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Ann Dang, left, and Hannah Mondrach, both of Marlborough, are the RHAM High School Class of 2008 valedictorian and salutatorian, respectively. Ann will attend the University of Pennsylvania in the fall to study business, while Hannah plans to attend the University of Connecticut to major in Spanish and Italian.

Best Friends Named RHAM High School Valedictorian, Salutatorian

by Sarah McCoy

RHAM High School seniors Ann Dang and Hannah Mondrach, both of Marlborough, have been best friends "since sixth grade," they said in unison during an interview Tuesday.

Fast-forward six years and the pair are now inseparable atop their graduating class. Ann will graduate as the Class of 2008's valedictorian and Hannah as salutatorian.

The RHAM High School graduation ceremony will be held at 6 p.m. Thursday, June 19, on the baseball field at the high school, 85 Wall St., Hebron. In the event of rain, the commencement will be moved to the high school gymnasium.

Despite their neck-and-neck grade point average (Ann's G.P.A. is 4.80 out of 5, while Hannah's is 4.79), there is no rivalry between Ann and Hannah. Both are happy with their successes and the success of their friend. "We understand each other," Hannah said. "Our classmates rub it in our faces when they score higher than one of us, but we don't do that to each other."

It isn't only academically that these two students excel. Both are active in a host of extracurricular activities including Future Problem Solvers, where, along with teammate Matthew Breglio, they finished first in the state of Connecticut for their team booklet.

Hannah has also been a member of the school's math team and student council for the past four years. She tutors, takes salsa-dancing lessons, plays the clarinet and is an active member at St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Hebron.

Ann is an accomplished dancer. She has danced jazz, tap, and ballet for the past 10 years and currently teaches pre-school and middle school students. Also, Ann, along with Glastonbury High School valedictorian Frances Hu, founded the Connecticut Chinese Culture Center Youth Association. Ann was born in China and moved to the United States when she was three. She said she was dismayed to find that there were no groups for teenage Chinese Americans. So, Ann and Frances decided to do something about it and created their own organization.

This spirit will likely serve Ann well as she plans to attend University of Pennsylvania's prestigious Wharton School of Business in the fall. "I find business very interesting," she said. "I don't like things that are so concrete."

Ann isn't sure what specifically she wants to do in business, but she wants it to hold her interest and challenge her.

While Ann will head off to Philadelphia, Hannah will head to Storrs in the fall, where she will attend the University of Connecticut to study Spanish and Italian.

It will be the first time that the two best friends will be separated for a long period of time, but Hannah knows how to overcome the distance. "We're planning on buying laptops with video cameras," she said.

One thing that might make life apart easier is the fact that Ann and Hannah aren't used to having much time to hang out in the first place.

"You learn to have no free time," Hannah said of the sacrifices they've made to achieve their high grades. "Last year, I don't think I went to bed before midnight once."

The girls even missed their senior prom to attend the Future Problem Solvers International Competition, held in Michigan last weekend.

That decision doesn't surprise RHAM High School Spanish teacher Amy Nocton, who teaches Hannah's Spanish and Italian classes. "Students like Hannah make teaching worthwhile," Nocton said. "She's excited about learning and not just doing the work to get good grades."

It's Nocton who has provided direction for Hannah's career aspirations. "I want to be her," Hannah said of her favorite teacher.

Before the graduation later this month, Ann and Hannah will each have one final assignment to complete – their speeches.

Marlborough 5K Road Race Results

On May 25, the Marlborough Lions held its 24th annual 5K 'Round the Lake Road Race, and more than 100 runners participated.

The runners totaled 124, and the race kicked off precisely at 10:30 a.m. Chris Costa from Liberty Bank was on hand as the race began near the entrance to Blish Park. Liberty Bank is the sole sponsor from the event and has been for many years.

Crossing the finish line first for the male runners was John Paggioli with a time of 18:35.4 and first for the female runners was Melissa Perkins-Banas who completed the run with a time of 19:23.7. Other notable runners included the race's senior participants, 75-year-old Cynthia Peterson, who won the first place trophy for the women's 65-plus category and first place male senior winner Ruscan Tew. This was the first year that the race featured a category specifically for seniors.

Finishing times for male and female runners, in first-, second- and third-place order, were:

Male Runners: 13 & under: David Einsiedell 20:36.3, Bryan White 22:04.2 and Tim Fitzgerald 24:00.0; 14-19 years: Mathew Angelo 19:05.8, Ben Reiner 20:18.4 and Brian Culno 20:20.7; 20-29 years: Ryan Powers 20:29.1, Tad Wood, 23:35.1, Carl Sottile 40:00.0; 30-39 years: Joe Zavalishin 18:38.9, Daniel Rearick 22:01.5 and Jeff Smith 23:27.1; 40-49 years: John Paggioli 18:35.4, Chris Greenlaw 21:58.1 and Mathew Pulse 22:48.7; 50-64 years: Alan Rondeau 19:49.5, Joe Balavender 20:56.9 and Charley Whynacht 21:32.9; 65 years and over: Ruscan Tew 24:28.5.

Female Runners: 13 & under: Mari Larcheveque 27:16.5, Mary Kate Cannon 28:35.9 and Hannah Einsiedel 32:05.5; 14-19 years: Caroline Norton 22:23.6, Adrienne Matunas 23:21.8 and Kara Trippel 26:00.5; 20-29 years, Susan Perrella 22:27.3, Amie Dennis 33:19.2 and Elisabeth Johnson 40:00.0+; 30-39 years: Melissa Perkins-Banas



The Marlborough Lions held its 24th annual 5K 'Round the Lake Road Race. Pictured are the race winners, Melissa Perkins-Banas, who finished with a time of 19:23.7, and John Paggioli with a time of 18:35.4.

19:23.7, Leann Eppinger 22:06.6 and Jennichelle Oatman 23:03.3; 40-49 years: Kennedy Dani 22:00.5, Pamela Cahill 23:04.4 and Lisa Zoblonski 23:14.7; 50-64 years: Joan Monroe 25:44.3, Sharon Reiner 26:36.9 and Gail Glenn 26:54.2; 65 years and over: Cynthia Peterson.

The Lions Club also wishes to thank Marlborough's constables, the crew of the Pettengill Volunteer Ambulance Association and the Connecticut State Police for providing safety and medical coverage for this year's event.

Former East Hampton Town Council Member Confesses to Fraud

by Michael McCoy

Many East Hampton residents are reeling from the news that one of the town's most esteemed citizens is facing prison time.

On Thursday, May 29, Bob Berlin, 54, pled guilty to one count of health care fraud. Berlin made the plea in federal court in Hartford, waiving his right to indictment.

Berlin began working for Thatcher's Pharmacy in East Hampton in 1981, and became owner in 1989. In 1994, Berlin and his family moved to East Hampton. In 2004, Thatcher's moved to Independence Drive in Marlborough, vacating the spot where Shaw's now sits.

According to a press release from the state attorney's office, Berlin began submitting "fraudulent claims for prescriptions to ConnectiCare and other health insurance programs" in 1998. "Most of the false claims were prescriptions issued to Berlin or his family or employees," the release said. Essentially, Berlin collected money for prescriptions that were never filled, or perhaps never even written, the release said.

In the plea, Berlin confessed to collecting \$564,661 and agreed to pay those funds back.

Berlin served on the East Hampton Town Council from 2005 to 2007. Though he received more votes than anyone else during the 2005 election, he declined to run again in 2007.

Berlin's attorney Richard R. Brown pointed out that Berlin has no prior criminal history and commented that his actions were due to his being "under certain economic pressures as related to the business."

Brown also said Berlin used the money to keep Thatcher's afloat and not for any personal extravagances. "If anything, he's a workaholic," commented Brown. However, Brown added, "He knows it's not an excuse; he regrets his misconduct. ... He's ashamed of himself."

Kyle Dostaler served alongside Berlin on the Town Council, and called the news of Berlin's indictment "quite a surprise."

"I think Bob made a series of poor choices and bad judgments," Dostaler said. "I think Bob was put in a tough position because he wanted to support his family and support his customers. ... When you think you've run out of options, people make bad choices."

"I think he remains a very likable guy," Dostaler continued. "He's still a friend to a lot of people in town."

Dostaler described Berlin as "a dying breed, in the sense that he owned his own pharmacy." Also, he said, Berlin aided seniors with their prescriptions, going so far as delivering them on occasion.

"I think he cared a great deal for his cli-

ents and his customers," Dostaler said. "Bob thought everyone was his friend, and he tried to treat people that way."

Suggesting that this incident does not sum up who Berlin is, Dostaler said, "Sometimes people's decisions don't represent their true moral character."

Councilman Bill Devine, owner of Devine Jewelers in East Hampton, also sat on the council during Berlin's tenure. "Bob's a real nice guy," he said, and added, "Being self-employed's not easy. There are days that I don't make any money."

Devine said he can "empathize with" Berlin, therefore, "I really can't judge the guy." In fact, Devine called Berlin "a very caring person." Devine said he has been a Thatcher's customer for 30 years, and Berlin allowed him to pay for his prescriptions several months late on a few occasions when times were tight for Devine.

"I'm not going to drop the prescription I have with him," Devine said, pledging that this incident will not shake his loyalty to Berlin's business.

Berlin sat on the Town Council as a member of the town's Chatham Party. Current council member Sue Weintraub, also a member of the Chatham Party, called her immediate reaction "disbelief."

"Bob Berlin's name has always been associated with love, respect, and generosity in this community," she said, and added, "I am deeply disappointed that the events in his life backed him into this corner of desperation."

Town Council Chairman Melissa Engel also served alongside Berlin and admitted to being quite surprised by this turn of events. "Bob's served our town for a long time," Engel said, "and I hope everything works out for he and his family."

Brown said Berlin is currently attempting to sell Thatcher's. "He's been working on that for a while," said Brown. According to Brown, Berlin plans to use the money from the sale to make "restitution."

In the meantime, Brown said Berlin is working at Thatcher's everyday, and "the help is behind him 100 percent."

Assistant United States Attorney David J. Sheldon is prosecuting the case, and the investigation was conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Office of Criminal Investigations, the Food and Drug Administration, and the FBI's Health Care Fraud Task Force.

United States District Judge Vanessa L. Bryant will sentence Berlin on Aug. 7. At that time, Berlin could face a \$250,000 fine and up to 10 years in prison.

Berlin is married and has three children.

Portland High-Speed Chase Leads to Arrests

by Michael McCoy

A local man was arrested on a litany of charges last Thursday after allegedly leading police on a high-speed chase.

At around 9 p.m. May 29, Portland Police received a complaint that a man was selling drugs near the intersection of Airline Avenue and Riverside Street. While en route to the scene, Portland Police Sgt. Scott Cunningham said, "Officer [David] Bond was almost struck by a Chrysler 300 with Vermont plates." Bond went after the car, while Officer James Capello went to head it off at Airline Avenue and Pickering Street.

It was at that intersection, Cunningham said, that the Chrysler stopped and let a white female out of the front passenger's seat. Cunningham said Capello had just enough time to identify the driver as Thomas McArthur, based on previous incidents, before McArthur zipped away and raced along a series of side roads, in excess of 70 miles per hour.

With Capello in pursuit, McArthur dashed onto Cross Street, which led him to Route 66, where he proceeded west, Cunningham said, adding that McArthur was "speeding consistently above 100 miles per hour."

About five and a half miles later, McArthur, 26, abandoned his vehicle near his residence at 47 Airline Ave. Capello apprehended him outside the residence, Cunningham said. According to Cunningham, "[McArthur] said he figured he was going to get arrested for having drugs, and had to make four phone calls before being apprehended by police."

As Bond and Capello investigated the scene, Cunningham said, "marijuana was emanating

from [McArthur's] vehicle." The officers discovered a "green, leafy substance" in the car Cunningham said, which was later determined to be marijuana. The officers also found a blunt, a package of blunt wraps and \$238 in cash. In the trunk, police also found a ballistic body armor vest, Cunningham said.

While inspecting the vehicle, two cellular phones inside the car went off repeatedly, Cunningham said. Police eventually answered one of them, he said, and found a female on the other line, inquiring about prices. Cunningham said she eventually agreed to pay \$20 for a quarter ounce of marijuana and would be waiting behind the Portland Burger King in a white Chevrolet Beretta. Police traveled to the location and arrested Alison Kozikowski, 20, of 62 Childs Rd., East Hampton, and charged her with possession of drug paraphernalia and possession of less than four ounces of marijuana.

The charges for McArthur, who has had previous drug arrests, were considerably more extensive. He was charged with reckless driving, engaging in pursuit, failure to obey stop signs, failure to drive right, interfering with a police officer, possession of drug paraphernalia, possession with intent to sell, possession of less than four ounces of marijuana and criminal possession of body armor, police said. Both McArthur and Kozikowski were released on bond and will appear in court Tuesday, June 10, Cunningham said.

While high-speed chases like this happen, Cunningham said they are quite rare. "I don't remember the last time there was a pursuit," he said.

Andover Looking at Dog Nuisance Ordinance

by Sarah McCoy

The Board of Selectmen formed a sub-committee at their meeting on Wednesday to consider a possible dog nuisance ordinance, in response to residents' complaints.

Selectmen David Ziff and Jay Linddy, who is also the town's Animal Control Officer, will serve on the sub-committee along with residents Pete Shaw and Brain Doucette. Shaw and Doucette, who both live on Bear Swamp Road, have made several complaints about their neighbor's dog over the course of the past three years. Now, they hope to be part of the resolution.

"The dog is tethered to a tree for long periods of time," Doucette explained. "And, at the slightest noise, he starts to bark- often four or five times an hour."

Without fail, both Shaw and Doucette said, the dog barks at each car that drives up the dead end road.

Doucette said he has spoken with Resident State Trooper Kevin Reed, First Selectman Bob Burbank and Linddy about the dog problem and each has given the same response: their hands are tied. Linddy said at Wednesday's Board of Selectmen's meeting that the state has put the responsibility on each town to manage their domestic animals and that Andover has no town laws in place.

Linddy estimated that it would take three

months for the ordinance to be completed before it is brought before residents for a town-wide vote. The vote won't happen, Linddy said, until "we generate an ordinance that gives our Resident State Trooper something to enforce."

Doucette and Shaw both said they are more than willing to participate in the drafting of the ordinance, but question why it's taken the town so long to act. "If we weren't here tonight, nothing would be done on the matter," Doucette said after Wednesday's meeting.

"This isn't our responsibility," Shaw added. "This is the responsibility of our town government. They should handle it."

Shaw noted that in Coventry, first-time offenders of the dog nuisance ordinance are assessed a fine of \$80 and, on the second offense, they are summoned to court. "With all the problems facing the town's budget right now, I know where they can make \$80 right off the bat," Shaw said of his neighbor.

During Wednesday's meeting, Burbank stated that the most effective way for the selectmen to proceed would be for the sub-committee to consider the ordinances of neighboring towns and then tailor the ordinance to fit Andover.

The sub-committee will hold its first meeting next week with a date and time to be determined.

Behold, the Power of (Local) Cheese in Colchester

by Kristina Histen

I have always prided myself as a cheese connoisseur: sampling the different brands of string cheese (the ones with the jokes are my favorite) and playing around with the thickness of my American cheese slices at the deli in order to achieve that perfect meat to cheese ratio for all my sandwiches.

However, after my visit to the Cato Corner Farm last Friday, I learned there was much more to know about our delectable dairy friend and my cheese horizons have definitely been broadened.

Cato Corner Farm is a year-round small farm owned by Elizabeth MacAlister and her son, Mark Gillman. MacAlister has owned the farm for almost 30 years, but didn't start milking cows and making cheese until 1997, to keep the farm sustainable. At the time, Gillman was a seventh-grade English teacher in Baltimore, but he was excited and curious about what his mother was doing and decided to come home and check it out.

"If I liked it, I'd stay," he remembered thinking. "And that was nine years ago. So right now I've got a career as a cheese maker."

Nowadays, Gillman makes most of the cheese and oversees its aging, while MacAlister manages the farm operations, including milking and caring for the cows, the farm's web site, www.catocornerfarm.com, said. The rest of the Cato Corner family includes several full-time and part-time workers and a diligent and attentive border collie named Flute, it said.

The farmland is all in preservation, which means it is protected from being developed or cultivated on and is designated to be kept an open space, by working with the Connecticut Farmland Trust and the Colchester Land Trust, Gillman said.

"Connecticut is losing farmland at an incredible rate," Gillman said. "We have land so it is important to protect that and do what we can. We emphasize that it is a farm first and from that we make cheese to make the farm sustainable."

When I first arrived at the farm, Gillman and Chris Batt, an employee and longtime family

friend, were packaging cheese to be sent to New York, where Cato Corner Farm has been selling since 1998. The cheese is also regularly featured at over 60 other locations throughout New England, as well as Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, New Jersey, California, Nevada, Louisiana and Illinois. Gillman said that, over the years, the business has grown and he and MacAllister continue to be proud of the product they have created. Although he and MacAllister run the farm like any other business, balancing between costs and income, there has been more of a demand for cheese than the farm can even meet.

"There is certainly ample room for those interested in cheese-making as the demand for local foods gets larger," Gillman said. "We are selling out everything we make."

I was able to observe some of the main steps in the cheese-making process. All the cheese is made by hand with raw milk from their individually-named 40 or so cows, which are mostly Jerseys. The cows graze freely throughout their 75 acres so that they have "happy lives" consisting of a rich diet of fresh pasture grasses, Gillman said. The flavor and fat/protein components change slightly throughout the seasons as the cows' diet changes. In the winter, the milk is richer and higher in protein, producing a creamier cheese. The summer produces more milk with a focus on firmer and dryer cheeses, Gillman said.

They never use growth hormones, sub-therapeutic antibiotics, or animal-based feeds, so all the rinds are natural and have natural surface molds that are integral to developing the full flavor of the cheese. The cows are milked twice a day, everyday, at 4 a.m. and 4 p.m., employee Hannah Gant said. The raw milk is stirred in a vat tank where certain cultures and rennet are added. The milk comes in at a temperature of 50 degrees and is usually cultured at 88 degrees, Gant said. For hours, employees work with the milk as it curdles and thickens to create the conditions for it to become the cheese they want it to be, Gillman said. Over the course of 24 hours they check the time, temperature and acidity, Gillman said.

When the curd is ready, the workers use a



Mark Gillman, right, and Chris Batt weigh and package cheese for vendors in New York in their shop at Cato Corner Farm.

cheese press to shape up the cheese and get the excess moisture out. It then sits in a brine tank for two to three days to pick up salt, which acts as the only preservative. The brine tank is in an underground cheese cave, which is "where it all happens," Gillman said. In the cave, workers age and care for the cheese, ripening all 1,200 pounds of varieties to the peak of their flavor. Depending on the cheese, it will be kept in the cave for two to 12 months, and as it ages it gives off an ammonia-like smell. The cave is kept at a temperature of 50 degrees and is very humid, to create as natural a setting as possible; this made me wonder how badly the humidity was affecting my hair.

After my quick tour of the cheese making process and the opportunity to meet the ladies themselves, I, frizz-free, was able to do some taste-testing. My expertise in cheese may be

limited, but even I can tell when cheese is good, and that cheese was good.

"There's more and more good cheese being made in the United States," Gillman said. "The number of handmade cheese has quintupled in the last 20 years and the quality has gone up. There is a lot of good cheese out there and this is an exciting time to be making cheese."

The cheese of course was different than what I was used to, as it is a unique, artisanal farmstead cheese. But with over 10 different types, I can only recommend for you to try it yourself on any Saturday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Cato Corner Farm, located at 178 Cato Corner Rd.

So, as soon as I got home, I took out a box of crackers and with my cheese samples, enjoyed a delicious snack before dinner. Just one of the perks of the job.

PZC Shoots Down Belltown Place

by Michael McCoy

Just a week after the East Hampton Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency (IWWA) ruled in its favor, the proposed Belltown Place housing development was squelched by the Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC) Wednesday night.

This made for a much different vibe than last week's IWWA meeting, when even the agency members who made the decision seemed morose. Without a major presence from the applicant's camp, the mood among the 25 or so people in attendance seemed congratulatory.

Proposed last November by Glastonbury-based Pelletier Development Company, Belltown Place was to be "a townhouse community" composed of 127 units on a 24.4-acre parcel.

IWWA opened their public hearing at the end of February, and the PZC opened theirs the first week in March. Each hearing lasted two meetings and the proceedings often attracted in excess of 100 people. Not one resident spoke in favor of the project.

The PZC hearing was closed April 1. Then, last week, the IWWA unanimously approved the project in the form of three motions, albeit with long faces. The general feeling appeared to be "we did the best we could with what we had," which were the words of IWWA vice chairman Josh Wilson.

The 25 or so audience members may have been braced for a similar outcome Wednesday night after the first of four motions read by PZC vice chairman Ray Zatorski passed unanimously. By a vote of 7-0, the PZC found that the intervener, South Main Environmental Trust (SMET), provided "inadequate evidence in the record that the proposed text amendment, proposed zone change and proposed site plan approval involve conduct that is reasonably likely to cause unreasonable harm to the natural resources as cited in paragraph 4 of the application to intervene..."

However, the next motion made by PZC was to deny the text amendment requested by the applicant, as it pertains to Section 7.11 of the

zoning regulations, which concerns the Housing Opportunity Development Zone. The developers had asked that the regulation be changed to allow the maximum number of dwellings per building be increased from four to 10. They also asked that the threshold for the construction of a mandatory community building/clubhouse be increased from 100 to 200 dwellings per development. Developers had also requested that maximum density allowance be increased from five to six units per acre of developable land. They also asked for the "landscaped perimeter buffer" minimum to be reduced from 25 feet to 15 feet. Belltown Place also asked to remove "the requirement for a public hearing on the final site plan."

Zatorski's reasons for denying this text amendment included the lack of a "demonstrated public water supply." His written motions read, "...the applicant has not obtained a certificate of public convenience and necessity for construction of its proposed water supply system from the Department of Public Utility Control and the Department of Public Health..." Also, Zatorski wrote, the applicant's proposal "has failed to provide evidence, and has provided merely conjecture that there is an adequate supply of water to serve the intended new dwelling units. Additionally, the applicant has failed to demonstrate that construction and operation of the on-site water system will not interfere with the ongoing viability of the neighboring private water supplies."

Zatorski also cited "historical inadequacy of water supply based on bedrock wells" and added, "No reasonable change to the proposed project will address the need for an adequate water supply." He also proposed that a "defect in the affordability plan" existed.

Commissioner Peter Aarrestad said to Zatorski, "I think you laid out a pretty good case based on the record that was put before us." Roy Gauthier, another commissioner, said, "I think the evidence supports your motion wholeheartedly." The motion passed 7-0

The references to affordable housing pertain

to the project's billing as a Housing Opportunity Development. In return for shaving a portion off the fair market value price for the applicable units, the developer is allowed to build more units per acre.

Zatorski's next motion was denial of the site plan. The grounds for denial included the aforementioned reasons as well as being "defective and [failing] to conform to the East Hampton Planning & Zoning Commission regulations," and cited 28 deficiencies found by Thomas Cummings of CLA Engineers, Inc. This motion also passed 7-0.

Finally, Zatorski moved to deny the applicant's proposed zone change from general residential to HOD for reasons already stated. This passed 7-0 as well.

These decisions were based on nearly 10 hours of testimony given over the course of two nights, one in March and one in April.

Prior to these motions, Zatorski said, "First, I'd like to thank town staff, Daphne [Schaub] especially." He also thanked Planning, Zoning, & Building Administrator Jim Carey for his "countless patience." (In fact, Acting Town Manager Bob Drewry recently said the staff hours generated by the Belltown Place project were a large reason for the inclusion of more department staff in the 2008-09 budget.)

When asked to comment, Carey said, "I think [the PZC] did a great job as always."

Dan Miller is one of the members of SMET, an intervening group made up of a number of concerned residents. He commented, "Obviously, we're happy with the decision," and admitted he was not surprised by it, given the argument of insufficient water supply. However, noting the appeals process, he continued, "We're not really out of the woods yet." Still, this did not seem to be enough to dampen his spirits, commenting, "I think the town provided a very long list of reasons for denial that's gonna hold up. For that reason, I am optimistic."

Resident Rob Lazor said, "We relied on expert opinion and Mr. Saxton did not waiver." Lazor is referring to town geologist John

Saxton. Lazor also added, "The public was very helpful."

SMET attorney Keith Ainsworth, seconds after receiving the news Thursday morning, said of the first motion, "I think sometimes commissions have a reluctance to give a nod to community intervenor groups to make it look like they did it on their own."

But, he added, "I think the South Main Environmental Trust will be pleased" by the PZC's overall actions Wednesday night. He added that a "wealth of evidence" was provided and said, "I think there were a lot of reasons to reject the application that were very legitimate." This prompted him to add, "I don't think [Pelletier Development Company is] going to get a reversal from the courts."

"There were plenty of items in this application that would not be in the town of East Hampton's best interests," Ainsworth said.

According to Ainsworth, a developer often submits a "slightly-modified" plan to the town while going through the appeal process. He said this often places pressure on the town to accept this plan as an alternative to spending extreme funds on legal proceedings.

"That's the classic developer's maneuver," he said, and suggested it requires "a spine [by the town] to resist that."

He also added that the intervener has the right to be part of the appeal process. "Depending on if they do take an appeal, we might do that," Ainsworth said.

Pelletier attorney Mark Branse said he "wasn't surprised" by Wednesday's decision, and added, "There are legitimate legal issues that I imagine will have to be resolved before a court."

"We clearly have no choice but to appeal," Branse said.

In January, David Dodes, who just resigned as town planner, likened the appeal process to "this 2x4 that [developers] whack the town over the head with." He also said that Connecticut courts rule in favor of the developer 98 percent of the time.

Mary Rose Meade Named Hebron Citizen of the Year

by Sarah McCoy

As far as Mary Rose Meade is concerned, she shouldn't be the Hebron Citizen of the Year. According to her, it should be her cucumber deliverer.

After grocery shopping at Ted's, Meade realized she had forgotten to pick up cucumbers. She expressed her frustration to a woman in the parking lot but opted not to return to the store as her young son was getting fussy. Meade left Ted's for home, planning to return to the store for the elusive cucumbers, when the woman from the parking lot pulled up to deliver the vegetables.

"She went above and beyond," Meade recalled. "That random act of kindness carried me for a long time."

Knowing how that single act impacted her made it difficult for Meade to express her feelings upon hearing that she had been named Citizen of the Year by the Hebron Women's Club chapter of the Junior Women's Club.

"Humbled," she said. "I feel humbled to be chosen to accept this award. I live in this community with so many exceptional people, and this award really represents them all."

Meade's undeniable impact on the town of Hebron varies depending on who you ask. To some she is the backbone of the AHM Summer Youth Theatre (where Meade has served as the director for the past 13 years). To others, Meade is the church member always willing to pitch in. And, to others, Meade is the neighbor who never hesitates to help when illness strikes or kids need to be supervised.

"She is an all-around great friend and person. I wish I lived in her neighborhood," Marsha Teck said. Teck was one of three individuals to serve on the selection committee for the Women's Club. She said Meade was the unanimous choice for the Citizen of the Year honor.

It was Meade's friend, Jane Golino, who nominated her. "What she brings to Hebron is real passion for community building," Golino said. "She is a great neighbor and would reach out to anybody."

Golino and Meade met on a Sunday about seven years ago when the families, each with

three children, happened to sit next to each other at the Church of the Holy Family. Since then, Golino said, she has been in awe of Meade, especially as she takes the role of Director for the Summer Youth Theatre each year.

"As her friend I get to see behind the scenes," Golino said. "I know what she goes through and her dedication to making the final production one that everyone will be proud of."

But it isn't just the final show that kids can be proud of. "Their self-esteem, their confidence, their ability to take risks, Mary Rose brings this out in all the kids," Golino explained. "Her impact on their lives is both short and long term."

AHM Youth Services Director Joel Rosenberg echoed the same sentiments. "What greater way to build confidence than through the theatre?" he said. "Mary Rose recognizes that and encourages each student to shine in their own ways. She has, literally, touched the lives of hundreds of kids."

From the star of the show to the child lifting the ropes to open the curtain, Golino said that Meade gives every child the same amount of respect. "No matter what role they're playing they're important, and Mary Rose lets them know," she said.

Meade and her husband, Mark Busa, first came to Hebron in 1992, when Meade took a teaching position at RHAM High School. She left RHAM shortly thereafter, after giving birth to her sons Danny, now 12, and Adam, now 10. But Meade remained active in the academic community, as she began tutoring. She and Mark now have four boys, Peter, 8, and Paul, 1.

Meade and her husband don't envision leaving Hebron anytime soon. Their almost 200-year old house with crooked floors has become home.

Meade found out that she had been named Citizen of the Year about a month ago when Teck called her to share the news. Humbled by the award, Meade still searches for answers for why she was chosen amidst the thousands of Hebron residents.

"When I think about the difference between



Peter, Danny and Adam Busa surround their mother, Mary Rose Meade, while Meade's husband Mark Busa and their youngest son, Paul, stand in back. The family is shown at the Hebron Junior Women's Club ceremony on May 20. Meade was selected as the town's Citizen of the Year by the organization, for her service to Hebron.

me and all of the other deserving people in town, a lot of it, I think, is my friends who wrote letters of nomination," Meade said. "To see the joy that it brought my friends when I won was just great."

After the Junior Women's Club ceremony on May 20, Meade's friends poured out of the woodwork to celebrate. In a setting reminiscent of an episode of *This Is Your Life*, friends from every strata of Meade's life turned out to congratulate her and affirm the good work she does in Hebron. "For me, the best part of this whole thing, was all the friends of mine that were brought together," Meade said. "It was a

wonderful feeling."

Meade's not taking too much time to savor her award. She is already in full swing for this year's Summer Youth Theatre production of *Fiddler on the Roof Junior*. Auditions were held last week and rehearsals will be in full swing at the end of the month. Meade will have one month to turn 90 kids into the cast and crew for the musical. "I don't know how we're going to do it," she said. "A month seems much shorter than what we've had in past years."

While Meade might worry, those around her don't. "She does it every year," Rosenberg said, "and every year it's great."

East Hampton Breaks Ground for Water Tower Demolition

by Michael McCoy

About 15 people showed up to Tuesday's ribbon cutting in the center of East Hampton, commemorating the long-awaited demolition of the Walnut Avenue Water Tower.

State Rep. Gail Hamm, Acting Town Manager Bob Drewry, Facilities Manager Frank Grzyb, Fire Marshal Phil Visintainer, Assistant Superintendent of Schools Kevin Reich, Town Council Chairman Melissa Engel, and Community Development Agent John Fauxbel of the state Department of Economic and Community Development all attended this briefest of ceremonies.

The water tower was erected in the 1930s by the Gong Bell Company and was eventually sold to the J.C. Barton Company and, later, the town.

Though this project has been in the works for the better part of two years, Visintainer said the concerns over the water tower actually date back to around 2004, when vandals scaled the tower and drilled holes in it, causing it to lose half of its capacity. Visintainer said the town then looked into repairing it, but found that it was not worth the effort, given the condition.

A study conducted by the state revealed that not only was the tower in disrepair, but it was hazardous. The legs were not strong enough to support its 50,000 gallons when filled, and it could potentially fall over from strong winds

when empty.

In 2006, the town applied for a state grant through the U.S. Departments of Housing and Urban Development's Small Cities Program. The town was awarded \$600,000 for the project, which was comprised of three phases. The first was the dredging of the fire suppression pond located at the corner of Walnut Avenue and Watrous Street, which had become contaminated with heavy metals, such as copper and nickel, which Visintainer attributed to industrial dumping.

The second phase was the overhaul of the pump house, located about 100 feet from the tower. This includes a new diesel engine, which helps the system pump 1,500 gallons per minute. In the past, the town needed the water tower as backup, should the pump not be sufficient. But the revamped system now renders the water tower obsolete.

Welcoming attendants to the event, Engel said the term "groundbreaking...seems odd when we're taking something down." She lamented, "I guess it's kind of been an eyesore, the poor thing. Anyway, its time has come."

Demolition began Thursday. According to Grzyb, it would be taken down, piece-by-piece, by a crane, and Drewry estimated the effort, which will be carried out by Haz-Pros of West Hartford, would take about a week.



State Rep. Gail Hamm (second from left) holds the golden shovel, and is joined by (from left) Community Development Agent John Fauxbel (of the state Department of Economic and Community Development), Acting Town Manager Bob Drewry and Town Council Chairman Melissa Engel during Thursday's groundbreaking.

Marlborough Sewer Project Finally Underway

by Kristina Histen

After years of planning, the town center and Lake Terramuggus sewer projects have finally started. Construction began Monday by F&J Incorporated of Ludlow, MA, on North Main Street, just south of Hall Trail.

"I watched the first shovel go into the ground," First Selectman Bill Black said Tuesday at the Board of Selectmen's meeting. "They are moving quite quickly. The contractors are very good and trying to make every accommodation to get people through."

There are three separate contracts involved in the project, Steven Pisch, Project Manager for the Town of Marlborough, said, and F&J Incorporated have two of them. F&J will mostly be doing the piping work in the roadways, Pisch said. Contract number two involves constructing the pump stations for the project and will be done by Kovacs Construction of Danbury, Pisch said. Kovacs is still in the design and engineering review stages. When that is completed, it will still take time to order specific pumps, electrical equipment and generators that need to be manufactured for the project, Pisch said. He estimates Kovacs will start work in about a month or two.

F&J Incorporated is running truck line pumps and putting gravity line pipes in the ground. These pipes will lead to the main pump station for the town located behind the Marlborough Country Barn Complex, Pisch said. Another pipe comes out of there and runs down North Main Street and Route 66, headed toward East Hampton. All sewer waste water will be pumped to East Hampton because of a regional waste water treatment plan for the pump, he said.

The contractors have estimated that the pipe work will take at least one year, Pisch said, but they still haven't received the schedule from the pump contractor because they are still work-

ing out project issues. It is believed that the whole system will be up and running in about two years, and eventually houses will be able to connect to the system, he said.

"This is going to be a long project and lot of construction over the next year or two," Pisch said. "We'll see how it goes and hopefully it will get done sooner, but with construction you never know what you're going to find before you start."

A main need for the project is because of a lot of failed septic systems around the lake that cause bacteria to filter into the lake and other drainage systems over the land, he said. The school has also been tied into the project and mandated by the state Department of Environmental Protection because of failed septic systems, he said.

Twenty-five percent of the project is being funded through clean water fund money, the DEP and the federal government, Pisch said. The other 75 percent will be paid with a low interest loan by the state over a 20 year period, he said.

"That's pretty much what other towns do," Pisch said. "For the town to come up with this kind of money would be too much to handle, so they have state money that is available."

Work hours for the project will be Monday through Friday, between the hours of 7 a.m. and 4 p.m., and, on some occasions, later afternoon hours will be required, Pisch said. Access to all businesses and private residences will be provided at all times, Black said.

"A request from construction [workers] and residents is [for drivers] to please slow down," Black said Tuesday. "I know there feels like a need to make up for lost time because of the rerouting, but just take a few extra minutes. We have provided reroutes."

The Town of Marlborough has issued a news



The town center and Lake Terramuggus sewer projects are finally underway. Shown here is construction equipment, after hours, in front of Town Hall.

release providing further details on traffic and the aforementioned rerouting. There will be alternating one-lane access through the work zone between Pettengill Road and Route 66 between 7 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. After 4 p.m., and on weekends, North Main Street will open to all traffic.

Through traffic to Route 66 will be restricted for a short period, "most likely" from June 9-13, from just south of the Marlborough Country Barn complex to Route 66, the news release said. During this period, local traffic and traffic to the Marlborough Barn complex will be

available on North Main Street from the south.

During the period that through traffic from North Main Street to Route 66 is restricted, a detour for through traffic will require that motorists traveling south on North Main Street take Park Road to Jones Hollow Road and head south towards the center of town. Trucks and buses traveling south are required to use West Road to Jones Hollow Road. Motorists desiring to travel north on North Main Street can use Jones Hollow Road to either Park Road or West Road, while trucks and buses will be required to use West Road.

Andover Budget Saga Continues

by Sarah McCoy

It's back to the drawing board for the Board of Finance, after residents voted down its proposed \$10.26 million budget at a town meeting Tuesday.

The proposed 2008-09 spending plan represented a 4.3 percent increase over the current year's budget.

The Board of Finance (BOF) met Thursday after press time to, presumably, make further adjustments to this number before the next town meeting on Tuesday, June 10.

"To the average taxpayer here," BOF Acting Chair Cathy Desrosiers said after Tuesday's meeting, "it's not about the percentage increase, it's about the departments affected by cuts."

Desrosiers is referring to the Town Clerk's budget. After voters at the May 27 referendum voted down the first budget, the BOF trimmed \$15,000 from the town government budget, including \$1,400 from the Town Clerk's account. On Tuesday, several residents raised concerns that this money should be reinstated.

"It's irresponsible to be making those cuts," resident Dennis Foran said. He went on to call the Town Clerk's office the most vital in the town and asked the BOF to return the \$1,000 for land records and \$400 for conferences that had been removed from the Town Clerk's account.

"We looked at the expended budget from the current year when we made our recommendations for cuts," Desrosiers explained. "This was one area where we felt we could make due with less based on what the Town Clerk expended this year."

While the BOF cut the town government budget last week, it refrained from touching the local Board of Education's proposed 2008-09 spending plan, due to unexpected costs that weren't accounted for in the budget. Thanks to rising fuel costs and magnet school tuition, Superintendent of Schools Andy Maneggia is estimating that the district will begin the school year \$75,000 in the hole.

With that information, the BOF opted to keep the school board budget in tact and adjust the town government budget. This, however, wasn't kosher for some residents. "The Board of Finance is in error by not doing something with the Board of Education] bud-

get," resident Donald Denley said. "All budgets should be looked at again and no area should be left untouched."

The local Board of Education is requesting a \$3.92 million budget, an increase in spending of 3.75 percent. The proposed spending plan represents 40 percent of the town's total budget. Another 41 percent of the budget is comprised of the RHAM Board of Education budget, which Hebron, Marlborough and Andover taxpayers all passed at a May 6 referendum.

While residents didn't give much guidance for the BOF in terms of where to make further reductions, they did use Tuesday's Town Meeting to sound off on the political makeup of the town. Resident Georgette Conrad stated that she felt it was a conflict of interest for the spouse of any First Selectman to serve on the Board of Finance. This prompted Marie Burbank, the Board of Finance member to whom Conrad was referring, to state, "When I became Marie Burbank I didn't give up my right to be a citizen."

Others criticized the town's format for even holding the town meeting. "It's prudent for the selectmen and finance board to do the cuts," resident Millie Missal said. "They certainly know the budget better than almost everyone here."

Desrosiers agreed with Missal, saying after the meeting that the town meeting is "almost like micromanaging the budget. It becomes very difficult for the Board of Finance to gauge where exactly cuts should be realized."

Desrosiers added that any and all areas of the budget are subject to adjustments excluding the RHAM budget, which has already been approved.

Ultimately, the vote to send the budget to referendum failed by a vote of 63-37. Since the proposed budget failed to gather approval to take the number to referendum, the \$15,000 cut by the BOF will be reinstated and the town will meet again Tuesday, June 10, for another town meeting. That meeting will be held at 7 p.m. in the Andover Elementary School cafeteria. The most current budget information, including any adjustments made by the BOF at Thursday's meeting, will be available at the town meeting on Tuesday.

Two Seriously Injured in Route 2 Crash in Colchester

by Kristina Histen

State Police are investigating a Monday afternoon car accident that left two people seriously injured.

According to state police, Jeffrey Anderson, 23, of Norwich, his front-seat passenger, Jessica Chartier, 25, of Lisbon, and a child riding in a car seat in the back, were traveling westbound on Route 2 at around 1:50 p.m. Monday, June 2.

The car was just west of exit 16 in Colchester when the vehicle drove off onto the center median, police said. The vehicle then swerved across both westbound travel lanes and struck

the guardrail before it rolled down an embankment and crashed into a tree, totaling the vehicle, state police said.

Both Anderson and Chartier suffered from serious head injuries, state police said. The injuries of the child were unknown as of Monday, according to state police.

The injured were transported to Hartford Hospital. Hospital officials said Thursday that Anderson had been discharged, while Chartier was listed in stable condition.

State Police are investigating the accident and did not return calls for comment.

Colchester Police News

5/28-Joshua Jonata, 25, of Rt. 117, Ledyard, was charged with failure to appear, State Police said.

5/29-Matthew Mierez, 20, of 14 Virginia Dr., Windham, was charged with third-degree assault, disorderly conduct and interfering with emergency call, State Police said.

5/29-Adrian Pompei, 19, of 71 Fox Ridge Dr., was charged with violation of probation, State Police said.

5/29-Lisa Adams-Puleo, 48, of 92 Main St., Hampton, was charged with second-degree larceny, identity theft, criminal impersonation and third-degree forgery, State Police said.

5/29-David Greenfield, 54, of 83 Basket Shop Rd., Hebron, was charged with violation of probation, State Police said.

5/30-William Rodriguez, 27, of 182 Preston St., Hartford, was charged with possession of cocaine and possession of marijuana, State Po-

lice said.

5/30-Joel Martinez, 25, of 2343 Albany Ave., West Hartford, was charged with possession of cocaine and possession of marijuana, State Police said.

5/31-Chad Nadeau, 18, of 198 East Hampton Rd., Marlborough, was charged with threatening, State Police said.

6/1-Alex Bashunov, 18, of 50 Hoskins Rd., Simsbury, was charged with DWI and failure to maintain lane, State Police said.

6/2-Spencer Emilio Paris-Beattie, 18, of 115 Johnson Rd., Marlborough, was charged with possession of drug paraphernalia, possession of controlled substances and reckless driving, State Police said.

6/3-Amy Chase, 25, of 5 Long Pasture Lane, East Haddam, was charged with DUI and improper parking, State Police said.

Portland Police News

5/26 — Michelle Paparello, 40, of 40 Ferry St., Middletown, was charged with possession of drug paraphernalia and narcotics not kept in original container, Portland Police said.

5/28 — Brian Darna, 27, of 97 Great Hill Pond Rd., was charged with breach of peace and second-degree criminal mischief, police said.

5/31 — Brittney Vigneri, 18, of 27 Hilltop Dr., was charged with second-degree breach of peace and third-degree criminal mischief, police said.

6/1 — A 17-year-old female was arrested on charged of second-degree breach of peace and third-degree criminal mischief, police sai

Marlborough Police News

5/29-Jacobs Rodrigue, 22, of 56 South Rd., was charged with second-degree assault and disorderly conduct, State Police said.

5/30-Phillip Sirois, 46, of 176 Saner Rd., was charged with disorderly conduct and threatening, State Police said.

5/31-Shelley Lewis, 44, of 198 East Hampton Rd., was charged with third-degree assault and first-degree breach, State Police said.

Obituaries

Hebron

George William Rogers III

George William Rogers III, Ph.D., 70, of the Gilead section of Hebron, beloved husband of Karen (Rickershauser) Rogers, passed away from a sudden and extreme heart attack at home on Wednesday, May 28. Born Dec. 11, 1937 in Melrose, MA, he was a son of the late George and Ruth (Simonson) Rogers, Jr.

A clinical psychologist for many years, he studied at Tufts University and went on to earn his Ph.D. from UConn in 1968. Dr. Rogers was a partner and co-founder of the Hartford Family Institute and author of "Bonding, Terror and Psychotherapy – A Primer." In his spare time, he was an avid reader and motorcyclist and held a deep love of film, opera and classical music. Together, Karen and George also enjoyed their summer home on Raquette Lake in the Adirondack Mountains in New York.

In addition to his loving wife of 15 years, he is survived by three sons, Thomas of Frederick, MD, Jonathan and his fiancée, Kelly Gillette of Denver, CO, and Brendan of Corvallis, OR; four grandchildren, Thomas, Jr., Michelle, Emma and Jack; his sister, Jean Rogers-O'Reilly of Santa Barbara, CA; his brother, Paul Rogers of Ventura, CA; his former wife, Nancy Delano of Exeter, NH; and numerous extended family members and friends.

In addition to his parents, he was predeceased by his brother, David Rogers and his 2nd wife, Valerie Keegan-Rogers.

Friends called Sunday, June 1, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. A memorial with sharing of remembrances followed. Burial will be private and at the convenience of the family.

For online condolences, visit www.auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Portland

Eugene Wallace Berube

Eugene Wallace Berube, 60, husband of Linda M. Estabrook Berube, of Summer Street, Portland, died Saturday, May 31, at St. Francis Hospital. Born in Winterville, ME, April 6, 1948, a son of the late Wallace Berube and the late Mabel "Mae" Vaillancourt Berube Guerette. He was a Portland resident for many years.

He had been employed as a project manager for McPhee Electric Ltd. for over 30 years until his retirement. Following his retirement, he was active with the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local No. 35. He was a 3rd Degree Knight in the Knights of Columbus in Terryville and was a member of the Bristol Fish and Game Club. He had been active in the Boy Scouts with his sons and his nephews and he coached his children's baseball and basketball teams for many years. He was a volunteer for the Portland Agricultural Fair and was an avid fan of the Boston Red Sox and UConn basketball teams. He was a parishioner of the Church of Saint Mary.

Besides his wife Linda, he is survived by his daughter Kaitlin Berube; his sons Bruce E. Kosis, Jr., and his companion Danielle, and Michael E. Berube; his granddaughter Caroline Emma Kosis, all of Portland; his step-father Herman J. Guerette of Newington; his sisters Nancy Colgate and her husband Bruce of East Hartford, and Dawn Stange of Burlington; his brother Darrell Berube of Brooklyn, NY; his step-brothers Stephen Guerette, Mark Guerette, both of Bristol, Jeff Guerette of Burlington, and David Guerette of East Hampton; his brother-in-law Jason Stange of Torrington, a special friend Art Serrago, and many nieces and nephews. The family of Eugene Berube wishes to give special thanks to the St. Francis Hospital Cancer Center and to the nurses and staff of 8-1.

Relatives and friends attended a Mass of Christian Burial Tuesday, June 3, directly at the Church of Saint Mary. Calling hours were in the Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland, Monday, June 2. Interment will be private in West Meadow Cemetery in Newington. In lieu of flowers, gifts in his memory may be sent to the Saint Francis Hospital Cancer Center, 114 Woodland Street, Hartford, CT 06105.

Hebron

Daniel Eugene Champion Jr.

Daniel Eugene Champion Jr., 76, of Amston, beloved husband of Sara Rita (McInnis) Champion, died peacefully Thursday, May 29, at St. Francis Hospital, surrounded by his loving family. Born Feb. 10, 1932, in Hartford, he was a son of the late Daniel and Madeline (Fennelly) Champion Sr. A veteran of the Korean War, he proudly served with the U.S. Army. Mr. Champion was a retired machinist at Flanagan Bros., Inc. in Glastonbury for 38 years before his retirement in 1997. He was an award-winning roller skater, and avid bowler and a lifelong fan of the Red Sox. Mr. Champion attended Christ Lutheran Church in Hebron.

In addition to his loving wife of 44 years, whom he wed on June 28, 1963, he is survived by his daughters, Linda Novotasky of Middleburg, FL., Anita Malloy of Portland, and Lisa Smith of Coventry; Linda's husband, Daniel; their children, Joseph and Jessica (Novotasky) Breiden; Jessica's husband, Mark, and their children, Paige and Lauren; Anita's children, Cassandra and Patrick Malloy; and Lisa's daughter, Shayla Smith; his sister-in-law, Ann Wells and her husband, Dwight of Dothan, AL; nieces, Lori Champion, Cameron (Wells) Killen; nephews, Donald Dwight Wells, Jr. and grandnephews, Jackson Wells Killen and Don Wesley Killen.

Friends called Monday, June 2, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. Graveside services were observed Tuesday directly at the Duck River Cemetery, McCurdy Road, Old Lyme, with Pastor Jonathan Liebich, officiating. Donations in his memory may be made to Christ Lutheran Church Early Childhood Center, P.O. Box 62, Hebron, 06248 or to the charity of one's choice.

Hebron

Armand Leon Boucher

Armand Leon Boucher, 61, a longtime resident of Hebron, passed away Friday, May 30, from heart failure. Born Aug. 21, 1946 in St. Albans, VT, he was the son of the late Florence and Clarence Boucher. Mr. Boucher graduated from RHAM High School in Hebron before serving in the United States Air Force at Vandenberg AFB, CA, from 1964 to 1968. He was a fuel specialist and achieved the rank of sergeant prior to being honorably discharged.

He was a proud AA Chairperson and owner of Boucher's Tree Service in Hebron for over 20 years. He met his loving wife of 10 years, Sheri, while they were both working as nurses' aides at Abbey Manor. Together they enjoyed collecting antiques and opened Antique Emporium two and a half years ago in Colchester. He loved basketball and volleyball as well as spending time with his grandchildren.

In addition to his wife Sheri, he is survived by a daughter, Sherri Boucher and her partner Lori Sinnen of Atlanta, GA; a son, Steven Boucher and his wife Lisa of Franklin; three stepchildren, James Otka, Floyd Otka and Nicholas Otka, his siblings, Roland and his wife Pauline of MN, Yvonne Bain and her husband Kenneth of Andover and Anthony and his wife Helen of Amston. He is also survived by five granddaughters, five nieces and five nephews.

His family received friends at Potter Funeral Home, 456 Jackson St. (Route 195), Willimantic, on Monday, June 2. His Funeral Mass was celebrated Tuesday, June 3, at Church of The Holy Family, 185 Church St. (Route 85), Hebron. In lieu of flowers, Armand's family suggests memorial donations to Church of The Holy Family, Hebron or to the Hebron Volunteer Fire Department. For online memorial guestbook and directions, visit www.potterfuneralhome.com.

Marlborough

David H. Wagner

David H. Wagner, 62, of Portland Road, Marlborough, beloved husband of Janet (Smith) Wagner, died Monday, June 2, as a result of lung cancer, at Middlesex Hospital. He was born in Bloomsburg, PA, the son of the late John and Violette (Kiner) Wagner. David was the co-owner of Village Automotive Center in Tariffville for 26 years and retired in July 2007 due to health reasons. He enjoyed reading, gardening, and being outdoors.

Besides his wife, he is survived by his daughter, Dawn Smith and her husband Rick of Colchester; and his granddaughter, Katelyn. He was predeceased by a brother, John Wagner. The family would like to thank all friends and neighbors for helping so much this past year.

Funeral services were to be held today, Friday, June 6, at 11 a.m. at Biega Funeral Home, 3 Silver St., Middletown. Burial will be in Pine Grove Cemetery, Middletown. Friends call at Biega Funeral Home Thursday, June 5. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Middlesex Hospital Weiss Hospice Unit, 28 Crescent St., Dept. of Philanthropy, Middletown, CT 06457 or to VNA East, 34 Ledgebrook Dr., PO Box 716, Mansfield, CT 06250 or to Roy B. Pettengill Ambulance Assoc., PO Box 308, Marlborough, CT 06447.

Portland

Stephen Melesko

Stephen Melesko, 79, of Portland, son of the late Stephen and Jennie (Dobensky) Melesko, died Sunday, May 25, at home following a long illness. He was born in Meriden and attended Meriden High School. Steve was a veteran of World War II, serving with the U.S. Navy, before entering the Naval Academy in 1947 and graduating in 1951. He also served during the Korean War and his first assignment was to the USS Benham. He retired as a Lieutenant USNR in 1958. He then worked as an industrial engineer for Eastman Kodak in Rochester, NY. His manufacturing career took him to several different companies through the years. In 1991, he retired as a manufacturing manager with the former Napier Co. of Meriden.

Before he became ill, Steve was very active in professional, educational, charitable and church organizations as well as the Naval Academy Alumni Association, where he served as president of the Connecticut Chapter and then trustee of the USNAAA Board representing Connecticut. He was a chapter president in Connecticut and also regional V.P. for the American Institute of Industrial Engineers; past president and director of MARC; charter member, board member and President of RMS (Residential Management Services) where he was involved in developing an organization to administer several area ARCs (Middletown, Meriden, Southington, Bristol and New Britain) group homes for adults with developmental disabilities. Steve was the representative and chairperson for MARC's first group home at Powder Ridge in Middlefield. He also served many years as a director on the Board of ARC Connecticut and the Harkness Committee. Previously, he served on the Board at Kuhn in Meriden. Steve was an active parishioner, lector and member of the parish council at St. John Church in Middletown.

Mr. Melesko is survived by his loving and caring wife of 56 years, Mary (Cote) Melesko of Portland; his daughter, Susan and son-in-law Neil Jay of East Hampton; his son, Robert Melesko and daughter-in-law Sharon of RI; his granddaughter, Christy Melesko of RI; two brothers, Gerald Melesko and sister-in-law Mary Beth of Meriden, Vincent Melesko and sister-in-law Marlene of East Lyme; two sisters, Mary Ellen Melesko of Southington, Charlotte Legonski and her husband Edward of Farmington; also several nieces, nephews, grand nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by a daughter Karen Melesko and son, Brian Melesko. Steve was a wonderful husband, father and grandfather. He will be missed greatly.

Funeral services were held Thursday, June 5, from Biega Funeral Home, 3 Silver St., Middletown, followed by a Funeral Liturgy in St. John Church, Middletown. Burial with military honors will be in St. John's Cemetery. Friends called at the Biega Funeral Home Wednesday, June 4. Those who wish may send memorial contributions to St. John Church, St. John Sq., Middletown, CT 06457 or the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society of CT, 300 Research Pkwy., Ste. 310, Meriden, CT 06450.

Andover

John A. Barone

John A. Barone, 48, of Andover, died Sunday, June 1, at home after a lifelong battle with juvenile diabetes. He joins his beloved mother, Jacqueline Barone, his father, Bill "Pops" Barone, and his much-missed dog "Sudz" in Heaven. John was born in Hartford, and resided there until his move to Andover in 1977, and was employed by the Metropolitan District for the past 30 years. He leaves many friends and supporters at the MDC. He attended Kennelly School and graduated from Bulkeley High School in 1978. John was an avid collector and car enthusiast.

He leaves his brother, Stephen Barone of Newington, his sister, Lisa Beaudoin and her husband, Tom of Rocky Hill, as well as his much-loved nieces Morgan and Sarah Beaudoin. Their Uncle John shall live on in their hearts. He also leaves many close friends that have many fond memories of times spent with John.

A Memorial Service was held Wednesday, June 4, in the Farley-Sullivan Funeral Home, 34 Beaver Rd., Wethersfield. Friends and relatives called on John's family Wednesday at the Funeral Home. Interment followed at Cedar Hill Cemetery, 453 Fairfield Ave, Hartford. In lieu of flowers John's family requests friends to consider memorial donations to the Juvenile Diabetes Assoc., 20 Batterson Park Rd., 3rd Fl., Farmington, CT 06032.

Colchester

Robert Solomon Feldman

Robert Solomon Feldman, "Bob," 84, of Broadway, beloved husband of Eleanor, passed away Friday, May 30, at home after a courageous battle with cancer. Born Aug. 21, 1923, in Reading, PA, he was the son of the late Harry and Anna (Meyerowitz) Feldman.

Mr. Feldman was a proud veteran of World War II, having served with the US Army Air Corps. On March 1, 1947, he wed the former Eleanor Lockfield in Brooklyn, NY. Bob was in poultry and egg farming for over 50 years and had served as Treasurer of the Connecticut Poultry Association for many years. He took great pride in helping numerous others establish their own farms. Mr. Feldman had also served as treasurer of the former Colchester Jewish Aid Congregation and was past president and treasurer of the Colchester Lions Club. In his spare time, he enjoyed boating but found his greatest joy in his family, to whom he was ever devoted. May his memory be for a blessing.

In addition to his loving wife of 61 years, he is survived by his four children, Mitchell of Savannah, GA, Rayna of Somersworth, NH, Abby Foballe and her husband, Mark and Harvey and wife, Barbara, all of Glastonbury; three grandchildren, Megan and Lauren Foballe and Benjamin Feldman; his dog, Buddy; five beloved granddogs; and numerous extended family and friends.

Funeral services were observed Sunday, June 1, at Congregation Ahavath Achim, 84 Lebanon Ave., Colchester, with Rabbi Kenneth Alter, officiating. Committal with full military honors will follow in the Colchester Jewish Aid Cemetery. Shiva was observed at the family home at 79 Broadway from Sunday through Tuesday evening, with Minyan at 8 p.m. Kindly omit flowers, those who wish may make memorial donations to Congregation Ahavath Achim, P.O. Box 5, Colchester 06415. Care of arrangements has been entrusted to the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester with the Hebrew Funeral Association. For online condolences, visit www.auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

East Hampton

Deborah Pelletier

Deborah (Ronzello) Pelletier, 49, of East Hampton, passed away on Wednesday, June 4, after a brave battle with cancer. She is survived by her husband, Omer Pelletier of East Hampton; a brother, Ronald Ronzello and his wife Gloria of Bristol; a brother, David Ronzello and his partner Ronnie Butts of Wilmington, NC; and a sister-in-law, Rita Pelletier of East Hampton. She also leaves behind several nieces and nephews. Debbie was predeceased by her parents, Daniel P. and Emma B. Ronzello of Berlin.

A memorial service will be held at The Church of The Holy Family, Church Street, Hebron, at 11 a.m. on Saturday, June 7.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Cancer Services Oncology Unit, Middlesex Hospital, Office of Philanthropy, 28 Crescent St., Middletown, CT 06457.

Portland

Mary Anne Pettiross

Mary Anne "Sissy" (Valk) Pettiross, 63, of Lacey, WA, formerly of Portland, passed from this life Thursday, May 22, resting comfortably on her couch at home, a book in her lap, watching television. Born in Middletown on Aug. 25, 1944, to John William Valk and Katherine (Durgin) Valk, she graduated from Cromwell High School in 1962 and Central Connecticut State University. Mary Anne enjoyed a 30-year marriage to Middlesex Community College professor Rino Pettiross, who passed in 2000. She resided previously in Higganum, near which she worked as a banker for many years, and retired to Fort Myers, FL and Portland, before moving to Lacey.

She is survived by son Jeffrey Pettiross (Lake Forest Park, WA), her father (Middletown), sisters Linda Gamache (Portland), Amber Caverly-Shepherd (Cromwell), and Katherine Hennessey (Needham, MA), brother John Valk (North Conway, NH), daughter-in-law Victoria Pettiross, and grandchildren Kuran and Clara.

Mary Anne was a lifelong traveler, starting soon after high school, sharing her love with her family, and continuing to explore the world on her own, including a trip to Iran this April. She was a magnet for her community in Lacey, active in book and investment clubs, bridge, and global outreach through hosting international students.

A memorial service will be held at Wadsworth Mansion in Middletown, Monday, June 9, from 5-7 p.m. Memorial donations welcome to the Nature Conservancy (www.nature.org or 800-628-6860).