

RIVEREAST

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More than 200 firefighters from across the state responded to M&J Auto Recycling Inc. in Colchester last Friday, June 13. Smoke from the blaze could be seen as far west as New Haven. Photo by Robert Ladd.

Major Fire Erupts at Colchester Auto Recycling Plant

by Kristina Histen

It took nearly six hours and over 200 firefighters to tame the wild beast of a fire that erupted in Colchester last Friday morning, June 13.

Because it was a clear, wind-free day, the thick black smoke caused by the burning of hydro-carbons, fuel and tires could be seen from Route 20 in Windsor, down south in New London and Groton and as far west as New Haven.

According to town Fire Marshal Reed Gustafson, a car allegedly fell off a lift at M&J Auto Recycling Inc. on 355 New London Rd., and knocked over a 55-gallon drum of waste gasoline that came in contact with an ignition source and started the fire. Two employees working on the vehicle were injured. Published reports have identified the men as Justin Corso, 21, and Aaron Palmer, 22. Corso was transported to Backus Hospital ALS and then flown by Life Star to the burn unit at Bridgeport Hospital with third-degree burns, Colchester Hayward Fire Department firefighter Don Lee said, and Palmer was transported to Marlborough Clinic BLS with minor burns.

The fire marshal along with the U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety & Health Administration is still investigating the fire. No conclusion has yet to be made in a final report and it will take several weeks.

The call came in to the Colchester Hayward Fire Department around 10:26 a.m., Lee said. When they first arrived at the

scene, "it was very chaotic," Lee said. "Our first concern was for the workers there."

More than 43 other fire departments from the counties of Hartford, New London, Tolland, Windham and Middlesex responded to the scene, Lee said. In addition, 19 assisting agencies were at the site, including the local police department, the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, the Public Health Department and the First Selectman's office. The Salvation Army Canteen Units out of Hartford and Groton were there to supply food and water in order to keep the firefighters going. The American Ambulance Rehabilitation Trailer screened every firefighter in 45-minute increments to check them medically and take their blood pressure and pulses. The firefighters were also given lots of fluids and the opportunity to rest in between shifts.

Because it was a fuel-based fire, Lee said the only thing able to put it out was actual foam. Specialized foam trailers came from Hartford, Norwich, Wethersfield and Willington to help out with the scene. Several other departments, like Niantic and East Lyme, provided coverage to back up the other departments on site. The Hebron and East Hampton ambulances staffed up and moved to Colchester, to be on standby in case of any other medical emergencies in town.

After the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, a lot of preparing and planning for a statewide reasonable response plan has

been practiced and utilized, Lee said. "This is probably the largest move-ups and activation of resources in the state," Lee said. "This instance will probably be talked about for the next several months because it was an example of how all our agencies can come together and work post-9/11. This is one of the first big incidents that we have had in our area and we utilized task forces.

"All these departments came to Colchester to lend assistance," Lee continued. "The cooperation was absolutely phenomenal. It proves the system we have here and put in place statewide works. There were comments made about the firefighters working right alongside the volunteers from this region like 'you would never have known you guys never met before.' It was seamless, effortless and well-done."

Because of the fire at M&J Auto Recycling, which is located directly behind the M&J Bus terminal, certain precautions were taken to ensure the safety of all students, Superintendent of Schools Karen Loisel said in a press release last Friday. Afternoon kindergarten was canceled while morning kindergarten students were fed lunch and kept an additional hour and a half, then taken to their regular drop-off by buses. Bus lists were used to identify students who reside on roads that were blocked by firefighting equipment, and bus drivers were notified of alternate routes to

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use in driving the students to their destination. All students were kept inside for recess and physical education and students on an in-town walking field trip were driven back to school.

M&J worked "with great efficiency" with Colchester Police to get buses off the lot so that the schools could dismiss students at the regular time that afternoon, Loiselle said. The Colchester Health Department also indicated that people living in the vicinity of the fire should have kept their children inside to reduce the risk of respiratory irritation due to smoke exposure.

As there were no fire hydrants in the area of the fire, responders had to draft water by the use of tankers, the First Selectman's Office said in a press release last Friday. Therefore, because of the result of a significant water requirement associated with the fire, and a reduced capability to pump water during plant reconstruction, a mandatory water conservation order was issued. A mandatory water conservation order meant that use of water could only be used for essential needs; no outdoor water use was allowed.

By the end of the day last Friday, the order was modified to a voluntary water use restriction that was issued by the Colchester Public Water System. As of this Thursday, it is still in effect until further notice. A voluntary water use restriction includes use of water for essential use only. Outdoor use should be limited to essential use only (such as watering of food gardens). Some pressure reduction in higher elevation properties may be noticed.

The fire was contained at 1:50 p.m. last Friday because it was "pretty much surrounded,"



Photo by Robert Ladd

Lee said. It was declared under control at 4:30 p.m. and Fire Chief Walter Cox gave the all clear at 9:30 that night. Route 85 was shut down until the fire was declared under control, Lee said. Throughout the day, there were approximately 200 to 220 firefighters on scene, with 55 of them from the Colchester Hayward Fire Department.

"This was the first [major fire] in our neck of the woods," Lee said, "and everyone just came together seamlessly. It was just awesome."

Lightning Prediction System Removed in Colchester

by Kristina Histen

After years of crying wolf, the lightning prediction system at the Recreation Complex on Old Hebron Road has been taken down to avoid dangerous consequences in the future.

"Time and time again Mother Nature proves that she is smarter than us," Parks and Recreation Director Jason Cohen said in a press release. "While science gets close to figuring out many of her mysteries, she is always one step ahead."

About five or six years ago, the system was purchased to alert park visitors when the weather conditions could cause lightning. It would give them the opportunity to leave the complex before even seeing lightning or hearing a clap of thunder, Cohen said.

However, the system continued to give off what appeared to be false positives and negatives. The warning horns would go off, yet lightning would not arrive, he said. On other occasions, lightning would move in but the horn never would have sounded. Therefore, some people would hear the horn and ignore it, putting themselves in possible danger. In other instances, even when people saw lightning and heard the thunder, they would remain on site since they hadn't heard a warning horn, he said.

"It started to create more of a safety hazard of having it there because people were relying on it too much rather than using their own common sense," Cohen said Tuesday.

As a result, the town decided to take the system down last week to avoid any false senses of security, Cohen said. Aside from maintenance issues, this is the first time the system has been taken down without the intent of putting it back up, Cohen said. It was not meant to be the primary decision-maker as to whether people should stay on the fields, as it was just a predictor and not a detector, Cohen said. It was

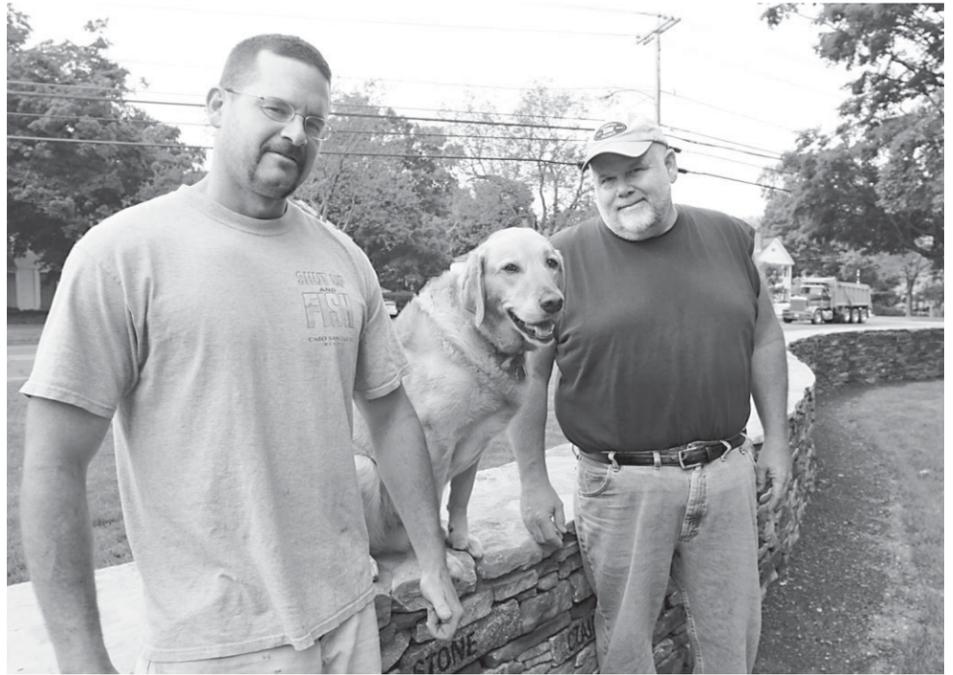
supposed to be used only as extra backup and not as the one point of reference. "Just because you have an airbag in your car, [it] doesn't mean you should stop wearing your seatbelt," Cohen said.

As of now, there are no plans on putting the system back up, Cohen said. If it was to go back up in the future, it would only be if the town knew there wouldn't be any mechanical failures in its operation and if they were comfortable enough with the community using it properly as backup, and not as a primary education piece, he said.

The league has been notified, including all participants, coaches and volunteers, Cohen said. The Parks and Recreation Department reminds people to take all safety precautions during a lightning storm.

According to the National Lightning Safety Institute, Cohen said in the press release, the following precautions should be taken when outdoors and lightning or thunder is first seen or heard: avoid water; avoid the high ground; avoid open spaces; and avoid all metal objects including electric wires, fences, machinery, motors, power tools, etc. Unsafe places include underneath canopies, small picnic or rain shelters and/or near trees. Where possible, find shelter in a substantial building or in a fully enclosed metal vehicle such as a car, truck or van with the windows completely shut.

If lightning is striking nearby when you are outside, you should: crouch down and put feet together; place hands over ears to minimize hearing damage from thunder; and avoid proximity (minimum of 15 feet) to other people. It is recommended to suspend activity for 30 minutes after the last observed lightning or thunder.



Dan Garrison (left), yellow Labrador retriever Gus, and Tom Clark stand by the new commemorative stone wall in the center of Hebron. The men donated their time as professional stone masons to build the stone wall, which features 300 granite stones etched with various Hebron residents' names.

New Stone Wall Helps Mark Hebron's 300th Birthday

by Sarah McCoy

Stone walls have been a part of Hebron's history almost as long as the town has been in existence. So it's apropos that the town's newest stone wall commemorate the town's 300th birthday.

Earlier this month Tom Clark, Dan Garrison, and their side-kick Gus, a yellow Labrador retriever, finished a commemorative stone-wall along Route 66 in the center of Hebron. Clark and Garrison are the owners and operators of Stonewalls by Tom Clarks and Dan Garrison. The wall is made of mostly fieldstone with 300 granite stones sporting the names of various Hebron families.

The 300th Celebration Committee sold these stones last year as a fundraiser, with names under six letters costing \$30 and longer names costing \$50. The committee raised \$12,000 to be put towards defraying the cost of the 300th Celebration events.

Clark and Garrison, both lifelong Hebron residents and professional stone masons, donated their time to complete the project and fellow Hebron resident David Podell volunteered to etch the names into the granite blocks. "When we heard about the Hebron Rocks theme and the idea for the stone wall, it sounded like [the 300th Committee] needed a little help," Clark said of the decision to volunteer his time. "It's just a nice thing for the community."

All told, Clark and Garrison worked on the wall for 12 days. Clark estimated that the wall is valued at \$25,000, but all the 300th Committee paid for was the stone.

The idea for the stone wall came from a conversation between Podell and Gilead Congregation Church pastor Denise Esslinger. At the time Podell, whose wife Judy serves on the 300th Committee, was thinking about constructing a commemorative walkway. Esslinger suggested a stone wall as it was more "New Englandy," Podell agreed.

Hebron Town Planner Mike O'Leary and town engineer Tom Fenton worked to plan the

wall and the Public Works Department created a foundation for it. "It's been a great example of how people in the community come together," Judy Podell said. "A lot of people were involved."

David Podell, who is a professional industrial designer, spent over 150 hours cutting stencils, sandblasting and painting names onto the granite stones. The multiple step process left him with a broken finger, but Podell remains proud of his work and happy to have contributed.

The stone wall runs approximately 100 feet in between the First Congregational Church and local businesses Skintology and Hebron Sporting Goods. It's about two feet high and made through an intricate process where virtually every stone is hand-chipped to fit perfectly. "It should be there forever," Clark said. "Certainly longer than we'll be here."

The wall is more than just a nice lawn accessory. It will now be a part of Hebron's history. One day, while Clark and Garrison were out assembling the wall, a woman came up asking to take a photo of the stone that had her name on it, as she was leaving Hebron to move to Virginia.

"Dan told her it wasn't in yet, but if she waited for a minute, he would do it next," Clark said. "He put it in and she started crying. It was very emotional for her to see her name as part of Hebron forever."

Apparently more people want that same feeling. The 300th Committee sold out of stones right around the new year, however, as residents saw the construction of the wall at the end of May and beginning of June, they began phoning the Hebron Town Office Building asking how they, too, could be a part of it. "There must have been 50 to 100 calls after it was too late," Judy Podell said.

Clark seems satisfied with the finished product. "In today's age of manufactured products, stone walls are something special," he said.

Andover Emergency Meeting May Have Violated FOI

by Sarah McCoy

The Board of Selectmen this week set the town's mill rate for the 2008-09 fiscal year – but not before apparently violating the state's Freedom of Information Act.

On Monday afternoon at 1:15 p.m., First Selectman Bob Burbank posted an agenda for an "Emergency Meeting" of the Board of Selectmen (BOS), to be held just two and half hours later. The sole item on that agenda was to set the town's mill rate.

Present at the meeting were Burbank and selectmen Jay Linddy and Elaine Buchardt. There were no members of the public present.

By a vote of 2-1, with Linddy dissenting, the BOS approved the town's mill rate for the upcoming fiscal year at 27.6 mills. This represents a 1.3 mill increase from last year and is consistent with the proposed 2008-09 budget, which residents will vote on next Tuesday.

Burbank said the meeting was called in response to a request by the town's Tax Collector. "We were advised by the Tax Collector that we needed to set the mill rate in order to get the people who prepare our tax bills the information they need to print and send those bills prior to the July 1 deadline," he said.

If the budget fails at referendum next Tuesday and the Board of Finance is forced to make further cuts, therefore reducing the mill rate, then the extra taxes collected would be reflected in the end of the year's budget and be returned to residents, Burbank said.

While he doesn't deny the need for the meeting, Freedom of Information Act Public Education Officer Tom Hennick said he believes the town violated the FOI Act by holding Monday's meeting.

"I would argue that setting the mill rate is not a valid reason for holding an emergency meeting," Hennick said. "Man-made emergencies, like forgetting to properly notice a meeting and then holding an Emergency Meeting instead, tend not to hold water with the FOI Commission."

Rather, according to Hennick, the town of Andover should have noticed the meeting as a Special Meeting, giving residents at least 24 hours of notification.

If a formal FOI complaint is filed against the Town of Andover, the town could face possible fines, the actions of the meeting nulled, or a warning from the FOI Commission.

East Hampton Resident Awarded Money After Suing Police

by Michael McCoy

Five years after a run-in with the East Hampton police, a federal jury awarded Alan Clark more than \$20,000 – though the amount is but a sliver of what he initially sought.

According to a lawsuit filed by Clark's attorney, Brian Woolf, in August 2005, Clark and his then-wife Stephanie had an altercation at their 17 Markham Road home around Sept. 13, 2003. Eventually, the argument led to Stephanie's leaving the residence.

The suit alleged that Stephanie Clark later contacted the East Hampton Police Department to request police to escort her back to the home, so she could gather some personal items. She eventually returned with officers Tim Dowty and Kevin Wilcox.

The suit said Wilcox questioned Clark about the argument, while "asking him the same questions again and again and repeatedly pushing into him."

According to the lawsuit, "The intensive badgering by police officer Wilcox caused the plaintiff, Alan P. Clark, to break down in tears and walk, then run, to the cow pasture situated on the property after being informed by the police officers that he was not under arrest."

The suit alleged that Dowty and Wilcox chased Clark and, "without justification, both officers drew their guns and aimed them towards the plaintiff." The suit said Officer Michael Fitzpatrick joined the duo and all three proceeded to spray Clark with pepper spray and beat his arms and legs, "forcing him to the ground."

Clark was then handcuffed and beaten on the head by Wilcox with a metal flashlight, "causing severe wounds," the lawsuit alleged. According to the suit, Clark was placed in a police cruiser, which remained on the scene for about an hour before he was taken to the Marlborough Medical Center, where 14 staples were necessary to "close the wounds."

Clark was then arrested and charged with two counts of second-degree threatening, two counts of interfering with a police officer and disorderly conduct. The suit said all charges were "subsequently nulled and then dismissed" in Middletown Superior Court, according to the lawsuit.

The lawsuit alleged that Clark "sustained personal injuries, some or all of which may be permanent in nature..." These included

"severe wounds" to his scalp and "contusions to his arms, legs and torso," and "emotional distress and psychological pain and suffering." The suit also alleged that, "Due to said personal injuries, the plaintiff was found to miss time from work and engage in psychological therapy."

The suit was filed "to redress the excessive and unreasonable use of force against the plaintiff, Alan Clark, by defendant Timothy Dowty, Michael Fitzpatrick and Kevin Wilcox, all police officers of the East Hampton Police Department, in violation of plaintiff's rights... and the deprivation of plaintiff's liberty without due process of law," according to the lawsuit. In the suit, Clark also alleged claims of "assault and battery; recklessness and maliciousness; negligent infliction of emotional distress; and intentional infliction of emotional distress."

Clark also alleged East Hampton Police Chief Matthew Reimondo and the town "failed to promulgate and enforce appropriate guidelines, regulations, policies, practices, procedures or customs regarding the use of force against citizens by East Hampton police officers, thereby causing the plaintiff to be unlawfully deprived of his Constitutional rights."

Clark also accused Reimondo of failing or refusing to "adequately train East Hampton police officers in the performance of their duties and conduct toward persons." The suit also accused Reimondo, as well as the town, of failing or refusing to "take appropriate disciplinary action against" the officers in question.

Clark sought monetary damages of "not less than" \$1 million, the lawsuit said, as well as "punitive damages," "attorney's fees and costs," "indemnification pursuant to Conn. Gen. Stat. Section 7-465," and "such other relief in law or equity as the Court may deem appropriate."

The lawsuit went to trial, with the case heard at the United States District Court in Bridgeport and presided over by Warren Eginton. A trial started on April 21 and the jury reached a decision on April 24. The jury ordered Wilcox to pay \$11,032.50 and Dowty \$16,548.75.

Reimondo declined to comment. As of press time, Woolf, town attorney Elliot Spector and Clark did not return phone calls to the *Rivereast*.

Andover Man Killed in Hebron Motorcycle Accident

by Sarah McCoy

An Andover resident died last Thursday after the motorcycle he was driving collided with a car along Route 85, state police said.

Mark Bergeron, 47, of 45 Windrush Ln., died at Hartford Hospital due to injuries he sustained in the crash, police said. Bergeron was traveling southbound along Route 85 just after 9:15 a.m. when he was struck by Kellie Kupica, 47, of 28 Chapin Ave., Rocky Hill, police said. According to police, Kupica was attempting to make a left hand turn onto Brian Drive from the northbound side of Route 85.

Kupica was transported to Middlesex Hospital in Marlborough, police said, and released later that day.

Bergeron was transported to Hartford Hospital via Life Star Helicopter where he was pronounced dead, police said.

Following the crash, state police closed Route 85 in both directions to allow for investigators to examine the scene. The road was reopened just after noon, police said. The case is still open and under investigation by the State Police from the Troop K barracks in Colchester.

Bergeron is survived by his wife of one year and nine months, Karen (Inglis) Bergeron. He was born in Hartford and spent most of his life in Hebron, moving to Andover in 2006. He graduated from RHAM High School and currently worked as the manager for the Manchester Sam's Club.

In his free time, Bergeron was a huge sports fan. He loved the Red Sox, Celtics, and Patriots. He loved to watch and play golf, even working part-time at Tallwood Country Club because he loved the sport.

Karen Bergeron described her late husband



Mark and Karen Bergeron, shown on their wedding day in 2006.

as a "funny, goofy guy. Anybody he met, whether it was a friend he's known for years or a waiter at a restaurant, he always had them laughing."

Bergeron was a stepfather to Jeffrey and Courtney Fazzino. "He loved them as if they were his own," Karen Bergeron said of her husband's relationship with her children. An attentive stepfather, he was genuinely interested in the lives of his stepchildren, she said.

Funeral services were held for Bergeron on Monday, June 15, followed by a burial at East Cemetery in Manchester. His full obituary runs this week on page 29.

Colchester Police News

6/11-Johnny Little Jr., 20, of 164 Jail Hill Rd., Haddam, was charged with interfering with an officer, DWI, reckless driving, failure to obey the signal of an officer, failure to stop at a stop sign, operation of an un-registered vehicle and failure to have insurance, state police said.

6/12-A juvenile was charged with threatening and breach of peace, state police said.

6/12-Craig Michaud, 37, of 49 Melanie Ln., was charged with DWI and failure to drive right, state police said.

6/13-Matthew Griffin, 21, was charged with six counts of weapons in vehicle, state police said.

6/4-Kesia Howard, 18, of 80 Park Rd., was charged with breach of peace and third-degree assault, state police said.

Marlborough Police News

6/14-Thomas Keaveny, 46, of 86 Park Ave., Wethersfield, was charged with operating under the influence of drugs/alcohol, state police said.

Andover Police News

6/14-Melanie Roberts, 42, of 513 Jackson St., Willimantic, was charged with DUI, evading, possession of marijuana and possession of cocaine, state police said.

Salem Police News

6/16-Michael Burke, 43, of 9 Witter Rd., was charged with second-degree failure to appear, state police said.

Portland Police News

6/8 — A 17-year-old male was arrested on charges of failure to respond to infraction, Portland Police said.

6/10 — Kelly Mosebach, 22, of 15 Rising Trail Ct., Middletown, was charged with second-degree failure to appear, police said.

6/13 — Eric J. Carrano, 31, of 1113 Portland-Cobalt Rd. No. 9 was charged with third-degree assault, violation of protective order and disorderly conduct, police said.

6/13 — Ashley Cannon, 20, of 1113 Portland-Cobalt Rd. No. 9, was charged with disorderly conduct and narcotics not kept in original container, police said.

Tight Finish for Bacon Valedictorian, Salutatorian

by Kristina Histen

It's been a close race to the top between Bacon Academy High School seniors Justin Morse and Mike Guarino.

For three years Mike was first in his class with Justin at a close second. But in their last year of high school, Justin took the lead as the Class of 2008's valedictorian, with Mike as the salutatorian. Justin said that his "more natural skills" in biology might have made the difference in the final run because Mike is more of a math person.

Either way, with Justin's grade point average of 104.9 out of 105 and Mike's at 104.787, it's hard to really distinguish a difference.

"It was pretty intense and the race got pretty close," Mike said. "But we're pretty cool about it. We both knew the difference in our grade point averages would be so small that we'd be like 'so what's the big difference between us?'"

The two guys were recognized at the Board of Education (BOE) meeting last Tuesday, June 10, along with fellow classmate and friend, Mary Jo Valenzuela. Mary Jo was the winner of the prestigious Gilbert Lamb essay award and will also speak at the Bacon Academy graduation. She placed 13th out of the 260 graduates with a "99 point something" average, she said. She will attend the University of Connecticut in the fall, double majoring in pre-journalism and political science.

At last week's meeting, Superintendent of Schools Karen Loiselle and Bacon Academy Principal Jeffrey Mathieu had nothing but proud faces and praises to share about their three very accomplished students.

Justin has also chosen to attend the University of Connecticut, to major in bio-medical engineering. Although he will live at school, he said it will be nice to be close to home. Both his father and cousin have graduated from UConn, and he has only heard "good things" about it. Not to mention, with all his scholarships he's received, it will be very affordable.

"It's just a good school quality-wise," he said, "and they have a really good engineering school."

Mike, on the other hand, has decided to travel a little bit west, to attend the University of Penn-

sylvania.

"I probably chose it because my brother goes there," Mike said, "but it's also a really good school and I like the area."

His brother is two years older, which will be beneficial in helping Mike adjust to his new setting. Mike also said it'll be nice to have him around any time he needs laundry money. He plans on majoring in mathematics, hoping to work in actuary, but he's not ruling out the option of becoming a high school math teacher either.

"They're both my really good friends," Valenzuela said. "I'm really happy for them. They both did really great and their GPAs are amazing."

Not only were the two guys able to maintain straight As throughout high school, both somehow managed to find even more time to participate in a number of extracurricular activities. The two were involved in concert band where Justin played the trumpet and Mike did percussion. Justin also played trumpet in the school jazz band where they placed second in their division at a jazz festival in Boston. About a year ago, he was involved in a ska band, which brought him into the local band scene. So now, he also plays guitar in a punk rock band with three of friends. Their band, Pancreas and the Checkered Rectum, has participated in school events and will even be playing at some graduation parties. In addition to all that, Justin still finds time to write songs and do some casual reading as well. He said it was hard finding time between getting his work done and doing what he enjoys.

Besides playing percussion in the band, Mike was also captain of the varsity cross-country team and the indoor and outdoor track teams. He ran the one and two mile, and although he didn't make it to states, he placed pretty well. What's more, Mike was the top point scorer for the math team this year. He admits there were a "couple of hairy moments" throughout it all, especially with all the stress of his junior year, but "you manage," he said. Some days were harder than others, like when there was a lack of sleep and he was running around with only four to five hours of it.



Mike Guarino, left, and Justin Morse are the Bacon Academy High School Class of 2008 valedictorian and salutatorian. Mike will attend the University of Pennsylvania in the fall to study mathematics, while Justin plans to attend the University of Connecticut to major in bio medical engineering. Both were recognized at the Board of Education meeting last Tuesday after participating in the concert band performance.

"I think the good thing was I didn't have a job," he said. "Talking to my friends, it was the biggest drain on time apart from school work."

Both admit that the best part about high school was the bonding experiences with their friends. Justin said the jazz band was pretty close and his "best memories" were jazz band related. Mike said he enjoyed the commodity of the friendships formed around the different groups and that the track team was "really tight." Justin said he is looking forward to graduating and meeting new people, and is more ready for it now than in the past. Mike is also glad and ready to graduate, but admits to being a little apprehensive about college.

"I never had to manage my own time before

on this brand of scale, but I think I'll get by," he said.

However, with their experiences in juggling a million things at once on a limited amount of sleep, it seems they'll both be plenty prepared for those many all-nighters they'll have to pull in college.

The Bacon Academy High School graduation ceremony will be held at 6 p.m. this Monday, June 23, on the John D. "Jack" Long track and field complex at the high school, 611 Norwich Ave. In the event of rain, the commencement will be moved to the high school gymnasium. Only six tickets are allowed per student if the graduation takes place outside, and only four if it is held inside.

Portland High School Graduates 79

by Michael McCoy

"Well, we made it! Can you believe it?"

These were not the words of a starry-eyed graduate, but the buoyant remarks of Superintendent of Schools Sally Doyen as she exited the Portland Town Hall parking lot Wednesday.

She was referring to the quick but inconveniently placed downpour that put the pace of the 2008 commencement ceremony in hyperdrive.

Commencement exercises for the Portland High School Class of 2008 began promptly at 6 p.m. on the green behind Town Hall, with the 79 students filing in to "Pomp and Circumstance."

Following the national anthem, class president Caroline Norton and vice president Sarah Phillips tag-teamed the welcoming address. Their light-hearted speech was delivered in the context of the year 2033, and anticipated what many of the students and almost the entire faculty would be doing.

In closing, Norton posed the questions, "Where do we come from? Who are we? Where are we going?" Figuring that the first two have already been answered, Norton said, "The third one, we must determine on our own."

She then announced the class gift, an automated external defibrillator, which can detect fatal cardiac arrhythmia.

As per tradition, the class was next commissioned to step down to the audience, row by row, and present a rose to their parents.

Salutatorian Sarah Harris then delivered her address. Speaking to the virtues of coming of age in a small community, Harris said, "Over the past four years, I have had the privilege of associating with nearly every teacher at Port-

land High School, whether in a class or through a co-curricular activity or club. The small learning community has also allowed me the opportunity to get to know all of my classmates. Over the past 13 years, I have shared a class with almost every one of them."

Sarah recalled her days at Valley View School when, in both the first and second grades, her class participated in a mock town program, designed to give them a taste of the business world and the workings of a community.

"One afternoon, I was 'pulled over' in the hallway by a girl from the Valley View town police department and was given a speeding ticket for jogging on my way to the bathroom," she said. "At the time, I was shocked and very upset. In the 11 years since, I have discussed the incident with the 'officer' and, yes, I have forgiven her."

She added that the patrolman would later become her best friend (and incidentally, the Class of 2008 valedictorian), Stephanie Tornaquindici.

Recalling a third-grade unit that involved first-hand study of the town, Harris said, "our teachers were encouraging us to learn about and take part in our community. We had, in a sense, 'graduated' from Valley View's protected, close-knit village and were being nudged out into Portland, a real, active community."

In conclusion, Sarah remarked, "Each of us will be entering an unknown world beyond the pretend town of Valley View, beyond the comfort of high school and even beyond the town of Portland. As we face this unknown, we can do so with the confidence that, thanks to our

teachers and parents, we are prepared."

As for Sarah's aforementioned best friend, Stephanie opened her remarks by snapping her fingers four times. "Did you catch that?" she asked. "Four moments...gone. Life is made of moments. *Those* were our high school years; over before we realized they had even begun. Each year faster than the previous."

Instead of marking an end, Stephanie suggested that by graduating, "We celebrate the beginning of Act Two on the stage of life."

Suggesting that moving on does not render these formative years "obsolete," Stephanie said, "From the Germanic Warrior Code to Bushido, the periodic table to Newton's laws, the nature of amoeba to the nuisance of homework, it has been a journey of self-discovery."

She concluded by saying, "In the words of Saint James, your life is a vapor that appears for a moment and then vanishes. Will your moment be wasted, or will it be lived with passion and purpose? It is up to you: how will your brief moment on life's stage be spent?"

By the time Doyen took the podium to present the Class of 2008, it was clear that she was somewhat anxious about the foreboding sky, explaining that she had always been told that the ingredients of a good speech are "keep it short, and make it funny." Though she was unwilling to promise the latter, she followed through on the former, as she simply presented the class and turned the microphone over to Board of Education Chairman Chris Hetrick.

"I usually don't like to preach or give advice here because I don't think I'm qualified," Hetrick said. "However, I have a special connection to this class. Also, there is not a guest

speaker here tonight to preach to you." (Hetrick's daughter, Grace, was one of the evening's graduates.)

"One of the most interesting definitions of success I've come across," Hetrick said, "comes from one of my favorite movies, *Big Fish*." Hetrick set up the scene where Ed Blum, nearing death, tries to explain to his son just why he is content with what he has done with his time on Earth. Quoting Blum, Hetrick said, "There's a time when a man needs to fight and a time when he needs to accept that his destiny is lost. The ship has sailed, and only a fool will continue. The truth is I've always been a fool."

With that, Hetrick accepted the Class of 2008, and the ceremony proceeded with the presentation of diplomas. However, the remainder of the ceremony was somewhat ragged, as the rain gradually started and the final box of diplomas was misplaced. By the time chorale director Brian Stevenson led the class in the singing of the alma mater, the rain was falling at a pretty good clip. The 79 students virtually darted down the middle of audience to the playing of the recession number.

Dave Kuzminski and his young crew of technicians scrambled to get electrical equipment packed up and out of the rain.

The whole graduation ceremony was wrapped up in about 45 minutes, prompting Portland High School Principal Andrea Lavery to laugh, "I want that to be noted as the fastest graduation in Connecticut."

In spite of the circumstances, or perhaps because of them, it is not likely to be an evening that any of the 79 will forget.

Graffiti Leads to Shutdown of Portland Playscape, Gazebo

by Michael McCoy

The town closed a playscape and gazebo last week due to vandalism – and rather strange vandalism at that.

The playscape, built several years ago with funds from the state as well as those raised by local parents, sits between the police station and the public library.

The gazebo that sits in front of the senior center was also vandalized. The gazebo is located less than a hundred feet from the playscape, and was donated by the Junior Women's Club of Portland in 2001.

The vandals defaced both facilities by writing on them with black and red magic markers, Portland Police Lieutenant Ron Milardo said. Milardo estimated that the vandalism occurred during the night of June 5.

Milardo described the graffiti as “graphic words and all kinds of pictures.”

The playscape, which is dark green in color where the vandalism occurred, did sustain some written vandalism, but it is not highly visible from outside the playscape's gate. However, the gazebo, which is white, was virtually covered on the inside with writing. Despite a few coarse words and several drawings of genitalia, the vast majority of the graffiti was not obscene, and seemed to have no rhyme or reason to it.

The playscape work included phrases like “I feel gay” and “I love hippies.”

As for the gazebo, apart from the renderings of genitalia, incorrect spellings of “fallopian tube” and “gonorrhea,” as well as “uterus,” “crotchal region,” “ass cheez,” and “I did your mom,” was as dirty as it got.

The other phrases were decidedly more perplexing. These included “dradle,” “belt buckle,” “Finding Nemo,” “imitation crabmeat,” “jean jacket,” “fireworks,” “footy pajamas,” “roid rage,” “pastor,” “janitor,” “America=Hell,” and, ironically, “I [heart sign] Portland.” The writing also included a drawing of a snail and one of the benches being predominantly tagged, “Drop Acid Not Bombs.” All told, the gazebo had been donned with upwards of 200 words or phrases.

First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield said Public Works Director Rick Kelsey obtained a quote of what it would cost to replace every section of the playscape that was vandalized. The number he got was \$8,000. However, Bransfield said Tuesday that the town will not go that route, and had already begun removing



Some strange vandalism led to the closure of a playscape and gazebo last week. The words were mostly innocuous, and seemed to have no rhyme or reason.

the graffiti with a cleaner.

According to Milardo, there have been other reports of vandalism throughout the past few weeks, including writing on the brick walls of Brownstone Intermediate School.

Milardo said there is “a lot of damage” to the gazebo. He said the case is under investigation, and added that “some leads” have been developed. He said Portland Police Sgt. Scott

Cunningham is heading up the case.

Bransfield said the vandalism “is stupid,” and added, “It's a ridiculous waste of time,” voicing apparent anger toward those responsible. She said the defacing of the playscape “goes beyond reasonable,” and showed extreme resentment over someone singling out a place frequented by children for off-color writing.

She said vandalism “seems to be an unfortunate rite of spring,” and added, “I don't begin to understand why people do it.”

Bransfield admitted that she does not think such vandals are acting on malice. But, she said, “They need to stop and think that this is public property. People have given their time and money to make Portland a nice place to live.”

Bransfield has held off on cleaning the gazebo because, she said, “What we would like is for the people responsible for all the markings to do it themselves.” She said cleaning the gazebo will be much harder than cleaning the playscape, as it will also require painting.

Public Works started cleaning the playscape Tuesday. Neither Bransfield nor Public Works Director Rick Kelsey could estimate Tuesday how much money and labor the effort would take, but Bransfield said they would keep an expense and time log, and charge that amount to the guilty parties when they are arrested.

Bransfield expected that the playscape would open by the end of the week.

The playscape and gazebo are by no means the only recent victims of vandalism. Milardo said Officer James Capello heard a “loud, crashing sound” while at his residence Monday night. He jumped into his cruiser and found a destroyed mailbox just down the street. He then pulled over a vehicle with two males. He also “observed in plain view a baseball bat,” Milardo said.

Milardo reported that after investigating that night and the following day, police found around a dozen mailboxes damaged, all in the Penfield Hill Road and Cox Road area.

Michael Veseski, 18, and a 17 year-old male, both from Moodus, were charged with first-degree criminal mischief. Their court date at Middletown Superior Court was pending as of press time. According to Officer Peter Paranzino, the 17 year-old wielded the wooden Louisville Slugger bat while Veseski drove.

Milardo said the two teens are not suspects in the gazebo and playscape vandalism.

Paranzino said mailbox smashings come “in spurts.” He said there might be months without a complaint, followed by a spree that takes a bunch out in one night.

Milardo asked that anyone else whose mailbox was damaged recently should call Portland Police at 342-6780.

Poor Economy Leads to Shortfall of Supplies at Colchester Food Bank

by Kristina Histen

The shelves are emptying at the local food bank, and they're not filling back up. And it should surprise to anyone that the economy is apparently to blame.

The need for food continues to climb, Social Services Coordinator Janet Taylor said. Since last December, there has been a 20 percent increase in people using the food bank, averaging about 15 families a week (or 60 each month), she said, and it's not always the same families.

“More and more new people are coming in,” Taylor said. “There are people that have lived here for years that just can't make ends meet with the price of gas, oil and electric bills going up like they do.”

Unfortunately, with the increase of people using the food bank there has been a decrease in donations; “a sign of the economy,” Taylor said. Like the rest of the population, people that normally donate usually were able to give a little extra to the food bank because they knew they had the money to give, Taylor said. However, where they used to have an extra \$5 to \$10 a week to donate or do something fun, they don't anymore, because they are putting that money in their gas tanks or trying to heat their houses, Taylor said.

“Donations are down, but customers are up,” Taylor said.

The biggest concern seems to be with the senior citizens. Most are only getting about \$10 a month for food stamps, if they're lucky, Taylor said. Although this allows them to purchase a gallon of milk, bread and some cheese, it is not enough and they do not have a lot of income. Many are too proud to ask for help, Taylor said, because it may seem like they have a lot of resources. They save for a rainy day and have their pensions and social security, but this puts them out of reach for every program out there and they are struggling, Taylor said.

General families are struggling too, Taylor

said, especially now that the children are home for the summer and there are no more school lunches. They still want to eat. It has also been predicted that oil will hit \$6 a gallon by the fall, but Taylor thinks that that may be a low estimate at this point.

What many people do not know is that the food stamp program has not changed its criteria for those that qualify in the past 30 years, Taylor said. Also, food stamps only cover edible things and therefore do not include personal hygiene products like toothpaste, shampoo, deodorant or feminine products. The only change that has been made is allowing the purchases of pre-made food, because homeless people have nowhere to cook, she said.

Unfortunately, supplies and monetary donations are dropping fast, Taylor said. Usually she is very good at keeping the money up and the account levels high enough so that if she spends something, more donations come in pretty quickly, she said. But that is just not happening right now. If it keeps in this mode, Taylor predicts that come fall there won't be any funds left, and if there is nothing to give, she will have to turn people away.

Right now, there is a need for everything. In the past, the Bacon Academy Class of 2008 took on the food bank as their class project. For three years they teamed up with State Police and were able to bring in “a ton of food,” she said. It was enough to hold her over throughout the summer months. However, this past year, the class didn't team up with the state police. While the state police did contribute food, there was quite a shortage because the police also donated the food to all the other counties they serve, she said.

When donating, it is important to give “good food,” Taylor said. This means nothing expired, no dented cans and no opened food. Her only rule of thumb is “if I wouldn't bring it home to feed my family, I won't give it to you.”

Taylor does not put restrictions on those that need food. In her opinion, “if someone calls to



The local food bank is in desperate need for donations as the food is disappearing off the shelves because more and more people are looking for help.

say they're hungry, they're hungry.” Those that need the services are requested to call in advance, unless it is an emergency, so Taylor can arrange the food boxes accordingly and have the opportunity to provide fresh dairy products. They then are able to pick up a preset box dependent on family size and everything is donated. If the government serving sizes are followed, the boxes are supposed to last about a month, but Taylor said for an average family, it usually lasts about a week. The boxes are meant to help those in need transition from paycheck to paycheck or when food stamps are coming

in again.

In addition to the food bank, Taylor coordinates the fuel bank, back to school clothes, Christmas, holiday dinners and energy assistant programs. Hours of operation are Monday from 8 a.m.-3:30 p.m., Wednesdays from 1-4:30 p.m. and Thursdays from 8 a.m.-3:30 p.m. on the second floor of Town Hall, 127 Norwich Ave. Call 537-7235 for more information.

The town is fortunate it can offer these services. “We are lucky that Colchester is very good town to be in,” Taylor said.

Obituaries

Portland

David Anthony Johnson

David Anthony Johnson, 54, son of Hazel Saul Johnson and the late Robert Gerald Johnson of Portland, died Tuesday, June 10, in Bedford, NH. David was born in New Haven on April 9, 1954. He lived in Portland for many years, attending St. Mary School in Portland and graduating from Xavier High School in Middletown and Mildin Technical College in New Haven. He was a licensed plumber and was employed for the past 16 years by the City of Concord, NH.

David enjoyed camping, fishing and spending time with his family. He was happiest when helping family and friends with various projects from installing a new kitchen faucet to trimming the apple trees. He had a keen interest in lighthouses and spent many hours researching their histories and planning visits. He will be remembered as a gentle man with a big heart.

In addition to his wife Iva, David is survived by his much loved daughters Rebecca and Heidi and son Jacob. Rebecca recently graduated from St. John's College and begins a teaching fellowship in the New York school system. Heidi is a student at New York University. Besides his mother Hazel, he leaves one brother, Peter and wife Lauren of Portland, and five sisters: Karen and husband Dr. Richard Wilson of Lake Oswego OR; Margaret Johnson of Portland; Joanne Hubbard and husband Peter of Shrewsbury, MA; Julianne Johnson of Mystic; and Valerie Cavanagh and husband Timothy of Portland; and his first wife and best friend, Barbara Goulding-Gordon of Rye, NH. David also leaves his nieces and nephews: Robert, Daniel, Alex, and Emily Wilson; Alaina Fillback; Emma, Eric and Julia Hubbard; and Daniel and Helen Cavanagh.

Funeral services were held June 14 in Manchester, NH. Burial will be at the convenience of the family at Rock Landing Cemetery in Haddam Neck.

East Hampton

Jill C. Zimmerman

Jill C. (Harris) Zimmerman, 58, of Glastonbury, wife of the late David J. Zimmerman, died Sunday, June 15, at Hartford Hospital. Born July 20, 1949, in Plainfield, NJ, daughter of the late Oscar and J. Constance (Hagaman) Harris, she had lived in East Hampton, moving to Glastonbury in 1995.

Jill was a math professor and department chair at Manchester Community College. She attended Gettysburg College and UConn and earned a MALS at Wesleyan University where she received special recognition for her senior thesis on the works of the mathematician Lewis Carroll. Jill was a longtime piano teacher and an accompanist at East Hampton High School and was an organist at the Bethlehem Lutheran Church in East Hampton.

Jill is survived by two sons and daughters-in-law, Michael and Wendy Zimmerman of Middle Haddam, Stephen and Kate Zimmerman of Burlington; a brother and sister-in-law, Roger and Cindy Harris of Mohnton, PA; four grandchildren Samantha, Cassandra, Alexander and Paige.

A memorial service was held Thursday, June 19, in the First Church of Christ, Congregational, 2183 Main St., Glastonbury. Burial will be at the convenience of the family. Friends called at the Mulryan Funeral Home, 725 Hebron Ave., Glastonbury, Wednesday, June 18. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the American Cancer Society, 538 Preston Ave, Meriden, CT 06450-1004.

Colchester

Eleanor Lasnier

Eleanor Mary W. Lasnier, 88, of Bristol, died Sunday, June 15, at the Liberty Specialty Care Center in Colchester. Born March 26, 1920, in New Britain, she was a daughter of the late Russell and Mary (Callahan) Winger.

Mrs. Lasnier worked at Bristol Hospital in the Medical Records Department. She was a communicant of St. Joseph Church in Bristol and a member of the Bristol Women's Club. She is survived by her son and daughter in law, Richard and Carol Lasnier of Amston, a brother Russell Winger of Forestville and three sisters, Georgia Winger, Suzanne Winger and Patty Dube all of Bristol.

Friends called Tuesday morning, June 17, with a chapel service immediately following at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. Burial will follow in West Cemetery in Plainville. In lieu of flowers, donations in her memory may be made to the Alzheimer's Association CT Chapter, 279 New Britain Road, Ste 5, Kensington, CT 06037.

Visit www.auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com for online condolences.

Andover

Mark E. Bergeron

Mark E. Bergeron, 47, of Andover, the husband of Karen M. (Inglis) Bergeron, died Thursday, June 12, in Hebron the results of injuries sustained in a motorcycle accident. Mark was born in Hartford attended East Catholic High School and graduated from RHAM High School. An avid sportsman he played varsity football at East Catholic and varsity basketball at RHAM. Mark was currently employed as the manager for the Manchester Sam's Club.

He is also survived by his stepchildren, Jeffrey and Courtney Fazzino, his parents Richard and Dorothy (Eddy) Bergeron of Manchester, his sister and brother-in-law Pamela and Robert Wahlberg of Manchester and their children Rob and Liz who he loved like his own children. He is also survived by his mother and father-in-law Muriel and William Inglis of Middletown, his brother-in-law Gary Inglis and his companion Jennifer of Killingworth, his sister and brother-in-law Lori-Ann and Edward Bednarz of Middlefield and numerous aunts, uncles, cousins and special friends.

Family and friends called at the John F. Tierney Funeral Home, 219 West Center St., Manchester, on Sunday, June 14. Funeral service was held Monday, June 15, at Center Congregational Church, 11 Center St., Manchester, followed by burial in East Cemetery, Manchester.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to either the Hebron Fire Dept., 44 Main St., Hebron, CT 06248; RHAM High School Sports Dept., 85 Wall St., Hebron, CT 06248; or the American Heart Association, 1 Union St., Suite 301, Robbinsville, NJ 08691.

Portland

Sam Bazzano

Sam Bazzano, 88, of Portland, formerly of Windsor, beloved husband of the late Helen (Cassarino) Bazzano died Saturday, June 14, at a local convalescent home. Born January 7, 1920, in Hartford, son of the late Anthony and Sebastiana (Rossito) Bazzano, he lived in Windsor for over 56 years before moving to Portland two years ago.

Sam served with the U.S. Army 11th Airborne during World War II and was a recipient of two Bronze Stars. Sam was employed for over 50 years with Greenburg & Beatman Furniture, Hartford. He was a parishioner of St. Gertrude Church, Windsor and was an avid fisherman.

He is survived by three sons, Richard Bazzano and his wife, Debbie of Portland, OR, Ronald Bazzano of Oak Park, FL, Robert Bazzano and his wife, Michelle of Portland; eight grandchildren; six great grandchildren; and many nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by his two sisters, Sadie Micali and Josephine Fontana.

Family and friends gathered Wednesday, June 18, at Carmon Windsor Funeral Home, 807 Bloomfield Ave., Windsor, followed by a Mass of Christian Burial at St. Gertrude Church, Windsor. Burial with military honors was in Mount St. Benedict Cemetery, Bloomfield. His family received friends Tuesday, June 17, at Carmon Windsor Funeral Home. In lieu of flowers donations may be made to Portland Care & Rehabilitation Center, Inc., 333 Main St., Portland, CT 06480. To leave online condolences, visit www.carmonfuneralhome.com.

Portland

Wayne William Scervo

Wayne William "Dick" Scervo, 67, of Higganum, formerly of Portland, died Wednesday, June 11, at home, surrounded by his loving children. He was born in Middletown, the son of the late Dominic and Josephine (Barilari) Scervo. A veteran of the Vietnam War, he served with the U.S. Army. Prior to his retirement, he was employed with Cafe 66 as a manager.

He is survived by his son, Middletown Police Officer, Kurt Scervo and his wife Kerry of Chester; his two daughters, Deborah Scervo of Higganum, and Heather Lemieux and her husband, Kevin of San Diego, CA; his two brothers, Angelo Scervo and his wife, Patricia of Harwich, MA, and Anthony Scervo of Portland; his sister, Josephine Scervo of Portland; and two grandchildren, Tyler Braden Lemieux, and Sophie Grace Scervo.

A Funeral Liturgy was held Tuesday, June 17, at St. Peter's Church, Higganum. Burial with Military Honors was in St. Mary's Cemetery, Portland. Friends called at Biega Funeral Home, 3 Silver St., Middletown, on Monday, June 16. Memorial contributions may be made to the American Cancer Society, 538 Preston Ave., Meriden, CT 06450.

Colchester

Judith Schneider

Judith (Dember) Schneider, 81, of Norwich Avenue, Colchester, widow of her best friend, David Schneider, died Thursday, June 12. Born in Hartford, she was the daughter of the late Joseph and Dora (Fromberg) Dember. A former secretary, she owned and operated several businesses with her late husband, Dave. A member of Congregation Ahavath Achim, she was also a life member of Hadassah and an avid mah jongg player for over 50 years.

She leaves her son, Louis Schneider and his wife Cathy of Pittsford, NY; two daughters: Phyllis Winkler and her husband Michael of Vernon, and Henrietta Morgenstein and her husband Steven of Cottonwood, AZ; five grandchildren: Amy, and Laura Schneider, Melanie and Joanna Winkler, and Jamie Morgenstein-Courtney.

Funeral services were held Sunday, June 15, at 1 p.m., in the Sanctuary of Congregation Ahavath Achim, 84 Lebanon Ave., Colchester, with Rabbi Kenneth Alter officiating. Interment followed in the Colchester Jewish Aid Society Cemetery, Colchester. A shiva (memorial period) was observed at her home, 564 Norwich Ave., Unit A, Colchester, Sunday night, Monday night and Tuesday night, from 6-9 p.m. Shiva will be observed for the remainder of the period at her children's respective homes.

Memorial contributions may be made to the American Cancer Society, 538 Preston Ave., P.O. Box 1004, Meriden 06450. Arrangements are entrusted to Weinstein Mortuary, Hartford. For more information, directions, or to share memories of Judith with her family, visit www.weinsteinmortuary.com.

Hebron

Jacqueline M. Folsom

Jacqueline M. (DeLong) Folsom of Manchester and formerly of Hebron, passed away peacefully Tuesday, June 17. Born in Houlton, ME, she was the daughter of the late Clayton and Phyllis (Carpenter) DeLong and lived in Manchester for the past 15 years, previously residing in Hebron for most of her life. She was a computer specialist with JC Penney, retiring in 2004 after many years of service.

Jacqueline was a former high school cheerleading coach with RHAM as well as a certified life-guard. She enjoyed reading, her beloved cats, and vacationing with her family in the Bahamas. Most of all Jacqueline was a devoted mother, grandmother and friend who loved spending time with her family and working with her son Lloyd, at the family business, Folsom Construction, in South Windsor.

She leaves her three children, Lloyd L. Folsom Jr. and his wife, Tammy, of Bolton, Beth Piette of Mystic, and Clayton Folsom and his wife, Cheryl, of Andover; three sisters, Marie Kronfeld and her husband, Alan, of Minneapolis, MN, Chavala Moran of Millinocket, ME, and Betty Longstaff of Houlton, ME; four beloved grandchildren, whom she called them her "dollies," Rachel, Christina, Catherine, and Cynthia; and her former husband, Lloyd L. Folsom Sr.

The family received friends Thursday, June 19, at the Mystic Funeral Home, Route 1, Mystic. Burial will be private on Saturday, June 21, in Monticello, ME. The family invites people to visit www.mysticfuneralhome.com for directions to the funeral home and the online guest book. Memorial donations may be made to the Jacqueline M. Folsom Foundation, P.O. Box 605, Mystic, CT 06355.

Colchester

Andy Simon

Andy Simon, 45, of Colchester and formerly of Hebron, passed away Tuesday, June 17, at Hartford Hospital. Born Sept. 16, 1962 in Hartford, he was a son of Alfred Simon of Hebron and the late Marjorie (Pratt) Simon.

Andy was a graduate of RHAM High School in Hebron and went on to pursue college studies locally. He was currently a chef at the UConn Storrs campus. In his spare time, he enjoyed hunting and fishing. Mr. Simon was a communicant of the Church of the Holy Family in Hebron.

In addition to his father, he is survived by his sister, Patrice Anne Spicer of Griswold; his brother, Michael Cochran and his wife, Lynn of Arizona; his nephew, Daniel Spicer; and numerous extended family members and friends.

Friends may call from 5-7 p.m. Sunday, June 22, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. The Memorial Liturgy will be celebrated 11 a.m. Monday, June 23, directly at the Church of the Holy Family, 185 Church St., (Rte. 85), Hebron, with Fr. Michael S. Smith, officiating. Burial will be at the convenience of the family.

For online condolences, visit www.auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Portland

James W. Savage Sr.

James W. Savage Sr., 91, of Main Street, Portland, passed away peacefully on Tuesday, June 17, at Middlesex Hospital in Middletown. Born in Norwich Nov. 12, 1916, a son of the late John and Harriet Murray Savage, he leaves a son, James W. Savage Jr. and his wife Susan of Portland; a daughter Sharon Savage of Deep River and Gail Perzanowski of Deep River who was like another daughter to him. He also leaves grandchildren and great grandchildren who he adored and was greatly loved in return, Timothy Savage and his wife Erinn and their daughters Madison and Delaney of East Hampton, and Saralyn Levesque, her husband Michael and their sons Mick and Tyler of East Haddam.

Jim had lived in Middletown for many years prior to moving to Portland 25 years ago. He worked as a custodian at Vinal Regional Technical High School and retired in 1982. Jim was blessed with a long, happy life and had many good friends. Although blindness robbed him of eyesight, it did not deter his independence. He was a familiar sight walking along Main Street until a few days before his death. His brothers, Daniel, Fred, and John, and sisters Gert and Anna predeceased him.

His family will receive relatives and friends in the Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland today, Friday, June 20, from 6-8 p.m. Funeral services will be held Saturday, June 21, at 9:45 a.m. from the Portland Memorial Funeral Home and at 10:30 a.m. at the Church of Saint Mary for a Mass of Christian Burial. Interment will follow in the Swedish Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, those that wish may send a donation to the American Macular Degeneration Foundation, PO Box 515, Northampton, MA 01061-0515.