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Jalisa Parkman and her nephew, Derrick Fields, both of Hartford, enjoy a spin on the Sizzler at last year's Portland Agricultural Fair. The three-day festival returns to town next weekend.

Annual Agricultural Fair Returns Next Weekend

by Michael McCoy

It seems like the Brownstone Festival just happened, and now Portland residents have another fair to look forward to.

The eighth annual Portland Agricultural Fair will begin next Friday, Oct. 12, at the Exchange Club Fairgrounds along Route 17A, and run through Sunday, Oct. 12.

Coleman Brothers will return to provide the games and rides, which include the famous Ring of Fire and the Gravitron.

On Friday at 5 p.m., an antique tractor pull will serve as a prelude to the weekend. Then, at 6 p.m., the fair will officially kick off with an opening ceremony headed up by the Portland High School Band.

The music will begin at 7:30 p.m. with an eight-piece classic rock & blues group called Busted Roses. The ensemble, which has already played at festivals in Haddam and Cromwell this fall, will set up on the main stage.

At 8 p.m. Portland's own Brother Sleeze will begin their set on the small stage. Brother Sleeze plays a variety of popular rock tunes from the '70s on up.

On Saturday, events will kick off with a variety of shows: goats at 9 a.m., dairy cattle at 10 a.m., and a horse pull at 11:30 a.m. Also at 11:30 a.m., the Portland Junior Women's Club Talent Show will take place on the main stage.

At noon, "The Magic of Christopher" will once again be presented on the small

stage; the magician will have another show on Sunday at 3 p.m. Also on Saturday, the classic hot rod show will begin, again at noon, weather permitting.

Music on Saturday kicks off at 2 p.m., when the jazz ensemble Bengie Barnes will take the small stage. At 3 p.m., Beatles tribute band Number 9 will take to the main stage. Wild Notes will play the small stage at 6 p.m., offering, according to its website, "original arrangements of American folk songs, Irish ballads, and Scottish laments."

TL & the All-Stars will close out the night on the main stage at 7 p.m. with a blend of soul, rock and blues. At dusk, the fair will offer up its first fireworks show.

On Sunday morning, the beef cattle and sheep shows will start at 9 and 10 a.m., respectively. The garden tractor pull will follow at 10:30. At noon, the band Gunsmoke will bring some country music to the main stage.

At 2 p.m. Sunday and again at 4 p.m., Ronald McDonald will entertain children.

Also at 2 p.m., oxen round out the weekend's pull ring competitions.

Country artist Daryle Singletary will perform on the main stage at 3 p.m. on Sunday.

And, as usual, there will be a number of ongoing attractions throughout the weekend, including exhibitions of flowers, fruits

and vegetables, bread and pastry, needlework, pumpkin carving and quilting.

The weekend will include several raffles, including the Carousel Museum, which will be giving away a Harley Davidson Motorcycle.

The Portland Agricultural Fair was first held in 1919, but after 1989 the event died out due to lack of interest. A group headed by Don Bascom restarted the tradition in 2000.

In recent years, the festival has been plagued by rain. But last year, the fair had a splendid October weekend devoid of any rain, much to the delight of the Portland Fair Association's 20 or so active members.

This has resulted in a bump in the number of vendors; Bascom estimates there will be about 70-75 vendors at the festival. "When you have a good year the previous year more people are going to come out," said Bascom.

Hou-Tien Cheng will demonstrate the art of Chinese paper-cutting, while JDs Pony Express will bring their petting zoo, complete with pony rides.

Fairgoers need not worry about going hungry, as more than a dozen vendors and organizations will offer treats, including F&W Catering, which will serve sausage sandwiches, cheesesteaks, chicken wings,

Continued on Page 2

Continued from Front Page

and fried dough, as well as pastries and gourmet coffee.

The St. Francis Society will return its Oktoberfest Beer Tent, which was a huge success last year.

Portland Fire Department Co. #2 will sell french fries, while the Fish and Game Club will sell clam chowder and meatball sandwiches.

The Solar Masonic Lodge # 131 will put forward homemade pierogies along with seafood and lobster bisque.

Desserts will run rampant at the festival, too. The United Methodist Church will offer apple pie, with either ice cream or cheddar cheese. Hillside Sweet House will serve up fudge, along with other candy. Purple Oxen LLC, meanwhile, will present a brownie-based dessert

known as Great Grandma's Goop. Yukon Kettle Corn will also return.

The Portland Agricultural Fair runs 5-11pm on Friday, October 12; 9am-11pm on Saturday, October 13; and 9am-5pm on Sunday, October 14. Admission is \$7 for adults, \$5 for seniors, and free for children 10 and under.

John Dillon, Jr. along with Ken Ahnell and his team of young men from the Middlesex Alternative Incarceration Center will oversee parking. Parking will be available in the lot behind the town garage on Route 17, and a free shuttle bus will transport patrons to the fairgrounds. Handicapped parking will be available on the fairgrounds as well.

More information on the festival can be viewed at www.portlandfair.com.

RHAM Superintendent Expects Surplus

by Sarah McCoy

Hebron, Andover, and Marlborough can expect their favorite kind of Christmas gift from the RHAM Board of Education – cash.

The regional school board is expecting an estimated \$300,000 surplus from last year's budget, which will be returned to the three towns in late December or early January.

Superintendent of Schools Robert Siminski said the surplus is largely due to savings in health insurance and special education. Exact amounts for the savings won't be available until the district's auditors, Seward Monde of North Haven, make their final report to the Board of Education at their December meeting.

The school board will then vote to certify the amount and authorize Siminski to prepare checks for the three towns. The amount each town receives will be dependent on their middle and high school enrollments: 51 percent will go to Hebron, 32 percent to Marlborough, and the remaining 17 percent to Andover.

Siminski gave a few instances of specific areas in which RHAM showed savings in the 2006-07 budget. To err on the side of caution, the school board had estimated receiving an 80 percent reimbursement for special education from the state, but the actual figure turned out to be 90 percent. Also, the board had included a placeholder for a prospective special education student needing outplacement. This

placeholder was not used, resulting in a further savings.

In March, the Board of Education opted not to fund another placeholder in the 2007-08 budget, based on the trends of the district. "We're adjusting one budget based on the information gathered from the previous year," Siminski stated.

In terms of health insurance, Siminski said the district does expect a significant savings, a trend of late. "We take a snapshot of our employees' needs during budget prep," he said. "But, it's a moving target. People switch in and out of health insurance and switch from single to family."

Of the surplus money, the BOE authorized the spending of \$25,000 to study the prudence of moving the district's administration offices from rented space on Liberty Drive (rental fees cost \$46,000 per year) to a new home at RHAM. Siminski said this would likely be a freestanding building or addition onto the existing structure.

A decision on the office issue is expected later this fall, Siminski said.

A surplus is nothing new for RHAM. Last year, the school district returned about \$455,000 to the towns from the 2005-06 budget, sending \$80,000 to Andover, \$142,000 to Marlborough, and \$233,000 to Hebron.



Little League players were honored Sunday for winning the District 9 Championship this summer. Front row left to right: Tyler Bankowski (Catcher, Pitcher, 3rd Base,) Trevor Fleischman (Right Field,) Matt Zampini (Right Field,) John Beaulieu (Catcher,) Ryan Healey (3rd Base, 2nd Base,) and Mike Mazzarella (Shortstop, Pitcher.) Back row left to right: Mike Foley (Coach,) Nick Foley (2nd Base, Outfield,) Josh Mainetti (1st Base, Catcher, Pitcher,) Tom Humphreys (Coach) Steven Paley (Pitcher, 1st Base,) Brandon Sullivan (Center Field,) Mike Humphreys (Pitcher,) and Tom Sullivan (Coach.)

Portland Little League Cleans Up at Tournament

by Michael McCoy

Portland Little League was honored Sunday, Sept. 30, for winning the District 9 Championship this summer. It was the team's second championship in four years.

The team, along with coaches, parents, a pair of selectmen, and other well wishers celebrated their accomplishment at a brief ceremony on Sunday. The event took place at the Portland Senior Center on Waverly Avenue.

Steve Gibelli has been league president for the past five years and, showing his pride, said, "Before I became president, I found out that the last time Portland won the district championship was something like 40 years ago. Now they've won two out of the last three years."

Actually, it was in 2004 that the Portland Majors Division, made up largely of players from this team, won the title. But this time it was the Portland Little League Junior All-Star Team, comprised of 13- and 14-year-olds, that owned the tournament.

District 9 is primarily composed of teams from Middlesex County, with all the towns being east of the Connecticut River. Sixteen teams started off the season, including two from Portland. Together those two Portland squads went a combined 24-1.

Of the 28 players from the two Portland teams, 14 were chosen to make up an "All-Star" team that would face Haddam, Clinton, and Killingworth in the tournament, which took place during the first two weeks in July.

"There were a lot of good players that didn't make it," said coach Tom Humphreys, who added that many of those players showed up to support the team during the tournament.

During the tournament, Portland went 6-1, losing once to Killingworth, who Humphreys called "our biggest rival." However, the team won the best two out of three in a final series, which decided the championship. Portland then won the title on July 16 in a 9-0 blowout at the Portland High School.

After winning the division, the team went to the state tournament where they came in third behind Thompson/Brooklyn and champions Tolland.

Nevertheless, the division title was theirs, and this is what was celebrated Sunday.

During his opening remarks at the ceremony, Gibelli said, "We understand that not everyone is going to be a professional baseball player," and added that the odds in fact are stacked overwhelmingly against it. "But these young men are going to be citizens," he said, "and they've held themselves up well in the juniors and in the tournament."

Many of the coaches and league officials said that on many occasions they received compliments from opposing coaches and fans as to the character of the Portland team.

Gibelli also commended coaches Mike Foley, Tom Humphreys, and Tom Sullivan. "You guys exemplify what I think a great coach should be in this league," Gibelli said.

All-Star Coordinator Wayne Visintainer said, "I've gotten joy out of watching these guys for a while," and then presented the trophies to the players and coaches. (The team was also awarded embroidered hooded sweatshirts and trophies topped with a baseball.)

Humphreys also spoke, calling the players "real gentlemen, and they were very good baseball players."

Sullivan called the season "something I'll always cherish and remember," and Foley told the players, "You young men really did deserve special recognition."

The league's junior director, John Beaulieu, said, "It's nice to be successful, and it's nice to win, but it's important to have coaches with the right attitude."

First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield and fellow selectmen Kathy Richards were also present at the Sunday ceremony, and presented each team member with a certificate for their achievements.

"You obviously have quite a bit of talent, as well as support from your parents and family," Bransfield told the players. Then, echoing Gibelli's words on citizenship, she added, "In a few years, you'll be up here as president, or as coaches, or as parents."

Bransfield playfully chided one of the players who neglected to shake hands with her and Richards. But, Humphreys cracked, "We're better when we slap five."

Portland Town Center Project Moving Forward

by Michael McCoy

First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield estimates that between 40 and 50 people showed up for a Middlesex Chamber of Commerce meeting Wednesday morning, many of them eager to hear an update on the proposed Elmcrest property project.

On Wednesday, the developers, Portland Station, updated attendees on the 140,000 square foot project which will be located at the corner of Routes 66 and 17.

According to Bransfield, the developer's legal counsel, Peter Alter, went through several minor changes to the latest version of the schematic. These changes include more green space and the moving of the residential space from the Main Street side to the Perry Avenue side of the property.

Last spring, the developers, then called Portland Town Center, applied for a change to zoning regulations which would allow the development team to include residential property in the plan. The Planning & Zoning Commission (PZC) granted this change on May 3.

Also, according to Bransfield, Alter said the

developers purchased the property just east of the Elmcrest property, which currently houses Forlini's Garage.

No specific tenants have been named for the project. The schematic now calls for a drug store to be included, in place of a bank, which had been part of previous plans for the land.

Portland Station also hopes to include parking underneath their residential complex, which, Bransfield anticipates, will force the developers to apply for a zoning regulation change.

Portland Station has had three informal workshops with the PZC, soliciting feedback and counsel from that body. The next step for the project is the submission of Portland Station's site plan to the PZC.

"They are hoping to do that very soon," said Bransfield, who added that the group hopes to break ground on the project in the spring.

"It's a very exciting plan, and it seems better as they refine the plan," said Bransfield. "A lot of people are looking forward to it."



Paul Woods and his dog Yoda are heading from Alaska to Mystic on a riding tractor. He made a pit-stop by Gano's in Colchester to get his tractor worked on.

From Alaska to Mystic.... by Tractor?

by Jim Salemi

Before Paul Woods' mother died 19 months ago, she told him that she would be his guardian angel. And there is no doubt in his mind that his mother indeed made good on her promise. How else do you explain a successful 6,000-mile cross-continental trek on a 10-horsepower riding tractor?

Woods, 44, along with his dog Yoda, took off from Alaska more than a year and a half ago, and his destination was Mystic. But on Monday, Woods made an unscheduled stop in Colchester.

Woods visited Gano's after the engine gave up on his custom camo-painted 1980 model 8-36 Toro riding mower with the mowing deck removed. He dubbed his machine, which broke down in New York near the Connecticut border, "The Millennium Snail." He got it towed to Danbury, and then was able to get a ride from there to Gano's. He said he can get about 15 miles-per-hour out of it.

Woods said the purpose of his tractor trip was simply to get from point 'A' to point 'B.'

"I have some family albums to deliver and I wanted to visit some friends and family," Woods said Monday. "I don't have my license anymore and have a few outstanding tickets, and let's say there are other 'travel restrictions' I have. ... But, I got to see the country at ground level."

Since leaving the driveway of his mother's rental property in Alaska, Woods has had to deal with mechanical problems, money problems, weather and menacing drivers who crowded him and sometimes tried to run him off the road. Also, he said, he's been shot at with paintball guns and people have thrown firecrackers at him.

He hasn't let that dampen his spirits, though. Woods said he tries to make 30 to 40 people a day laugh. "It's my mission," he said.

Woods said that everyone in the country should do at least one good deed a day, and credited Gano's owner Tony Gargano as doing just that. Gargano put Woods up for a few nights at the shop, and fixed his ride for free.

When you log 6,000 miles on the country's highways with a lawn tractor, a trailer in tow

and a dog riding on your lap, you're going to get the attention of the law every now and again.

How often has Woods been stopped by police?

"Three to four times a day, every day," he said, but added that he knows they're doing their jobs.

What really irks him, though, is when a paramedic races up to him while he's working under his tractor.

"It must have happened to me a dozen times," Woods said. "I'll break down and I'll be under my tractor. I have a gearbox sitting over here, and tools in a pile over here, and people pick up their phones and call the paramedics. Can't they figure out I'm working on it? If they thought I was run over by my own equipment, can't they at least stop and say 'Are you okay?' I mean, they don't even have to get out of the car. It bothers me. People could die because EMTs are wasting their time."

To minimize his chances of becoming stranded, Woods carries in his homemade trailer a spare engine, a spare transmission, spare gears, belts and a drive chain, along with a tool set. Other items in the trailer include a Dutch Army survival tent and rain tarps, gas cans, his bedroll, road atlases and, of course, food for both him and Yoda.

That's not a bad haul, considering the trailer is an old shopping cart, painted black with an axle welded onto it with 1940s bush-plane wheels to keep it rolling.

Woods, who said he earns money on the road by performing odd jobs, has garnered considerable attention from the media during his trek, including a spot on *Good Morning America*.

"What paper do you work for?" Woods asked the news media that was at Gano's. But, he said, "I don't even buy [newspapers]. I gotta haul ass."

After a stay in Mystic, Woods said he will likely head back west, to New Mexico. But, he said, he probably won't make the return trip by tractor.

"I'll get on the CB and see if I can get a ride with a trucker," he said.

Colchester First Selectmen Candidates Sound Off

by Jim Salemi

The two candidates vying for First Selectman this November sounded off Tuesday on questions asked by residents and members of the Colchester Business Association.

The Colchester Business Association (CBA) sponsored a "Meet the Candidates" forum in the Bacon Academy Auditorium Tuesday night. Democratic candidate for First Selectman Linda Hodge and her Republican opponent, Diana Giles, took turns answering citizens' questions.

By the first question, it was evident the candidates largely agreed on what the most paramount of issues facing the town are: Economic development and taxes.

The forum comes on the heels of a recently-approved town budget, which was rejected by voters three times in prior referendums. Many residents saw their assessments skyrocket, which translates into a higher tax bill.

"I know [taxes] are a concern," Hodge said in response to a question asking how each intended to handle the issues of taxation, economic development and taxation on seniors. "How do we bring tax dollars in? By creating a Lebanon Avenue revitalization task force, a business development task force and a Main Street coalition. I have the skills to bring different people together."

Hodge also pointed to her service as past president of the National PTA, where she oversaw over 80 staffers in an organization of six million members.

Giles agreed that Colchester needed to attract more business to offset the residential tax burden in town, though she advocated reducing spending.

"It's about what we can afford, what we can afford to spend," said Giles in response to the same question. She also agreed with Hodge that

the town needed to attract more businesses.

Giles said the town needs to be more "business-friendly" and more helpful to new businesses.

"When businesses are put off, that's not a good thing," she said. "We need to invest in sewer and water. We need to implement multi-use zones and pay closer attention to building design."

In response to another similar question, Giles said she would look at merging some of the spending of the town and education department.

To find savings, Hodge said she would go to zero-based budgeting if elected.

"Just because something's been in the budget for 10 years doesn't mean it has to stay in there," she said.

Another resident asked what each planned to do, if elected, to "reduce or stabilize wages for town and Board of Education employees."

"Those are union contracts and I don't have a plan to reduce them," Giles responded. "Not everyone is getting three percent increases. Town employees need to understand why the budget is defeated. ... I will work with unions and try to hold them in check, like two percent versus three percent."

Answering the question, Hodge said, "I don't have a plan. ... We've had the same number of town employees for 10 years. They are working harder. The plan is to work more efficiently, by evaluations and holding department heads accountable."

She added that while not everyone is getting three percent raises in the private sector, some people are in fact getting more than three percent. "We have to be fair and equitable," she said.

East Hampton Police News

9/21 — JoAnn Dootson, 54, of 601 Lake Vista Dr., was arrested for driving under the influence and failure to drive right, East Hampton Police say.

9/21 — Caleb Sonniehsen, 18, of 137 Ague Spring Rd., Haddam Neck, and Allison Coleman, 18, of 58 Haddam Neck Rd., were both arrested for sixth-degree larceny and criminal attempt to commit larceny, police said.

9/22 — Christopher Bureau, 42, of Clark Hill Road, was arrested for third-degree assault, unlawful restraint, disorderly conduct and violation of a protection order, police said.

9/22 — Dylan Barthell, 19, of 13 Lakewood Dr., was issued a ticket for failure to obey a traffic signal, police said.

9/23 — James Keough, 43, of 33 Summer Hill Rd., Middletown, was arrested for disorderly conduct, police say. He was also arrested pursuant to a warrant for following too close, evading responsibility, operating under suspension and failure to appear 2nd degree, police add.

9/23 — Kenneth Miner, 53, of 12 Mohican Trail, was arrested for operating an unregistered vehicle and no insurance, police report.

9/24 — Richard Ivey, 36, of 2 Clearwater La., was issued a ticket for operating an unregistered vehicle, police say.

9/24 — Keith Rittman, 29, of 87 Young St., was arrested for speeding, operating an unregistered vehicle and operating without insurance, police say.

9/25 — Melanie Henshaw, 44, of 20 North Main St., was arrested for failure to drive right, operating an unregistered motor vehicle, operating without insurance and misuse of plates, police say.

9/25 — Susan Britt, 37, of 15 Nemczuk Dr., Norwich, was arrested for speeding, police say.

9/26 — Jason Pangretic, 27, of 12 Carriage Dr., was arrested for violation of a protective order and disorderly conduct, police say.

9/26 — Cheryl E. Dziarkowski, 37, of 9 Edgerton St., was issued a ticket for traveling unreasonable fast, police say.

9/27 — Charles Orbann, 59, of 12 Lakeview St., was arrested pursuant to a warrant for third-degree burglary and third-degree larceny, credit card theft, illegal use of a credit card, receipt of money obtained by illegal use of a credit card, conspiracy to commit third-degree larceny, conspiracy to commit credit card theft, conspiracy to commit illegal use of a credit card and conspiracy to commit receipt of money obtained by illegal use of a credit card, police report.

9/27 — Dianne Orbann, 55, of 12 Lakeview St., was arrested for third-degree larceny, credit card theft, illegal use of a credit card, receipt of money obtained by illegal use of a credit card, conspiracy to commit third-degree larceny, conspiracy to commit credit card theft, conspiracy to commit illegal use of a credit card, conspiracy to commit receipt of money obtained by illegal use of a credit card, police say.

Colchester Police News

9/28—Thomas G. Sears, 25, of 216 Lebanon Ave., was arrested for possession of less than four ounces of marijuana, police said.

10/2—Shawn Adams, 29, of East Hartford, was arrested for larceny, reckless driving, misuse of plates and driving without insurance, police said, after they allegedly clocked him riding an alleged stolen motorcycle at 105 m.p.h.

Hebron Police News

9/28—Matthew W. Mierez, 19, of Windham, was arrested for third-degree assault, risk of injury to a minor, breach of peace, interfering with police and criminal mischief following an altercation on Gilead Street, according to police reports.

10/1—Robert E. Lilly, 38, of Hartford, was arrested for violating a restraining order, DWI, and drinking while driving, according to police.

Hebron Resident Convicted in Fatal Car Accident

by Sarah McCoy

A Hebron man was found guilty last week of second-degree manslaughter following a fatal 2003 drunk-driving accident.

Rockville Superior Court Judge Carl Schuman found Robert Furbush, guilty of second-degree manslaughter Sept. 25; he will be sentenced Dec. 4, and faces a maximum sentence of 10 and a half years.

According to police reports, Furbush had been drinking at the Greenleaf Café in Hebron for much of the day on Sept. 3, 2003. Eventually the bartender cut him off, but not before Furbush had become intoxicated.

Friends warned him not to drive, according to police, and even offered to drive him themselves.

But, reports say, Furbush, a Hebron native, became belligerent. He swore at his friends and then, according to police documents, said, "I can drive. I don't need a [expletive] ride home."

Furbush didn't even get two miles. He was on Route 85 when, police reports say, his 2002 Ford F-250 pickup truck veered across the centerline and struck a 1989 Dodge Dynasty driven by George Koch, 60. Koch was on his way to work in Hartford at the time of the accident. Court documents indicate that he worked nights so he could be with his wife, who suffers from Parkinson's disease, during the day-

time.

After striking Koch, Furbush's truck continued on across the road, eventually rolling over, spraying beer cans from the bed of the vehicle onto the roadway, police reports say. It took firefighters 30 minutes to extract Furbush, according to the reports, at which time he registered a blood alcohol level of .24, three times the legal limit.

According to court documents, Furbush's lawyer, Hubert J. Santos, argued that his client could not be held responsible for the crash because it was Koch who crossed the centerline. Schuman dismissed that claim, the court documents say, saying that the markings left on Route 85 indicate the point of impact was on the northbound side of the road, where Koch was supposed to be.

Tolland State's Attorney Matthew C. Gedansky asked the judge to convict Furbush of first-degree manslaughter, court documents say, because he didn't heed the warnings of his friends. But, the documents say, Schuman opted for the lesser charge because he felt that Furbush was so drunk he couldn't comprehend the gravity of warnings received.

Furbush is currently free on \$75,000 bond. He will be back in Vernon Superior Court on Dec. 4 for sentencing.

Portland Projects to Require More Time and Money

by Michael McCoy

Two town building projects that started last month will take a little longer than anticipated – and they'll also cost a little more.

As the *RiverEast* reported last month, the clock tower sitting atop the Portland Town Hall required repair after sideways-driving rain caused leakage that penetrated through to the front stairwell. The town bid this project in conjunction with a long-needed roof replacement to the police side of the Buck-Foreman Building. That roof was more than 50 years old.

Both jobs went to Eagle Rivet Roof Service of West Hartford for a total of \$191,000. Originally, Public Works Director Rick Kelsey estimated that the projects would take several weeks.

However, these improvements recently hit a snag.

Work on the two roof projects "is going very well, on time, and under budget," Kelsey said. But, he added, on the Buck-Foreman building, when the contractors removed the fascia on the roof (the tiles on the side of the roof that were to be replaced), the soffit dropped about a foot. "What we found was the fasteners lost their holding power," said Kelsey.

The soffit is made of boxed-out wood, connecting the fascia to the roof. "It has weight to it," said Kelsey of the soffit. "It kind of collapsed downward." Kelsey said he will need to ask Eagle to refasten the soffit to the roof before the fascia can be replaced.

The town hall clock tower sits 75 feet in the

air, and because of the way it is situated, scaffolding is necessary to look at it. Therefore, though the existence of a leak was obvious, no one knew the severity of the damage until the repairs started. Once up there, Kelsey said, "We noticed that the wood was in worse shape than we had anticipated." In addition, paint cracks were more significant than originally thought.

Setting up scaffolding tends to be about 75 percent of the cost of a job such as this, so Kelsey said he is determined to do as much work as possible, so that they don't have to set it up again. Measures include installing aluminum flashing to the east side of the tower, which is not visible; the siding will stand up better to weather. "It won't require painting for a long, long, long, long, long time," promised Kelsey. Though the three visible faces of the clock tower may need to be occasionally repaired, scaffolding will not be necessary, he said.

This past Wednesday, the Board of Selectmen voted 6-0 to allot \$26,013 from the maintenance fund to help pay for the additional work needed on the buildings.

When asked if he was content with the price, Kelsey said, "I wouldn't say I'm happy with it. I wish it was lower, but, ultimately, it's a fair price for the work." Kelsey added that he did reduce the number by \$1,400 from what Eagle had originally asked.

Kelsey said he could not offer an estimate as to when the work will be completed.



Stephanie Eldridge, 15, of Hebron, has led the Sachems' cross country team to an undefeated year in the Northwest Conference. She looks to continue her strong showing as RHAM makes a run for post-season honors.

Hebron Teen Leads RHAM Cross-Country Team

by Sarah McCoy

Stephanie Eldridge is only a sophomore at RHAM High School, but she's leading the Sachems' post-season hopes.

Stephanie, along with her sister Kellie, is on the cross-country team at the high school. In her three conference races this year, Stephanie, a tall, lean redhead, has placed first twice and second once.

"The plan was to stay with Flannigan and pass her at the end but it didn't really work out that way," Stephanie said of her one second-place finish at the hands of Middletown High School's Kelly Flannigan.

In addition to the conference races, Stephanie has also competed in the Windham Invitational, finishing sixth out of 130 runners, and fifth out of 85 at the Greater Hartford Open this past weekend.

But while Stephanie, 15, admits all those statistics are true, what she really wants to talk about is her team. She'll tell you about how, after switching from soccer this year, junior Katie Wulfange has become the second-best runner on the team. She'll tell you the best part about being on the cross-country team is sharing it with her two best friends, Cassidy Olio and Rachel Matthews. She'll tell you how she loves to have her sister on the team.

And, begrudgingly, Stephanie will tell you, "I guess I'm pretty fast."

It takes Stephanie between 15 and 16 minutes to complete a two-and-a-half mile course, standard for the Northwest Conference. In half an hour, she'll have completed the RHAM course, twice.

"One of Stephanie's biggest attributes is her intelligence," Coach Mark Logan said. "She understands race strategy and she knows her limitations. She's also very consistent, a runner you can really rely on."

Running fast is nothing new to Stephanie. She was the number one runner on the team last year as a freshman and earned both All-State and All-Conference honors. In fact, there was only one freshman that finished better than Eldridge in the State Open meet to end the 2006 season.

"I hit my peak early last year," she said. "But this year, I think, will be different. I don't think I've reached my peak yet."

This year her sights are set on qualifying for the New England Open. To do so, Eldridge must complete the State Open course in 25th position or higher. Last year she finished 41st.

"Last year she was the phenom," Logan said. "She has become a leader this year, taking the team and dragging them along."

It's been a little over three years that Stephanie has been running competitively. "I always played soccer in the fall but when I got to RHAM [Middle School] I decided to try something else," she said.

Not only did she find something that she excels at, but Eldridge also found something that she really enjoys. "It may sound crazy to like running," she admitted. "But I love being part of the team and the sense of accomplishment I feel after a race."

Stephanie is a multi-sport athlete; she plays basketball and tennis, and snowboards in the winter. She also consistently makes the honor roll with higher-level classes.

And it seems running is in the Eldridge blood. Not only are Stephanie and Kellie on the high school team, but their younger sister Heather is on the middle school cross-country team. Their dad, Rich, is an avid runner.

As a team, RHAM has the potential to continue the successful tradition of girls cross-country. The school won state championships in 1993, 1994, 1996, and 1997.

Logan coached the team each of those years, but, he said, "every team is different. ... This year there is certainly the potential to be conference champions and to compete on the state level."

Before the postseason, RHAM has a few more meets in the regular season. The team will compete in the Wickham Invitational this Saturday in Manchester before finishing the regular season with a home meet on Tuesday afternoon. The Class M meet and State Open will take place at Wickham Park on Oct. 27 and Nov. 2, respectively.

Obituaries

East Hampton

Donata G. Sienna

Donata G. Sienna, 81, of East Hampton and formerly of Portland, widow of the late Nicholas Sienna, died Wednesday, Sept. 26, at her home surrounded by her family. She was born in Middletown, the daughter of the late Gero and Pasqualina Rossitto. She is survived by her son Joseph and his wife Kathy Sienna of Uncasville; two daughters and sons-in-law, Bernadette and Frank Green of Rocky Hill, Pasqualina "Pat" and Gary Cameron of East Hampton; four sisters, and six grandchildren. She was predeceased by her son, Charles Sienna.

A Funeral Liturgy was celebrated Tuesday, Oct. 2, at St. Patrick Church East Hampton. Burial in the family plot in St. Patrick Cemetery. In lieu of flowers memorial contributions can be made to St. Patrick Church Renovation Fund, P.O. Box 177, East Hampton, CT 06424. Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton has care of arrangements. To leave online condolences visit www.spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

East Hampton

Robert E. Pelotte

Robert E. Pelotte, 64, of Sexton Hill Road, East Hampton, beloved husband of Ruth (Bowerman) Pelotte, died Monday, Oct. 1, at Chestelm Health and Rehabilitation in Moodus. Born Feb. 13, 1943 in Waterville, ME, the son of the late Willie and Juliette (Foster) Pelotte he had lived in East Hampton since 1978. He was retired from Allied Grocers where he had been employed as a tractor trailer driver. Robert was a U.S. Marine Corp. Veteran having served during the Vietnam War. Robert was very active in his Native American culture having served on his Tribal Council as Chief Flying Eagle. Robert enjoyed Pow-Wows, and was active in food and clothing drives for the Indian Reservations in Maine. He also lectured on Native American Heritage to schools in East Hampton.

Besides his wife Ruth; he is survived by a son, James Pelotte and his companion Kimberly Davis of East Hampton; a daughter, Ronda Avery and her husband Brian of East Hampton; a brother, Gerald Pelotte of Waterville ME; four sisters, Jackie Doucette of Sydney, ME, Shirley Logan of Oakland, ME, Diane MacIntosh of Plymouth, ME, and Joan Carey of Plymouth, ME; five grandchildren William Avery, Brandi Avery, Caitlin Avery, Dillon Pelotte, and Kaylee Pelotte; many nieces and nephews and several adopted children through the Native American Community.

Funeral services were Thursday, Oct. 4, at 10 a.m. in the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St. Burial will be private at the convenience of the family. Friends called at the funeral home on Wednesday, Oct. 3. To leave online condolences for the family or for directions visit www.spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Hebron

William R. Stelzner

William R. "Bill" Stelzner, 81, of Lyme, CT, passed on Tuesday, Oct. 2. He was born on Oct. 8, 1925, in Norwich, CT, the son of William and Lillian (Etter) Stelzner.

Bill was predeceased by Caroline Littlefield Stelzner and his second wife Phyllis Stelzner; his son Paul J. Stelzner and a granddaughter Valerie M. Stelzner.

He was a proud graduate of Norwich Free Academy and the University of Connecticut. A US Navy veteran of World War II, Bill enlisted immediately after graduating high school. After serving in the Pacific Theater, he attended UCONN courtesy of the GI Bill. He was self employed for 20 years with the Kent Agency, Inc. and then was employed at CE/ABB. Bill was an active past member of the Glastonbury Lions Club. Right up to his demise, he was very involved with the Lyme Old Lyme American Legion Post 41 and the New London Sea Notes Chorus. He will be much missed by all these groups.

Bill is survived by three sons and their life partners, William R. Stelzner, Jr., and his wife Nella of Hebron; Daniel M. Stelzner and Raymond St. Germain of Rehoboth, MA; and Peter J. Stelzner and Melinda of Lyme; two grandsons Paul Stelzner of Hebron and Michael Stelzner of FL and one great-grandson, Bradley W. Stelzner.

A memorial service will be held on Monday, Oct. 8 at 11 a.m. in the First Congregational Church, Hamburg Road, Lyme, CT. Burial will be private. For online tributes visit www.mem.com. The Fulton-Theroux Funeral Home, Old Lyme is handling arrangements.

Hebron

Betty Mae O'Donnell Lussier

Betty Mae (Jones) O'Donnell Lussier, 81, of Amston Lake, beloved wife of Paul, passed away Sunday evening, Sept. 30, surrounded by her loving family. Born Sept. 10, 1926, at home in Hebron, she was a daughter of the late Ben and Dora (Scranton) Jones, Sr. She was a 1944 graduate of Bacon Academy in Colchester. Mrs. Lussier was a bench operator for Pratt & Whitney Aircraft for 22 years before her retirement in 1986. In later years, she and Paul enjoyed traveling, gardening and their families. Betty was a member of the First Congregational Church of Hebron, the American Legion Post 95 Women's Auxiliary in Hebron, and was active with the Red Hat Society as well as with the Jones Buzzing Cousins. She also enjoyed knitting, tag sales and making jams and jellies.

Betty will be missed by her many friends and family, who addition to her loving husband of 30 years, she is survived by four children, Marikay O'Donnell of Wethersfield, William O'Donnell and Donald O'Donnell and Diane, all of Hebron and Mike O'Donnell of Lebanon; four stepdaughters, Lisa Kilkoyne of Essex Jct., VT, Julie Cullen of Deerfield, MA, Helene Sedghi of Potomac, MD and Monique Prozerolik of Anchorage, AK; four grandchildren; six step grandchildren; one great grandchild; three sisters, Margaret "Peggy" Blake of Haddam and Melissa Emerson and Ruth Flemke, both of East Hampton; three brothers, Robert Jones of Colchester, Ben Jones, Jr. of East Hampton and Kenneth Jones of Portland; and numerous nieces, nephews, extended family members and friends. She was predeceased by a sister, Edith Trudeau, and a brother, Sidney Jones.

Friends called Tuesday at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. The funeral assembled Wednesday at the funeral home before a Chapel Service with the Rev. Kevin Zufall officiating. Burial will be private in the New Hebron Cemetery. The family wishes to thank everyone for their support during Betty's illness, especially Hospice of Eastern CT/VNA East. Donations in her memory may be sent to them at 34 Ledgebrook Dr., Mansfield Center 06250 or to the American Cancer Society, 106 Franklin Commons, Rte. 32, Franklin, 06254-1800.

East Hampton

Leo James A. Rossignol

Leo James "Grandpa Leo" Rossignol, 80, of Newnan, GA (formerly of East Hampton) passed over into eternal rest on Aug. 17, at his home. He was born June 19, 1927 in Van Buren, ME, son of the late Albert and Caroline (Albert) Rossignol. He



served in World War II as a Navy SeeBee. He worked as the Meat Manager for Geissler's Supermarkets until his retirement in 1987.

Leo is survived by his daughter Michelle Morse, her husband Todd and their two children Andrew and Ashlynn of Newnan, GA. He is also survived by his son Wayne Rossignol, his wife Estelle and son Ryan of Tolland, CT, his daughter Gayle and her husband John of Legonier PA, his daughter Lynn Rossignol of Enfield, CT and her children, Cassandra, Justin and Zackary, his son Gary Rossignol and his great-granddaughter Bailey. Leo is survived by his brothers Bertrand Rossignol, Edward Rossignol, Roger Rossignol and sisters Frieda Traceski and Irma Martin, as well as many beloved nieces and nephews. Besides his parents Leo was predeceased by his wife Patricia Rossignol, sister-in-law Ann Rossignol, brother Conrad Rossignol and brother-in-law Thomas Traceski.

Leo was formerly an active volunteer at Memorial Elementary School in East Hampton, where his grandchildren were in attendance. He received the Volunteer of the Year award from the Board of Education in 2005. He took great joy in being "Grandpa Leo" to everyone who met him, both young and old. He touched many hearts with his kindness, thoughtfulness and love.

A memorial service celebrating his life and eternal peace will be held on Sunday, Oct. 14, at Leete-Stevens Funeral Home, 61 South Rd., Enfield. Relatives and friends may call on Leo's family at the Leete-Stevens Enfield Chapels at 1 p.m. with the memorial service to follow at 2 p.m. Memorial donations may be made to The American Association for the Blind, 11 Penn Plaza, Suite 300, New York, NY 10001.

Colchester

Taylor Rosiland Kelsey

The Kelsey family of Colchester has announced with great sadness the passing of their daughter and sister, Taylor Rosiland Kelsey. Taylor was born and passed away Sept. 23 at New Britain General Hospital. She is survived by her mother Stacy, her father Robert and her two brothers Ryan and Justin. Taylor will be missed by her entire family. The Kelseys would like to thank their friends and family who have shown them support and love during this difficult time.