildren, Richard and Doree Martinez, Kyle, Tanner, Hunter and Kory Verrill; three sisters, Anna Patchell of Enfield, Glenna LeConte of Quaker Hill and Betty Griffin of Danielson; a special friend, Joseph Boylan of Shrewsbury, MA, as well as his other hunting buddies; and numerous extended family and friends. In addition to his beloved wife, he was predeceased by his twin brother, Alfred.

Friends were to call today, Friday, March 7, beginning at 9:30 a.m., at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester, followed by an 11 a.m. Chapel Service. Committal with full military honors was to follow in the Linwood Cemetery, Colchester. Donations in his memory may be made to the Colchester Hayward Vol. Fire Department, 18-54 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester, CT 06415.

