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The Thomas R. Pickering House in Portland is all decked out for the holidays and, starting next week, owner Ken Kupec will host tours of his home for a cover charge of one food item, toy or monetary donation to Portland Food Bank.

Decking the Halls For a Cause

by Elizabeth Bowling

Thanksgiving was yesterday, making today the unofficial start of the Christmas season – and the historic Thomas R. Pickering House at 337 Main St. in Portland is finding itself all wrapped up in the holiday spirit.

Throughout the month of December, the interior of the 19th-Century Victorian home will be on display to the public for the reasonable price of one donated food item, which will go to the Portland Food Bank.

Thomas Pickering built the house in 1886. It is more than 40,000 sq. ft. and is made up of 14 rooms, plus a basement and attic.

The tour will put the entire downstairs on display, which includes seven rooms. They are: the foyer, living room, kitchen, bathroom, butler's pantry, dining room and music room.

The house's current owner, Ken Kupec, calls it, "one of the more ornate homes in the area."

Kupec said it took his decorator, Douglas Rozevink, three weeks to decorate the downstairs for the holiday season – complete with Christmas music and the smell of pine. Visitors will be welcomed by three Christmas trees and garlands galore.

Regarding his Christmas decorations, Rozevink said, "The house really was the inspiration of the elaborate decorating scheme."

He added, "Victorian era and going over the

top just seem to be hand in hand."

The tour, led by Kupec, will begin in the foyer and move circularly throughout the house.

Like all traditional Victorian homes, Kupec's is circular, which, he said, creates a sort of "flow" that keeps the house from feeling crowded.

That "flow" exists because there are three doors to each room – one door leads to the hallway, and one door leads to each of the two adjoining rooms, Kupec explained.

"Victorian homes were designed perfectly for entertaining," he said. "It's easy for people to mingle and walk around."

The next stop on the tour after the foyer is the living room – Kupec's favorite room.

"I also love the dining room," he added. And after further contemplation he said, "I actually love all the rooms in this house."

The living room has its original 1886 fireplace – one of four throughout the entire house. The original fireplaces were coal-burning, Kupec explained, and because they are so small they cannot be turned into functioning wood-burning fireplaces. But he said he intends to make the one in the living room usable by putting in a gas insert in what would be a modern touch to an historic home.

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Marlborough Board Looks at All-Day K

by Melissa Roberto

Marlborough Superintendent of Schools David Sklarz presented a feasibility study on all-day kindergarten in last Thursday's Board of Education meeting – and while the board opted not to take action on it, members came to a consensus they'd revisit the topic in May, along with an updated report from Sklarz.

The all-day kindergarten (ADK) feasibility study came on the heels of Sklarz's feasibility study presentation on a world language program in the October board meeting, which immediately led to board approval of reinstating a Spanish program at Marlborough Elementary School. The board in April advised Sklarz to undertake both studies, with his kindergarten report due in November.

As was the case with the world language study, Sklarz's presentation Thursday night was commended by board members and members of the crowd, some who commented it was "thorough" and others stating he did a "very good job." Sklarz admitted to the board he became "more knowledgeable" about both half-day and all-day kindergarten programs as a result of the study in addition to admitting kindergarten is "one of my favorite grade levels to visit."

The superintendent's presentation was complete with three cost options, as well as a recommendation to put off a decision on boosting half-day to all-day for "at least one year." The board ultimately opted to revisit the decision

back in May based on conclusions – and current unknowns – highlighted by Sklarz.

The superintendent's report began with a description of the current half-day program at MES. Two sessions are held: one from 8:35-11:20 a.m. and one from 12:20-3:05 p.m. There are a total of four half-day classes at the school, three each with 13 students and a fourth with 17 students. Sklarz said the class sizes are "lower than any of our neighboring communities by far" and are a result of the board's commitment to small class sizes during last year's budget development process, he said.

One conclusion Sklarz communicated to the board was the differing results ADK has on low-performance/low-socioeconomic schools and high-performance/high-socioeconomic schools, and it was highlighted MES falls under the latter. The report concluded "all-day programs best meet the needs of children with greatest educational needs" and that high performing schools with all-day programs have negligible academic gains over time.

These conclusions were primarily determined by research noting low performance schools, schools generally in urban areas with lesser money, made many gains from a full program. Sklarz explained these schools often face a number of hurdles: lack of parent engagement, child care issues, excessive absences, less supportive home environment, poor quality of pre-school experiences, high retention rate (the

number of students that have to repeat a grade), and numerous discipline referrals. But implementation of ADK seemed to solve those hurdles.

"[It] closed the achievement gap between rich and poor, white and non-white, English as a second language," Sklarz explained, "and they found this in the earlier studies which got people saying 'this is important stuff.'"

As a result of ADK in these areas, absenteeism was reduced, retention rates and special education referrals were reduced, and academic success in primary grades increased, he said.

In turn, Sklarz said research showed high-socioeconomic schools like MES showed no necessary improvements in academic success, achievement gaps, etc. because they don't likely have those aforementioned issues to begin with. He said MES has a 98 percent attendance rate in its half-day classes. There's also "no achievement gap," he said, while adding "over the last 10 years we've had the average of one retention at the end of first grade."

Sklarz also positively noted MES does not have discipline issues in the low grades "because quite frankly these are just great kids and we have a high level of parent education."

A cost analysis was shared. The superintendent said with the aforementioned characteristics between low and high socioeconomic districts, the cost benefit of all-day kindergarten also differed.

"Low performance schools [are] at a high cost benefit because think of what it costs every time you retain a child," Sklarz said to members, "think of what it costs you every time you have a kid who's in special education, think about what it costs you in terms of closing the achievement gap at later ages. And then you add the cost of bus transportation."

In terms of strictly a cost analysis, Sklarz said he felt high performance schools don't receive a cost benefit with the exception of bus transportation, which in Marlborough, he said, is approximately \$40,000 for two bus runs. Furthermore, to stress his point, Sklarz compared grade 6 MES students' test scores to high-performing schools who have ADK programs. The results were compared to Essex, Greenwich, West Hartford, Wethersfield and more – and "in almost every category" MES outscored those schools.

"I'm not making judgment," Sklarz said. "It's a fact that you have to look at. ... That's really how you measure it at the end of the day."

However, Sklarz stressed there are parents, educators and advisory groups who nationally support all-day programs. From a national standpoint, Sklarz shared teachers' perspectives on the benefits of ADK, which included more flexibility during free choice times, it was less stressful, it gave more time for completing projects, as well as more time for students with

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Decking the Halls cont. from Front Page

In the hallway from the living room to the kitchen, visitors will see the home's original safe. Back when the house was first built, the safe was used to lock up spices and silverware, Kupec explained. Now the proud owner uses the safe as a wine cellar – another practical use.

The kitchen has been restored but still has its original fireplace, in which Pickering's caretakers would cook dinner.

Kupec said Pickering had two caretakers – one to care for the interior and one for the exterior of the home.

Kupec pointed out that there are "remnants of a bell system" connecting the master bedroom to the attic, which was where Pickering's caretakers lived.

Next to the kitchen is a bathroom. Kupec said he redid the downstairs bathroom about a year ago because of plumbing problems.

"You do have to have some modern conveniences in a 1886 home," he admitted.

Between the kitchen and the dining room is the "butler's pantry." In Pickering's time, food was prepared in the kitchen by his caretakers. Once it was ready, it was brought to the butler's pantry and from there it was served to the dining room, Kupec explained.

Kupec set his dining room table "for a Victorian-type dinner," to give his touring visitors an added sense of what life looked like in the late 1800s.

After passing through the dining room, visitors will come upon the sunroom overlooking Main Street, where Kupec has his morning coffee and often eats dinner, too.

The last room when circling through the first-floor is the old gentleman's room, where, in the 1800s, men would go after dinner to drink brandy and smoke cigars, Kupec said.

Under Kupec's homeownership, however, the gentleman's room became the music room. He adorned it with a baby grand piano made, fittingly, in 1886 just like the house.

Continuing through the music room, visitors will find themselves back in the foyer, and very well informed on the history of the Pickering House.

According to Kupec, Pickering was famous for three things: inventing the Pickering governor (which controls steam in an engine); inventing the modern bicycle (which has symmetrical wheels and a brake system); and being a U.S. senator.

After Pickering died, ownership of his home bounced around between a few people, as well as Trinity Church. The church owned it for about 60 years and used it as a daycare, thrift shop and bookstore, which many Portland residents still remember today.

Three and a half years ago, Kupec gained ownership of the home and has lived there ever since.

"When I walked into this house it just felt like home," he said.

He hasn't yet decided if 337 Main St. will be his final resting place, but he's been restoring it since he moved in.

Thus far, he's spent his time restoring the downstairs of the house by fixing the woodwork, for example, because it had "lost its luster and beauty," he said.

The floors, woodwork, fireplaces, most of the solid-wood doors and stained glass, as well as some of the windows are the home's original pieces, Kupec affirmed.

Now that the downstairs restorations are complete, Kupec has gotten to work on the upstairs – a feat he expects to take a couple more years.

Another upcoming project will be the restoration of the porch to its original state – an approximately \$30,000 job, Kupec said. But he plans to hold off the project until after the house gets listed on the National Registry of Historic Homes so he can benefit from some tax breaks.

He'd also like to remove the siding on the home and replace it with wood shingles, like Pickering had when he first built the residency.

"This has now become a labor of love," Kupec said about further renovations, noting that he can only put so much money into the house before he starts to lose out.

"I try to bring the house back to what it was without making you feel like you're in your great-grandmother's house and you can't sit down," he said.

Regarding the fundraising portion of the event, Kupec is asking each visitor to bring a nonperishable food item, toy or monetary donation for the Portland Food Bank. The purpose of the tour, he said, is "to be able to help the community."

Rozevink, who has been decorating the house for three Christmases now, said he's happy Kupec decided to use his holiday décor and the historic home to support a good cause.



The historic Thomas R. Pickering House will be on display throughout December. Homeowner Ken Kupec had the interior of the house elaborately decorated for the holiday season. Shown here is his foyer – one of the seven first-floor rooms that visitors will get to see on their tours.

"It'd be a shame not to get more out of it," Rozevink said.

Because this is the first time Kupec is hosting the fundraiser, he said he doesn't know what to expect in terms of donations. But he hopes to receive "as many as possible."

"The more we can raise, the more it's going to help those who are less fortunate," he said. "If it's not a total disaster, I'll do it again next year."

He elaborated that he hopes for future fundraisers, other historic homeowners on Main Street will agree to open their doors to the public, too, because "each house has its own unique and distinct characteristics," and because a more widespread home tour "would bring a lot of people to Portland," he said.

He also hopes to host events – for example, dinner parties – to fundraise to restore Main Street.

Kupec said he is looking to develop a long-term plan for Main Street that would make the

street more reminiscent of historic Portland. That plan would include the elimination of utility poles (wiring would be underground), and the widening of the sidewalks.

Eventually, he'd like to see parts of Main Street classified as a National Historic District.

"It would be nice to make Main Street something to talk about," he said, noting that if his ideas come to fruition the area may bring in more people and businesses.

First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield put her support behind the event.

She said, "I think it's a wonderful way to celebrate our beautiful, historic Main Street and at the same time contribute to our community needs – which is our food bank."

The house, which is handicapped-accessible, will be open for tours at the following dates and times: Dec. 4, 5, 11, 12, 18 and 19 from 6 to 8 p.m. and Dec. 8, 15 and 22 from 1 to 5 p.m.

All-Day K cont. from Front Page

delays to socialize with peers and teachers, among others.

Additionally, Sklarz shared the demands of Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for kindergartners. The CCSS, a state mandate, is expected to begin in the 2014-15 school year and is a new curriculum for grades K-12 for all public schools in the country. Sklarz showed demands for kindergartners under CCSS include identifying characters, settings and major events in a story, naming the author and illustrator of a story and defining the role of each, using a combination of drawing, dictating and writing to narrate an event, and identifying basic similarities and differences between two texts on the same topic among others.

The final piece of Sklarz's presentation showed results of the community survey that was conducted by 326 respondents at the same time they took the world language feasibility survey. Sklarz concluded there's a 2-to-1 ratio of teachers and families locally who support an all-day program. Additionally, he stressed the percentages of respondents agreeing that an all-day program would benefit students weren't as high as the world language program results.

Lastly, Sklarz showed the cost of three options ranging from nearly \$219,000 to \$312,000. The first, the second highest option at \$232,166, was to keep the current half-day program as is. Option two showed a projection of 60 kindergarten students for the coming year. At \$312,066, the second option was an all-day program with four classes each with 15 students. The cost covered additional classroom equipment, four teachers and four paraprofessionals and one less second bus run. The final and cheapest option, at \$218,753, was another full-day option, but with one less class and a greater class size of 20 students each. The third option covered the cost of three teachers, three paraprofessionals and only one bus run.

Sklarz then highlighted the "unknowns" that the board would need to factor in when making a decision. These included: MES' declining enrollment, class section reductions, the impact

of CCSS, the effect of smaller class size in half-day program, budget impact of the world language program, and whether Spanish would be taught in ADK.

With that said, members had similar feelings Thursday night.

"There are a lot of unknowns here and I don't see any rush needed to go into this," said member Bob Clarke. "We need time to see what it's going to take to implement the Common Core and see what effect it has."

Newly-elected board member Theresa Brysgel said she personally didn't feel ready to vote on the topic.

"I think we've heard a lot of great data but I'd like to hear more from teachers," she said. "I'd like to hear back in six months. I don't feel that I understand well enough what the impact of the Common Core is on the teachers, on the children, to say 'ye' or 'nay' tonight."

Carole Shea felt similarly to Brysgel. She said she didn't want to table the decision to a year from now, but would rather hear back in the spring and in the meantime "have a full plan of doing an outreach to the community and getting the materials out to the people."

Members also questioned the impact of offering both half-day and all-day programs at the school. Member Mimi LaPoint said she'd like to hear more about that option in May.

Sklarz said he recognizes the decision is an "important" one. He said he'd report back in May while in the meantime "as soon as I get information on things like options or others that come up I won't wait until then, I'll get them right out to you."

Citizens in the crowd also offered up advice to the board. Kimberly Disomma said she volunteered twice a month in her son's kindergarten class last year. Though she said the class worked "very hard and very diligently," she commented on the "struggle" of time limitation.

"It was a lot of work for them in a short amount of time," she said. "I'm glad that you guys are not going to wait a whole year. I just

hope we do the right thing for the kids because it's really hard for them to get through [it all]. Their day is just so quick. It's so fast."

Another mother, Leslie Juliani, also said she volunteered in her son's class last year. Though she said she had the "greatest time" working in the class, she also noticed a time constraint.

"They didn't have time to finish a project. They didn't have time to be creative and take the time and add the color they wanted to their beautiful picture. Please don't wait a whole year, continue to come back and look at the research."

Thursday's board meeting was also the first meeting for newly-elected members Brysgel and Wes Skorski. Per annual tradition, the board had a vote to elect who would act as chairperson on Thursday – and all four votes resulted in a tie, according to the unofficial meeting minutes.

Skorski first made a motion to appoint Clarke as chairman, and the vote resulted in a tie of 4-4. Skorski, Clarke, LaPoint and Brysgel voted in favor of it, while current chair Ruth Kelly and vice chair Betty O'Brien and board members Shea and Louise Concodello voted in opposition.

O'Brien then nominated Kelly, who has been chair for one year, to continue in the role; this vote had the same outcome, 4-4, with LaPoint, Skorski, Clarke and Brysgel voting in opposition and Kelly, O'Brien, Concodello and Shea voting in favor.

Two nominations then occurred again. Brysgel nominated Clarke once more, resulting in the same 4-4 vote as occurred for Clarke before, and then O'Brien nominated Kelly, resulting in the same 4-4 vote as occurred for Kelly before.

A special Board of Education meeting will be held Tuesday, Dec. 3, at 6 p.m. in the Library/Media Center at Marlborough Elementary School, 25 School Dr., for two election of officers votes. The first is for the purpose of electing a chairperson; the second vote will elect

a vice chairperson and secretary.

Sklarz also updated the board that an interim principal has been hired. The news comes after last month's meeting, where Sklarz announced Interim Principal Kathy Veronesi, who was hired to fill the interim role for one year, had accepted a job offer as superintendent of Region 13 Durham/Middlefield. The new interim principal, anticipated to take on the role at the start of 2014, is Paula Schwartz, former principal at RHAM High School. Sklarz said he's known Schwartz for a "number of years" and said she has "incredible enthusiasm and a wonderful personality."

"She is very experienced and came highly recommended," said Sklarz.

Sklarz said he will post the permanent principal position online in January and hopes to have someone appointed to the role in March; that person would then begin at the end of the school year.

Sklarz also said he has posted the position for the Spanish teacher/Program Developer at the local, state and national levels. Though he anticipates hiring someone in January, Sklarz said that if an appropriate person does not come along he would prolong the process until "we get the right person and a quality person."

Thanksgiving Meals Funded, Handed to Those in Need in Colchester

by **Melissa Roberto**

It was a sight that defined the spirit of giving. Five large delivery trucks made a pit stop at Town Hall Monday morning to unload nearly 200 boxes filled with all the Thanksgiving fixings needed for that warm, hearty meal so many looked forward to yesterday.

Those boxes were then stacked in the meeting room of Town Hall, where members of the Colchester Rotary Club handed them out to those in need who otherwise would not have been able to afford filling their kitchen tables on Thanksgiving Day.

The food was funded by the joint efforts of the Colchester Rotary Club and Liberty Bank Foundation through the 10th annual Thanksgiving Dinner Drive. The drive is an annual partnership between Liberty Bank and 29 local Rotary Clubs who raise money for Thanksgiving meals and distribute them.

According to the executive director of the Liberty Bank Foundation, Sue Murphy, Colchester is one of only two rotary clubs in the area who has participated since the drive's inception in 2004.

Overall, the fundraising efforts of the foundation and all 29 clubs raised \$182,026 this year – a record. Over the last 10 years, the drive has raised \$938,000 to supply the holiday meals. Liberty Bank this year participated in fundraising efforts by selling paper “turkey legs” to customers. Another *Rivereast* town's rotary club, East Hampton, along with the Liberty Bank branches in East Hampton and Marlborough, raised the most out of all clubs this year at \$33,903.87, and received matching funds of \$8,475.97, bringing the grand total to \$42,379.84. That grand total was used towards the East Hampton and Marlborough food banks, which provide food for Thanksgiving meals.

Murphy said key groups who contributed to this record were Marlborough Business Association, Marlborough Congregational Church, East Hampton Democratic Party, East Hampton Knights of Columbus, East Hampton Rotary Club and participants of East Hampton's annual Turkey Plunge.

In Colchester, fundraising efforts included the club's first-ever raffle. Raffle Chairman Wayne Potvin said \$20 raffle tickets were sold, which entered participants into a raffle that gave away a 2013 Dodge Avenger, a \$2,400 Honda generator, and a \$500 gift card. The drawing was held Oct. 30 at Bare Hollow Quilt Company, a quilt studio owned by Waynes wife and Colchester Rotary Club President Holly Potvin.

For Colchester alone, \$6,786 was raised. Of that total, \$1,253 was contributed by the Liberty Bank Foundation, which matches 25 cents for each dollar raised.

Inside the boxes piled high in Colchester Town Hall were 12-14-pound turkeys, cranberry sauce, green beans, butternut squash, potatoes, gravy, bread, butter, juice, and a pie from both Noel's Supermarket and Westchester Marketplace. Employees from both stores dropped off the items at around 8:30 a.m., Wayne Potvin said.

“They put their gift baskets together, deliver them to us, and I'm sure give them to us at a reasonable rate,” he explained. “They even sent helpers to help us unload!”

On Monday, his birthday, Wayne Potvin and multiple Rotary Club members handed out – and often carried – the boxes of Thanksgiving groceries to people's cars.

The receivers of the Thanksgiving boxes are determined by Colchester's Social Services Department. The number of residents receiving the boxes has a trend of rising each year and this year was no different. Town Hall was filled with 180 boxes, while last year there were 160 given out.

This year's Thanksgiving drive in Colchester was tweaked a bit, members said. In years past, the club delivered the food to recipients' houses, usually one night during the week of Thanksgiving. This year, however, the boxes were available for pick up at Town Hall. This was due to multiple reasons, Holly Potvin said. One reason was that it was often too dark for club members to see houses during deliveries, and another was the difficulty of assuring residents were home to receive them.

Wayne Potvin said he enjoyed meeting the families who came to Town Hall to pick up their boxes, and in turn, he thought it made the receivers feel good too.

“Some people don't like taking hand-outs,” he explained, “and when they come here and have to work a little bit to get their hand-out, they feel like it's totally not being handed to them.”

Club member Karen Brinkman agreed. “It's a hand-up, not a hand-out,” she said.

Brinkman and the Rotary Club's secretary Marisa Calvo, however, did make a few special trips to families early Monday morning who were unable to pick up the items themselves. Calvo said this year she felt the same she does every year during the Thanksgiving drive – “re-



Boxes filled with Thanksgiving fixings – turkeys, potatoes, gravy, cranberry sauce, green beans, corn, pies and more – were piled high in Town Hall Monday as part of the Colchester Rotary Club's Thanksgiving food drive. Partnered with the Liberty Bank Foundation, the local rotary club raised over \$6,000 to fund the Thanksgiving items, which were then given to citizens in need who otherwise would not have been able to afford supplying a bountiful meal for the holiday.

ally good.”

Calvo furthered this year's weather cooperated with the event, making it easy for people to travel to pick up their items.

“Even though it's cold, at least it's not snowing!” Calvo quipped.

Just around noon on Monday, with the pick-up going smoothly, one Colchester woman actually came to drop off. The woman wanted to remain anonymous, but thanked the Rotary Club members for all they do. She brought a 16-pound turkey and a kit for making all the turkey trimmings.

“God bless you guys!” she told the members. “I appreciate all the work that you guys do.”

And like every year, a few extra boxes were filled in case there are any people in need last minute. Those are kept in the Social Services Department at Town Hall.

For Holly Potvin, even though she assists getting the meals in the hands of those in need, the act gives something to her as well.

“I think that helping others makes you feel good,” she said, “and it's sad that a lot of people don't realize by giving up yourself you're re-

ally gaining.”

On Tuesday, after all the boxes had been picked up, the Rotary Club president furthered this year's drive, with the new pick-up procedure, ran “very, very smoothly.” That process will continue next year, she said.

Though the Thanksgiving holiday is over, and hopefully many Colchester citizens are still in food comas, the Rotary Club's volunteer efforts don't stop there.

The club will continue to raise money to go towards three programs it supports year-round: the Colchester Food Bank, the senior food pantries, in which the club stocks the shelves of the subsidized senior housing complexes Ponemah Village and Dublin, as well as the Free Lunch Program, a weekly rotated program that provides free lunches Monday-Friday at Colchester Federated Church and St. Andrew Church.

With Thanksgiving now over, the upcoming holidays in the month of December are upon us, meaning 'tis the season to keep on giving.

“It feels really good when we're helping others,” said Potvin. “It's one of the more rewarding things we do.”

Pair of Crashes in Colchester Send Three to Hospital

by **Melissa Roberto**

State Police responded to two crashes near Exit 17 on Route 2 last week within two days of each other, which wound up sending three to the hospital.

At around 8:30 p.m. on Nov. 20, police said, Anthony Heim, 23, of 39 Tanglewood Ln., Feeding Hills, Mass., was traveling on Route 2 eastbound when his vehicle struck a deer, causing him to overcorrect his steering.

Heim's vehicle then exited the highway and struck a wire rope guard rail located off the left shoulder before turning over and coming to a final rest right side up. Police said three of Heim's four passengers had minor injuries, and two of the three – William Racicot, 32, of 8 Jennie Circle, Agawam, Mass., who sustained a head injury, and Derek Damours, 24, of 14 Pheasant Run Circle, Feeding Hills, Mass., who sustained a back injury – were both transported to Backus Hospital by the Colchester Hayward Fire Department.

Then, just after midnight on Nov. 22, state police said an evading accident took place on Route 2 eastbound, two-tenths of a mile west

of Exit 17.

Police said a vehicle operated by an unknown person was traveling in the left lane while Joshua B. Cagle, 31, of 8 Thamesville Rd., Norwich, was traveling in the right lane. The unknown operator in the left lane attempted to pass Cagle and veered to the right and collided into Cagle's vehicle. As a result of the impact, Cagle's vehicle traveled off of the roadway and entered into a grassy area before colliding into a tree. Following the collision, the operator of the second vehicle evaded the collision scene.

Cagle could only describe the other vehicle as a white sports utility vehicle believed to have right side damage with green paint transfer, police said. He complained of back pain and was transported to Backus Hospital by the Colchester Hayward Fire Department for evaluation and treatment.

Anyone who witnessed the collision or saw the evading vehicle following the collision is asked to contact Trooper Mark DiCocco at Troop K at 860-465-5400, ext. 4054.

Two Killed in Marlborough Route 2 Crash

by **Melissa Roberto**

Two Ansonia men were killed early Sunday when they crashed into a tractor-trailer in the area of Exit 13 on Route 2 eastbound in Marlborough, according to state police and Marlborough Fire Department officials who were on scene.

A news release at the Troop K state police barracks in Colchester states at approximately 4:22 a.m. Omer Jani, 32, of 156 Beaver St., Apt. 2F, Ansonia, was traveling on Route 2 eastbound in between the eastbound Exit 13 on- and off-ramps when he lost control of his 1999 BMW and struck a tractor-trailer located on the right side of the road.

Jani and his passenger, Jack V. Sambrook, 22, of 16 Catalina Dr., Ansonia, were pronounced dead at the scene.

As a result of the crash, the area was closed until approximately 9 a.m., Marlborough Fire Department Fire Captain Mark Merritt said. Merritt, one of the dozen Marlborough EMTs and firefighters who responded to the scene, said Middlesex paramedics also arrived to the scene.

In terms of damage, Merritt said the car sustained heavy damage while the tractor-trailer

did not. The fire captain added the car sustained “so much damage it was just unrecognizable.”

Merritt said it was the fire department's job to secure the scene with State Police and direct traffic. Merritt furthered the accident occurred “just past the Route 66 overpass,” so drivers were able to get off of Exit 13 and get right back on via the on ramp from Route 66.

The tractor trailer is owned by Cryogenic Transportation Inc. That type of vehicle is used for carrying liquid nitrogen, Merritt confirmed, and to his knowledge it was empty at the time of the crash.

Merritt said he wasn't sure if the tractor trailer had been parked, or was driving.

“I don't know if it was parked, or just moving over from the high-speed lane to the slower lane,” Merritt said.

There was no information of a driver or passenger of the tractor-trailer on the police report, and police did not return calls for further details.

The cause of the crash is still unknown. State Police are currently conducting an investigation.

Colchester Jewelry Store Turns 25 – and Has a Grand Opening

by Melissa Roberto

Owner Drew DeBowsky of The Jewelry Connection offers his expertise daily to costumers purchasing jewelry to make a milestone extra special. And now the business owner has milestones of his own to celebrate tomorrow, on Saturday, Nov. 30: the 25th anniversary of his business and the grand opening of its recent relocation in Colchester.

The Jewelry Connection first opened in Colchester in November 1988, at 27 Lebanon Ave. Though the move has only taken place right next-door, at 35 Lebanon Ave., DeBowsky says relocating has allowed him to no longer rent his space but to own it.

The space that DeBowsky now owns is an entire plaza on Lebanon Avenue. The opportunity arose after he and his wife Joanne were in talks with the owners of Family Pizza, siblings Christos Valkanos and Anna Anastasio, who were interested in selling the space. DeBowsky said the two families came to a “nice agreement,” and he purchased the plaza in February 2012.

In addition to The Jewelry Connection, the plaza houses Joanne DeBowsky’s hair salon, Joanne’s Hair Connection, as well as AJ’s Comics, All Tressed Out Hair Salon, and a dry cleaners business.

The new jewelry store was completely remodeled and opened in April. Its soft green interior and wood accents create a “warm, earthy look,” DeBowsky said, and like its former location, the new store adjoins Joanne’s Hair Connection, which also relocated and was remodeled, allowing the husband and wife duo to “help each other if needed.”

With close proximity to the heart of Colchester, The Jewelry Connection seems to be the answer for any customer in search of a sparkling accessory for an occasion, or just a personal gift. The store sells all forms of jewelry from necklaces, bracelets, earrings and pendants, to custom creations, wedding bands and engagement rings, class rings, and stainless steel jewelry. It also offers in-store jewelry repair, watch repair, appraisals and free ear piercings.

The Jewelry Connection is also home to the popular line of charm bracelets and beads, Chamilia, similar to the Pandora bracelet line,

and just in time for the holidays, the business’s latest addition is the Wind and Fire bracelet line, an eco-friendly personalized adjustable bracelet similar to the popular brand Alex and Ani.

While the business’s relocation is worthy enough of a celebration, its move also came during its 25th year of establishment in Colchester. DeBowsky reflected this week on the store opening that occurred a quarter of a century ago.

“At the time, Colchester was a growing town and it seemed like a good fit to start a small family business,” he said.

The jewelry store owner currently lives in East Hampton with his wife Joanne and three sons, Tanner, Jarrett and Peyton. But he’s a Colchester native, and graduated from Bacon Academy in 1983. During the six years following high school, DeBowsky worked as an assistant manager for the Kay Jewelers in Meriden. There, DeBowsky often turned down offers to relocate out of state because he said he felt tied to his hometown roots. It was also while he worked for the big name retailer that DeBowsky realized aspects of the industry he wasn’t fond of.

“I had learned a lot about the jewelry business but I did not like the impersonal treatment that was given,” he said.

In 1988, it was the lack of personal customer relations at Kay’s that gave him the motivation to open up his own store in his hometown and to “treat customers the way they deserve to be treated and make sure they get the most value for their earned dollar.”

Fast-forward to the present day and the successful owner said he feels it’s his “credibility and honesty” that keeps his customers coming back.

“If you don’t have those qualities than you’re not going to succeed,” he said.

And in the last 25 years, DeBowsky has certainly reached milestones at The Jewelry Connection. One of the highlights, he said, has been watching generations of families come into his store.

“I’m selling engagement rings to sons and daughters of people I’ve sold engagement rings to in the past,” he explained. “I’ve seen children grow up.”

For that factor alone, DeBowsky said busi-



The DeBowsky family stands outside of dad Drew’s jewelry store, The Jewelry Connection, which recently moved to 35 Lebanon Ave., right next door from its previous location. The business is celebrating both the move and its 25-year anniversary tomorrow, Nov. 30. From left are Joanne, Jarrett, Peyton, Tanner and Drew DeBowsky.

ness is satisfying.

“Jewelry is such a sentimental item that has so much meaning to people that I cherish being able to assist them,” he said.

DeBowsky added he’s also appreciative his job gives him the flexibility to volunteer within the East Hampton Public Schools. At the middle school, DeBowsky coaches boys’ volleyball, soccer and baseball.

With 25 years under his belt, DeBowsky said his only goal is to continue serving the surrounding community.

“It’s very satisfying to know that I’ve been able to run a successful business in a small town and serve the community and my customers.”

He concluded, “I love Colchester, that’s for sure. It’s the town I grew up in and I feel loyalty to the town.”

The public is invited to attend the grand

opening of The Jewelry Connection’s new location at 35 Lebanon Ave. tomorrow, Saturday, Nov. 30, from 12:30-3 p.m., with a ribbon-cutting with First Selectman Gregg Schuster scheduled for 1 p.m. Refreshments will be served. In honor of the business’ 25th anniversary, the event will also feature free gifts, drawings and giveaways including 25 free Wind & Fire bracelets given to the first 25 customers in attendance of the ceremonies – a perfect way to celebrate the nation’s “Small Business Saturday.”

To reach DeBowsky at The Jewelry Connection, readers can call 860-537-0525. Special holiday hours are Monday-Friday 11 a.m.-7 p.m.; Saturdays, 10:30 a.m.-5 p.m.; and Sundays, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. The business can also be visited on the web at jewelconnection.net.

Three Fatal Accidents in Three Months in Portland

by Elizabeth Bowling

Over the past three months, there have been three fatal single-car crashes in town – leaving a total of six dead and two with serious injuries – and police and town officials are trying to make sure this doesn’t become a disturbing trend.

The first of the three accidents occurred shortly before 2 a.m. Sept. 20, when a truck hit a rock ledge on Route 66. The 2009 Sierra pickup truck caught fire, resulting in the death of the driver, James Stamm, 51, of East Hampton.

According to Lt. Ron Milardo of the Portland Police Department, the investigation for that accident is pending.

Milardo said in a phone interview last Thursday, Nov. 21, “It wasn’t extreme damage to the vehicle [so] we don’t believe that was a speed-involved accident.”

The second crash happened Oct. 26 and left four passengers dead and one in critical condition.

A Honda Civic traveling southbound struck a concrete bridge abutment at the intersection of Rose Hill Road and Lower Cox Road. The police and fire departments responded to the accident at approximately 2:45 a.m.

Three of the five occupants were pronounced deceased at the scene: Pedro Duprey (driver), 24, of Springfield, Mass.; Ramon Ruiz (friend),

30, of Hartford; and Ivette Amaro (mother), 42, of Springfield, Mass.

A fourth person – Andrea Caraballo (sister), 20, of Springfield, Mass. – was transported to Middlesex Hospital where she was pronounced dead.

The final occupant, Juniarys Caraballo (sister), 18, of Springfield, Mass., was ejected from the car. She was transported via LifeStar to Hartford Hospital, where she remained in critical condition until recently, Milardo said.

Milardo confirmed last Thursday that Juniarys Caraballo is still recovering at Hartford Hospital but has improved from her state of critical condition to one of stable condition. Because the investigation is ongoing, Milardo said, police will soon get in touch with the now-stable survivor to see if she can recall any information from the night of the accident.

Since none of the five occupants of the vehicle were from Portland, police think the group was unfamiliar with the area, which they feel may have contributed to the crash.

Milardo added, “We believe probably speed was involved in that [accident].”

He also affirmed that it was the birthday of one of the car’s four occupants who died.

Like the September accident, the third and most recent crash occurred near the ledges on Portland/Cobalt Road Nov. 10 at 12:45 a.m. The

accident left the driver dead and his passenger in critical condition.

This accident, Milardo said, “definitely had to do with speed and maybe alcohol.”

However, he added, police are waiting on autopsy results to confirm if alcohol was indeed involved.

According to Sgt. Scott Cunningham of the Portland Police, “Responding officers discovered that a 1967 Dodge Dart traveling westbound went across the eastbound lane, striking a dirt/rock embankment. The vehicle continued westbound. The vehicle became airborne while continuing westbound, striking a utility pole and then a tree before traversing down the embankment toward the river approximately 60 feet before it came to a stop.”

Both the driver of the vehicle and the passenger were ejected from the vehicle, Cunningham said. The driver, Donald Sorvillo, 52, of 27 Main St., East Hampton, was pronounced dead on the scene.

The passenger, his brother, Robert Sorvillo, of the same address, was Lifestarred to St. Francis Hospital in Hartford. Robert remained at St. Francis Hospital in “stable but critical conditions” until he was released recently, Cunningham said Tuesday.

In reflecting on the sudden abundance of fatal accidents, Milardo said, “It’s unfortunate.”

He said, “It’s pretty hard to prevent a motor vehicle accident from happening.” But, he furthered, “We’re doing what we can to make sure the town roads in Portland – and the state roads – are safe.”

Milardo said the local police have stepped up patrol in terms of radar and drunken driving enforcement on Route 66, Main Street and several other streets.

He noted, “We haven’t had an accident in that area in several years.” But, he added, “It’s not just that area.”

Milardo also said he has been in communication with state Rep. Christie Carpino, as well as First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield in an effort to acquire new signage on Route 66.

Bransfield affirmed that signage is, indeed, something the three parties are looking into.

Additional future precautions will include a DWI spot check during the holiday season, Milardo said.

Regarding whether high speeds or alcohol played in part in the three accidents, Milardo said, “We cannot say” because investigations are pending.

More discussion on the matters of street signage and speed enforcement is on the agenda for the next Board of Selectmen meeting Wednesday, Dec. 4, at 7:30 p.m. at Portland Library.

Hebron Resident Spending Year in Uganda

by Geeta Schrayter

“Thankful” is a term that was likely tossed around quite a bit yesterday, as families gathered for their Thanksgiving feast and discussed all they’re grateful for. Over a menu that probably consisted of some variation of stuffing, gravy, mashed potatoes, casseroles and plenty of pie, things such as family, friends and happiness might have been uttered by some, while others may have said lower gas prices, holiday vacation and Playstation 4.

But for one Hebron resident, who found himself miles from home during the holiday, the support he receives from his family and friends is on the list, but so are some items he called a result of the fact he’s currently spending a year in Africa.

“Being here has really put things in perspective,” Casey Lavallee said this week. “I now see how well off we actually are as Americans. We are given the opportunity of education and good healthcare that people in third world countries can only dream about. We don’t have to worry about not having enough water or wonder when the next meal is going to come.”

After graduating RHAM High School this past June, Lavallee decided he needed to see and experience more of the world before he decided what he wanted to do for the rest of his life.

“Today’s society says that everyone needs to attend college in order to be successful but I feel like this way of life and thinking did not fit my dreams and aspirations,” he said.

What *did* fit was the opportunity provided to him through Fields of Growth, a non-profit that, according to their website fieldsofgrowthintl.org, “aims to harness the passion of the lacrosse community into positive social impact through global leadership development, service and growing the game.”

Through Fields of Growth, Lavallee, who has played lacrosse for seven years, traveled in July to Uganda, where he currently coaches the first Ugandan lacrosse team, teaches at a local primary school, is fundraising for and helping to build a school, and working to make the lives of some of the students a bit easier.

A typical day for Lavallee involves waking up around 7:30 a.m., walking down the street for breakfast then going to teach at a primary school until noon. There he teaches English and gym to children in P4-P6 which is comparable

to third through fifth-graders. After he’s done, Lavallee relaxes for the afternoon, leaves for lacrosse practice at 4 p.m. and returns home around 8 p.m.

In addition, once a month he makes a four hour trek to the village of Kkindu which is the location of The HOPEFUL School, which was built by Fields of Growth and serves 275 orphaned children. There, Lavallee has made bricks out of mud to help finish the school and has taken part in homes visits where he’s provided students with “gifts that make life a little easier.”

These can include sugar, flour, oil and soap for washing clothes and bathing.

“We also try and play with the students as much as possible and let them know that education can truly transform their lives,” he said.

To further help with their education, Lavallee is raising money for the DREAM 2014 Campaign, which was started by Fields of Growth to help finish constructing classrooms at the HOPEFUL School and pay teachers. As part of that fundraiser, Lavallee walked 100 miles across Uganda, from the capital Kampala to the HOPEFUL School.

Along with raising money for the school, Lavallee’s efforts will also go toward bringing the lacrosse team he’s coaching to America for the world championships next July. Lavallee explained the team will be the first from Africa to compete in the championships. He said coaching the 24 players (that number will be cut to 16 next month) has been “very exciting and life changing” but also a struggle.

“Attendance is one of the largest struggles that I face,” he said. “Players might not have the money to make it to practice on some days or they will be stuck at work and won’t be able to make it. It’s also difficult explaining things and trying to show them how to play the game correctly.”

In order to work through these struggles – and make it in Uganda overall – Lavallee said patience is key.

“Patience is the only way that anyone will make it in Uganda,” he stated. “You have to be patient with everything from waiting hours for a taxi to fill up to players showing up an hour late to practice.”

But, Lavallee said, “I wouldn’t have it any other way.”



One of the things Hebron resident Casey Lavallee has been doing during his year in Uganda is coaching the first national Ugandan lacrosse team, who will come to America to compete next July.

Regarding the long wait for a taxi, Lavallee explained a Ugandan taxi is essentially a van with 15 seats. The taxi won’t leave until it’s full, which he said can sometimes take a couple of hours. Then, after a passenger gets off, the taxi stops and waits for someone else to get on before continuing.

“They also put as many people in a taxi as they can possibly fit. I was in one once with 23 people in it,” Lavallee shared. “The traffic is also ridiculous: there are no enforced traffic laws or traffic lights.”

Patience, taxis and traffic are just a few of the things Lavallee said he had to get used to. Another major challenge for him was adapting to a slower way of life. Everything in Uganda runs on “African Time,” he said – which is a term the locals use to justify being late.

And then, of course, there’s the food. Breakfast for Lavallee usually consists of four eggs, an avocado, banana, orange, toast and some milk. And every meal, he explained, usually consists of a combination of rice, beans, peas, potatoes and posho, which he described as like a “crushed up flour tortilla mixed with water until it’s about the same consistency as mashed potatoes” – a menu quite different from the

Thanksgiving food that filled tables yesterday, and lacking Lavallee’s favorite snack: beef jerky.

But food and adjustments aside, Lavallee said living in Uganda has been “amazing” and he’s enjoyed “everything.”

“The people are so nice and welcoming, the food is fresh and the weather is perfect,” he said.

Despite his overall happiness, Lavallee isn’t unaware of the fact he’ll be away from his family for the holiday season. And yet while he says it will be “very difficult,” he also knows being in Uganda has given him a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. And for the next seven months, he plans to work toward his various goals.

“My goals are to get the lacrosse team to a level where they are able to compete at the international level and win their division,” he said. “I also want to see the HOPEFUL School become self-sufficient, and [for] students to realize the importance of education.”

And those goals, and that dedication is something for the students and athletes he’s working with to be grateful for.

To donate to Lavallee’s fundraiser, go to crowdrise.com/hopefulwalk/fundraiser/caseylavallee.

New Business in Hebron Promotes a Sense of Calm, Healing

by Geeta Schrayter

Stepping into “The Sanctuary” at 19 Maple Ave. in Amston, there seems to be an unwritten rule that stress be left outside. A sense of calm seems to wait just inside the doorway, and, considering what can be found within those walls, that calm makes perfect sense.

“The Sanctuary” is the home of Mamoga Wellness LLC, a yoga and fitness center for women, mothers, children and families that focuses on “whole self-health.” Director Jennifer Magnano said she was looking to find a place to house her center that was “a little off the beaten path” and would be peaceful – even when patrons brought their children along.

“This is the space,” she said this week.

On the first floor of the building, which is filled with soothing scents and soft music, a sitting area is tucked into a corner with comfy chairs and walls of books. Not far off, a small gift area displays items such as local soaps and lotions, essential oils, baby balms, books, cards and yoga mats. Moving up the stairs, where the wall is lined with photos of positive phrases like “inspiration is the light that transforms rain into rainbows” and “leadership is the art of bringing out the best in others,” a large loft-like area comes into view.

It’s here, Magnano explained, that most of the classes offered through Mamoga take place. These classes include Align & Flow yoga for adults, the Yoga of Birthing to help with preg-

nancies, PainFree PINK yoga for those with chronic pain or autoimmune disharmony and family meditations.

In addition, Mamoga offers classes for kids such as a Drum & Dance class that offers “Zumba-like fun for everyone.” And it’s children – specifically Magnano’s children – that are the main reason the center came to be. Magnano explained she had two complicated births and was on bed rest for both. When her son was born in 2010, he was very sick and had acute liver failure at 11 months.

“He kind of changed my perspective on life,” she said, explaining before his birth she was very career driven, but left her job after she realized working while he was sick wasn’t working for either of them.

“When you have a sick child – one you almost lose – you recognize how precious moments are and learn how to get through it all,” she said. “A lot of what I teach now are self-care practices that women primarily, can integrate into their nurturing lives.”

In addition, Magnano was diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis when she was 10 and has been practicing yoga ever since. It’s these occurrences that led to Mamoga Wellness in October 2010, which allows her to share her experiences with “mindfulness and movement” and caring for yourself with others.

Magnano explained many women in their

late 30s and early 40s are caring for both their children and their aging parents and don’t have a lot of time to take care of themselves.

“The only time they get might be with a little crazy one running around so we teach how to break it down so even in busyness you can stay peaceful, present and patient,” she said. “It’s an empowering process.”

When classes are geared toward or incorporate children – like the Drum & Dance class – Magnano said she brings her son, who is now 3, and six-month old daughter along with her.

“Any class that has children involved I bring them,” she said. “When I do personal training with moms that have kids they’re more than welcome to bring their children and I’ll bring mine so they can play.”

And this winter, there will be a number of new classes geared toward kids. Magnano said there will be a no-bake cooking class, as well as a holiday camp in a “positive and motivating setting” where kids will take part in gentle yoga poses, children’s meditation and goal setting, creative activities, craft projects and yoga stories.

Also coming in December will be PainFree PINK classes in the evening; a family movement class; a Medicine Cabinet Makeover to help participants use more natural approaches to heal their families; and Mother Love, where

mothers can come to relax, sip tea, stretch and learn mindfulness practices they can integrate into their everyday lives.

“I hope to make [Mamoga] integrated in the community,” Magnano stated. “My intention is to support the community with tools that not only allow them to support themselves but those around them. And my motto is ‘acceptance is bliss,’ or ‘we best serve others when we serve ourselves.’”

In order to help that support reach as far as possible, Magnano said there are donation classes at the center as well as fee classes and next year she’s hoping to acquire grants for more programs – like one she currently teaches through the Collaborative for Colchester’s Children.

In the meantime, some specials are available for the month of December.

“Kids classes, family event classes and a couple of the women’s movement classes are all \$30 for three classes for the month of December,” she said.

And for Small Business Saturday, there will be discounts on certain classes tomorrow through Monday. To take advantage of those discounts, or for more information on Magnano and the center, class offerings, times and prices or to sign up for a particular class visit bekindandunwind.com or call 860-245-YOGA.

East Hampton Town Council Tackles Number of Issues

by Elizabeth Bowling

The Town Council voted unanimously on several items and discussed possible requests for an upcoming grant at its meeting Tuesday night.

The council unanimously approved an amendment under the membership terms portion of the fire department ordinance that will allow the Town Council to “remove any member for cause,” and also unanimously approved an amendment to the Clean Energy Task Force Resolution that will increase the task force’s membership from five to seven members.

Also on Tuesday, the council agreed to establish a “Good Samaritan Resolution,” in which East Hampton residents who go “above and beyond” what is normally expected will be recognized for their efforts and good deeds. The resolution describes a Good Samaritan as one who “acts in good faith.”

Town Manager Mike Maniscalco suggested posting a plaque in Town Hall that would display the names of each Good Samaritan in addition to the council recognizing those people annually.

In continued business, the council revisited a resident’s request for the town to reclaim ownership of the bridge that leads to the home at 10 Sexton Hill Rd.

Anna Ruth Sandin Masters, who lives in that home, approached Maniscalco about two months ago regarding bridge maintenance.

Maniscalco explained at the last Town Council meeting, Nov. 12, that the town stopped ownership of the road right before the bridge in 1989 because the bridge needed a significant amount of work and only serviced one residency.

Minutes recorded from 1989 show that the Sandin family requested the abandonment of their portion of Sexton Hill Road, Maniscalco said.

On Tuesday, the council decided to continue this lack of ownership of the bridge.

Council member Mark Philhower summed up the discussion in a simple statement; taking that portion of the road, he said, is “not in the town’s best interest.”

* * *

Also at Tuesday’s meeting, the council voted to approve a newly-built shed located in the town’s right of way. The shed is 35 feet from the center of Old Chestnut Hill Road and is in a swale where water usually flows off the road.

The shed is part of Moody’s Maple Sugar Farm, owned by Loren Moody.

Moody said he built the shed, which is 2.5 ft. wide by 7 ft. long, about three or four weeks ago. He explained, “It’s going to house a three horsepower electric motor that runs a vacuum pump that tricks the trees into thinking the atmospheric pressure is low so they’ll put out sap.”

But Public Works Director Phil Sissick expressed concerns in a letter he wrote to the town manager. It stated, “The shed’s present location may change and/or inhibit the flow of water in the swale; this change may create a diversion of water onto the road down slope or cause additional water to shed on private property. There is potential for damage to the road and the structure under high water. The shed may also be impacted by snow thrown from plows under certain conditions.”

However, Police Chief Sean Cox said he

didn’t see any issues.

Maniscalco agreed, “I don’t think it’s going to cause huge issues.”

Philhower too, agreed with Cox’s assessment. He said he “didn’t have a problem with it.”

The council unanimously approved the location of Moody’s shed. It also approved that a contract go into effect between the town manager and Moody regarding electrical service for the three horsepower pump.

The council members also discussed their ideas for 2014 Small Town Economic Assistance Plan grant requests.

Maniscalco explained that any STEAP grant request must have the intention of creating an economic impact.

Councilman Kevin Reich made a couple suggestions including extending the Air Line Trail to “get more people downtown.” But Maniscalco informed him that the town currently has a grant application with the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection for the Air Line Trail.

Reich’s other suggestion was to complete the sidewalk along Lake Pocotopaug, or widen sidewalks in other, more dangerous areas. He said, “This is a window of opportunity to implement sidewalks.”

John Moore, chairman of Friends of Lake Pocotopaug, said he’d like to see the grant go toward the lake.

Resident Scott Bristol also had an idea for the 2014 STEAP grant request. He suggested the grant request should be for 13 Watrous St. He called the town-owned property “the epitome of blight.”

* * *

Also, at an executive session meeting last Thursday, Nov. 21, the Town Council determined what steps to take regarding what was described as “inappropriate behavior” from the town’s Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission chairman.

The behavior of commission chairman Jeff Foran was discussed at the last regularly scheduled council meeting, Nov. 12, after a resident submitted a complaint. Maniscalco noted that he personally witnessed Foran “berate” a taxpayer at one commission meeting.

After the executive session to discuss action, Town Council Chairwoman Barbara Moore released a statement that read, “After hearing from Mr. Foran and the other members of the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission and listening to the recordings of the meeting in question, it was the consensus of the Town Council to reach out to our land use boards and provide them with more support in performing their duties.”

Essentially, the Town Council decided not to suspend Foran, as they had previously considered.

Moore’s statement furthered, “We have begun to understand their level of frustration, but will not tolerate or condone harsh behavior or inappropriate remarks toward residents and business owners. Our commission members must be held to higher standards and we will not allow intimidating behavior.”

* * *

The next regularly scheduled East Hampton Town Council meeting is Tuesday, Dec. 10, at 6:30 p.m. at the Town Hall.

‘Come On Over’ Bracelet in Portland

Angela’s Fine Jewelry has designed a “Come On Over” bracelet for the Portland High School Project Graduation committee. The bracelet features a picture of a bridge and the words engraved “Come on Over, Portland, Conn.” and is constructed from recycled materials. It has adjustable sizing capability and is priced at \$25.

To purchase a bracelet, visit Angela’s Fine Jewelry or call Kathi Thorell at 860-342-5472. All proceeds will go toward Project Graduation.

The Project Graduation committee is composed of parents and students who work together to provide graduating seniors a chaperoned drug and alcohol-free all night celebration on graduation night.



Pictured here is the aftermath of a reported explosion and structure fire to the residency at 474 Glastonbury Tpke. The abandoned four-car detached garage was engulfed in flames last Friday, Nov. 22, by an unknown origin.

Abandoned Residence Burned in Portland

by Elizabeth Bowling

An abandoned residence on Glastonbury Turnpike exploded and caught fire last Friday, Nov. 22 – a blaze that has been deemed suspicious.

The Portland Police and Fire departments responded to the report of an explosion and structure fire at 474 Glastonbury Tpke. at around 11:55 a.m. Nov. 22.

According to a press release from Portland Police Sgt. Scott Cunningham, the abandoned residency was actually a four-car detached garage located near the intersection of Glastonbury Turnpike and Main Street.

The property had been abandoned for several years and did not have any power utilities, the press release stated.

Cunningham added the origin of the fire was one of “a suspicious nature.” However, specific information on how the blaze started is still unknown, as police are still waiting on a report from the state fire marshal, Cunningham said Tuesday.

But, he speculated, “The fire may have been caused due to someone tampering with old propane cylinders stored in the garage.”

He said the fire had “fully engulfed the second floor” by the time the fire department was able to control it.

As of Tuesday, police had questioned two people of interest but no arrests had been made. Several other leads are also being pursued. The investigation is ongoing.

Car Crash Leaves One Dead, Two Injured in East Hampton

by Elizabeth Bowling

A single-car accident on Route 16 last Friday, Nov. 22, left the driver dead and seriously injured her two passengers, East Hampton Police said.

All three occupants of the vehicle were East Hampton residents.

The driver, Susan Walton, 42, of 29 West High St., was pronounced dead on the scene and the passengers were both flown via LifeStar to Hartford Hospital, according to a press release from East Hampton Police Chief Sean Cox.

The two survivors are Walton’s son, Christopher Schonagel, 24, of 29 West High St., and his friend, Joseph DePace, 24, of 28

Tartia Rd.

Schonagel and DePace’s conditions were unknown as of Tuesday.

According to the press release, Walton’s 1998 Ford Explorer was traveling westbound on Route 16 near the intersection of Cedar Ridge Road at around 1 a.m. when, “for no apparent reason, it crossed over the center of the paved roadway striking a stone wall and several trees before coming to an uncontrolled resting position on the south side of the road.”

The investigation of the accident is ongoing. Anyone with information should contact the East Hampton Police Department at 860-267-9922.

After Debate, East Hampton School Board Adds New Member

by Elizabeth Bowling

East Hampton's new Board of Education used its first official meeting Monday night to elect new leadership and discuss incoming school grants – and also wound up having a fairly heated discussion on how best to replace former board member Don Coolican.

Ken Barber was named chairman of the board by a unanimous vote. Barber, a veteran on the Board of Education, is a Democrat – meaning there are now Democratic chairs on the boards of education and finance, as well as the Town Council.

Chris Goff, whose term on the school board just started, was named secretary of the board by a unanimous vote.

Barber appointed veteran board members Scott Minnick and Josh Piteo for the positions of acting chairperson and acting secretary, respectively.

Also in terms of organizing the board, members discussed the need to fill the two-year vacancy left by Coolican, a Republican, who departed the board after he was elected this month to serve on the Board of Finance.

According to Superintendent of Schools Diane Dugas, Coolican submitted his official resignation last Friday, Nov. 22, and it went into effect Monday – the day of the new school board's first meeting.

Piteo, a Republican, made a motion that he said "reinforced" a motion made by the former

board. He moved that Dugas advertise the open position. Then anyone interested in filling the open seat could submit their applications to Dugas and the board would vote on which applicant would fill the vacancy.

"We've done this in the past. The previous chairman [Mark Laraia] – that's how he got on the board," Piteo said. "This process has been used by the Board of Education for a number of years."

Piteo's motion failed, as only he and fellow Republican board member Debra Devin voted in favor of it. The rest of the board members voted against.

Board member Bill Marshall suggested instead that the school board nominate the candidate who earned the next highest number of votes in the Nov. 5 election to fill the vacancy.

"We are just two weeks off an election. We're all here because we got voted in by the public," Marshall said. "I think we should honor the will of the voters and select the person with the next-highest number of votes, regardless of party."

Minnick, also a Chatham Party member, echoed Marshall.

"The next-highest winner is the way to go; it's the voters' will," Minnick said. "It's fair, it's reasonable. It certainly would be respected by the voting public."

He added that the sooner the board can fill the empty seat, the sooner it can move forward

with everything it needs to accomplish.

Because five candidates were elected to the board, the person with the next-highest number of votes would have been the candidate who came in sixth place – Jeff Carlson, a Democrat.

But Piteo said, "That's not an overwhelming vote of confidence in somebody – coming in sixth."

Piteo also questioned the fairness of replacing Coolican with a Democrat.

"People may feel short-changed by that," he said.

Marshall said, "As a point of fact, the party that nominated me is not the party that would benefit from this. I did not run as a Democrat."

Newly-elected board member Steven Kelley, a Democrat, expressed his support in nominating Carlson to fill the vacancy.

Kelley said, "Jeff Carlson is very involved in the community. He is the vice president of the Young People's Center for Creative Arts. He has a vast knowledge in the construction industry that will help as far as facilities goes. I think he will be an asset."

Regarding the nomination process, Kelley added, "The next person with the highest votes should fall into that place; it's happened in many other cases in this town."

The board took it to a vote. Marshall nomi-

nated Carlson to fill the vacant seat left by Coolican; the board approved the motion 5-2 – with Piteo and Devin voting against, and Republican board member Emily Fahle abstaining – making Carlson the ninth member of the Board of Education.

* * *

Also at Monday's meeting, Dugas informed the board that East Hampton received two state grants.

The first grant, for \$138,000 from the State Department of Education technology investment grant, will go toward bringing computers to the classroom and increasing Internet bandwidth, Dugas said.

"We are thrilled with that," Dugas said. "It will support not only the fiber that's coming into the district, but it will also support 200 Google Chromebooks."

The second grant is for approximately \$95,000 from the State Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection. The funding will address the safety and security of all four schools in town, Dugas said.

* * *

The next regularly scheduled East Hampton Board of Education meeting is Monday, Dec. 9, at 7 p.m. at the East Hampton High School library.

East Hampton Police News

11/7: Andre Shepard, 35, of 99 Grand Ave., Apt 1, Vernon, was issued a summons for evading responsibility and failure to have insurance, East Hampton Police said, stemming from a motor vehicle accident that occurred on Friday, Nov. 1.

11/12: Christopher P. Balendes, 20, of 37 Barton Hill Rd., was issued a ticket for possession of alcohol by a minor, possession of drug paraphernalia and possession of marijuana, police said.

11/14: Susan White, 50, of 53 Davison Rd., Moodus, and Amber McAuliffe, 42, of 57 Flatbrook Rd., were involved in a two-car motor vehicle accident in the area of Main Street and Route 66. McAuliffe was issued a summons for operating an unregistered and uninsured motor vehicle, police said.

11/15: Amanda L. Poland, 27, of 135 Smith St., was issued a summons for failure to obey a control signal and operating under suspension, police said.

11/16: Jeffrey D. Hyde, 54, of 153 Main St., was arrested for violating a restraining order and disorderly conduct, police said.

11/16: Christopher Ryon, 39, of 145 Witer Rd., Salem, was issued a summons for failure to drive right, distracted driving and operating an unregistered and uninsured motor vehicle, police said.

11/17: Thomas A. Cyrankowski, 51, of 46 Phelps Rd., Marlborough, was arrested for DUI and failure to drive right, police said.

11/18: Patrick R. Allen-Schunk, 21, of 4 Ellis Rd., was issued a summons for misuse of plates and operating an unregistered and uninsured motor vehicle, police said.

11/19: Hank Townsend, 72, of 41 East High St., turned himself in pursuant to an active warrant. Townsend was charged with disorderly conduct, third-degree assault, second-degree threatening and third-degree strangulation, stemming from an incident that occurred Sept. 20, police said.

Andover Police News

11/24: State Police said Stephen Alvarado, 44, of 46 Lebanon Ave., Willimantic, was charged with speeding and operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license.

Hebron Police News

11/24: State Police said Michael Schoell, 48, of 1931 South St., Coventry, was traveling northbound on Old Colchester Road in Hebron when a large branch across the roadway went through his windshield. Police said Schoell sustained a facial laceration and was transported to Hartford Hospital by the Hebron Fire Department.

Colchester Police News

11/19: State Police said Christina Lewis, 28, of 43 Ivy Court, was charged with second-degree failure to appear.

11/20: State Police said Cory Langlois, 34, of 288 Norwich Ave., was charged with misuse of plates, no insurance, operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license, operating an unregistered motor vehicle, second-degree failure to appear and possession of a stolen plate.

11/21: State Police said Kiplin Anderson, 62, of 12 Brentwood Dr., Bloomfield, was charged with carrying a firearm while under the influence, DUI and speeding.

11/21: State Police said a two-car crash occurred at approximately 5:47 p.m. on Waterhole Road. Police said one of the operators, Mark Christensen, 37, of 91 Wildwood Rd., East Haddam, was transported to Marlborough Clinic by the Colchester Hayward Fire Department for precautionary measures. Police furthered charges are pending for Christensen but did not specify which charges they were.

11/21: Colchester Police said a Heatherwood Drive resident reported an unknown person(s) utilized her debit card number to make several

unauthorized purchases. The incident is currently being investigated by the Colchester Police.

11/22: Colchester Police is currently investigating a report of fraudulent credit card charges for a resident of Hayward Avenue. Police said the resident reported four unauthorized charges occurring between Nov. 3 and Nov. 4.

11/24: Colchester Police said Mark B. St. John, 56, of 2 Birch Circle, Apt. 1, was charged with DUI, improper hand-signaling for turns, and drinking while operating a motor vehicle.

11/24: Colchester Police said a two-vehicle accident occurred at the intersection of Broadway and Route 85 at approximately 8:53 a.m. Police said Gary L. Mino, 61, whose address was listed as P.O. Box 332, Essex, and Paul Zimmitti, 51, of 110 Davidson Rd., Colchester, were transported to the Marlborough Clinic by the Colchester Hayward Fire Department for possible injuries.

11/25: State Police said Cheryl Patton-Lynch, 47, of 104 Honeycomb Ave., Milford, was charged with identity theft, criminal impersonation and illegal obtaining of drugs.

Marlborough Police News

11/21: State Police said a one-car crash occurred on Route 66 at approximately 1:05 p.m. Police said Sharon A. Fasanelli-Turner, 47, of 23 Mai Rd., Hebron, was traveling west on Route 66 and, for an unknown reason, drifted off onto the right shoulder of the roadway and struck a mailbox. Fasanelli-Turner then continued to travel along the right shoulder and struck a second mailbox. She then continued to drive on the right shoulder before striking a large tree in the front yard of 83 Rt. 66 and coming to a final rest. Police said Fasanelli-Turner was then transported to the hospital by the Marlborough Volunteer Fire Department for unknown injuries.

11/21: State Police said John R. Forbes, 26, of 205 West High St., East Hampton, was charged with DUI, operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license, reckless driving and illegal possession of drugs.

11/21: State Police said Aaron Blow, 19, of 200 Wall St., Hebron, was charged with DWI and failure to drive in the right hand lane.

11/22: State Police said Marie A. Johnson, 44, of 827 Brock Ave., New Bedford, Mass.,

was charged with failure to drive in the proper lane, failure to stop on right, DUI and reckless driving.

11/22: State Police said Ricardo Padilla Jr., 26, of 235 Main St., East Hartford, was charged with DUI and failure to drive in the proper lane.

11/23: State Police said Robert Meraviglia, 19, of 444 Freeman Ave., Stratford, was traveling southbound on North Main Street when he negotiated a right curve in the roadway and veered to the left and entered the northbound lane. Meraviglia's vehicle then traveled off the left side of the roadway and collided into the end of a metal beam guide rail, guide rail posts and a Connecticut Light and Power utility pole. Police said Meraviglia sustained a laceration to the right side of his head and was transported to Hartford Hospital via LifeStar for further evaluation and treatment. Police said the collision remains under investigation.

11/24: State Police said Enrique Najera-Hernandez, 32, of 167 South Main St., was charged with disorderly conduct and third-degree assault.

Obituaries

East Hampton

Steven Alan Grant

Steven Alan Grant, 57, of East Haddam and formerly of East Hampton, passed away Thursday, Nov. 21.

He leaves his mother, Joanne Grant of East Haddam; two children, Jeffrey and Jennifer Grant, both of Niantic; two siblings, Mark and Sandra Grant, both of East Haddam; his colleagues at Eddie's Auto Body; and many other friends and relatives.

He has now rejoined his late father, Earl, and late brother, Craig.

Care of private arrangements has been entrusted to the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester. For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Colchester

W. Edward Foster

W. Edward Foster, 74, of Colchester, passed away unexpectedly Thursday, Nov. 21. Born Aug. 24, 1939, in Meriden, he was the son of the late L. Stanley and Gail (Erb) Foster.

A talented bass trombonist, Ed earned his Master of Music degree in instrumental performance from Hartt College at the University of Hartford. He began his 45-year tenure with the Hartford Symphony Orchestra in 1961 while teaching trombone to countless students. In his 50s, he returned to school and earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Mathematics from Eastern Connecticut State University.

Ed taught information processing at Computer Processing Institute and Branford Career Hall while continuing his career in the HSO. He studied and traveled in Italy and had a passion for fine art. Later in life, he developed a love for gardening and bird watching. He was a gentle intellectual and had a quiet but firm personality.

He leaves his daughter, Kristin Foster of Colchester; his former spouse, Judith Billingham of Hadlyme and her daughter, Rebecca Risley of Tolland; his longtime friends, Andrew and Feather Spearman of Willington; and numerous other friends and extended family members.

A service will be announced at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory may be made to the Hartford Symphony Orchestra, 100 Pearl St., Hartford, CT 06103 (hartfordsymphony.org).

Care of arrangements has been entrusted to the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester. For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Colchester

Seymour Morris Kessler

Seymour Morris Kessler, 80, of Colchester and formerly of Niantic, beloved husband of JessieMay (Sanderson) Kessler, passed away Wednesday, Nov. 20, at the Wm. W. Backus Hospital in Norwich. Born Aug. 22, 1933, in The Bronx, N.Y., he was the son of the late Celia Kessler and Leo Siciliano.

He served proudly with the Army Signal Corps between 1955 and 1962.

Mr. Kessler earned his Bachelor of Science Degree in Electrical Engineering from UConn. He had worked for Underwater Sound Systems until his retirement. A member of the Niantic Community Church, he had served on the maintenance committee.

In addition to his loving wife of 35 years, he is survived by two daughters, Gwen Mosher of Plainfield and Lori Ann Kosior of Newington; three stepdaughters, Lynn Franius of New Haven, Ind., Katrina Perry of Groton and Christa Moro of Colchester; four grandchildren, Cheyanne and Aaron Mosher and Brandon and Ashleigh Moro; and numerous extended family members and friends.

A Memorial Service will be observed Saturday, Dec. 14, at 3 PM in the Niantic Community Church, 170 Pennsylvania Ave, Niantic. Rendering of military honors will follow. Burial will be private.

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

Care of arrangements has been entrusted to the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester. For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Portland

William H. Long

William H. Long, 82 of Portland husband of the late Mary (Chiabrero) Long passed away Saturday, Nov. 23, at Middlesex Hospital. He was the son of the late William E. and Louise (Schmid) Long.

Born on July 27, 1931, in Westchester, he was a lifelong resident of Portland. He worked for Valli Construction in Portland for many years before retiring as road foreman for the Town of Portland. After retirement, he worked as a caretaker for Trinity Cemetery in Portland. He was also a U.S. Air Force veteran having served during Korea.

He was a member of the Portland Fire Dept Co. 2 for over 50 years, past president of the Portland Lions Club, a member of the Portland Planning and Zoning Board of Appeals, the Portland Democratic Town Committee, the Portland Horse-shoe League, and a member of the Church of St. Mary in Portland. He was an avid hunter and fisherman, and was a fan of the Boston Red Sox and the UConn girls' basketball team.

He leaves a son, William P. Long of Portland; a daughter, Janet Long of Portland; son-in-law, David Granat of Portland; a brother, Edward F. Long of Portland; a sister, Louise Foster of Potsdam, N.Y.; and many nieces and nephews.

He was predeceased by a brother, Henry Long.

Funeral services were held Tuesday, Nov. 26, from Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland, followed by a Mass that morning at the Church of St. Mary, Portland. Burial was in St. Mary Cemetery, Portland. Relatives and friends called Monday, Nov. 25, at the funeral home.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Portland Fire Co. 2, P.O. Box 71, Portland, CT 06480.

To send an online expression of sympathy, visit portlandmemorialfh.net.

East Hampton

Susan Walton

Susan (Downey) Walton of East Hampton, died Friday, Nov. 22, 2013. Born Aug. 2, 1971, at Bridgeport Hospital, she was the daughter of Doris and George Downey.

Susan was married Nov. 5, 2005, to Robert Walton. She is survived by her husband, mother, two children, Kristopher Schonagel, his wife Tiana, Ashley Schonagel and grandson Rylie.

Through marriage she was blessed with being the stepmother to Kariann Walton, Robert Walton III, Allison Iudiciani. Susan is also survived by her three siblings; Patricia Brogan, Tony Niemeyer and Pearl Williams. Susan was predeceased by her father George.

Susan worked at Portland Care and Rehab for nearly 15 years and was passionate about helping others and putting others first. She enjoyed hiking, camping and spending time with family and friends.

She was a devoted wife and mother to Kristopher and Ashley and thought of as a surrogate mother to many.

Calling hours were Wednesday, Nov. 27, at Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton.

In lieu of flowers, Susan would be happy to know contributions were made to her grandson Rylie's College Trust Fund, c/o Patricia Brogan, 2 Gun Mill Rd., Bloomfield, CT 06002.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

East Hampton

Kim Umba

Kim Umba (McGregor), of East Hampton, passed away Saturday, Nov. 23, surrounded by her loving family, after a short courageous battle with cancer.

She leaves behind her mom and dad, Audrey and Derek McGregor; her sister, Susan Willmore; her brother, Craig McGregor; her son, Richie, and daughter, Amanda; five grandchildren whom she adored; and several nieces and nephews.

She was loved by all who knew her for her love of life, her caring personality and her love for pets. She will be greatly missed.

There will be no calling hours and the funeral will be private.

Portland

Kevin Libby

Kevin Libby, 54, of Middlefield, formerly of Portland, died at his home Sunday, Nov. 24. He is the son of Mrs. Pauline A. (Robida) Pelkey of Portland and the late Mr. George W. Libby, who resided in Chester. Born on June 22, 1959, he grew up in Durham, and later spent most of his adult life living in Middlefield.

For many years, he worked for the Geo. L. Mfg. Co., Inc., alongside his father and brother. He will be remembered for his courage and humor, his sardonic wit, and the honest way he "walked" through life. Despite the many challenges he faced, Kevin took great pride in living his life independently.

Kevin leaves many loving family members and friends who will miss him greatly. Besides his mother, Pauline Pelkey, and her husband Richard, he is survived by his brother, David Libby, his wife Lisa, and their two children Steven and Karen; his sister Diane Libby, her husband Charles Haley, and her children Eric Santostefano, and his wife Melissa, Michael Santostefano, and his wife, Janet, and Amanda Floros, and her husband, Timothy Floros; and his sister, Laurie Ganem, her husband William Ganem, and their daughter, Alyssa. Finally, his survived by four great-nieces and nephews, Riley, Ian, Jack, and Carson.

Calling hours will be held Sunday, Dec. 1, from 3-5 p.m., at the Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland. A prayer service will follow at 5 p.m. at the funeral home.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be made in Kevin's name to the Spina Bifida Association at spinabifidaassociation.org.

Andover

Herbert J. Lebel

Herbert J. Lebel, 82, of Andover, loving husband for 56 years of Carolyn R. (Forand) Lebel, died Wednesday, Nov. 20, at the Hospital for Special Care in New Britain, after an extended illness.

Herb was born in Van Buren, Maine, on Aug. 27, 1931, son of the late Anthony and Marian (Roy) Lebel. He was raised in Maine, moved to Hartford in 1949 and had been a resident of Andover since 1972. He was a member of the Connecticut Carpenters Union Local 43 for over 50 years before retiring. Herb attended St. Maurice Church in Bolton, was a member of the NRA, and was an avid outdoorsman who enjoyed hunting and fishing.

With his wife, he is survived by two daughters and sons-in-law, Denise and Thomas Preuss of Willington, and Sharon and Richard Danforth of Andover; six grandchildren; and several great-grandchildren; his sister, Aurora Violette of Ellington; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Herb was predeceased by a son, Jon H. Lebel. Funeral services were held Monday, Nov. 25, at the Holmes Funeral Home, 400 Main St., Manchester, with a Mass of Christian Burial following at St. Maurice Church, 32 Hebron Rd., Bolton. Burial will follow in the Townsend Cemetery in Andover. Visiting hours were Sunday, Nov. 24, at the funeral home.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Hospital for Special Care, 2150 Corbin Ave., New Britain, CT 06053.

To leave a message for his family, visit holmes-watkinsfuneralhomes.com.

Colchester

Alexander Rudyk

Alexander Rudyk, 87, of Water Street, Canterbury, beloved husband of the late Ann (Lewitz) Rudyk passed away early Tuesday morning, Nov. 26, at Harrington Court in Colchester. He was born Feb. 22, 1926, in Canterbury, a son of the late Jacob and Mary (Klebot) Rudyk, and was a lifelong resident of the community.

Mr. Rudyk was a U.S. Army veteran of World War II having served in Patton's army and was one of the first soldiers to liberate concentration camps. He retired from Atlantic Carton Co. after many years of service. He owned and operated a tree farm for over 40 years and was selected Connecticut Tree Farmer of the Year.

He leaves a son and daughter-in-law, Michael and Natalie Rudyk of Montville; a brother, Steven Rudyk of Canterbury; and several nieces and nephews.

He was predeceased by a brother, Richard Rudyk, and a sister, Estelle Burnett.

Services will be announced at later date. In lieu of flowers memorial contributions may be made to the Wounded Warrior Project, 4899 Belfort Rd. Suite 300, Jacksonville, FL. 32256.

Dougherty Bros Funeral Home, Plainfield has been entrusted with arrangements. For online condolences, visit doughertybrosfuneralhome.com.

Andover

Anna E. Terhune

Anna "Nancy" E. (Heim) Terhune, 93, of Manchester, passed peacefully into the arms of her Lord Friday, Nov. 22. Anna was the beloved wife of the late Francis "Terry" X. Terhune.

Anna was born in Hartford March 16, 1920, and grew up in Wethersfield. In 1934 Anna was in the first graduating class of St. Augustine School, Hartford. She graduated in 1938 from Wethersfield High School.

Anna married Francis Terhune on June 11, 1946; he predeceased her on Oct. 15, 1989. They resided in Manchester, and Anna devoted her life to her two girls, Pat and Mary. Anna loved to fill the station wagon with her daughters and neighborhood kids to head to their softball games, the beach, or Andover Lake where Anna had spent many summers at her family cottage. She was a member of the Assumption Church Ladies Guild.

Anna worked at the lockbox department of Connecticut Bank & Trust. Her quick smile and sweet disposition made her deep, lasting friendships wherever she was. In 1999, she moved to an apartment at Orford Village Commons and shared years of love and laughter with that community and many special friends.

She was predeceased by her brother, Joseph Heim of Westbrook, and her sister Madeline Plante and brother-in-law Gerald Plante of Windsor.

She is survived by her daughters, Patricia Terhune of Manchester and Mary Terhune of Bolton and her husband Christopher Foley; her sister-in-law, Rose Heim of Westbrook; and her beloved niece and nephews.

A wake was held at John F. Tierney Funeral Home, 219 West Center St., Manchester, on Tuesday, Nov. 26. Friends also met Wednesday, Nov. 27, at Tierney Funeral Home before proceeding to a Mass at Assumption Church, So. Adams St, Manchester.

In lieu of flowers, a donation may be made to the Orford Village Activity Fund, 370 West Center St., Manchester, CT 06040.

Colchester

Jeanette L. Piche

Jeanette L. Piche, 92, of Hartford, beloved wife of Arthur J. Piche, passed away peacefully Wednesday, Nov. 20, at Apple Rehab in Colchester, after a long illness. Born June 25, 1921, in Fall River, Mass., she was the daughter of the late Joseph A. and Josephine (Dubreuil) Poirier.

Jeanette was a graduate of Durfee High School, Class of 1940 and married Arthur on July 7, 1942. She was employed by Royal Typewriter in Hartford for many years and with the State of Connecticut Labor Department until her retirement in 1983. Jeanette enjoyed ball room dancing, bowling, was an excellent seamstress and was involved in great detail with family genealogy.

Besides her husband, she is survived by her son, Raymond L. Piche of Framingham, Mass.; her daughter, Louise Caisse of Hebron; five grandchildren, Raymond L. Piche Jr. and his wife Marlene of Portland, Marianne Piche of Westborough, Mass., Suzanne Brogie and her husband Martin of Madison, Michele Francoeur and her husband Jeffrey of Colchester and Darrin Bourret and his wife Jennifer of Middletown; five great-grandchildren, Simon, Magnolia and Gavin Brogie and Leo and Simone Francoeur; and many other very special family members.

She was predeceased by her sister, Irene Bousquet and her brother, Edward Poirier.

Friends called at The Ahern Funeral Home, 180 Farmington Ave., Hartford on Sunday, Nov. 24. Funeral procession from The Ahern Funeral Home was Monday, Nov. 25, followed by the funeral liturgy in St. Anne-Immaculate Conception Church, 820 Park St., Hartford. Burial was in Rose Hill Memorial Park, Rocky Hill.

Donations may be made to a charity of the donor's choice. Flowers may be sent directly to the funeral home.

To send online condolences to the family, visit ahernfuneralhome.com.



Colchester

Grace H. Potter

Grace H. Potter, formerly of Montville, passed away Saturday, Nov. 23, at Harrington Court in Colchester. Grace was born May 6, 1919, in Norwich, the daughter of the late Clarence and Gertrude (Bump) Horton. She attended Montville Schools and was a 1937 graduate of Norwich Free Academy.

On Jan. 1, 1941, Grace was united in marriage to the late Wallace L. Potter Jr. at the Uncasville United Methodist Church. He passed away April 18, 1999.

She had worked in the Montville School System as a teacher's aide for 25 years. She loved to square dance and was a member of the Pequot Ramblers and the Ledyard Squares. She is survived by her daughter, Linda Robinson, by five grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

In addition to her parents, she was predeceased by her son, Nelson W. Potter; brother, Nelson Horton; and by her sister, Dorothy Wilson.

A funeral service will be held at the Montville Funeral Home of Church and Allen today, Nov. 29, at 11 a.m. A calling hour will be held one hour prior, from 10-11 a.m. Burial will follow in Comstock Cemetery in Montville.

To leave a message of condolence for Grace's family, visit montvillefuneralhome.com.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations in Grace Potter's memory may be made to Vitas Innovative Hospice Care, 628 Hebron Ave., Suite 300, Glastonbury CT 06033.

The Montville Funeral Home of Church and Allen is entrusted with arrangements.

East Hampton

Philip Gerard Robida

Philip Gerard Robida, 92, of East Hampton, passed away Wednesday, Nov. 20, at Aurora Senior Living of Cromwell. Born in Belmont, N.H., he was the son of the late Edward and Irene (Peron) Robida.

Philip recently lived in East Hampton for 11 years, was a veteran of World War II, serving in the U.S. Army, and was very involved with the East Hampton VFW Post 5095. He was formerly employed with Ames Department Store and WTG Grant as a traffic manager with both places. Philip was an avid stamp collector, loved traveling, living in Spain for 11 years and riding his motorcycle all over the country.

He is survived by his sons, Bruce Robida and his wife Donna of New Britain and Mel Laraway of Adelaide, Australia; five daughters, Diane Robida of Georgetown, S.C., Denise Ouellette and her husband Raoul of Pawleys Island, S.C., Nancy Klick of Middletown, Laurene Robida of Middletown and Rise Baker of Cypress, Texas; one brother, John Robida of East Hampton; three sisters, Edith France of Pickens, S.C., Jeanne Hubbard of Macungie, Pa., and Barbara Robida of S.C.; six grandchildren, James Klick Jr., Peter Klick, Kirstie Klick, Michael Ouellette, Jenelle Vera, and Julie Robida; four great-grandchildren, Hannah, Garrett, Robbie and MaKayla; and many nieces and nephews.

Along with his parents, Philip was predeceased by three brothers and a sister.

Funeral services were held Monday, Nov. 25, at Doolittle Funeral Home, 14 Old Church St., Middletown. Burial followed in State Veterans Cemetery where full military honors were accorded. Family and friends called Sunday afternoon, Nov. 24, at the funeral home.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Philip's memory to American Lung Association of Connecticut, 45 Ash St., East Hartford, CT 06108, or to the charity of their choice.

Messages of condolence may be sent to the family at doolittlefuneralservice.com.

East Hampton

Philip J. Votto Jr.

Philip J. Votto Jr., born Feb. 20, 1941, in New Haven, of East Hampton and Sun Lakes, Ariz., entered his eternal life Saturday, Nov. 23, after a courageous battle against cancer.

He was predeceased by his parents, Philip J. Votto and Elvira (Possidente) Votto.

He was the beloved of Diane. He leaves children, Stephen C. Votto of Hamden and his children, Lauren and Sarah, Peter Votto (Lisa) of Rocky Hill, and Lisa (Kevin) Fitzsimmons of Hamden. He also leaves Diane's children, Michael J. Devine of Danbury and James C. (Joy) Devine of Mesa, Ariz., and their children, along with a great-grandson. In addition, he leaves his sisters, Judith (Edward) Piazza of New Haven and Louise (Robert) Ferrando of Wallingford.

Phil graduated from Notre Dame High School in West Haven and Fordham University with a degree in Pharmacy. He was the pharmacist/owner of Beirne's Pharmacy in New Haven for over 40 years. Phil also owned and operated a Milford and a Fair Haven medicine shop, along with a medical equipment business in Hamden. After selling his pharmacy in 2003, he worked until he retired in 2008 with Parkinson's disease.

During his pharmacy career, he was president of the New Haven Pharmaceutical Association, in addition to being on the Boards of the Mary Wade Home, New Haven Halfway House, Fair Haven Health Clinic, Yale New Haven Hospital Regional Directors Council, and Constitution Healthcare. Phil served as a consultant to Special Attention Home Care Service, Hill Health Care Center, and Community Health Care HMO. He devoted many hours to these organizations but his favorite community service was to his parish of St. Frances Cabrini Church in North Haven where he served on the Board of Directors and Finance Council for many years. Phil was also a member of the New Haven Amity Club.

He derived great happiness from taking his grandchildren on "adventures" and teaching his Arizona grandsons the game of golf which his father and uncle taught him at the age of nine. In addition to golf, Phil enjoyed travel, whether to the great national parks in this country, a trip to Italy, a baseball park or a Yankee game. Although his professional life was full and empowering to Phil as he helped many individuals throughout his career, his true joy was his family and extended family. His aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces and nephews were a significant part of his life and he was always there for them.

Phil will be remembered by all for his positive outlook and the humorous anecdotes he shared. He always jokingly talked about writing his memoirs in a book entitled "Over, Under, and Behind the Counter; Stories by Your Neighborhood Pharmacist," and did he ever enjoy telling those stories.

A Mass of Christian Burial was held at St. Frances Cabrini Church, 57 Pond Hill Rd., North Haven, on Tuesday, Nov. 26. Burial followed in All Saints Cemetery. There were no calling hours.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Amity Charitable Trust, P.O. Box 4129, Yalesville, CT 06492, or Notre Dame H.S., 24 Ricardo St., West Haven, CT 06516.

Maresca and Sons Funeral Home, 592 Chapel St., is in charge of arrangements. Offer condolences at marescafuneralhome.com.

Portland

Nicolo Pitruzzello

Nicolo Pitruzzello, 92, of Middletown, passed away peacefully surrounded by his family on Friday, Nov. 22, at the Portland Care and Rehabilitation Center. He was the beloved husband of 67 years to Concetta (Corsino) Pitruzzello. He was born July 9, 1921, in Melilli, Sicily, immigrating to the United States in 1954.

He is survived by his son Vincent Pitruzzello and his wife Lisa of Portland; son-in-law Carmelo Spada of Middletown; four grandchildren, Joseph Spada and his wife Kristine, Nicholas Spada and his wife Alessandra, Daniel Pitruzzello and Gina Pitruzzello, all of Portland; sister Rosa Rigano of New Britain; and two great-grandchildren, Tyler Spada and Carmelo Spada.

He is predeceased by daughter Angela Spada, parents and five brothers and sisters.

He was a devoted and loving husband, father and grandfather whose family meant the world to him. He was an avid gardener and enjoyed working around the house. Nicolo was a parishioner of St. Sebastian Church in Middletown and a longtime member of The Italian-American Club. He was extremely proud of being an American citizen.

The funeral was held Tuesday, Nov. 26, from the Coughlin-Lastrina Funeral Home, 491 High St., Middletown, followed that morning by a Mass of Christian Burial at St. Sebastian Church. Burial was in the family plot in St. Sebastian Cemetery, Middlefield. Friends called at the funeral home Monday evening, Nov. 25.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made in Nicolo's name to St. Sebastian Church, 155 Washington St., Middletown.

The family would like to offer a special thank you to the wonderful staff at Portland Care and Rehabilitation. Their care and concern for Nicolo was exceptional.

Haddam Neck

Christine M. Anelli

Christine M. Anelli, 91, of Berlin, formerly of Haddam Neck, passed away Friday, Nov. 22, in Meriden. She was the wife of the late Steve Anelli. She was born in Middletown Dec. 16, 1921, and was the daughter of the late John and Carmela (Paranzino) Labbadia. She was a member of St. Sebastian Church.

Christine served as chaplain, past president and state commander of the Wives of the Submarine Veterans of World War II, Thames River Chapter, in Groton. For many years, she and her husband ran the Anelli Farm in Haddam Neck and supplied livestock and fresh vegetables to their many loyal customers.

She is survived by her loving family, a son and daughter-in-law, Stephen and Colleen Anelli of Meriden, a daughter, Cynthia Kolman of Meriden, a brother, Dr. Nicholas Labbadia of New Hartford, and a sister, Joanne Jennings of Clinton. Her four grandchildren include Jason Campagna and his wife, Madalina of Austin, Texas, Stephen Anelli Jr. of Meriden and his fiancée, April Roy, Stefanie Anelli of Stamford, and Jonathan Anelli of Meriden. She also leaves a great-grandchild, Marco Campagna and several nieces and nephews.

Mrs. Anelli was predeceased by a brother, John Labbadia, and a sister, Mary Labbadia.

The funeral will be held Saturday, Nov. 30, at 9 a.m., from the Coughlin-Lastrina Funeral Home, 491 High St., Middletown, followed by a Mass of Christian burial in Sacred Heart Church, 48 Cottage St., East Berlin, at 10:30 a.m. Burial will be in the State Veterans Cemetery, Middletown. Friends may call at the funeral home today, Nov. 29, from 4-7 p.m.

Donations in her memory may be made to the American Heart Association, P.O. Box 417005, Boston, MA 02241-7005.

Portland

Doris Darling

Doris (Rowe) Darling died Wednesday, Nov. 20, age 95, at Portland Care & Rehabilitation Center.

She was born in Granby on Jan. 24, 1918, the third daughter of John and Dorothy (Bowers) Rowe. A few years later, the family moved to Simsbury, and she began school two years early with her older sister Viola. She graduated from Simsbury High School in 1934, only 16 years old.

After graduation, Doris went to work for Margaret's Salted Nuts & Fudge in Canton where she met owner Margaret Dyer's nephew, Daniel Darling. Dan and Doris were married in 1936 in Millerton N.Y., and moved into the house Dan had created in 1933 by dragging Margaret's old shop building a half-mile east and setting it up on a hillside on Albany Turnpike. They enlarged it to a wider two-story house in the 1940s and 1950s.

When Dan was drafted in 1943, Doris went to work at the Harford Steam Boiler, where he had worked. He returned in 1945 and, in 1946, the couple had their first child, a daughter Doris. In 1951, they had a son Charles.

Doris ran the Cherry Brook Library for many years, and delivered meals for Meals On Wheels until she was in her later 80s. She was active with Canton Benefit Productions in 1956, doing costumes for "Plain & Fancy." She attended the Canton Center Congregational Church where she was a deacon for several years.

She leaves her son Charles and his wife Marianne (Urso) Darling; her daughter, Doris Sherrow Heidenis and her husband Kerry; four grandchildren, Kathryn Darling, Sam Sherrow (Athena Wang), Sarah Sherrow and Esther Sherrow (Richard Wilson), and three great-grandchildren, Oscar, Maxine and Elroy Wilson. She also leaves her nieces and nephews, Roy and Maureen LeClaire, Dorothy and Joseph Eaton, Diane Wadsworth, Michele and Stanley Lien, and Sarah and James Smothers.

She was predeceased by her husband, Daniel Dyer Darling and her sisters, Laura (Rowe) Andrus and Viola (Rowe) LeClaire.

We want to thank Portland Care & Rehabilitation Center, where she spent her last months, for their loving care and consideration. They gave her kind, understanding care in her last days.

Friends called at the Vincent Funeral Home, 120 Albany Tpke. in Canton, on Monday, Nov. 25. Burial was Tuesday, Nov. 26, at Dyer Cemetery on Dyer Cemetery Road in Canton. A memorial service followed the burial at the First Congregational Church of Canton Center, 184 Cherry Brook Rd. in Canton Center.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the First Congregational Church of Canton Center, P.O. Box 133, Canton Center, CT 06020 or to Portland Care and Rehabilitation Center, 333 Main Street, Portland CT 06480.

Visit Mrs. Darling's "Book of Memories" at vincentfuneralhome.com for online condolences.

Marlborough

Donald V. Chase

Donald V. Chase, SMSGT U.S.A.F. (Ret.), 86, beloved husband of 55 years to Phyllis (Joyner) Chase passed away peacefully Thursday, Nov. 21, at Marlborough Health Care Center. Donald was born Jan. 19, 1927, in Putnam, son of the late Waldo and Helen (Hagerman) Chase and had been a resident of Vernon since 1961.

He was a U.S. Army Air Corps and U.S. Air Force veteran serving during both World War II and the Korean War. Prior to his retirement in 1986, Donald was a flight simulator supervisor for the Air National Guard for over forty years, retiring with the rank of senior master sergeant. He was an avid pilot and enjoyed spending his time flying. He was a longtime member of the First Congregational Church of Vernon.

Donald was a former member of the Rockville Elks, former Secretary of the Babe Ruth Baseball League in Vernon and a former member of the Vernon Cemetery Committee. He spent much of his retirement years on the golf course, and was very proud to say he had earned a hole-in-one.

Besides his wife Phyllis, he is survived by his three children, Arnold Chase and his wife Deborah of Vernon, Amy Chase of Manchester and Heather Loupe of Somers; his sister, Judith Waddell and her husband Ernie Hulme of Charlestown, R.I.; his three grandchildren, Eric and Emily Chase of Vernon and Kinsey Loupe of Somers; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Calling hours were held Monday, Nov. 25, at Watkins Funeral Home, 142 East Center St., Manchester. Funeral services were Tuesday, Nov. 26, at the First Congregational Church of Vernon, 695 Hartford Tpke. (Route 30), in Vernon. Burial with military honors was in Elmwood Cemetery, Vernon. A reception followed at the First Congregational Church of Vernon.

Should friends desire, memorial contributions may be made to the Alzheimer's Association, Connecticut Chapter, 2075 Silas Deane Highway, Suite 100, Rocky Hill, CT 06067.

To leave an online condolence, visit holmes-watkinsfuneralhomes.com.

From the Editor's Desk

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

Last weekend, I went to the theatre – specifically, The Little Theatre of Manchester, as the community theater group put on *Fiddler on the Roof* at Cheney Hall.

Over the years, I had heard bits and pieces of a couple of songs I knew were from the musical – “If I Were a Rich Man,” “Matchmaker, Matchmaker” and “Sunrise, Sunset” – but that was about the extent of my familiarity with the score, and I knew next-to-nothing about the story. It was a hugely-successful show, running for more than 3,000 performances and nearly eight years on Broadway, collecting nine Tony Awards along the way, but I had never seen it.

It was a superb performance – wonderfully-produced, very well-acted, and the story and especially the songs were great. The three aforementioned songs were winners, as were such numbers as “Tradition,” “Miracle of Miracles,” “Now I Have Everything” and more.

Like I said, the entire cast of the show did a great job; in fact, it was sometimes difficult to believe these folks onstage were volunteers, that they all had day jobs that didn’t involve the stage. They were that good. One of the real stand-outs was the actress that played the high-profile role of Hodel. And, while flipping through the playbook (and here’s where I get to the local connection; see, sometimes there’s a method to my endless blathering about Manchester, a town we don’t cover), I saw she was played by RHAM Middle School choral teacher Bailey Emerson.

Emerson performed terrifically in her part. Hodel, I learned while watching the show, is a pretty hefty part, with lots of emotional scenes and some pretty great songs to boot (such as “Matchmaker, Matchmaker,” “Now I Have Everything” and “Far From the Home I Love”). Emerson handled the acting quite nicely and sang the songs beautifully. I can say with full confidence to kids taking choral classes at RHAM: you’ve got a very talented teacher.

Alas, last weekend was the final weekend for *Fiddler*, so you’ll just have to take my word on all this. But trust me, it was a fantastic show, and Emerson did a fantastic job. Little Theatre of Manchester starts up its 2014 season in February, with several shows planned. I encourage you all to check them out then – and hopefully, Emerson will be a part of them. As I saw last weekend, she’s quite a talent – one that RHAM is lucky to have.

* * *

A friend of mine, who’s a dad, posted on Facebook the other day some great cornball dad-to-kid jokes he came across on the Internet. As anyone who’s either been a dad or had a dad knows, sometimes they just love some cornball jokes. For dads, I think half the fun is just getting their kid’s groaning reaction.

Most of these were in the form of text message-exchanges between a father and his kid, although some were just classic pearls of wisdom from a dad. While I am not a dad, I admittedly love horrible, cornball jokes sometimes, so some of these really had me laughing. Such as:

Dad: “Your toaster oven was delivered yesterday.”

Son: “Cool!”

Dad: “No, it only does warm.”

~

Dad: “General Tso’s chicken from Asian King: \$7. Drink: \$1. Getting home and realizing Asian King forgot to give you one of your containers? Rice-less.”

~

Dad: “What’s the difference between a piano, a tuna, and a pot of glue?”

Daughter: “What?”

Dad: “You can tuna piano, but you can’t piano a tuna.”

Daughter: “Heeheeheehee. [Pause] What about the glue?”

Dad: “I knew you’d get stuck there.”

~

Dad: “I remember the first time I saw a universal remote control. I thought to myself, ‘Well, this changes everything.’”

~

Dad: “Did you hear about the kidnapping at school?”

Daughter: “No! What happened?”

Dad: “It’s okay; they woke him up.”

~

Dad: “You know I stayed up all night, wondering where the sun went, and then it dawned on me.”

~

Dad: “Did you hear about the new movie *Constipation?*”

Son: “No; what is it?”

Dad: “It hasn’t come out yet.”

* * *

See you next week.