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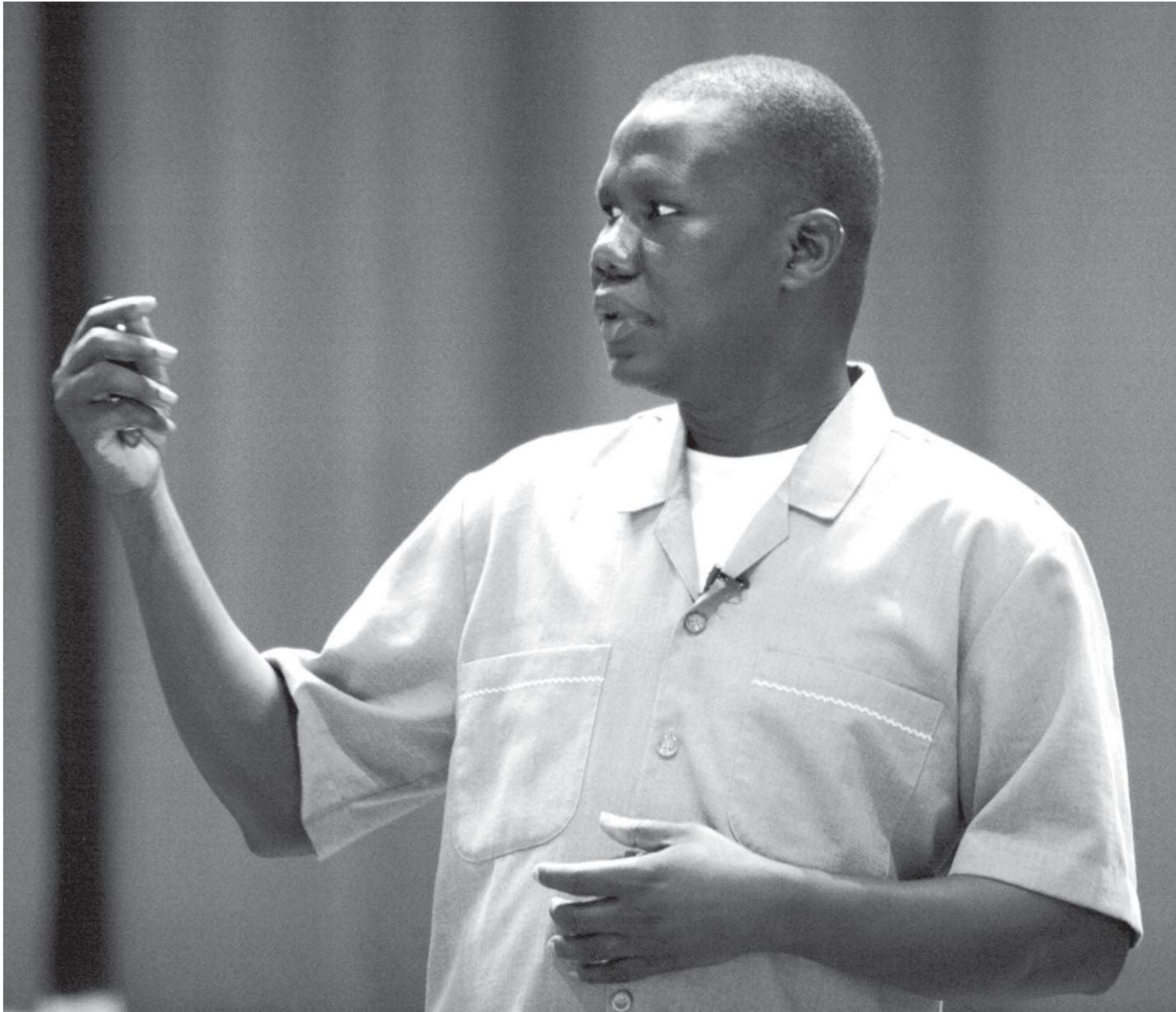
# News Bulletin

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

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**Gabriel Deng, a Lost Boy of Sudan, addressed RHAM Middle School students at an assembly on Monday morning. Deng shared his story of escaping from a civil war and to raise awareness about Sudan today. RHAM students have raised over \$2,500 for Deng's H.O.P.E. for Ariang organization that aims to bring formal education to Sudan.**

## Lost Boy of Sudan Shares Story with RHAM Students

by Sarah McCoy

For most people, the challenges that Gabriel Deng has experienced are unimaginable. Watching his village burn to the ground, walking for eight weeks across a desert and surviving a civil war that has taken the lives of millions are just a few of the struggles that Deng faced before adolescence.

Deng appeared at RHAM Middle School Monday to tell his story and how he's helping his fellow Sudanese.

Until he was nine years old, Deng led a happy life. He had his parents, plenty of free time to play and a cherished responsibility of tending to the family's cattle (a measure of wealth in Sudan). That all changed when, in January 1987, a group of armed Arab militia burnt down his village.

With his parents' whereabouts unknown and no home to return to, Deng left. He joined a group of about 500 to flee to Ethiopia. This group, mostly comprised of women and children, faced some of the most excruciating obstacles Mother Nature could dole out. Deng watched as over

50 of his fellow refugees died as the group forged across the Nile River, many of them attacked by the crocodiles that call the river their home.

But Deng refused to give up, even when the group ran out of food and water while walking across a hostile desert.

"For six weeks I walked without hardly any food and water," he said. "Many died of dehydration and starvation but I remembered what my parents had said to me, 'Have a positive mindset. Do not give up hope.'"

Deng didn't give up hope, and he eventually arrived at the Dimma Refugee camp in Ethiopia. This became his home for the next four years. After being hospitalized for dehydration, Deng began a new journey that has changed his life even further. At the age of 13 he began a formal education.

But in 1992, everything came to a halt, when air raids forced Deng out of Ethiopia and into Kenya. Despite the chaos around him, Deng recommitted himself to learning how to read, the English language

and math. He found peace through learning and has since "dedicated his life to studying."

In 2000 he came to America seeking political asylum. After a 19-hour flight across the Atlantic, he took a job at a photo processing company as he worked towards earning his GED. He received his certificate in 2004 and promptly began attending La Moyne College in New York, where he has already earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in math education and is currently pursuing a Master's degree in the same subject.

When Deng isn't studying he's speaking to inspire and raise awareness about his country's continuing struggles.

On Monday he stood before hundreds of middle school students with some suggestions, including:

- Never lose hope.
- Develop good listening skills.
- Respect your parents, teachers and friends.
- Be resilient.

Continued on Page 2

**Continued from Front Page**

Dream.  
Work hard.  
Believe.  
Be appreciative and grateful.  
“You see,” he said to the crowd, “in Sudan students don’t have the new building and opportunities that exist at RHAM.”

But that is something Deng is trying to change starting with the Ariang village. Help Offer Primary Education (HOPE) for Ariang is Deng’s nonprofit organization dedicated to bringing formal education to the youth in southern Sudan.

Since the program’s inception in 2007, Deng has raised over \$35,000 to start the Ariang Primary School. The school, which currently has no building, attracts over 600 students, some of whom walk over three hours to get to the tree where classes are held. Deng hopes to bring trained teachers and clean water to the area and, some day, build a school building for the students to learn.

Currently, in southern Sudan there are only about 20 secondary schools. Only about 10 percent of girls attend school. And, only about seven percent of teachers are trained.

“It is a dream in the making,” he said of the Ariang Primary School.

Students at RHAM Middle School helped contribute to that dream as they presented a check to Deng on Monday morning for \$1,000. Earlier this year the school contributed an additional \$1,500. Students raised money by selling flowers and bracelets supporting HOPE for Ariang.

Lois Donato, a reading teacher at the school, and Carol Fonseca, a special education teacher, organized Monday’s event after they heard Deng speak at Eastern Connecticut State University last fall.

“I was blown away,” Donato said of Deng’s speech. “And, I knew my students would be inspired and want to help.”

Donato was beside herself by the results the students produced. The \$2,500 will go towards a drinking well that Deng will install later this year. That well will likely be the only source of clean drinking water for the entire village.

Those wanting more information about HOPE for Ariang or to make a donation to the organization can visit [www.david-morse.com/hopeforariang](http://www.david-morse.com/hopeforariang).

## A Rite of Spring: Flooding in Portland

by Michael McCoy

It’s that time again.

Before the May flowers come, the April showers bring flooding to Route 17A in Portland.

Last week, the state Department of Transportation blocked off Route 17A near the Wangunk Meadows. This includes about 3,000 feet of road from Summer Street to Route 17 due to its flooding.

The detour takes drivers down Summer Street to Route 17, but, First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield said, “We prefer people to use Bartlett Street.” So, the town places a sign near the Civil War Memorial on Bartlett Street, warning residents that the road is flooded.

Route 17A runs parallel to the Connecticut River, and this particular section is quite close to it. The flooding occurs not only as a result from rainfall, but also as a byproduct of the snow melting up north.

“If all goes well,” Public Works Director Rick Kelsey said, “the river will stay put and

not keep getting higher and higher.”

Kelsey estimated that at its deepest, the flooding runs five or six feet deep. “This is normal,” he said. “It’s a function of rainfall and snow up north.”

Kelsey predicted that heavier rainfall would simply cause the flooding to last longer. However, he said the less desirable scenario would be a rapid melting of the snow up north, which would cause the flooding to become deeper. Kelsey said that 1936, 1938, 1955 and 1984 were the worst flooding years in recent memory. The 1984 flood resulted in the damaging of a town pumping station. Fortunately, no residential or municipal property has been damaged this year.

Kelsey said the state has tried building dams and other flood control devices. But, he suggested, this annual event is simply something that must be endured.

“Mother Nature is going to prevail every time,” he figured.



**Michele Sinkez, of Hebron, sits in her barn with her dog, Tyler, and examples of her pottery work. She will be featured in the Hebron Creates art show later this year as part of the town’s tercentennial celebration.**

## Retired Hebron Teacher Discovers Pottery

by Sarah McCoy

Retirement isn’t going exactly as Michele Sinkez had planned, but that’s not necessarily a bad thing. The Hebron artist is now fulfilling dreams and discovering interests she never knew she had.

In 2004, Sinkez lived in Glastonbury and was preparing to retire from her position as an art teacher at Windsor High School to pursue printmaking. She searched online for a waterfront home, figuring that retirement was a chance to go wherever she pleased. What Sinkez found was a vintage Hebron home with a barn and a pond in the backyard (hence the waterfront designation).

“One day I was out on the porch, overwhelmed with life, and said to myself, ‘This place is so blissful,’” she recalled. That was the beginning of Blissmeadow Arts, a pottery studio tucked in the heart of Hebron.

Yes, pottery, not printmaking.

After two years of being a self-proclaimed “renaissance woman” as she renovated her house, Sinkez delved into the world of pottery after a friend gave her a pottery wheel. Not one to let things go to waste, she rolled up her sleeves and got dirty, literally. Sinkez converted her barn into a studio and began to hone her artistic pottery style.

Born in Newark, NJ, Sinkez always had a flair for the arts but it was her passion for sports won out, initially. Her first teaching job, in East Hartford, was as a physical education teacher. But, the absence of art in her life got to be too much and Sinkez returned to school to earn her Master’s Degree in Art Education.

“It was the most magical and freeing time,” she said of her years back in college. “I cleaned houses and waited tables to make ends meet.”

After graduation, and to Sinkez’ dismay, she took the only job she could find, another physical education teaching position, identical to the one she had left just a few years prior, only in Windsor. Twenty-two years later, Sinkez finally got her wish and transferred to the art department at Windsor High School. Four years later, tired and a little burnt out, she was ready for a change.

So, she moved to Hebron and kicked off her

second career as a dedicated artist.

While her printmaking equipment sits untouched in the barn, Sinkez is finding joy in the tactile art of pottery. She relishes the opportunity to “play in the mud” and considers her work to be a wonderful, natural journey. “Plastic has its place. Technology has its place. But, I’m looking for my world to have more aesthetic sensibility,” she said.

One of the best things about pottery, for Sinkez, is the organic nature of the craft. Using mud and fire, the Hebron artist can create works of art that connect her to her ancestors. Out of desire, and lack of equipment, Sinkez shied away from kiln-fired pottery. Instead, she fires pots in a hole in her backyard. The smoke, with added raw materials such as seaweed, saw dust or even manure, creates patterns in the pottery as it hardens.

“You don’t know what you’re going to get,” she said of the pit fire technique. “Instead, you’re allowing nature to do what it does and rejoicing in that.”

Sinkez will be one of the featured artists later this year at the Hebron Creates art show, the culminating event of the town’s tercentennial. The show, being held Nov. 1, will bring the town’s visual and literary artists together for a one-day town-wide celebration of the arts. Artists will showcase their work at Old Town Hall, Douglas Library and their own private studios. Hebron artists can find applications to be a part of the event at the Town Office Building.

Last year Sinkez combined her two loves and began teaching classes in pottery. Individuals of all ages learned the intricacies of the art as they, too, tried their hand at creating bowls, boxes and other forms. Based on feedback from her students, she now offers primitive pit-firing and functional kiln-firing options.

Using a kiln allows an artist to glaze their pottery, thus making it safe to eat and drink out of.

Blissmeadow Arts will offer classes again this summer with both private and group lessons available. Those interested in signing up can contact Michele at 228-1520 or by e-mail: [blissmeadow@comcast.net](mailto:blissmeadow@comcast.net).

# Belltown Firefighter Still Active After 50 Years

by Michael McCoy

Fighting fires might seem like a job best suited for young people – but Donald Ingraham has been fighting them for 50 years.

Ingraham was born in 1936, and has lived the entirety of his life in town. In 1954, he graduated from East Hampton High School and went to work for Gong Bell.

The year 1957 proved to be a significant one for Ingraham. He got married that year – and he also joined the East Hampton Volunteer Fire Department.

“In those days,” Ingraham recalled this week, “joining the fire department was the thing to do.” However, if Ingraham makes it sound as if he was simply hopping on the bandwagon, think again. Ingraham had wanted to sign up to serve his country during the Korean War. But, at the time, the service would not accept a man who was his family’s only son.

Ingraham remembered that he “wanted to give my time to some sort of community service.”

Ingraham came in as a 3<sup>rd</sup> Lieutenant, and worked his way up to captain of Company 1, and, eventually, Deputy Chief of the department. He also sat on the Board of Fire Commissioners, and spent 10 years driving an ambulance for the Ambulance Association, which shared a facility with the fire department before its new building was completed in 2005.

The year after Ingraham started, the town built a new Co. 1 Fire Department building on Barton Hill Road, which is where he works out of today.

Several years ago, Ingraham left the post of Deputy Chief and resumed working for Company 1. “Then I found I was too old, and I couldn’t keep up with these kids anymore,” he said.

So, Ingraham found himself working on the Fire Police, and remains there as captain. He seems happy to serve in any capacity he can but admits, “If I could go back and fight fires again, I’d be pleased with that.”

Obviously, technology has changed quite a bit in 50 years, but, Ingraham said, “the training has changed quite a bit” as well.

“When you first came in, you were paired up with a veteran and learned like that,” Ingraham recalled. He was under the tutelage of Paul “Pat” O’Connell, who was chief at the time. He also was inspired by veteran firefighter and neighbor Alfred Royce Sr., who later went on to become chief as well.

These days, though, every volunteer who signs up with the department is sent to Willimantic Fire School for formal training.

Another thing that has changed during Ingraham’s time with the department are the fire calls, which are “not what they used to be,” he recalled.

Ingraham chalked much of this up to the obsolescence of kerosene stoves, as well as stricter burning regulations. Speaking of burning, Ingraham recalled one day with 16 brush fires, and remembers the destruction of the west wing of Center School, as well as the old Gong Bell factory, as being especially nasty affairs.

Ingraham estimated that about 70 guys served the department when he joined, and somewhere between 60 and 65 do today. But, that drop-off in volunteerism is more extreme than it seems, when you factor in how much the population has grown in the past 50 years – from 5,000 in 1957 to 11,381 now.

“I don’t think you ever really have enough,” Ingraham said of volunteers. “You have to take what comes along.” But, he said, “Somebody has to do it. We don’t have a paying department, and I don’t ever really want to see one come in here.” He added that he doesn’t think the town could afford a paying department.

When he signed on, Ingraham remembered, “When that siren went off years ago, it practically cleared out the factories,” alluding to the number of laborers who served in the department. “There’d be 25 guys here in minutes.”

Early in his career, one particular incident started off pretty gruesomely. He recalled that, after entering a burning home, “I could see this leg laying there and it’s all burnt.”

This was too much for the young Ingraham to stomach, so he fled the building. However, once outside he reconsidered, saying, “If I was going to be a fireman, I ought to get used to this.” So he went back in and finished the job. He later found out the leg was a prosthetic.

There were more horrific stories but, Ingraham said, “The stories I could tell you, you wouldn’t be able to print.”

However, Ingraham recalled a humorous episode in 1968. For a time, the Boston Red Sox ticket office had the same number as the fire department, albeit with a different area code. But the fire department received calls all the time looking for the Red Sox. Finally, Ingraham wrote a letter to then-manager Dick Williams who sent him a picture of the 1968



“Fighting fires is common sense,” says Donald Ingraham, suggesting that keeping your wits about you is the key to staying safe. Here, Ingraham stands in the Co. 1 garage, adorning his Fire Police Captain’s hat.

team.

The advent of certain retirement benefits has also come along since Ingraham started. During the gas rationing days in the early-1970s fireman were given carte blanche to ensure they could answer all calls. That was the extent of their perks. Eventually, they were partially reimbursed for gas costs.

Another difference was no women belonged to the fire department in 1957, but that changed in the 1980s, when Barbara Sergeant (nee Feist) joined up. Today, there are a handful of women that serve. “They do a pretty good job,” Ingraham said.

Ingraham retired in 2001 after spending 50 years working in various local factories. His wife, Elizabeth, died in 2000 after 46 years of marriage. He has two grown children – son Donald Jr., who lives in East Hampton, and daughter Elaine, who lives in West Granby – and four grandchildren.

Now 72, Ingraham has no immediate plans to leave the fire department. “I’ve been here so

many years, I don’t know how the hell to get out of it,” he laughed. “It’s just something I do. ... When I stop contributing and pulling my weight, I’ll get out.”

During its April 8 meeting, the East Hampton Town Council issued a formal proclamation thanking Ingraham for his 50 years of service, a meeting which both of Ingraham’s children attended. “I had no idea this was coming,” Ingraham said, and later joked that he is not fond of surprises.

Fire Chief Chuck Stickler has known Ingraham since 1980, and said that of all active members of the town’s fire department, Ingraham has been around the longest.

Each year, the department holds an appreciation dinner. This year’s event, which will take place at The Gallery in Glastonbury on April 26, will include formal recognition of Ingraham’s service. In addition to the town council proclamation, he will receive a plaque from the department and a certificate from the Connecticut State Firefighters Association.

# RHAM Special Education Director Calling it a Career

by Sarah McCoy

At the end of the school year Brian Morin will retire from his post as Director of Special Education and Pupil Personnel Services at RHAM after 35 years in the field.

While his day-to-day activities will change, Morin expects to continue advocating for the students who need it.

Growing up in Hartford, Morin always knew he wanted a career helping others. Initially he attended seminary, planning to work with the community as priest. His plans changed, though, and Morin would go on to spend over 35 years in the field of special education.

“I can’t say that I always wanted to be a special education teacher, per se,” he explained. “But, I was always drawn to helping kids who needed it.”

In 1973 Morin accepted his first position as a special education teacher, and later as the Director of Special Education, for the Hartford public school system. He was there for 26 years before coming to RHAM in 1999. The RHAM middle and high schools serve students from Andover, Hebron and Marlborough.

“The students have such energy,” he said of his initial draw to working with special needs students. “On your worst days they can make you smile.”

In his nine years at RHAM, Morin has seen a lot change. From the break-up of the Central

Office Compact to the building of two new schools, the regional school district isn’t the same as it was when Morin first arrived. In fact, when Morin first arrived in Hebron the special education caseload was about half what it is now. Now, with 233 special education students, 21 teachers and 31 paraprofessionals, Morin has his hands full.

“One of the best parts about working in this district is that you’re not working alone,” he said. “There is tremendous cooperation and flexibility to provide programs that are meaningful to all our students.”

When Morin first began his career the general practice in schools was to isolate special education students and keep them out of the regular education classroom. Now, it is just the opposite. The district aims for an inclusive environment, providing academic opportunities in regular education and life skills programming that teaches students real world skills.

“We have been able, over the years, to develop a program that meets the needs of our special education students through creative programming,” he explained. “I’ve been fortunate to work with a Board of Education that has supported the needs of the students.”

With retirement just around the corner Morin is planning to help a new child. His daughter, Emily, is pregnant and due in Sep-

tember with her first child. It will be the first grandchild for Morin and his wife, Connie.

“I’m looking forward to being a grandpa and I know my daughters have lists of jobs they’d like a little help with,” Morin said of retirement. “But, I’m sure I’ll maintain some level of involvement as an advocate for special needs students. That desire to help never goes away.”

One thing Morin will miss the most is his students. “They’re just a remarkable group of kids. It would be hard to leave and not come back,” he said hinting at the possibility of returning to his familiar role as Santa Claus for the students’ annual holiday party.

Recognizing his passion and love for the job the Hartford Association for Retarded Citizens will present Morin with the 2008 Educator of the Year Award, for his lifetime service to the special needs population. The award will be presented at a ceremony on June 10 at the Hartford Boat House.

Superintendent of Schools Robert Siminski said that the district is currently working to finalize the contract for the new Director of Special Education and Pupil Personnel Services. Carl Gross, Coordinator of Special Education Services for the New Britain public school system, was hired to replace Morin. His job duties will officially begin on July 1, at the beginning of the new fiscal year.



Brian Morin

# Portland Praised for Being Green

by Michael McCoy

Portland has been recognized once again for its commitment to clean energy.

On March 18, First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield, along with Clean Energy Task Force (CETF) members Andy Bauer, Joanne Luppi and Fran Schoell attended a luncheon at the Yale Outdoor Club in New Haven. The event was sponsored by the Connecticut Clean Energy Fund (CCEF). Portland was one of 19 towns, two businesses and Wesleyan University that received awards from CCEF that day.

In an interview with the *RiverEast* last week, Bauer, who has chaired the nine-person task force since its inception in February 2005, said Portland is one of 60 towns in the state that have made the "20 percent by 2010" commitment. This means that, in two years, 20 percent of the town's energy will come from clean sources, such as wind farms and solar panels.

"They have put their money where their mouth is," Bauer said of the town. He added that, while a town can make a commitment to clean energy, they don't all follow through. But, he said, Portland has consistently included a line item in their budget to offset the costs of clean energy. The proposed 2008-09 budget, for example, includes \$5,000 for clean energy costs, which will enable the town to have nine percent of its energy come from clean sources. There was no money in the approved 2007-08 budget for clean energy spending, but Finance Director Rob Buden estimates that, by the end of the current fiscal year in June, the town will have spent between \$4-5,000 on clean energy, with the money coming from fund transfers from other accounts.

Bauer estimated that the town would be at 13 percent in 2010. The "20 percent by 2010" program allows a town to include the state's percentage in their figure. Bauer said the state is expecting to be at seven percent itself in two years, which would bring would bring to Portland exactly to that projected 20 percent.

Another component that led to the town being honored by CCEF is individual clean energy sign-ups. A household can sign up at the 50 percent or 100 percent level. Those that sign up are essentially contributing to the subsidy of clean energy. For example, Bauer said, if a household, which is signed up at 100 percent, uses 500 kilowatts in a month, 100 percent of their electricity is not necessarily coming from clean sources. But, because of their enrollment, 500 kilowatts of *somebody's* electricity *somewhere* would be coming from clean sources.

Bauer estimated that a household with a \$100 monthly electricity bill would pay an additional \$5.75 to sign on.

In terms of towns signing up, Bauer said, "Portland's among the state leaders." He said Portland has about 240 households signed up, more than seven percent of the town's total households. By comparison, neighboring Middletown has only 1.7 percent of its homes signed up; Cromwell has 1.6 percent, as does Farmington and Hebron. Marlborough has 1.4 percent of its homes signed up for the program. Bauer said that statewide only Bethany and Norfolk have a higher sign-up rate, both bringing in 14 percent of their homes.

Bauer said that not only does every sign-up help make the air a little cleaner, but each enrollment shows more of a demand for clean sources, which would in turn motivate more and more energy providers to look into using clean and renewable sources.

Bauer also said clean energy has an aesthetic benefit. He said many have come to view wind farms as not bad to look at. "Would you rather look at a plume of smoke from a power plant?" Bauer rhetorically asked.

Relying more on clean energy "is a local, state, national and international challenge," Bauer said. "There is no way we are going to make it to 2050 with our current mix of fuel sources. ... God help us if we go with coal."

Also, Bauer said, clean energy is the only



Portland was recently praised for its commitment to clean energy. Pictured, from left, are Lise Dondi (Connecticut Clean Energy President), Bob Wall (Connecticut Innovations Director of Energy Market Initiatives), Susan Bransfield, and Portland Clean Energy Task Force members Fran Schoell, Andy Bauer, and Joanne Luppi at the March luncheon in New Haven.

option that guarantees a completely domestic purchase.

Bauer said that at the luncheon, "You got to meet and talk with people who are doing the same thing. You are part of a group of people who all look at this as a real necessity. That's a real good feeling."

Bransfield said she's "very proud of our town," and praised Bauer and the rest of the CETF "for their dedicated work."

For its clean energy efforts, Portland has received one free solar panel from the state, and, taking advantage of the installation, the Board

of Selectmen voted last October to buy another one. This additional panel will cost the town \$14,000; the full cost is \$82,000, but the town received \$68,000 in reimbursement from the state. The panels will be placed on top of Valley View School in the next few weeks, Bauer said.

The CETF meets the third Monday of every month at 6:30 p.m. at Portland Library, 20 Free-stone Ave. Anyone interested in signing their household up for clean energy may go to [Portlandct.org](http://Portlandct.org) and find the clean energy link.

# State Issues Violations in EH Concerning Tight November Election

by Michael McCoy

After five months of investigation, the State Elections Enforcement Commission (SEEC) has found several violations, but no foul play, in the administration of East Hampton's Nov. 6 election and its subsequent recounts.

Last fall's election was close enough that Democratic Town Chair Barbara Moore was able to call for a recount. Election moderator Dave Simko, registrars of voters Margaret Jacobson and Irene Junga, Town Clerk Sandi Wieleba and a team of volunteers assembled to perform the recount. The recount numbers were so different from the Election Day count that Simko felt they were wrong; he chalked the matter up to the new voting machines.

The group then held a second recount, on Veterans Day, and went through the numbers more comprehensively and more exhaustively than they had at the first recount. Simko went home confident after this one, only to find the next day that an envelope full of 117 ballots was discovered at town hall. Once this last batch was incorporated, the figures were certified and sent to the state.

Though numbers shifted somewhat, none of the results for Town Council were affected, which resulted in the election of three Republicans, two Democrats and two Chatham Party members.

But, on Nov. 19, the SEEC received a complaint from Irene Curtis, in which she wrote, "...I do NOT [emphasis her own] believe in

the accuracy of the results, as reported by our town officials...and it makes me question the accuracy of the optical scanning results."

SEEC Investigating Attorney Shannon Bergquist said that they came to a conclusion on the matter at their April 8 meeting.

Bergquist said the general statute mandates that the main entrance to the area where counting is taking place be open; on Election Day, this was done at East Hampton High School. Her report also said, "...While there is no evidence that the public was asked to step outside of the polling place during the canvass for deceptive purposes, the canvas was not done 'in plain view of the public.' Respondent Simko prevented the public from entering the gymnasium, as a consequence, it appears he violated General Statutes 9-308."

The other violation concerned Jacobson, the Republican registrar of voters. According to General Statutes 9-307, official checkers must submit to the moderator a list that shows all eligible voters and all voters who turned out to vote. This official checklist is to be signed by the checker. Bergquist said Jacobson "did not appear to be aware of the provision. She admitted she did not sign the list. Her error appears, however, to be a good faith error."

The same assessment was made of Junga; however, she has since resigned as Democratic Registrar of Voters and moved out of state, and no longer falls under the jurisdiction of Connecticut's SEEC.

An agreement signed by SEEC members Joan Andrews and Stephen Cashman as well as Jacobson, noted the violation, and also read, "The Commission also concludes that no evidence has been uncovered that establishes that the respondent, or any other election official, manipulated or attempted to manipulate the results of the election for Town Council."

The agreement, signed by Simko and the same SEEC members, elaborated, "...Respondent Simko caused the public to be removed from the gymnasium during the canvass of the votes [on Election Day] and asked police officers to prevent the public from entering the gymnasium. The Commission concludes that by doing so, he violated General Statutes 9-308." However, it also noted that the new voting machines made for a tougher situation for election volunteers, adding, "...The Commission is aware that, due to the acoustics in the gymnasium, it may have been difficult for the election officials conducting the canvass to hear one another if the public was allowed to remain in the gymnasium during the canvass," although, "...those conditions do not excuse the Respondent's violation of the law."

The agreement said Simko's actions were not meant "to intentionally deceive the public but rather was a good faith effort to ensure that the election night canvass was conducted properly and without distraction. The Commission has found no evidence to the contrary.

The agreement also said Simko "vehemently denies that he witnessed, was aware of, or engaged in any form of election fraud and the Commission has not uncovered any evidence to the contrary." The agreement stated the Commission itself also found no evidence of fraud.

Simko was also found to be in violation of General Statutes 9-311a, which mandates the moderator contact each party chair in writing as to the specifics of any subsequent recanvassing. Simko only notified them verbally.

The agreement said Simko "admits that he knew that the law required the notice to be in writing, and the evidence establishes that he even informed [Chatham Party Chair Patience] Anderson of that requirement; however, because of the timing of the recanvass...the Respondent thought the best and most efficient course of action was to notify verbally the Party Committee chairpersons. The evidence establishes that this decision was made in good faith and without fraudulent intent."

While Jacobson was merely ordered to "henceforth strictly comply" with the protocol, Simko was ordered to do the same as well as pay a civil penalty of \$350.

Bergquist said that the SEEC anticipates a margin of error from election results and, though their audit yielded some slight variation from the Simko's certified results, she noted that the outcome remained the same.

# East Hampton Finance Board Sends Budget to Town Council

by Michael McCoy

The East Hampton Board of Finance (BOF) this week put forth its proposed 2008-09 budget this week – a \$36.94 million, which represents a 5.02 percent increase over current spending.

After meeting with department heads and various board and commissions, finance board members wrapped up their deliberations on April 3. One issue discussed that night was the additions to the building department.

Acting town manager Bob Drewry said, “That Belltown [Place] project has made us realize we’re understaffed in that department.”

So, to address matters, Drewry included in his budget request a building department technician which comes to \$35,492. Drewry also asked for \$55,000 for a building inspector/code enforcement officer. Building official Jim Carey is currently pulling triple duty covering these responsibilities. The BOF increased this number up to \$60,000.

Savings from the Fire Marshal salary will fund much of these positions, as Phil Visintainer has opted to work the position part-time. The full-time salary had previously been \$60,000.

The position, now part-time, will carry \$30,000 in pay. The town had also budgeted \$22,500 for benefits but now that it is part-time, the position will receive no benefits. (There is no actual \$22,500 in savings, though; this money will be used to pay for the new building inspector benefits.)

The BOF was set to hold their public hearing on the budget on April 7; but, due to failure to properly notice it, the hearing had to be postponed until April 14. Still, the BOF needed to deliver its proposed budget to the Town Council by April 15, so the board met immediately after the brief hearing Monday night and passed their budget 6-0.

Just before that vote, Pfaffenbach said, “I think it’s a great budget,” a remark BOF chairman Ted Hintz echoed Wednesday during the Town Council budget deliberations.

“It takes into account that everyone’s having a tough time now,” Hintz said. “People can’t afford an increase in taxes.”

Some other budget highlights include a 29.81 percent increase in legal expenses. Hintz said, “We’ve been going up for a while,” and explained that this is not a result of lawsuits

against the town, but rather a byproduct of the various building projects in town.

The BOF cut \$15,000 from the Economic Development Commission (EDC) budget, bringing it to \$42,776. This marks a 26.47 percent decrease from last year. Hintz said the BOF left enough in the budget to retain the commission’s consultant, Connected to Connecticut. But, he said, the EDC “had some items in there that were primarily exploratory. ... Some of the items will have to wait until next year.”

“We’re touching the education budget by zero,” Hintz said. “For me, that’s a good step.” Hintz said the finance board did cut \$150,000 from the BOE budget, but said this is simply because the BOF expects the BOE to receive \$150,000 more in state money for special education than the school board had anticipated. This means, Hintz said, the BOF effectively cut nothing from the school board budget. Hintz added, “The superintendent is fully on board with that.”

When asked what items he is most excited about in the budget, Hintz said, “Our new building inspector, who is long overdue.” He also

said, “Technology is huge.” He made special mention of the Global Information System (GIS), which is being phased in. Hintz said this tool would be quite useful to the building department, police department, and the assessor’s office. The town spent \$40,000 on the system this year and another \$42,000 is proposed for the coming year. Though additional mapping would need to be funded periodically, this would account for the lion’s share of the expenses.

All told, the proposed budget comes to \$36.94 million, which marks a 5.02 percent increase over current year spending. The calculated mill rate comes in at 23.81 mills, which is an increase of 0.51 mills, an increase of 2.19 percent.

On Tuesday, April 22, at 7 p.m., at Town Hall, the Town Council will vote to adopt the 2008-09 budget and send it to Town Meeting, which will occur Monday, April 28, at 7 p.m., at East Hampton High School, 15 North Maple St.

A referendum on the proposed 2008-09 budget will be held Tuesday, May 6, from 6 a.m.-8 p.m., at the high school gymnasium.

## \$32.76 Million Hebron Budget Sent to Referendum

by Sarah McCoy

With little fanfare or controversy, the Board of Finance (BOF) Monday recommended a budget for the 2008-09 fiscal year.

The proposed \$32.76 million spending plan will go before voters at a referendum scheduled for May 6.

The budget represents a 5.53 percent increase in spending, and a 3.53 percent increase in taxes. The discrepancy in the two numbers is largely attributable to the \$600,000 in additional support the town will receive from the state government through the Education Cost Sharing formula.

“It’s a budget I, and the rest of the Board of Finance, support,” BOF Chair Mike Hazel said.

The budget includes three main components: the Hebron Board of Education (BOE) budget, the RHAM Board of Education budget and the town operations budget. The proposed 2008-09 RHAM budget, which the Hebron BOF has no control over, has been recommended for referendum with a 4.66 percent increase. Because Hebron’s overall enrollment at the middle and high schools will increase next year the town’s levy is 51.3 percent.

The Hebron Board of Education has recommended a proposed \$11.49 million budget for 2008-09, or a 4.39 percent over current year spending. This would be the smallest percentage increase for the BOE in over 10 years. The lone member of the public who spoke at Tuesday night’s meeting, Sandra Queen, commended the Board of Education for a “well thought out and responsible” budget.

The proposed school budget includes two

full-day kindergarten classes, a new initiative for the town.

The remaining budget increase comes from the town operations budget. The town government line item is proposed to increase by 7.2 percent or \$410,448. This increase is largely driven by salary and benefit increases for town employees, the rising costs of utilities and costs associated with the impending parks project. An additional \$84,132 is needed to hire additional staffing to support the construction of the approved park on East Street and renovations to parks across the town.

The debt services line item also saw an increase this year as the town takes on \$170,000 in additional debt from the parks project. The total increase for the town’s debt services account is 10.42 percent or \$162,863.

At Tuesday night’s public hearing Hazel commended the town’s boards and officials for their part in crafting a budget that, he said, “maintains the commitments made by the town with the lowest possible impact on residents.”

With the limited public feedback on the budget, Hazel said he feels confident that this is a budget that residents consider reasonable. “I think the budget is good,” he said. “It shows the level of work that went into it and hasn’t elicited public controversy.”

Taxpayers will have a final say on the budget on May 6, when the town will hold a referendum. Voting will take place at Hebron Elementary School, 92 Church St. (Route 85), from 6 a.m.-8 p.m. Copies of the 2008-09 fiscal year budget are available at Town Hall, 15 Gilead St.

## East Hampton Police News

3/30 — Douglas Wagner, 41, of 82 Main St., was arrested for operating under suspension, operating an unregistered motor vehicle and passing on the right, East Hampton Police said.

3/30 — Christina Dutour, 37, of 82 Main St., was arrested for operating without insurance, police said.

4/5 — Brian Krajewski, 33, of 145 Hog Hill Rd., was arrested for operating under the influence of alcohol, operating under suspension, possession of drug paraphernalia and possession of narcotics, police said.

4/6 — Michael J. Naud, 19, of 124 Murray St., Middletown, was arrested for second-degree larceny and operating a motor vehicle without a license, police said.

4/7 — Seth Hall, 17, of 126 Bear Swamp Rd., and April Varricchio, 51 of 12 Lake Rd., Marlborough, were involved in a two-vehicle accident at the intersection of Route 66 and Laurel Glen Drive, police said. Hall was issued

a ticket for following too closely, according to police.

4/7 — Robert A. Hawkins, 25, of 39 Henry Ln., Higganum, was arrested for operating under suspension and failure to have brake lights, police said.

4/8 — Eric Q. Roise, 43, of 1 Mitchell Ln., Deep River, and Linda M. Dadario, 38, of 12 Heritage Brook Rd., East Haddam, were arrested for speeding, police said.

4/8 — Gerald A. Yuska, 26, of 34 So. Stony Brook Dr., Marlborough, was issued a ticket for traveling fast and failure to obey a stop sign, police said.

4/11 — Joseph J. Epstein, 18, of 17 Sherry Dr., was arrested for possession of marijuana, police said.

4/13 — Angel L. Santos, 41, of 34 East High St., was arrested for disorderly conduct, interfering/resisting arrest and assaulting a police office, police said.

## Portland Police News

4/5 — Patrick D. March, 19, of 20 Flanders River Rd., Coventry, was charged with reckless driving and engaging police officer in pursuit, Portland Police said.

4/9 — A 17-year-old male was arrested on charges of third-degree criminal mischief, police said.

4/10 — Kelly Mosebach, 21, of 15 Rising Trail, Middletown, was charged with third-degree criminal mischief, police said.

4/11 — Peter Graham, 20, of 12 Oak Hill Rd., Rocky Hill, was charged with third-degree criminal mischief, police said.

# Obituaries

## East Hampton

### Kathleen P. Tierney

Kathleen Patricia (Cross) Tierney, 78, of Glastonbury, and Weekapaug, RI, passed away peacefully on Sunday, April 13, 2008 into eternal life with our Lord.

Kathleen was the daughter of the late William J. and Marie R. (O'Dea) Cross. She was born in Paterson, NJ on Jan. 16, 1930. She was a graduate of St. John's Cathedral High School, Paterson, NJ and Burrough's Business School, Newark, NJ. The joy of her life was being a devoted wife and mother, dedicated to raising their eight children and welcoming into her life 21 grandchildren. In her leisure time, Kathleen enjoyed golf, gardening, bowling, swimming at the beach and gathering with her family and close friends.

She is survived by her devoted husband of 58 years, Arthur R. Tierney of Glastonbury; her daughter, Kathleen A. Tierney of Glastonbury; grandchildren Justin Pele (predeceased) and Sean Pele and their father Thomas Pele; her daughter, Susan M. Gates and her husband Spencer Gates of East Hampton; grandchildren Ryan Gates and his wife Erica, and Katelyn Gates; her daughter MaryAnn Tierney (predeceased); grandchildren Vincent and Alexandra Ustach and their father, Daniel Ustach; her daughter, Carol T. Butler and her husband Walter Butler, Jr. of East Hampton; grandchildren Colleen and Christine Butler; her daughter, Patricia A. Toller and her husband Robert Toller of Portland; grandchildren Brendan and Erin Toller; her daughter, Sharon M. Tierney of Glastonbury; grandchildren Cameron and Andrew Fontana and their father Joseph Fontana; her son, Robert J. Tierney and wife Susan of Glastonbury; grandchildren Taylor, Kelly, Casey and Kevin Tierney; and her son, Michael J. Tierney and wife Sandra of Glastonbury; granddaughter Kiernan and grandchildren Alicia, Shannon, Kara, Amanda and their mother, Michelle DeMarco. She is also survived by her beloved sister-in-law, Clare Tierney of Clifton, NJ and brother-in-law Edward McCann of Stuart, FL. She is also survived by many cousins, nieces, nephews and their children.

Kathleen was predeceased by her adored brother, William J. Cross of Clifton, NJ and her sister, Marie McCann of Stuart, FL and brother-in-law Edward J. Tierney of Clifton, NJ.

Our heartfelt gratitude is sent to Dr. William Vacek and the Emergency Room staff at Hartford Hospital. The family is truly grateful for the compassionate care that Kathleen and her family received during her stay at Glastonbury Healthcare Center.

A celebratory Mass was to be held today, Friday, April 18, at noon at St. Paul RC Church, 2577 Main St., Glastonbury. Burial will be at the convenience of the family. Farley-Sullivan Funeral Home has been entrusted with the arrangements. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations can be made in Kathleen's memory to either Intensive Education Academy, 840 N. Main St., West Hartford, CT 06117, or Tabor House I & II, 67 Brownell Ave., Hartford, CT 06106.

## East Hampton

### Gregory L. Franklin

Gregory L. Franklin, 55, of East Hampton, passed away Sunday, April 13, at Bristol Hospital in Bristol. Greg was born Nov. 19, 1952, in Wilmington, NC, the son of the late Lloyd and Rita (Cavanaugh) Franklin. He was employed as a telecommunication technician for AT&T for 29 years.

In addition to gardening Greg enjoyed traveling and exploring various places around the world. He was dedicated to his family, cataloguing the Franklin ancestral genealogy going back many generations. He was president of the Franklin/Guiler family reunion held annually in Ohio. Greg's love for life and gentle nature will be missed by all.

He is survived by his brothers Lloyd Franklin of Waterford, and Michael Franklin of Old Lyme; a sister Marybeth Foley of Clinton; nieces Kate Foley and Julia Franklin and nephews, Dan Foley, Clint and Van Franklin; and his best friend and travel companion in life, Paul Grabulis.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated Thursday, April 17, in St. Mary Star of the Sea Church, 10 Huntington St., New London. Calling hours were Wednesday, April 16, at the Thomas L. Neilan & Sons East Lyme Funeral Home, 48 Grand St., Niantic. Donations in his memory may be made to: St. Mary Star of the Sea Church, 10 Huntington St., New London, CT 06320 or a charity of the donor's choice. For directions or to sign Greg's online guestbook, visit [www.neilanfuneralhome.com](http://www.neilanfuneralhome.com).

## East Hampton

### Catherine Scott Hogan

Catherine Scott (Kinsella) Hogan, of Middle Haddam, passed away peacefully Friday, April 11, with her family by her side. She was born in Hartford on Jan. 22, 1921, the daughter of the late George F. Kinsella and his wife Dorothea (Mooney) Kinsella. Catherine was predeceased by her husband John K. Hogan, her son William Patrick Hogan, her daughter Dorothea Coles, and her sister Mary Ann Kinsella.

"Kay" as she was so fondly called by her family and friends attended local schools graduating from Buckley High School and St. Joseph's College. Catherine was a teacher at the old Southwest School now the Eleanor B. Kennelly School until her enlistment in the United States Marine Corps in 1943. Following her commissioning as a 2nd Lieutenant, Kay remained on duty until the end of World War II. She also met and married her husband Marine Captain John K. Hogan at the base Chapel in San Diego, CA. Following her marriage and subsequent discharge from the Marine Corps she accompanied her husband on his 24-year career in the Marine Corps.

Beginning at Yale University they traveled extensively throughout the world with postings in London, England and Port Leyauty, French Morocco. Upon retirement Kay's only desire was to return to her native Connecticut, where they settled in East Hampton and later Middle Haddam. Fascinated by antiques, she became an expert in Early American furniture and was a licensed dealer. Though totally absorbed with business and a large family, she found time to volunteer her services as a board member and past president of the Middle Haddam Historic District Commission.

Catherine is survived by her sons John S. Hogan and Sean O. Hogan and their wives, her brothers Richard, James H., and George B. Kinsella and their wives, her grandchildren Shannon Hogan Galinson, Sarah Sheridan, Scott, Ian, Kelly and Alysia Hogan. She also leaves three great grandchildren McGuinness, O'Neil, and Lakeland Galinson, and a host of nephews and nieces to mourn her loss. Aunt Kay will be missed by all.

Funeral services were held Wednesday, April 16, at 10 a.m. in the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton. Interment will take place in Arlington National Cemetery in Arlington VA, along side her husband John and their son Bill. Friends called at the Spencer Funeral Home on Tuesday evening from 6-8 p.m. To leave online condolences or for directions visit [www.spencerfuneralhomeinc.com](http://www.spencerfuneralhomeinc.com).

## Hebron

### Ralph Walter Lankton

Ralph Walter Lankton, 78, of Hebron and formerly of Ridgefield, beloved husband of Joan (Putnam) Lankton, passed away peacefully Thursday, April 10, at Manchester Memorial Hospital after a long and courageous battle with cancer. He was born Nov. 6, 1929, in Detroit, MI, son of the late Walter and Martha (Felzke) Lankton and was a resident of Hebron for 18 years. He was a U.S. Navy Veteran, serving during the Korean War.

Ralph earned his bachelor's degree from Michigan State University and his master's degree from the University of Buffalo. He retired in 1990 after many years with the Dupont Corporation. Mr. Lankton was an active member of South United Methodist Church in Manchester, where he served on several committees and especially enjoyed singing in the church choir and helping with the hospital visitation program. He had a great interest and dedication for the Boy Scouts of America, serving in many capacities. He was also an avid golfer, who enjoyed playing with his many friends.

He was the loving and dedicated father of three sons, Stephen R. Lankton and his wife Madelyn of Hebron, Bradley D. Lankton of Hartford, and Craig Freddie Lankton and his wife Karen of Tolland. He was grandfather of Eric Lankton and Benjamin Lankton both of Hebron and Kyle Lankton of Tolland. He also leaves two brothers, Robert Lankton and his wife Maude of Canton, MI, and Kenneth E. Lankton of Glencoe, IL, and several nieces and nephews. Ralph was predeceased by a brother John Lankton.

A memorial service will be held Saturday, May 3, at 10:30 a.m. at South United Methodist Church, 1226 Main St., Manchester. Burial will be private in the New Hebron Cemetery in Hebron. There are no calling hours. The Holmes Funeral Home, 400 Main St., Manchester has care of arrangements. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the John DeQuattro Community Cancer Center, 71-A Haynes St., Manchester, CT 06040 or to the South United Methodist Church Memorial Fund, 1226 Main St., Manchester, CT. 06040.

## Marlborough

### Anthony P. Rogers

Sunrise- Jan. 18, 1926- Bristol; Sunset- April 8, 2008- Marlborough.

Tony passed away quietly and peacefully at Liberty Specialty Care Center, Colchester, with his family gathered at his side. He was born the fourth of six children to George (Razanauskas) Rogers and Mary (Piorowski) Rogers, and was the last remaining of their six children. During World War II he served with the Seabees of the U.S. Navy in the Pacific Theater having enlisted at the age of 17. A few years after the war ended, he settled in the Rockville-Vernon area where he became well known as a Restaurateur having owned and operated the Old Market Square Café, the Vernon Steak House and the Super Sub Shop. He was a member of most of the local social clubs as well as the VFW, the Legion, the Elks and the Moose clubs. Tony was also well known in Harness Racing circles having owned and raced several champion prize winning Pacer and Trotter horses.

After his marriage to Caroline in 1978, he began his residence in Marlborough. Soon after his retirement in 1988 he became a part-time driver for the Marlborough Senior and Disabled Van and was well known in that capacity for several years. Tony had traveled extensively and enjoyed "seeing the world." He was an avid sports fan, particularly of the NY Yankees and UConn Women's Basketball.

He leaves to mourn his wife Caroline Reagan Rogers, a stepson Brian J. Reagan and his wife Lisa, a step-daughter Maureen R. Reagan, his "other daughter" Donna, a grandson and his wife John and Yvette Rogers of Florida, granddaughter Chelsea Rogers and a great granddaughter, Morgan. He also leaves many nieces and nephews who loved their "Uncle Tony." A son John G. Rogers, a granddaughter Cindy and a grandson Joshua predeceased him. The family wishes to extend to the kind, caring and compassionate staff at "Liberty" their appreciation and very sincere thanks. There will be no calling hours. Burial will be in the Marlborough Cemetery and will be private with just immediate family attending. These were his wishes.

Tony was a kind, gentle and loving man and will be missed unendingly. As a tribute to his memory and his love of his pets, friends and relatives are encouraged to donate to an animal humane or rescue group of their choice. Farewell dear one, until we meet again. May the angels guide you swiftly to paradise. The Spencer Funeral Home 112 Main St. East Hampton has care of the arrangements. To leave online condolences visit [www.spencerfuneralhomeinc.com](http://www.spencerfuneralhomeinc.com).

## Portland

### Ellen E. Ryan Curley

Ellen E. "Betty" Ryan Curley, 75, of Guernsey Circle, Portland, passed away unexpectedly on Wednesday, April 9, in her home. She was the wife of the late Donald S. Curley, Sr. Born in Tewksbury, MA, May 21, 1932, a daughter of the late George and Alice O'Brien Ryan, she was a long time Portland resident. A real estate broker, she was the proprietor of Curley Real Estate Associates for over 40 years. She sold hundreds of houses in Middlesex County and made many dear friends as a result.

She was active in many professional organizations including the Soroptomists, the Middlesex Chamber of Commerce and the Brownstone Quorum. She was very interested in community projects and was a constant champion for the town of Portland. She was a parishioner of the Church of Saint Mary and was a member of the Ladies Guild. She was a member of St. Luke's Board of Managers for 25 years. She dearly loved to make gourmet pies and never met a dessert she didn't like - especially chocolate. Betty was the eternal optimist. She was happiest sitting on the beach, talking and laughing with her friends and taking a swim in Great Hill Lake.

Betty is survived by her sons, Donald S. Curley, Jr., and his wife Nelly and James M. Curley, all of Portland; her grandchildren Ryan Curley, Emily Curley, Nick Hetzel, Holley Hetzel, and Shannon Curley; her daughter-in-law Joanne Curley of Portland; her nieces Barbara Grady of Dracut, MA, and Kathleen Scomis of Lowell, MA; and her nephew Kevin Burns of Litchfield, NH. She was predeceased by her daughter Mary Ellen Hetzel and her sister Ann Burns.

Her family received relatives and friends in the Portland Memorial Funeral Home 231 Main St., Portland, Monday, April 14. Funeral services were held Tuesday, April 15, from the Portland Memorial Funeral home, and in the Church of Saint Mary for a Mass of Christian Burial. Interment will follow in St. Mary Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, gifts in Betty's memory may be sent to the Portland Volunteer Fire Department, Company 3, P.O. Box 571, Portland, CT 06480 or to the Church of Saint Mary, 51 Freestone Ave., Portland, CT 06480.

## Colchester

### Rose D'Alfonso

Rose D'Alfonso, 98, wife of the late Dominick D'Alfonso of Colchester, passed away on Monday, April 14, at the Harrington Court Genesis Elder Care Center in Colchester. She was born Nov. 1, 1909, daughter of the late Sabato and Victoria DeTorre DiRoma. Surviving are two daughters, Rose Viti of Cocoa Beach, FL, and Vicki Campbell of Colchester; eight grandchildren, Kathleen Standish, Nancy LaFlamme, Patricia Rutka, Ronald Clark, all of Colchester, Robert Derda of Ledyard, Deborah Bochain of Lebanon and Robert Clark of Mystic; 14 great-grandchildren, two great-great grandchildren and numerous nieces and nephews. Rose was predeceased by a daughter, Gloria, a granddaughter, Vicki Clark Turner, four brothers and seven sisters.

Funeral services were to be held today, Friday, April 18, at 10 a.m. from the Belmont Funeral Home, 144 South Main St., Colchester, followed by an 11 a.m. Mass of Christian Burial at St. Andrew's Catholic Church on Norwich Avenue, Colchester. Burial to follow in St. Joseph Cemetery. Memorial donations may be made to either Harrington Court Genesis Elder Health Care 59 Harrington Court, Colchester, CT 06415 or to Hospice Southeastern CT 227 Dunham Street, Norwich, CT 06360 in her memory.

## East Hampton

### Mike Stark

LTC Mike Stark, US Army (Ret.), July 31, 1946 - April 4, 2008. Resident of East Hampton and Tucson, AZ.

Those of us who knew Mike Stark, better known as "the Colonel" or "Falcon 6," are not feeling sorry for him or his family as much as we are feeling sorry for ourselves, because we will no longer share his extraordinary company. That is perhaps the best indication of the quality life, one that gave so much pleasure to others. Mike was an honorable man of substance, a man with an insatiable curiosity, and a man with a passion for life.

He was an active member of East Hampton's VFW Post 5095 Color Guard. His spirit lives on in the efforts he put into the acquisition and restoration of the Cobra helicopter on display at the Post Home and into the construction of the Garden of Honor in which the helicopter is now located. A patriot and a warrior, Mike was a man who knew first-hand the true cost of freedom; he was proud to have served his country as a United States Army Aviator. A highly-decorated professional soldier, he saw combat as helicopter gunship pilot in Vietnam and went on to a distinguished military career, retiring as a Lieutenant Colonel.

He is survived by his two sons, John and Jason; his loving wife, Cindy; his sister Susie and brother-in-law, Steve Young; his brother, Robert; and sister, Jayne. Mike's remarkable life will be remembered by everyone who ever met him, and he will be greatly missed by all who knew him across the USA. A service will be held on Memorial Day weekend at VFW Post 5095 in East Hampton; details to be announced. In celebration of Mike's life, donations may be made to: The Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 5095, Cobra Fund, North Maple Street, East Hampton, CT 06424.

