

RIVEREAST

# News Bulletin

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Triathletes make their way out of the lake after finishing the 400-yard swim phase of the fifth race of the Lake Terramuggus Triathlon Series Thursday, July 26.

## Going for the Marlborough Gold

by Katelyn Kelleher

A little chance of rain and thunder didn't put a damper on the fifth race in the Lake Terramuggus Triathlon Series at Blish Park Thursday, July 26. The competitors weren't going to stay dry for very long anyway.

Forecasts of hail, heavy rain, thunder and even a tornado watch may have dissuaded a few triathletes from heading outdoors the evening of the race – 131 individuals and relays finished the race, slightly lower than previous races in the series that saw numbers exceeding 190 finishers. The looming storms prompted race officials to shorten the swimming length from 500 yards to 400 yards. But overall, the race went off without a hitch and finished before a single drop of rain.

After the swim, a 12-mile bike ride and a five-kilometer run completed the fifth in the six-race Thursday series, with the final race to be held Aug. 9.

Competitors at the race spoke highly of the series, held annually in Marlborough since 2005, for being fun and not too competitive. Essex resident Jeff Sowa called the race very low-key. "You can still get some competition when you come out here but it's more relaxed," he said.

"This is probably the most fun race around," said race winner Karl Schilling of Canton. "It's really friendly and a lot of people here are racing for the first time, which is fantastic; not a lot of races have that. You just have people coming and hanging out. There's a wide variety of ability."

Sowa, who said he has competed in more than 60 triathlons over the last eight or nine years, started as a mountain bike racer. "I guess all of us were probably something initially," he said. "I was actually doing mountain bike racing in an off-road triathlon in Winding Trails in Farmington and I was hooked. I was dying in the swimming event, but you keep training and you get better."

"That's the beauty of it; you really have to put all three together," said Bob McCusker of Simsbury. "If you only do one thing, you're more prone to injury over time. This is really cross-training so you're more fit."

Schilling finished the race in 52:10, about a minute and a half before second place came down the finish chute. He also won the third race of the series on June 28 in 54:33. "I just started this just to do it," he said of taking up triathlons four years ago. He also competes in the Cedar Lake Triathlon Series in Chester.

Previously a soccer player, Schilling was quick to say cycling was his preferred triathlon phase.

East Haddam resident Sue Freeman had her daughters, Molly and Julia, cheering her on during the race, her first of the season. "I did two [triathlons] last year but not here," she said. "This is my first here. It's a great race; hilly, though."

The girls rested their handmade sign, which they held up during Freeman's entire race, then went back to cheering on other finishers, in-

See Marlborough Gold Page 2

## NBA Player Shoots Hoops at RHAM

by Geeta Schrayter

As 2 p.m. rolled around on Monday, the sound of dozens of basketballs bouncing off the floor of the RHAM High School gymnasium echoed through the air. The kids dribbling the balls, who ranged in age from 7 to 14, were waiting for the start of a basketball clinic that would feature UConn star alum – and soon-to-be NBA rookie – Jeremy Lamb.

All Pro Sports, the company that put on the clinic, works with NBA players to help the participants learn not just the fundamentals of their sport, but life lessons as well. Past participants have included former NBA players Kevin Ollie and Donny Marshall – last year, the clinic boasted Charlotte Bobcats star Kemba Walker – and on Monday, it was Lamb and his father Rolando who the kids learned from.

As Lamb, 20, a shooting guard with the Houston Rockets, sat down to get ready for the clinic – switching from his sandals to his "kicks" – he said he'd decided to participate after his father told him "a lot of good stuff" about the clinics. He added it was fun to be there and he was hoping to encourage a good attitude in the kids.

"The right attitude and working hard are great habits to instill," he said, adding he wanted to

get the kids "on the right track."

And staying on that right track has brought Lamb a long way from shooting hoops in the gym of Norcross High School in Norcross, Ga. As a freshman with the UConn Huskies, Lamb played in 41 games during the 2010-11 season and was named to the Big East All-Tournament Team, the NCAA West Region All-Tournament Team, and the NCAA Final Four All-Tournament team. He helped UConn capture the Big East Tournament title, as well as the Huskies' third NCAA national championship in 2011, something he described as "a great feeling."

It's something "a lot of players can't say they got to experience," he said.

Lamb competed with Team USA at the U19 FIBA World Championships in summer 2011, and during his sophomore year at UConn appeared in 34 games, was the team's leading scorer, and an honorable mention All-American. Then, at the NBA Draft this past June, Lamb was selected with the No. 12 overall pick by the Rockets.

"It'll be cool today," he said before hitting the court to shoot ball with some of the 68 kids who were present. And while at first the kids kept their distance, seemingly in awe of the

See NBA Player Page 2



Kids at a basketball clinic at RHAM High School Monday learned some basketball pointers, along with a few life lessons, from new NBA player Jeremy Lamb.



**Competitor Mike Ruggerio grabs his bike before heading off on a 12-mile ride in the second phase of the triathlon held last Thursday at Blish Park.**

**Marlborough Gold cont. from Front Page** cluding a friend's mother competing in her first triathlon.

Jen Christiansen and Anja Pennell, both members of different relays, had been doing triathlons for two years, but it was their first in Marlborough also. "If I had known it was this much fun I would've done them all," Christiansen said.

Pennell said she began with the Winding Trails Tri Series in Farmington. "They do weekly ones as well on Tuesday nights," she said. "Someone told me about it and I said, 'That sounds like fun.'"

Both Christiansen and Pennell have completed individual races, but were teaming up with friends last week. "At the end of the work-week, my friends and I are usually tired, and she doesn't like to run so I'm running for her," Christiansen said.

Pennell was completing the swimming and running phases. "My friend, who's biking right now, she's a really strong cyclist but she's not a swimmer," she said.

Marlborough Parks and Recreation will also sponsor a swim race and pancake breakfast at Blish Park Sunday, Aug. 5, where swimmers can race one-, two- or three-mile events, with the first race beginning at 8 a.m. Pre-register at [newingtonbike.com](http://newingtonbike.com) or register on the day of the race.

The final race in the Lake Terramuggus Triathlon Series will be held Thursday, Aug. 9, at 6 p.m. at Blish Park. There will be an Olympic distance triathlon, a 1,500-meter swim, a 24.9-mile bike ride and a 6.2-mile run, at Blish Park Saturday, Aug. 25, at 8 a.m. For more information, call Marlborough Parks and Recreation at 860-295-6203.



**Lamb shoots – and scores – while some of the clinic's 68 participants look on.**

**NBA Player cont. from Front Page**

basketball celeb, some of the kids soon moved in, shooting alongside him and watching as he made six baskets in a row.

From 3-foot-tall peanuts to Lamb's 6-foot-5 frame, everyone in the gym appeared to be having fun as they ran around with their balls. But when Leahy blew his whistle, it took seconds for all bouncing to stop and everything to turn to business as the kids were told to "hustle" and line up across the gym. They were then introduced to Rolando, and the "three hours of intense basketball," as Leahy called it, began.

Rolando, a character coach and motivational speaker who used to play for the Seattle Super-sonics, directed the kids. He told them they'd be learning "the exact same" principles and drills Lamb had been taught.

"I taught him everything he knows," said Rolando, adding the kids should be "so thankful and appreciative for the ability God has given you."

And then things began with a series of stretches and warm-ups.

"I know what you've been doing all summer," Rolando joked, as the kids performed their push-ups. "You've been eating Twinkies, watching ESPN and picking your nose – Jeremy's been doing the same thing!"

Over the next few hours, the kids practiced a number of drills, such as the figure 8, where the ball is dribbled in a figure eight between the player's legs, and one where the ball is balanced over the player's head on their fingertips and bounced lightly. They worked on their footwork and game fundamentals through activities such as jumping over hurdles to help with their agility and dribbling around cones while Rolando, Lamb and staff members from All Pro Sports supported them.

"Push yourself," urged Rolando. "This is what champions are made of; champions don't take shortcuts."

And when the clinic wound down, the kids, with their flushed cheeks and damp T-shirts, listened to Lamb as he spoke about the game and his routine.

Lamb said it was a lot of little things he did when he was younger that helped get him to this point. He said he was outside playing with his dad at a young age, and could frequently be found outdoors dribbling. When he was in high school, Lamb added, he would get up at 5:30 a.m. and be in the gym shooting for an hour every morning before school started.

"That's how I got here now," he said, stressing that his dad was also "pushing me the whole time to always work hard."

And when Lamb's dream of playing in the NBA came true, he gave credit to another source as well – and made his dad cry as a result.

"I've never seen my dad cry, but on draft night I said, 'I want to thank Jesus Christ,' and he cried because I put God first," Lamb shared. "I can't do it by myself."

Lamb said he'd be heading back to Houston at the end of August and until then, he'd work on maintaining his skills and fitness. Then, when the NBA season starts up at the end of October, he'll work to "be the best I can be and live out my dream."

But it was only a few short years ago that Lamb was playing in high school, and as he finished speaking with the kids at Monday's clinic, he let them know they weren't so different from him.

"I see me in ya'll," he said. "Keep working on it."

## Neighbor Helps Cops Nab Burglar

by Joshua Anusewicz

A watchful neighbor was able to alert police to a burglary in progress last Friday, which resulted in the suspect's arrest, East Hampton Police said.

According to Sgt. Michael Green, the incident took place just after noon on July 27, when police received a phone call about a suspected burglary occurring on Laurel Glen Drive; the call came from a neighbor, who noticed a man allegedly climbing into the window of the house next door, Green said. The suspect, who was described as a white male wearing a hat, white tank top, shorts, sneakers and a black backpack, was then described as fleeing the area on Laurel Glen Drive toward East Hampton High School.

Green said he was then dispatched to the area, where he was able to locate the suspect, William Shane Landry, 36, of no certain address, walking toward the high school, at the intersection of Hills Avenue and North Maple Street. Landry matched the neighbor's description, Green said, and was arrested after "some brief roadside questioning and a positive identification" by the neighbor.

After being taken into custody, a search of Landry's backpack turned up several valuable items, including a GPS unit, a digital video camera and Bose headphones, Green said. However, these items were found not be from the residence on Laurel Glen Drive, he said,

but rather a residence on Bevin Boulevard that had allegedly been burglarized by Landry earlier in the day. Green said that the homeowner on Laurel Glen Drive, who was not home at the time of the incident, determined nothing had been taken from their residence.

According to Green, Landry was charged with third-degree burglary and third-degree criminal mischief, a charge that stems from damage he caused to a "radon gas abatement system" that he used to climb into the home. Landry is being held on \$75,000 court set bond and is scheduled to appear at Middletown Superior Court Monday, Aug. 20, at 10 a.m. Green said the police are working on a warrant for the Bevin Boulevard burglary, which will result in additional charges.

Landry, a multi-convicted felon, is well-known by the East Hampton Police, Green said. In the past, Landry has been convicted multiple times for burglary, larceny and possession of narcotics, which has earned him several years in state prisons.



**Landry**

## Two Arrested in Attempted East Hampton Copper Theft

by Joshua Anusewicz

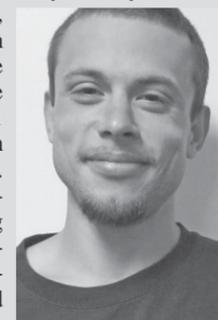
East Hampton Police arrested two area residents last month who allegedly attempted to steal copper materials from a church on Middle Haddam Road.

According to Sgt. Jared Boynton, police were dispatched to Second Congregational Church at 52 Middle Haddam Road just before 3 a.m. Saturday, July 21, after a neighbor had called to report suspicious activity at the church. Officer David Gionfriddo was the first to arrive at the scene, Boynton stated, where he found that copper gutters had been pulled off of the church building and placed in a pile on the ground. Gionfriddo also found a backpack filled with copper pieces from other areas of the church, Boynton added.

At that time, Boynton stated, no suspects were in the area of the church. Roughly 45 minutes later, however, Gionfriddo was dispatched to Cobalt Lodge at 29 Middle Haddam Road for a report of a suspicious person. Boynton stated that a woman had stopped at the lodge and asked for directions, claiming

to have been abandoned by her boyfriend.

A short time later, Officer John Wilson was able to locate the woman, Nicole LaPlante, 19, of 41 Old Middletown Ave., on Route 66. Boynton said that after interviewing LaPlante, she confessed to her involvement in the attempted theft and also implicated her boyfriend,



**Frederick Dart**

Frederick Dart, 24. Dart was later arrested at the Riverdale Motel in Portland, where he resides, police said.

According to the state's judicial website, Dart has an extensive history of drug and theft-related convictions, which have resulted in jail time.

Both suspects were charged with second-degree criminal mischief, second-degree conspiracy to commit criminal mischief, sixth-degree larceny, and sixth-degree conspiracy to commit larceny; both were released after posting \$10,000 surety bond. Boynton stated that the suspects were scheduled to appear in Middletown Superior Court Tuesday, July 31.

# Colchester Water and Sewer Extension Delayed

by Katelyn Kelleher

A water and sewer line extension project originally scheduled to begin Wednesday as part of a larger plan for the state to build a new Department of Transportation (DOT) facility in town has been delayed slightly.

Public Works Director Jim Paggioli said the state has a contract executed to begin construction on the project but the builders haven't had a pre-construction meeting yet. He said a meeting should be held within the next week and will determine when the project will start.

The state approved funding in October 2011 to construct a new DOT repair facility on the corner of Route 85 and Lake Hayward Road and extending the water and sewer system to that part of town. The state funding was originally set at \$35.45 million, but Paggioli said bids were down at about \$17 million for the project.

The new facility will replace and merge three deteriorating facilities in Montville, Lisbon and Higganum. DOT spokesman Kevin Nursick said in November the three facilities are out of date and are no longer able to meet their needs.

The facility in Colchester will employ 50 in a 62,000-square foot facility with a vehicle base, storage area, storage stock room, materials testing lab and soil storage area. It will be used to repair vehicles, heavy equipment and electrical items and for material testing.

The \$2.3 million water and sewer system extension, covered as part of the estimated \$17 million in state funding, will reach from South Main Street, down Route 85 to Lake Hayward Road. Paggioli approximated the project is 2,600 feet of piping.

Waiting on the pre-construction meeting before the groundbreaking to lay down the utility

pipes won't delay anything on the DOT facility construction, Paggioli said, as both projects are being handled by the same construction company.

Paggioli said the extension is a two-phase project, and expects the water line will be in operation by the end of November.

"On the sewer line, most of the work will be installed this year, but the pump station construction may not be installed and working until next year," he said.

Paggioli said traffic control will be discussed during the upcoming pre-construction meeting and expects there will be local detours and possible lane closures. Once the traffic situation is examined, information will be posted on the town's website, he said.

The state funding for the sewer and water expansion with the construction of the DOT

facility will benefit the town by allowing for commercial development in that area. A Tractor Supply Company store, developed by New England Retail Properties Inc. of Wethersfield, will be constructed directly across the street from the DOT facility, which would bring 15-20 more jobs to town. Construction on the store, possibly, will be completed mid-winter, Paggioli said.

The state Office of Policy and Management estimates the project will create 735 construction-related jobs.

State Sen. Eileen Daily said in a press release last fall, while working with state Rep. Linda Orange to secure the state funding, that "Colchester has shown remarkable growth over the past few years and this bond allocation is additional evidence of our resolve to keep pace with that progress."

Marlborough Colchester Marlborough Colchester Marlborough Colchester Marlborough Colchester Marlborough Colchester Marlborough Colchester



Local band Carnage competed in the Hartford Battle of the Bands at the Webster Theater last Saturday and band members said they put on their best show yet. At left, lead singer and guitarist Dan Paquette takes front and center during their performance. At right, Paquette and Jason Norkeveck jam on their guitars.

## Carnage Tears Up the Stage

by Katelyn Kelleher

The local band Carnage was hoping to beat their competition in a bloodbath in the Hartford Battle of the Bands at the Webster Theater last Saturday. Although Carnage didn't take home the top prize, it put up a good fight with what members called their strongest performance yet.

The quartet of Dan Paquette, Alexis Paquette, Jason Norkeveck and Shawn Herman, all from Marlborough or Colchester, make up the group that bested all but one group in a preliminary battle in the spring, to make it to the finals last weekend and earn a chance to win \$500 and 20 hours of studio time.

To advance from the previous round in May, Carnage had to finish one of the top three bands. It proved no problem for the four.

The band certainly gave it their best shot Saturday, too. "It was probably one of our best shows ever," said Dan, a Marlborough resident and lead vocalist and guitarist for the band, adding Carnage played at 7 p.m., during the first half of the show. The doors opened at 4 p.m.

"The sound was really great and our band was one of the tightest we've been," he said.

"We had all our songs down and we just fit together."

His cousin, Alexis, of Colchester, agreed. "I think it went really well," she said. The band performed, along with a few of their other original songs, their first original piece, "Partying's an Art," and their newest, "Nuclear Waste."

Carnage also performed a cover of "Sweating Bullets" by Megadeth.

Although they ended up leaving before the final bands took the stage between 1 and 2 a.m., Dan said he was confident in their performance and thought they probably came in the top five, possibly the top three. Other bands battling included Architect Rufus, Amplified Afterthoughts, Fish House, Gate 38, Deemed to Rise, Blackthorns, Up is Down, Marching On, Kingsley Amiss, War of Angels, The Boxing Ghandis, Haddam Neck and My Soul, My Surrender.

"A lot of other bands were really good that night," Dan said.

A representative from the Webster Theater said Enfield-based Up is Down ended up taking the top prize, the only band to beat Car-

nage at the qualifier battle in May.

Carnage has its own style, drawing influence from bands such as Metallica and Slayer. "We're a thrash metal band," Dan said, which he explained is a late 1980s subgenre of heavy metal. "But we also incorporate music from today...it's not straightforward music."

The band is also influenced by "second wave of thrash metal" bands, Alexis said, citing Municipal Waste as an example.

Much of their competition was of the modern heavy metal genre, but not all. "There were also a couple soft rock bands and some old school metal," Dan said.

The four from Carnage, though young, take their music seriously. It all started in the summer of 2010 with Dan and Herman, the band's drummer, who had been longtime friends.

"I wanted to get [Herman] into music, so we just started jamming," Dan said.

The two got their beginnings in the band Apocalypse, along with another guitarist not a member of Carnage. "We kind of were just fooling around," Dan said. "Right around the winter of 2010 we started getting more serious;

playing more shows late winter."

When they asked Alexis and Norkeveck to join the band, the name switched over to Carnage – for reasons unclear, though. "I'm pretty sure Dan just came up with it in the beginning," Alexis said.

The band played at local venues, frequenting the Webster Theater.

And music isn't just a hobby for the Carnage four; it's also their course of study. Dan and Alexis Paquette are both sophomores at the Greater Hartford Academy of the Arts. Alexis is a jazz major while Dan is working on becoming one. Norkeveck is a freshman at the academy and Herman is trying to get into the program, Alexis said.

Further, they're trying to turn the band into something that pays. Having already recorded one demo album, Carnage is trying to secure more recording time. And while winning the top prize at the Battle of the Bands would have helped accomplish this, Alexis still hopes a music label is in the group's future.

"I'm hoping that we end up getting signed," she said.

# Skepticism Expressed Over Route 6 Plan in Andover

by Geeta Schrayter

The draft report of a recent transportation study on the Route 6 Hop River Corridor was discussed by the Board of Selectmen at its meeting Wednesday – and not all the comments were favorable.

The two-year study, conducted by the Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) and the Department of Transportation on the Hop River Corridor, examined 11 miles of Route 6 – stretching through Bolton, Coventry, Andover and Columbia – and two miles of Route 66 east between Notch Road in Bolton and the Willimantic River at the Columbia-Windham town line.

The final results of the study, which were first presented in June, recommended changes to five different areas along the corridor: Bolton Notch and Bolton Crossroads, Coventry Ridge, Historic Andover and Lighthouse Corners in Columbia.

Some of the key goals of the changes were to address speeds, improve safety at intersections, for pedestrians and bicyclists; improve access to the Hop River Trail; and provide opportunity for future development.

For Andover, recommended were modifications to Route 6 that include intersection improvements and speed mitigation measures, as well as streetscape improvements and better pedestrian crossing, signals and signs.

In addition, the idea for a small network of streets that would support the town's vision for a future mixed-use village and the layout for said vision were included.

After a presentation was given on the study results, selectman Jay Linddy, who led the meeting in place of First Selectman Bob Burbank, who is currently recovering from heart surgery, said he didn't think the idea was feasible.

He said the environmental impact of the mills that used to be in town meant there could be a substantial clean-up cost, and he thought the

impact the changes would have on the Hop River itself "would be huge." He also noted there was a significant slope downgrade in the area where the village was envisioned, on the southern side of Route 6 moving back toward the Hop River.

The study pegged the cost for the Andover modifications as \$11 million, but Linddy was skeptical the changes would be that low, saying, "I think that's not even going to cover 25 percent."

However, Jeff Parker, a representative from Clough Harbour & Associates, the company that helped develop the plan, explained the amount presented didn't include everything.

"The cost we show is for [changes to] the roadway, the sight way, the grade wall," Parker said, but not any cleanup if there were issues from the mills or the "substantial site grading."

"Without further study that's not something we could put a number to," he said. "There are definitely site constraints."

But Linddy was still hesitant.

"The other thing is, we're looking at something that people might think could be done in 10 years," he said, "but I think the price of this project would be so much higher in 10 years [as prices increase] – I don't know where the funding is going to come from. We can't even afford a senior center."

But selectwoman Elaine Buchardt explained the project would be paid for in phases. She said it would consist of state and federal projects and grant funding, and Parker said the development for the mixed-use village "could also be covered by private development."

"The town itself certainly isn't rich enough to do anything on any large scale," Buchardt said. "This is a regional plan; all four towns are invested in it."

Buchardt added there was "a lot of low-hanging fruit" with the medians, sidewalks, street

lights and working to get additional parking for the rail trail.

"If we don't have this – we don't have a thing," she said. Without the study, she said, the town would have "no vision, no plan – nothing to look forward to or work on. That's why this is valuable... it's an idea and that's what we have to work with."

Buchardt furthered the town wasn't making a commitment to implement any of the recommendations.

"This isn't committing to do this," Buchardt said. "This is committing to look at this as a good idea."

As Buchardt made a motion to endorse the study, she said selectwoman Julia Haverl had been to some of the workshops and was "for it" as well, and she also said Burbank liked the plan. However, neither could make a formal endorsement since they weren't present at the meeting.

The motion to endorse the study passed 2-1, with Linddy against. The final version of the study will be published in the fall, after it's been presented to officials in Andover, Bolton, Coventry and Columbia.

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Also at the meeting, Linddy informed the board the application for \$175,000 in Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) funding had been submitted for repairs to the bridge on Times Farm Road.

The grant would cover 20 percent of the total costs of the project. The remaining 80 percent will be paid for by the federal government through the Local Bridge Program, a program that "provides state grants and loans to municipalities for the removal, replacement, reconstruction and rehabilitation of local bridges," according to the state website, [ct.gov](http://ct.gov).

"Now we have to wait," he said, noting it would probably take about three to four weeks before the awards are announced.

Buchardt explained even if the STEAP grant wasn't awarded, work would begin on the bridge "or we'll lose the 80 percent," funding by the government.

If work on the bridge is delayed, and the status was downgraded from its present "poor" to "critical," the bridge would be shut down until the town fixes the areas the state finds of particular concern. But Federal Local Bridge Program liaison engineer Joseph Scalise told the board in July that if it got to that point, the changes "would unfortunately be paid for 100 percent by the town."

If the STEAP grant isn't awarded, options for funding the 20 percent the town is responsible for include utilizing some of the \$70,000 remaining in Local Capital Improvement Program (LoCIP) money the town has been awarded from the state in the past. Burbank has also said the town will get another \$27,000 in LoCIP funds during the current fiscal year.

"We have enough but let's go for the grant first," said Linddy.

The project "is 10 years overdue," selectwoman Cathy Desrosiers added.

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It was also announced at the meeting Republican Registrar of Voters Cathy Palazzi appointed Lisa Kurtz as the Republican deputy registrar of voters.

Kurtz will receive a yearly stipend of \$180 for her work.

"But then they get paid for the elections," Linddy explained Thursday, at a rate of \$12 per hour.

"Every election is at least 12 hours, but the day before there's hours, too," he said.

The appointment became effective July 30.

\* \* \*

The next Board of Selectmen meeting will be held Wednesday, Sept. 5, at 7 p.m., in the Town Office Building, 17 School Road.

# Suit Settled Against Former Portland Rep. O'Rourke

by Joshua Anusewicz

A lawsuit filed against a former Portland state representative and a Cromwell bar by family members of a Rocky Hill woman found frozen to death in 2009 has been settled outside of court.

According to a document on the state's judicial website from Wednesday, July 25, the lawsuit against James O'Rourke and O'Leary's Digger McDuff's Tavern was withdrawn by Lorraine and Joan Sinisgalli, the mother and sister, respectively, of Carol Jean Sinisgalli, whose body was found Jan. 22, 2009. The document states that the dispute had been resolved by "discussion of parties on their own," but does not disclose the terms of the settlement. As per the settlement, neither O'Rourke nor Digger McDuff's admit to wrongdoing in the case.

At the time of the incident, O'Rourke was the representative for the 32nd Assembly Dis-

trict, which covers Portland, Cromwell and parts of Middletown. The following year, O'Rourke would lose a re-election bid to Republican Christie Carpino.

The well-publicized incident brought into question O'Rourke's involvement in Sinisgalli's death, as well as the complicity of the tavern on the night in question. After the state's attorney's office denied an arrest warrant request against O'Rourke in June 2009, Sinisgalli's family members filed the suit in February 2010, seeking at least \$1 million in damages from O'Rourke and the tavern.

In the state's attorney's report, it states that on Jan. 21, 2009, O'Rourke arrived at the tavern just before midnight. Soon after, Sinisgalli was asked to leave the bar after assaulting two bar patrons, leaving behind her shoes, purse, cell phone and jacket. When O'Rourke left a

short time later, Sinisgalli allegedly jumped into the backseat of O'Rourke's vehicle and asked for a ride home to Rocky Hill, to which O'Rourke obliged.

After allegedly acting unruly inside the vehicle, Sinisgalli jumped out after O'Rourke stopped the vehicle and scrambled over a snow bank. O'Rourke returned to Cromwell after Sinisgalli left the vehicle, into the 14-degree weather.

Sinisgalli's body was found the next afternoon by a cross-country skier. An autopsy later determined that she died of hypothermia; the autopsy also found her blood alcohol level to be .08 and the presence of cocaine in her system.

Though the state's attorney's report deemed that there was not enough evidence to charge O'Rourke with criminally negligent homicide,

Sinisgalli's family members filed the suit, claiming the tavern should not have ejected Sinisgalli from the bar without shoes and a jacket on, and that O'Rourke should have prevented her from wandering off in the freezing temperatures.

The lawsuit had progressed over the past two years in New Britain Superior Court and, according to the state's judicial website, jury selection for a trial was scheduled for Thursday, Oct. 4.

Phone calls to the Sinisgallis' attorney, Pamela Cameron of Moore, O'Brien, Jacques and Yelenak in Cheshire, and O'Rourke's attorney, Steven Seligman of Katz and Seligman in Hartford, were not returned this week, so it's not known how the settlement was reached or what the terms of the settlement were.

# Portland Tri-Town Foods Keeps It Local

by Joshua Anusewicz

Rick Sharr shows a bit of deprecation when speaking of his business. “At first glance, it’s nothing special,” he admits. “But it works.”

As anyone who has been to Tri-Town Foods on Route 66 in Portland can attest, it sure does work – and has for a long time. And for all that time, a Sharr has been at the helm.

Tri-Town Foods, an independently-owned IGA grocery store, was opened in 1969 by Rick’s father, Edward Sharr. Edward had entered the grocery business years prior, working at his uncle’s grocery store in Plainville. After gaining some experience, Edward decided to branch out on his own by purchasing Tri-Town Foods in Colchester and moving it to Portland.

Just a few years later, in 1974, Rick became a full-time employee. Now, as the president and CEO of Tri-Town Foods, he operates the Portland location, as well as stores in East Lyme and Uncasville.

Although his position has changed with Tri-Town, the goals of the business haven’t: to serve the community. “In a town of only about 10,000, we need to be everything for everybody,” Sharr said, adding that they wouldn’t be able to tailor the store to a smaller niche. “We try to give the customers the basic food items they would need. And we try to provide a higher quality product at – hopefully – a better value than the bigger grocery stores.”

The products that Tri-Town offers are unique, as well, not just to Portland but to most of the area. Sharr said he prefers to keep the store stocked with products from local vendors, including produce, meats, dairy, and seafood, which he said is his biggest seller. But it’s not just fresh goods that are local – you can find local syrup, salsa, and pastas, as well.

“It’s good for the local economy,” Sharr said, “and usually a little healthier because it’s made with natural ingredients.” On any given day, it’s not uncommon to see Sharr working his cell phone, chatting with local vendors about getting the freshest products in shipped to Portland. And if need be, Tri-Town staff will even drive the store’s truck to pick it up.

“It takes a little more effort and coordination,” Sharr said of the process. “But it’s worth it.”

Tri-Town has been built on that effort and, up until recently, had not been formally rewarded for it. But in the past decade, organizations have started to take notice. In 2004, Tri-Town received the Adam J. Bozzuto Award for Community Involvement and the Bozzuto’s

Retailer of the Year award, both given by a distinguished Connecticut food group. In 2005, Tri-Town received the IGA Five Star Status award and was named IGA International Retailer of Year.

This year marked one of the biggest and most personal awards yet, as Sharr was inducted into the Connecticut Food Association Hall of Fame, a distinction Sharr referred to as “a lifetime achievement award for contributions to the food industry and community involvement” in the state of Connecticut.

Over the years, Sharr has not only run his business well, but has engrained the company into the Portland community, supporting local organizations and raising money for various town projects, including the local food bank, Project Graduation at the high school, and the Brownstone Quorum. Every year, Tri-Town also sponsors a charity golf tournament at Quarry Ridge Golf Course that has raised over \$40,000 for local organizations.

Despite all that, Sharr was still surprised to receive the honor. “I had a feeling it might happen,” he said with a sheepish smile. “But I was certainly surprised. [The awards ceremony, held in April at the Aqua Turf in Southington] went really well and was a nice honor.”

Running a small-town grocery outfit has been a challenge, Sharr admits, especially as big business has outgrown most local markets. Sharr said that 30 years ago, all of the local markets were “on a level playing field,” providing most of the same services to the towns they were in. But as the population of the small towns grew rapidly, the demand for more – more products, more brands, more variety – grew right with it. Sharr said that soon enough, if a town had over 10,000 residents, it was “on the radar” for a large grocery chain like Stop & Shop to move there.

To survive, smaller grocery stores have had to adapt to survive. “We needed to differentiate what the store does and create our niche,” Sharr said. “We do that by being really active in the community. Our motto is ‘invest in local’ – not just food, but our employees.”

Currently, Tri-Town has roughly 60 full-time and part-time employees.

With most of the staff being local, Tri-Town is also able to offer something many larger grocery chains don’t: personal service. Sharr encourages his employees to converse with the shoppers to build a rapport, and to not just tell the customer where a product is, but actually



**It may be just a small-town grocery store, but thanks to president and CEO Rick Sharr, Tri-Town Foods continues to adapt and offer fresh, quality products to the citizens of Portland. Recently, Tri-Town was equipped with new, energy-saving equipment through a state grant, a project that was supported by First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield, left, and state Rep. Christie Carpino, right.**

show them.

“Having a store like this makes a small town nicer to live in,” Sharr added. “If the town is dominated by [big businesses], it loses that local flavor. I look at [Tri-Town] as a service to the community.”

To better serve the community, Sharr is always looking for ways to keep up with the evolving community dynamic, he said. In the next few years, Sharr plans to make major upgrades at Tri-Town, including a larger deli section and kitchen, which will be used to make more pre-made meals and sandwiches for those on the go.

“We need to react to changes in what consumers want. We need to do what’s right for the consumer,” Sharr said. “I’m not one to stand pat. I’m always thinking of ways that we can do better.”

Upgrades have already been underway at Tri-

Town in recent months. The latest update was included as part of the Connecticut Energy Efficiency Fund’s Small Business Energy Advantage program, which provides funding to businesses to who want to upgrade to more efficient energy. The program allowed Sharr to move to high-efficiency lighting, fans and an upgraded refrigeration system, all of which have cut the store’s energy costs by as much as 30 percent in some months. Sharr also isn’t ruling out more energy efficient upgrades, including solar panels, in the future.

So Sharr might be right; at first glance, Tri-Town might just look like your run of the mill small-town market. But from finding the best and freshest local products to giving back to the community, Sharr and the rest of the staff at Tri-Town put a lot more into it than you might think. And that has made – and will continue to make – a difference.

*From the Editor's Desk*

## Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

Just last week, I happened to come across a *Rivereast* from around this same time last year – it was the July 29, 2011, issue, to be exact – and I noticed the cover story was entitled “Giving Thanks for ‘Hebron Angels.’”

It was about the Hebron community’s rallying together to help resident Tammy Aston, a mother of three who had been diagnosed with stage IV colon cancer the month before. As the article detailed, the Hebron Youth Baseball and Softball Association held a benefit for the Aston family earlier in the month, and Gilead Congregational Church was gearing up for an ice cream social in Tammy’s honor, which was held the following weekend.

It was a sweet story, about a resident who had been stricken with that terrible disease and residents’ thoughtful attempts to come to the aid of her and her family.

So it was with sadness when I saw Tammy’s obituary in my work emails Monday morning. Tammy passed away last Saturday, July 28, at the age of 42. She leaves behind her husband, Brett, and children Bradley 12, Allison, 9, and Amy, 7.

Tammy’s obituary says she will be remembered for, among other attributes, her “compassion for others.” One of the things that stood out in the *Rivereast* cover story from a year ago was just how much compassion others had for her as well – and how grateful Tammy was for all of that, calling the residents her “Hebron angels.”

“Every time I turn around, something else wonderful is happening and someone else is reaching out,” Tammy said, and later in the story added, “It’s quite shocking how many people care about little old me. It’s just another reminder of what a great community we live in.”

Unfortunately, cancer is all too common; it’s likely a very fair guess that the majority of us have known somebody, be it family or friends, that is or was afflicted by the disease. I personally lost my grandmother to it four years ago. It’s particularly tough to see it happen to someone so young – again, Tammy was just 42, and leaves behind three young children.

My sympathies go out to Brett, Bradley, Allison and Amy – and all that knew Tammy. Judging from that story in last year’s *Rivereast*, it’s a pretty high number. Tammy seemed like a very well-liked woman – and one taken far too soon.

\* \* \*

On a happier note, I was pleased to learn this week the Podium Players youth theater troupe in East Hampton has chosen *Little Shop of Horrors* to be its fall musical. The musical debuted off-Broadway in 1983, but I first became familiar with it via the 1986 movie adaptation of it, which I watched several times on video when I was a kid. It was a hilarious movie, with a great cast and great songs. (The score is by Howard Ashman and Alan Menken, the duo that would go on to pen the Academy Award-winning songs of *The Little Mermaid*, *Beauty and the Beast* and *Aladdin*.)

Several years later, though, I saw the play when my middle school-aged brother performed in a youth theater production of it in Manchester – and I learned that, while the story was the same and those fantastic songs were still there, the ending was a teensy bit different.

(Note: If you’ve never seen *Little Shop of Horrors* and want to go into the Podium Players’ October production totally fresh, read no

further. Spoilers abound.)

In both the stage and film versions of the musical, a plant arrives from outer space that a nebbish plant-shop clerk named Seymour discovers and keeps as his own, naming it Audrey II, in honor of his unrequited love, his fellow employee named Audrey.

Audrey II looks at first like a mere Venus fly trap, but it turns out he feasts on human blood. At first content with just blood from paper cuts and other minor boo-boos, Audrey II soon wants more. Wanting to keep the plant growing, Seymour reluctantly acquiesces, first feeding it Audrey’s abusive boyfriend, then his boss at the plant shop. But Audrey II still wants more, and one night finds itself alone in the plant shop with Audrey. It persuades her to come closer, at which point it opens wide and chows down.

And here’s where things start to change. In the movie version, Seymour arrives at the plant store in time to pull Audrey from Audrey II and rush her outside to safety. He then goes back into the plant shop and has a big confrontation with the plant, ultimately ending with Audrey II bringing down the whole store. Seymour emerges from the rubble, conveniently locates a power cord and electrocutes the plant. He and Audrey then run off and get married – and live happily ever after. (Well, sort of. The movie’s final gag has another baby Audrey II plant in the front yard of Seymour and Audrey’s new house.)

But when I saw the stage version, I realized the original ending was quite different indeed. In it, Seymour gets to the plant shop, and still pulls Audrey out of Audrey II, but it’s a little too late. He rushes her outside, and she dies shortly thereafter. Despondent, he reluctantly feeds her to the plant (to honor her last wish, so that the two of them could always be together), but then the next day, a botanical salesman shows up and asks to take clippings from Audrey II so he can sell little Audrey IIs across the country. Seymour realizes the plant must be stopped, and, after other attempts to kill it fails, he finally takes a machete and crawls into Audrey II’s mouth, thinking he could maybe kill it from the inside. That doesn’t work, and instead the plant kills Seymour. Nobody lives happily ever after – except, perhaps, Audrey II.

So why was the movie’s ending so different? It actually initially had an ending similar to what the stage musical had. However, the movie had two different test screenings in California with the original ending, and both screenings bombed. Apparently, the crowds loved the film up until the point Audrey and Seymour bit the dust. They wanted a happy ending – so the studio decided they should have one.

So, director Frank Oz and Ashman (who also wrote the screenplay to the movie version) were directed to craft a new ending – and this is what hit theaters across the country in 1986 and has been available on video ever since.

A rough cut of the original ending is available on YouTube (and apparently a polished version of the original ending is coming in a special “director’s cut” Blu-Ray this October). I’ve seen it, and I have to admit it’s a preferable ending to the happily-ever-after one.

I assume the Podium Players’ production of *Little Shop* will follow the stage version of the play. Is it darker? Sure. But it’s also better.

\* \* \*

See you next week.

## Police Searching for Missing East Hampton Person

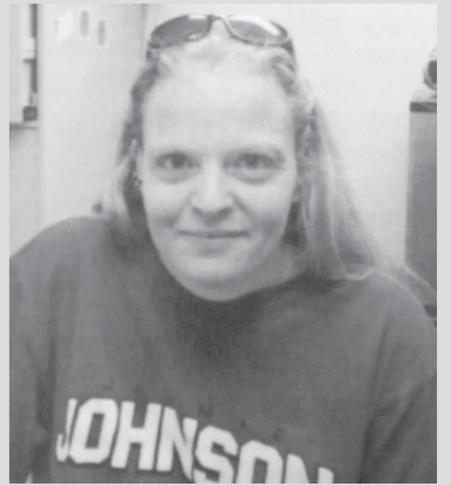
by Joshua Anusewicz

East Hampton Police are investigating a report of a local woman who has been missing since Sunday night, Sgt. Garritt Kelly said Wednesday.

The subject of the missing person report is Jini Barnum, a 30-year-old white female. Barnum is 5-feet-2, 140 pounds, with reddish-blond hair. She has numerous tattoos and piercings, and was last seen wearing a T-shirt and jeans, Kelly said.

Kelly said that Barnum was last seen on Sunday, July 29, at roughly 11 p.m., when she left her home after having a disagreement with her boyfriend, who filed the report. Kelly said Wednesday there have been no developments yet in the case and that, currently, there is “no indication” of foul play.

Police ask anyone with information to call the police department at 860-267-9922.



Jini Barnum

## Burbank Still in Hospital

by Geeta Schrayter

As of Wednesday, First Selectman Bob Burbank remains in Hartford Hospital, after undergoing surgery on July 25 to replace an aortic valve and unclog an artery.

As explained in last week’s *Rivereast*, Burbank started to experience shortness of breath over the weekend of July 14 that was so acute it became difficult for him to walk across the room. As a result, he went to see his primary physician on July 16, who sent him to a cardiologist the following day.

After a two-day attempt to treat Burbank at home with medication to no avail, he was sent to Middlesex Hospital, then transferred to Hartford Hospital where he’s been since. Doctors determined the following Monday, July 23, that Burbank would need to undergo surgery to correct what turned out to be atrial fibrillation, a type of arrhythmia where, according to the website for the Massachusetts

General Hospital Heart Center, “the electrical signals in the atria are fired in a very fast and uncontrolled manner.”

The surgery was performed two days later. Prior to the operation, Burbank said he hoped to be back at Town Hall the following week, but on Wednesday evening his wife Marie confirmed he was still recuperating in the hospital.

“He looks good,” she said, “and it’s one day at a time. He was a little too optimistic thinking he was going to be back to work this week, but that’s the way he is.”

She added that she couldn’t provide any update as to when he might be home.

Selectman Jay Lindy said that, as vice first selectman, he has been handling Burbank’s duties in his absence. He also filled in for Burbank at Wednesday’s meeting of the Board of Selectmen.

# Obituaries

## Portland

### Robert J. Reilly Jr.

Robert J. Reilly Jr., 86, of Portland, husband of Eileen (Haldeman) Reilly, passed away Wednesday, July 25, at Middlesex Hospital.

Born on Feb. 17, 1926, in Philadelphia, Pa., he was the son of the late Robert J. and Marguerite (Burke) Reilly. Bob was proud of his 50 years working for Henkels and McCoy. He began as an equipment operator in Philadelphia, Pa., in 1950 and retired as division manager in Portland in 2000. He was also a veteran of the United States Marine Corps serving in World War II, where he received a Purple Heart.

Besides his wife, he leaves his children, Kathleen, and her husband William Richards of Portland, Donna and her husband Ralph Dumas of Massachusetts, Linda of West Hartford, Bob of Georgia and Maureen of Portland; seven grandchildren; and six great-grandchildren. His greatest joy was spending time with his grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Funeral services will be private and at the convenience of the family.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Portland Volunteer Fire Department Portland, CT 06480.

The family would like to extend their sincere thanks to Dr. Levy and his staff and the caregivers from Middlesex Hospital Hospice and Palliative Care. Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland, has care of arrangements. To send an online expression of sympathy, visit [portlandmemorialfh.net](http://portlandmemorialfh.net).

## Portland

### Robert Stevenson

Robert (Bob) Stevenson, 90, formerly of Portland, husband of the late Helen (Rose) Stevenson, died Tuesday, July 24, in the loving care of Masonicare in Wallingford.

Born May 31, 1922, in Middletown, he was a lifelong resident of Portland. He worked for Standard Knapp in Portland for 41 years until his retirement. He was a 60-year member of Warren Lodge No 51, A.F. & A.M., and a member of the Mattabassett Camping Association and Trinity Church in Portland.

He leaves two daughters, Shirley Platt of Glastonbury and Deborah (John) Cusano of Wethersfield; one surviving brother, Lloyd Stevenson of Cromwell; four grandchildren, Dawn Swilling, Wayne Goodrich, Sarah Cusano and Nicholas Cusano. He also leaves five great-grandchildren, Madison and Zachary Swilling and Nathanael, Hannah and Jubilee Goodrich.

A celebration of life will be held Saturday, Aug. 11, at 10 a.m. at Trinity Episcopal Church, 345 Main St., Portland. Burial will be in Trinity Cemetery, Portland.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Masonic Care, 22 Masonic Ave., Wallingford, CT 06492 or online by visiting [masoniccare.org/mcf](http://masoniccare.org/mcf) and click on the "donate now" link.

Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland, has care of arrangements. To send an online expression of sympathy, visit [portlandmemorialfh.net](http://portlandmemorialfh.net).

## Portland

### Arthur J. Augeri

Arthur J. Augeri, 88, of Cynthia Lane, Middletown, died Saturday, July 28, at Middlesex Hospital. He was born in Portland, the son of the late Rosario and Lenora (Magentti) Augeri.

A veteran of World War II, he served with the U.S. Army Air Corps in Italy and North Africa. Art grew up in Middletown, where he enjoyed playing all sports, especially football and playing for the Hillside. He retired as a manager of the Sears Roebuck store in the Meriden Centennial Plaza after 30 years of employment. Art was also a member of the IACO, Middletown.

He is survived by his best friend, Carol Kane of Middletown and her family; his sister, Mary Landack of California; sister-in-law, Lucille Augeri of Middletown; also several nieces and nephews.

He was predeceased by his brothers, Mario, Michael, Alexander, and Salvatore Augeri; and his sisters, Helen Barbieri, Lucy Schaffrick, Lena Gawlak, Jennie Scionti and Jean Cuccaro.

Funeral services are private and burial will be at the convenience of his family. There are no calling hours.

Memorial contributions may be made to a charity of the donors' choice. Biega Funeral Home has care of the arrangements.

To share memories or express condolences online, visit [biegafuneralhome.com](http://biegafuneralhome.com).

## Hebron

### Tammy Y. Aston

Tammy Y. Aston, 42, the beloved wife of Brett A. Aston and devoted mother to Bradley, Allison and Amy, passed away surrounded by her family Saturday, July 28.

She was born in Hartford to the late Thomas R. and Judith F. Yoczik on March 9, 1970. She was predeceased by her older sister, Janet Y. Gray.

Tammy grew up in Simsbury, attending Simsbury High and later graduating from Eastern Connecticut State University in 1992.

Tammy was a loving childcare provider in her home and extended "TLC" to all who entered. For the past 15 years, Tammy lived in Hebron with her husband Brett, proudly raising their three beautiful children. She loved her family and considered her close friends and neighbors to be an extension of that. She will be remembered for her kindness, compassion for others, and graceful way.

Tammy faithfully served the Lord at Gilead Congregational Church in Hebron.

She is survived by her husband of 17 years, Brett; three children, Bradley 12, Allison, 9, and Amy, 7; her sister, Carol Y. Labbe of Simsbury; brother and sister-in-law Kevin and Cathy Gray of Simsbury; her paternal aunt and uncle, Paul and Linda Ridgeway of Windsor; David and Connie Yoczik of East Granby; stepmother Cynthia Yoczik of Simsbury; aunt and uncle Carroll and Paige Fulks of Williamsburg, Va.; aunt Johnnie F. Rowland of Gretna, Va., mother-in-law Lorainne Aston of Hebron; father-in-law Alfred Aston of Venice, Fla.; brother and sister-in-law Bryce and Michelle Aston of Coventry; and many loved nieces, nephews and cousins.

A funeral service was held Wednesday, Aug. 1, at Gilead Congregational Church, 672 Gilead St., Hebron. Burial followed in Gilead Cemetery. Friends called at Mulryan Funeral Home, 725 Hebron Ave., Glastonbury, on Tuesday, July 31.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Gilead Congregational Church, 672 Gilead St., Hebron, CT 06248, or The Palliative Care Team, CB2 Unit Conklin Building, 80 Seymour St., Hartford, CT 06106.

For online condolences, visit [mulryanfh.com](http://mulryanfh.com).

## Colchester

### Ruth Rafus

Ruth (Barnes) Rafus, 86, of Colchester, widow of the late Sheldon Rafus, passed away Tuesday, July 31, at Harrington Court GHC Center in Colchester. She was born Feb. 15, 1926 in Deerfield, Mass.

Mrs. Rafus had worked as a gear grinder specialist for Pratt & Whitney for 33 years before her retirement. She was a longtime member of the Congregational Church of East Hampton and had served on the Board of Deacons.

Over the years, she had volunteered for the Middlesex Hospital Auxiliary and loved to fish, ride motorcycles and golf – she was a member of Chantclair Golf Club in Colchester.

She is survived by her daughter, Shirley Ellis, son-in-law, Rick Ellis and grandson, Philip Ellis, as well as her families at her church and the Abundant Life Church in Colchester.

Friends called Wednesday, Aug. 1, at Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Road, Colchester. The funeral service was held Thursday, Aug. 2, at the Congregational Church of East Hampton, 59 Main St., East Hampton. Burial followed in the Westchester Center Cemetery, Colchester.

In lieu of flowers, donations in her memory may be made to her church, P.O. 237, East Hampton, CT 06424

For online condolences, visit [auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com](http://auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com).

## Hebron

### Christopher J. Connelly

Christopher J. Connelly, 61, of Hebron, died unexpectedly Sunday, July 29.

He is survived by his mother, Theresa (Griesbach) Connelly of Turners Falls, Mass., his wife of 25 years, Christine (Mooney) Connelly, his son Tyler and daughter Micaela of Hebron. He also leaves three brothers: Michael, Kevin, and Sean Connelly, and their respective spouses Linda, Carol and Amy.

Christopher was an English teacher at Glastonbury High School for 36 years before retiring in 2010. He was a gifted writer and had a passion for literature. He graduated from Amherst College, and received his master's degree from Cornell. Besides his passion for the written arts, Chris was an avid runner and cyclist, and was a member of the Silk City Striders and the Appalachian Mountain Club.

A memorial service celebrating his life will be held Saturday, Aug. 4, at 1 p.m., at South Congregational Church, 30 High St., South Glastonbury.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Christopher J. Connelly Memorial Fund, c/o Glastonbury Board of Education Business Office, P.O. Box 191, Glastonbury, CT 06033.

To extend condolences to the Connelly family, or to share a memory of Chris, visit [mulryanfh.com](http://mulryanfh.com).

## Portland

### Harry E. Berggren

Harry E. Berggren, 85, husband of the late Lydwina (Schipke) Berggren, passed away Monday, July 30, at Miller Memorial Community. He was born Nov. 5, 1926 in Portland, a son of the late August and Hulda (Johnson) Berggren.

Harry proudly served his country in the U.S. Army during World War II, and then worked for Pratt & Whitney Aircraft for 35 years retiring in 1986. He was also a member of the Masonic Washington Lodge No. 81 in Cromwell.

He is survived by two daughters and their husbands, Jean and Thomas Fields of Southington and Nancy and William Mudry of Meriden; a son, Jay Berggren of Meriden; and six grandchildren, Kevin and Amy Fields, Eric, Scott and Abby Traue and Nicholas Mudry. He also leaves a brother and his wife, Harold and Kathleen Berggren, of Hilton Head, S.C., as well as several nieces and nephews.

Harry was predeceased by a daughter, Margaret Traue; a son, Harry Edward Berggren; a brother, Frederick Berggren; and three sisters, Eleanor Denette, Gladys Smithwick and Grace Olson.

The family would like to thank all the staff at the Miller Memorial Community for their wonderful care.

Funeral services and burial will be private. The Beecher & Bennett-Flatow Funeral Home, 48 Cook Ave., Meriden, is in charge of the arrangements.

## East Hampton

### Jean Rose Sparks

Jean Rose (Thorne) Sparks, 83, of East Hampton, passed away Saturday, July 28, at Water's Edge Care and Rehabilitation Center in Middletown. Born in Baltimore, Md., she was the daughter of the late Alan and Esther (Eades) Thorn.

Jean had lived in Middletown since 1967, studied nursing at John Hopkins University in Maryland, completed her associate's degree at Middlesex Community College in Middletown, and had been employed as a Mobile Crisis Worker at CVH for eight years. She enjoyed being a homemaker, helping people, gardening, yoga, was an avid bridge player and a long-time member of the Middletown YMCA.

She is survived by two sons, Bradley H. Sparks and his wife Paula of Woodstock Valley, and Timothy R. Sparks of Portland; two daughters, Valerie Bozzi and her husband Paul of East Hampton and Jennifer Knight and her husband William of Rocky Hill; and 10 grandchildren.

Besides her parents, she was predeceased by two sons, John and David Jr. Sparks, one brother, Jerry Thorne, and a sister, Lila Nicolaisen.

Funeral services were held at the Doolittle Funeral Home, 14 Old Church St., Middletown, Thursday, Aug. 2, and interment will be at the convenience of the family.

Friends called at the funeral home Wednesday, Aug. 1, and are invited to leave messages of condolence to the family at [doolittlefuneral.com](http://doolittlefuneral.com).

## East Hampton

### Michael P. Asensio

Michael P. Asensio, 62, of East Hampton, passed away peacefully Friday, July 27, at home in the comfort of his devoted, loving wife Carol and son Andy by his side.

Mike was born in Southington July 22, 1950, a son of Cesareo Asensio and the late Patricia (Kenney) Asensio. He loved RV-ing and travel. Mike was a lifelong car enthusiast and belonged to many hot rod organizations over the years. He also enjoyed cooking and entertaining.

In addition to his wife and father, Mike is survived by two sons, Andrew of East Hampton and Michael W. Asensio of Nevada; his sisters and brothers-in-law, Christine and Carl "Butch" Stagers of Terryville, Lynn and Patrick Brookman of Bristol and Jeanne Nocera of Farmington; his brother and sister-in-law William and Tracy Asensio of Waxhall, N.C.; a granddaughter, Kaylee Basile of Massachusetts; and several nieces and nephews.

He was predeceased by his brother Kenneth Asensio.

Calling hours were held Monday evening, July 30, at O'Brien Funeral Home, 24 Lincoln Ave., Forestville/Bristol. A funeral service was held at the funeral home Tuesday, July 31, followed by burial at St. Joseph Cemetery, Plainville.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations in Michael's memory may be made to Connecticut Brain Tumor Alliance, P.O. Box 370514, West Hartford, CT 06137.

For online tributes, visit [OBrien-FuneralHome.com](http://OBrien-FuneralHome.com).

