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Artist David Magee (left), Portland First Selectman Susan Bransfield and veteran Reg Farrington show the artwork Magee created to help raise funds for the Portland Veterans Memorial.

Veteran's Memorial Just Within Reach

by Michael McCoy

By now most people in Portland have heard Reg Farrington's spiel at least once.

He and others working on behalf of the Veteran's Memorial Fund have been selling cookies at the Brownstone Festival and at the Portland Agricultural Fair. They've hosted a Tip-a-Veteran Fundraiser and sent out a direct mailing to everyone in town. Throughout all of that, they've given numerous updates of their progress at various Board of Selectmen meetings.

It's an operation worthy of a retired U.S. Army colonel. It's also a campaign that comes straight from the heart. Just lend Farrington an ear sometime, and it doesn't take long to see how deep-seated and selfless his feelings are for the realization of a monument honoring Portland veterans from World War I through the

current War on Terrorism.

What's more, he seems to be winning. Despite what seemed like a slow start last summer, it appears the committee working on behalf of the project will achieve their goal of a Memorial Day 2007 installation.

There will be hundreds and hundreds of names listed on the monument. Ironically, Farrington's won't be among them.

Only those veterans who were Portland residents during their time of service are eligible to be listed on the memorial, so Farrington, who came to Portland later, does not qualify.

He doesn't care about that. In fact, he even tends to cringe a bit at having his name mentioned in a newspaper article such as this. "To me, it's all about the vet-

erans from town," he says.

Farrington, 68, retired from the U.S. Army in 1986 after serving for 26 years. That included two tours in Vietnam, first as a captain, then as a major. He served his time as an infantry officer and achieved the rank of lieutenant colonel.

Upon settling in Portland in the early 1990s Farrington realized that while the striking Civil War Memorial on Main Street commemorated the service of local residents in that conflict, there existed nothing to honor later veterans, except for a couple of plaques to World I and II veterans in front of the Old Town Hall, now the police station.

Last spring, Farrington, and a number of fellow American Legion members de-

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cided to correct this oversight. Upon receiving unanimous permission from the Board of Selectmen, the group struck a deal with Rock of Ages of Barre, VT, for a granite memorial.

Fashioned from granite, the simple memorial will include three stones. The middle stone will measure 8 ft. by 8 ft, while the outer two will measure 7 ft. 6 in. by 6 ft. All will be 8 inches thick.

Rock of Ages quoted the project at \$55,000. The company allowed payments in the three parts, the last of which will be due upon delivery of the memorial itself. To date, Farrington and his army of believers have collected \$43,000.

"We've had a lot of response, especially from all the old people in town. They know a lot of these old guys shuffling around town and what they've done," jokes Farrington.

More seriously, he adds, "There's a lot of people in town with a great sense of community."

In his own time, Farrington recalls men serving during wartime without any choice in the matter. He remembers buddies doing things that didn't seem to make much sense to them, but they did it because it was their national duty to listen to their superiors. He recollects truck drivers in his battalion leading the convoy for the day, despite having seen colleagues run into a landmine the day before.

Those are just a tiny percentage of the troops he speaks of when he gives the simplest but key reason why he won't rest until this job is done: "They didn't get any recognition anywhere else."

The Portland Veteran's Memorial will honor those who were Portland residents while serving in any of the five branches of the armed forces during World War I, World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, and any of the Persian Gulf efforts.

Most recently, the American Legion has enlisted the help of Dave Magee, a South Glastonbury artist who also happens to be a former Vietnam Era Marine. Magee has created a watercolor painting in honor of Portland's proud tradition in the service.

The artwork contains a variety of motifs. Most prevalent is an image of Ernest Forsberg, a Portland resident who was killed in France during World War I, only weeks before the Armistice.

Also represented are several B-24 bomb-

ers from World War II. Portland residents J. Paul Peterson and John McBrien were flying in this same type of aircraft when they were shot down and taken as POWs.

A Higgins Boat is also shown. Portland's own Sal Logano rode one of those onto the Normandy beaches during the D-Day invasion in 1944.

There are many more images on Magee's creation, all significant to Portland. And Forsberg, Peterson, McBrien and Logano are just a few of the soldiers of days gone by who live or lived in Portland. In fact, the tally of names stands at about 2,000.

All donors to the Memorial Fund will receive a print of this rendering. Some that have been especially instrumental will receive one signed by the artist. Farrington presented the first print to First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield on Wednesday, Jan. 24.

In addition, copies will be available to purchase. Signed copies will go for \$50, while unsigned prints will sell for \$10. Magee's prints were purchased at a discounted price by the American Legion using Legion funds, not Memorial Fund dollars.

The first opportunity to purchase a print will be at the 2nd Tip-a-Veteran fundraiser at Portland restaurant on Valentine's Day. The event will go from 11 a.m.- 11 p.m., with musical guest The Joey Milardo Band performing from 6-9 p.m.

The last Tip-a-Veteran raised \$3,000, while Portland Restaurant owner Mike Lastrina added another \$1,600.

Farrington is not alone in his devotion to this project. When approaching veterans to work at the Valentine's Day event, he remarks, "I just had to say, 'We're doing it again.' Everyone said, 'I'll be there.'"

Somewhere between 10 and 15 veterans will serve food and bus tables that night.

Those interested in donating to the cause can make checks out to the Portland Veteran's Memorial Fund, and send them to P.O. Box 161 Portland, CT 06480.

Prints will be available at Patches and Patchwork on Main Street and at Quonset Surplus on Pickering Street or call Reg Farrington at 342-1818.

Farrington vows, "Come hell or high water, the memorial will be installed and dedicated on May 28."

Marlborough Grand List Up 1.1%

by Sarah McCoy

The Town of Marlborough has released its 2006 Grand List totals. The figures show a net increase of 1.1% despite decreases in two of the three categories.

The Real Property line item showed an increase from \$553,231,730 in 2005 to \$560,483,470 this past year.

However, Motor Vehicles and Personal Property showed a net decrease of \$530,154.

The final Grand List total stands at \$616,217,956.

In total, of the 2,670 real estate accounts in town, 163 saw an increase last year. An additional 60 accounts had their assessments reduced by a total of \$2.1 million by the Board of Assessment Appeals.

The 1.1% increase is far below last year's huge increase when the town saw the Grand List jump by 37.7% due to a state mandated town revaluation. Had the revaluation not been figured in, Marlborough's Grand List would have only gone up by 2.1% last year.

Both numbers reflect a slowdown in town growth.

A memo from Assessor Emily Chaponis to

First Selectman Bill Black and the boards of selectmen and finance explains the meaning behind the other numbers. "There are a lack of newer vehicles being purchased by residents and people are retaining their vehicles rather than trading up," she wrote.

Chaponis did not return calls to the *Rivereast* for further comment.

Also contributing to the lower rise is the fact that the state has increased the number of machinery exceptions that can be counted towards the Grand List. This, combined with devaluation of property over time, led to the \$470,000 decrease in Personal Property assessments.

With no new subdivisions planned for the current year, Chaponis did speculate in her memo that Marlborough might see no increase at all in next year's Grand List unless there is a steep hike in the other two categories.

A 1.1% increase in the Grand List means that, with all things equal, residents can see a 1.1% increase in the budget without having their property taxes increase. Selectman Sharon Reiner did note that this could change if a current source of revenue decreased.

Proposed RHAM Budget Up by \$1.26 Million

by Sarah McCoy

Region 8 Superintendent of Schools Robert Siminski presented the Board of Education with his recommended budget at a Special Meeting last Monday. The budget calls for an increase of 5.89%, or \$1.26 million, from the current year's budget.

Over half of the increase, \$668,174, comes from the costs associated with continuing programs that are already available as the middle and high schools.

The other increases come from four main sources: special education, dealing with the expected enrollment increase, alternative teaching programs, and technology.

The Special Education department has been a focus of Siminski's since the district failed to meet the annual yearly progress set by No Child Left Behind. Combine that fact with an anticipated enrollment increase of 25 Special Education students, and Siminski felt he needed to make some changes.

In his budget he proposes the hiring of two Special Education teachers, two Special Education paraprofessionals, and one psychologist.

Special Education is not the only area which will see an increase in enrollment. Siminski expects at least an additional 41 students at RHAM Middle School next year. To prepare for this increase, he proposed hiring faculty in four areas for a total increase of 2.55 total new employees. Even with these proposed chances class sizes are

expected to be 22 to 25 students.

Additionally, Siminski proposed a \$40,000 increase in spending for students pursuing an alternative diploma through the Vernon Regional Adult Basic Education Program. Through the program, students would be able to work during the day and take classes in the evening. "We recognize not all students learn the same way," Siminski explained. "But the important thing is that continue to learn."

The last major area of increase came under the technology expenditures. Siminski proposes a \$65,671 increase to replace 20% of the school's computers. This is an annual trend to keep the district up to date with the latest technology.

Three other areas saw increases in spending. Curriculum writing, capital expenditures, and athletics combined for an increase of just under \$60,000.

The 5.89% increase does not reflect the refund Region 8 gave to each of the three towns. This week Superintendent Siminski delivered checks totaling \$455,458 due to a surplus from the 2005-2006 audit. The \$455,458 represents approximately 2% of the entire budget.

The RHAM Board of Education members will go over this budget individually before addressing it at their March 6 meeting. They will continue to meet weekly through the month of March.

Marlborough Library Expansion to Go to the Voters

by Sarah McCoy

As expected, the Board of Finance public hearing regarding the possible renovation of Richmond Memorial Library drew a large crowd and no overwhelming consensus Wednesday evening.

Public opinion seemed split down the middle as to whether the \$5.1 million expenditure was justified.

Those mixed feelings were reflected by Board of Finance members. It took a reconsidered vote to pass the motion to bring the library expansion project before the voters. The referendum will be held on March 20 from 6 a.m.-8 p.m. at the Elmer Thienes- Mary Hall Elementary School.

"This is a tough one," Dave Porteous said Wednesday night. "I would vote for it but with a sobering sense of the cost."

That cost was carefully outlined by the finance board. Of the \$5.1 million, the Town of Marlborough is asked to provide \$4 million. The library plans to fundraise \$600,000 and they have already received a \$500,000 construction grant from the Connecticut State Library.

Currently the town has just over \$39 million in debts, mainly from the two school renovations. Then there is another \$11.2 million in authorized debts, mainly from the sewer project. All told, this translates into an \$8,065 per capita debt. The state average is \$1,942 per person.

If the library expansion project were to pass, residents would be looking at a per capita debt of just under \$9,000.

The library renovation plan calls for an increase in square footage from 5,000 to 16,000. This would include a large meeting room as well as two additional conference rooms. The rough design for the proposed renovation can be seen at Town Hall or the Richmond Memorial Library.

Of the 21 people to stand up and voice their opinion, 11 did so in favor of the project. "I can't afford taxes anymore than you can," Linda Harmon said to the crowd. "But one of the reasons I am in Marlborough is because of the library and what it offers me, my children, my neighbors and this whole town."

Of the ten who voiced their concern with the project, none objected to the desirability of the project, just the impact of the cost. "I don't disagree with the project, itself," John Stimpson said. "But we are digging a hole. What good are all these things if we can't afford to stay here and use them?"

Proponents of the library expansion project spoke of the lack of space for books, study areas, meeting space and even chairs.

Sharon Pensack reported that she and her family used to be frequent users of the Richmond Memorial Library. But as the years passed, she found that there was nowhere for she and her children to read. "I now travel to East Hampton or visit Barnes and Noble," she said. "I'd probably save money if this project goes forth."

Opponents say many of these things, while they would be nice to have, aren't critically needed. Meeting rooms, many people stated, aren't needed because of the space Marlborough Elementary School provides. Chairs, too, are secondary.

"We have the access to materials and that might have to be good enough," Dan Dupray said. "Go and get it, bring it home, and enjoy whatever you borrowed from the comfort of your own home."

Residents in attendance were not the only ones who expressed their concern over the timing of the library project. Board of Finance chairperson Kathy Gaudinski said she didn't believe the "timing was prudent." However, she did support the motion to bring the issue to referendum because she said she felt "an issue this large shouldn't be decided by such a small group."

Of the five finance board members, four voted in favor of bringing the issue to referendum. Susan Lesser did not. She opted not to comment further.

The Board of Selectmen will hold a Town Meeting on March 13 for further public comment on the issue. The proposal will then come before voters on March 20.

Senator Addresses Local Concerns at ‘Office Hours’ in Marlborough

by Sarah McCoy

Marlborough residents had a chance to express their concerns to Mary Ann Handley last Tuesday night. The state senator held office hours at the Town Hall this week to hear from her constituents.

“It is something I try to do regularly,” she said. “These meetings give me a focus for the coming legislative sessions.”

Of the dozen or so residents who stopped by, virtually all had the same concern: property taxes. “It’s not only in Marlborough,” resident Betty O’Brien said to Handley. “Taxes are a major concern throughout Connecticut. There needs to be another way to fund education than through our property tax.”

O’Brien then questioned Handley regarding the prior commitment by the state to use the revenue generated by the two Indian casinos to fund state education.

“Honestly there was a bait and switch employed by the state,” Handley responded. “The legislation which included casino revenue for education was for only one year. The information that was presented led us all to believe it was permanent, but sadly that is not the case.”

On Wednesday Handley did express her optimism regarding Governor Rell’s plan to increase educational funding through state revenue. On Wednesday Rell announced her five-year plan to pump \$3.4 billion into local education through increases in income and cigarette taxes. This would relieve a burden on local property taxes.

“The revenue has to come from somewhere,” Handley explained. “If there is a reduction in property tax, that will have to be made up for in other ways—presumably income or another type of tax.”

Another part of Rell’s proposal had Handley and First Selectman Bill Black smiling. The funding for the Department of Environmental Protection’s Clean Water projects went from \$20 million last year to a proposed \$245 million for the coming fiscal year. Last week Black and Planning and Land Use Director Peter

Hughes spoke to the Environment Committee in Hartford, asking for more funding for Clean Water.

Rell’s figure is well above the \$157 million Handley requested in her proposed bill number 515.

“It almost guarantees Marlborough some funding for the sewer project,” Handley said.

This is certainly positive news for the sewer project that looks to break ground this spring. The town has secured a funding deviation for the start of construction and a six-month extension on the repayment of the design work done by Weston and Sampson.

When Marlborough voters initially passed the sewer project at the referendum in 2002, the project budget was just over \$12 million. Now, thanks to inflation and the rising costs of material, over \$22 million is needed to complete the intended area.

Instead the town is looking to complete part of the district with the \$10.6 million remaining from the initial \$12 million approved.

Resident Jane Boston came Tuesday night to let her support for the entire project be known. “The sewer project is not only good for Marlborough, but it is what is right for the environment,” she said.

The third concern residents brought before Handley was the state of healthcare in Connecticut. Gordon Isleib and Boston both expressed their concerns regarding the direction the state may take in addressing prescription drug care and ability to see specialty physicians.

Handley responded adamantly that Connecticut would not follow the trends of Connecticut, Tennessee or Oregon. She said the number one focus is increasing the eligibility for programs that already exist, namely HUSKY, SCHIP, and Medicaid.

Currently State Senator Handley does not have another time scheduled to sit down with residents. She did encourage residents to call her office at (860) 240-0567 with any comments or questions.

who need to use them.

Maneggia said there are still a number of “unknowns” in the budget, though those are items every school district is contending with, such as unstable fuel prices, and the cost of electricity.

Because the addition built onto the school included new lighting fixtures and a new boiler and oil burners, among other items, Maneggia said he expects some savings as a result of the new and more efficient equipment. However, the exact costs will not be known until they are used and their efficiency better measured.

The superintendent also told the board that enrollment will remain largely the same with no unanticipated costs for special education—two factors that can drive a budget up substantially.

The exact budget figure requested by the superintendent is \$3,797,797. That is a difference of \$144,890 or 3.97% over the current year figures. The current year’s operating budget is \$3,652,907.

Having presented numerous budgets to school boards over his career as an educator, Maneggia is familiar with the drudgery of pouring over every line item. So, he provided the board with what he called “some levity” before passing out copies of his budget.

It was a sheet copied from an AARP bulletin comparing costs of everyday things in 1957 and in the present day. According to the sheet, titled ‘Fifty Years Ago...’ \$50 in 1957 is worth \$6.58 today. A gallon of gas cost 23 cents, a gallon of milk 97 cents, a pound of sugar 11 cents; Harvard tuition cost \$800, compared to \$31,665 today; an average new home cost \$14,200 compared with today’s average cost of \$241,400; and median income was \$4,966.

“I’d like to thank Mr. Maneggia for his time and effort in putting this together,” school board Chairman Jay Lindy said after the presentation. “He did a great job and his staff did a great job also. They all put a lot of hours into this, and it serves the children.”

Gildersleeve Fund Benefits Portland Schoolchildren

by Michael McCoy

In Sylvester Gildersleeve’s time, Portland residents, like many citizens elsewhere, had to pay tuition to send their children to public school. No money, no school.

That troubled Gildersleeve. So, in 1867, he set up a bank account using \$25,000 worth of stock. The idea was to defray the costs for those in town who could not afford tuition. Any leftover money would be used to enhance education.

This was the genesis of the Gildersleeve Wheeler Education Fund.

Today, that fund is still benefiting local school children, though the process was recently completely revamped.

The problem was the change from public school “tuition” to public funding. While public schooling is now funded by the taxpayers, several years ago some of the fund’s trustees were accused of using some of the money to fund their children’s college expenses.

This appeared to fall beyond the intent of the fund and drew scrutiny from the Portland Judge of Probate and the State Attorney General’s Office, who froze the funds.

The fund remained frozen until 2004 when the Judge of Probate and the Attorney General restated the parameters of the fund and appointed three new trustees. The Portland Board of Education appointed two more, making for a completely fresh board of trustees.

These included Glen Ballinger. Diane Bascom. Steve Kinsella. Terri Larson, and Chairman Howard Rosenbaum. (Kinsella, who resigned from the board after being elected as Judge of Probate in November, has been succeeded by Andy Bauer.)

The new board spent the next year or so drawing up new, more applicable guidelines and by-laws as well as a mission statement. That mission aims to improve the Portland public school system by supporting enhancement programs, educational projects, improvements to technology and training, and to implement other novel ways to better the town’s educational experience.

“We had to start from scratch,” said Rosenbaum.

After sending out proposals to six or seven financial institutions, the trustees decided to set up an account with Webster Bank in town.

“Now everything’s all set,” said Rosenbaum.

Among the changes is the fund’s newly achieved 501(C)3 status which deems them a tax-deductible charity organization. This status, realized in mid-December, finally allows the fund to accept donations, something it could formerly not do by law.

It also allows funds to be spent in a more measured fashion. Previously, the fund was

taxed on all monies not spent within a year of acquisition. This pressured the trustees to spend more hastily than they might have preferred to.

Now, the money can sit and accrue interest indefinitely, while the trustees search out new ways to help the schools.

Since the adoption of the new by-laws, the fund has donated about \$30,000. Among the benefactors was Project Lead-the-Way, which seeks to familiarize students with engineering and math.

The fund has also donated software to kindergarten through 2nd grade. Most recently, trustees contributed \$5,000 to acquire My Access, a software program that actually critiques students’ writing compositions.

The fund also contributed to Portland’s Own Playscape 2, which finally reached its goal last year. Though not directly addressing academics, Rosenbaum commented, “We felt that it had to do with the overall physical education of those kids.

Anyone is welcome to submit a proposal to the education fund, be it teacher, student, parent, town organization, or otherwise. Requests pass through the Superintendent’s Office before going in front of the Board of Education, and ultimately, the fund Board of Trustees.

The trustees have imposed a \$5,000 guideline cap for proposals; however, they are still willing to entertain proposals that call for more if deemed appropriate.

According to Rosenbaum, the fund generates about \$40,000 a year through its investments. It is through this money only, and not donations, that they may fund the necessary administrative operating costs.

Rosenbaum also made clear that the Gildersleeve Wheeler Education Fund would not be involved with scholarships of any sort, only the enhancement of the Portland Public School experience.

Praising his team, Rosenbaum said, “They’ve been a really good group; it’s a nice mix of backgrounds.” The trustees have collectively pursued occupational endeavors in fields such as banking, insurance, education, medicine and law.

Rosenbaum, who put three children through Portland’s schools, remarked on the vision of Sylvester Gildersleeve and its continuing benefits today. “I think the town has a very unique opportunity to enhance the education system in a way most teachers don’t have...We can fund it if it’s for education,” he observed.

Those who would like to donate to the Gildersleeve Fund, submit a proposal, or simply seek out more information may contact Howard Rosenbaum at 342-0771.

Portland Man Charged After Argument Turns Violent

by Michael McCoy

A 28-year-old Portland man was arrested Monday after a domestic dispute turned violent and he allegedly went after a police officer’s gun.

Avone Leach, 28, of 35 Chatham Court, was charged with assault 3rd degree, reckless endangerment, interfering with police, risk of injury to a minor, threatening, and assaulting a police officer. He was held this week on \$250,000 bond.

According to Sgt. James Kelly, Officers David Bond and Daniel Knapp responded to the domestic dispute around 10:30 p.m. on Monday night at Chatham Court. A 26-year-old female alleged that Leach, her boyfriend,

struck her about the face and choked her after a verbal altercation became physical.

When the officers arrived at the Chatham Court residence, they attempted to place Leach under arrest. Instead of cooperating, Leach tackled Officer Bond to the ground. Both officers struggled with the suspect for three or four minutes before subduing him. Officer James Capello also arrived on the scene to aid his fellow officers.

During the scuffle, Leach allegedly made an attempt at Bond’s firearm, but was unable to remove it from the holster, said police. “His intentions really are unknown.” Kelly said of the apparent effort to seize Bond’s weapon.

Arrests Made in Colchester for Prescription Drug Conspiracy

A 48-year-old Colchester man was arrested Feb. 2 and charged with multiple counts of conspiracy and illegally trying to obtain prescription drugs, according to police.

Thomas Furman of 35 Jan Drive, was arrested last Friday and charged with at least 187 counts of conspiracy to illegally prescribe narcotics, conspiracy to illegally prescribe a controlled substance, insurance fraud, conspiracy to commit insurance fraud, illegally obtaining a controlled drug and conspiracy to obtain a controlled drug, said police.

Also arrested was Dr. Mitchell Moffat of

Canterbury, who was charged with multiple counts of illegally prescribing narcotics, conspiracy to illegally prescribe narcotics, illegally prescribing a controlled substance, conspiracy to illegally prescribe a controlled substance, conspiracy to commit insurance fraud and conspiracy to obtain a controlled drug, according to reports.

The pair was arrested after a lengthy investigation by the Colchester Resident State Trooper’s Office, State Police, and the Drug Control Division of the state Department of Consumer Protection, according to police.

Andover School Superintendent Presents Proposed Budget

by Jim Salemi

Superintendent of Andover Elementary School Andrew Maneggia recently presented the education board with a \$3.8 million budget for the next fiscal year, which begins July 1.

The proposal represents a nearly 4% increase over current year spending.

The board voted at the special meeting last Wednesday to “accept” the budget. That does not mean the proposal has been adopted, however. Board members will review the budget in greater detail and possibly modify and/or adopt it at their next regular meeting scheduled for next Wednesday, Feb. 14 at 7 p.m. at the elementary school library.

“This is a very bare-bones budget. It covers all the operating expenses and there is some flexibility to do curriculum improvement,” the superintendent told the board.

He also asked the board to regard the presented budget as a “blueprint” for education.

“When drafting it I like to look at the past, present and future...It’s not just a physical document of dollars and cents, but a blueprint of educational opportunities at our school,” he said.

For example, Maneggia said he was aware that the board, in the past, would occasionally borrow money to pay for more expensive items, then proceed to pay down the debt over three to four years. That just costs more money in the long run, he observed.

He pointed to a line item that asks for \$37,000 to implement the school’s Technology Plan.

“When we adopted this last April we made a commitment to spend 1% of the budget...In the past you borrowed and paid back over three or four years. As a superintendent I’d rather not do that. I’d rather bite the bullet. I don’t like to pay interest. No one lends money for free,” he said.

Maneggia recommended a portable computer lab, which will be on a cart and wheeled from place to place. He said the computer lab at the school, although redesigned, still has too few work stations to accommodate all the students

Portland Woman Gets Jail Time for Embezzlement

A Portland woman was sentenced Tuesday to 18 months in federal prison for bank embezzlement.

Mary Kuskey, 51, of Portland, formerly of Middletown, was sentenced to 18 months imprisonment followed by three years of supervised release, according to Kevin J. O'Connor, U.S. Attorney for the District of Connecticut. Sentence was imposed by U.S. District Judge Christopher F. Droney in Hartford.

The embezzlement took place at Liberty Bank in Durham.

According to documents filed with the court and statements made in court, Kuskey was employed by Liberty Bank from 1974 until 2005. During her employment with Liberty Bank, she served in various capacities as head teller, new account representative, assistant manager, manager, and regional manager.

In 1995, she became branch manager of Liberty Bank's Durham branch, a position that she held until she was terminated in June 2005.

From approximately 1997 until 2001, Kuskey created several fraudulent loans in the names of bank customers who had large deposit account balances, and kept the loan proceeds for her own use, said investigators.

Kuskey concealed the scheme by repaying the loans within 90 days, which prevented Liberty Bank from sending the customer a loan statement.

According to prosecutors, Kuskey created new loans in increasing amounts to repay the existing loans and provide her with additional funds. Eventually, the loan amounts related to the scheme totaled \$261,244.

In January 2001, Kuskey stopped the loan scheme. In order to obtain funds to repay the

existing loans, she made an unauthorized withdrawal from a jumbo certificate of deposit (CD) account of a Liberty Bank customer, said authorities.

She initially made a withdrawal in the amount of \$261,244 to pay off the outstanding loans from the loan scheme. She then continued to make additional unauthorized withdrawals from the customer's CD accounts and kept the money for her own use, said investigators.

Between January 2001 through May 2005, Kuskey made unauthorized withdrawals totaling \$497,792.96 from the CD accounts, according to information revealed in court.

The Liberty Bank customer's CD accounts typically matured every 30 days. To induce the customer to roll over the CD into a new CD, Kuskey gave the customer a much higher interest rate than what the bank was offering. To conceal the scheme, she also gave the customer false CD certificates and related documentation, which she fabricated. This documentation reflected the inflated balance that the customer believed was in the account based upon the false interest rates.

The bank eventually uncovered the fraud and notified authorities. An investigation which included the FBI ensued.

On May 30, 2006, Kuskey waived indictment and pleaded guilty to one-count of bank embezzlement.

To date, she has paid restitution in the amount of \$190,148.65 to Liberty Bank. She must pay an additional amount of \$410,799.85 to the bank in order to fulfill her restitution requirement, said authorities.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Thomas V. Daily.

Obituaries

Colchester

Anna Jackson

Anna (Tarnowski) Jackson, 101, widow of the late James R. Jackson, passed away peacefully on Jan. 26 in Colchester.

Anna was born on May 14, 1905 in the Ukraine and received a birthday greeting from President George Bush on her 100th birthday in 2005 which was celebrated at Harrington Court Convalescent Facility.

She was the daughter of the late Anthony and Alice (Matkowski) Poplowski and lived on her family farm located on Parum Road until 2003. Anna was a seamstress at the former Cohen Dress Shop and was the first union representative in 1938. She was also an avid gardener and loved cooking and canning for her family. Anna was a member St. Mary's Ukrainian Church.

Anna leaves her daughter Alice Griffin of Colchester; a sister, Olga Chopp of Salem; granddaughter Gail Kittle and her husband Thomas; grandson William S. Griffin III and his wife Constance; great granddaughter Jennifer Bell-Dauphinais and her husband Dr. Karl Dauphinais of Southington; great grandson William S. Griffin IV of Colchester; and several nieces and nephews.

She was predeceased by two brothers, John and Alex Poplowski and two sisters, Antoinette Thornton and Lydia Poplowski.

Funeral services were held at Belmont Funeral Home on Jan. 30. Memorial contributions may be made to St. Mary's Ukrainian Church, 178 Linwood Ave., Colchester, CT.

Portland

Frank J. Healy

Frank J. Healy, 83, known to everyone as "Josh," beloved husband of Frances Czyn Healy, of Buddy Lane, Portland, died Sunday, Feb. 4, in Middlesex Hospital.

Josh was born in Stamford, March 3, 1923, a son of the late Frank and Anna O'Neil Healy. He had lived in Stamford, Ivoryton, and Ridgefield before moving to Portland five years ago. He had been a police officer for the City of Stamford for 28 years until his retirement in 1974. He was a veteran of World War II having served in the U.S. Army and was a parishioner of the Church of Saint Mary.

On the job and in his personal life, Josh was a gentleman, a very fair, happy person who treated everyone equally. He was a person who found the good in everybody and because of these fine qualities he was well liked by everyone. He was an avid gardener who loved to play golf. He was always upbeat and was able to find humor in everything.

Josh loved his family, his wife Frances; his daughter, Lynn Bruneau and her husband, Jeffrey of Seymour; his grandchildren, Jeffrey J. Bruneau, Meghan H. Bruneau, and Kristen E. Healy; his sister, Marianne Fahey of Darien; his brother, William J. Healy and his wife, Lillian of Litchfield; and several nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by his beloved son, Brian F. Healy.

Calling hours were Thursday evening at the Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated Saturday, Feb. 10, at 11 a.m. in the Church of Saint Mary, Portland. Interment will be private.

In lieu of flowers, Josh's family requests that gifts in his memory be sent to the American Cancer Society, 538 Preston Ave., Meriden, CT 06450 or to the Church of Saint Mary, 51 Freestone Ave., Portland, CT 06480.

East Hampton Police News

1/21 — Two 15-year-old male juveniles and one 14-year-old male juvenile were referred to Juvenile Court for criminal mischief 3rd degree.

1/21 — Brandi L. Daly, 25, of 468 New Haven Rd., Durham, was arrested for disorderly conduct and criminal mischief 3rd degree.

1/30 — Michael J. Allstadt, 32, of 78 Skinner St., East Hampton, was arrested for criminal mischief 3rd degree, breach of peace and assault 3rd degree.

2/2 — A 17-year-old male juvenile was arrested on two warrants on the following charges: burglary 3rd degree, larceny 2nd degree and larceny 6th degree.

East Hampton

Fayette I. Totedo

Fayette I. (Read) Totedo, 79, of Marlborough, widow of Samuel L. Totedo died Sunday, Feb. 4 at Middlesex Hospital.

Born Nov. 28, 1927 in Hartford, the daughter of the late Kenneth and Thelma (Griswold) Read, she had lived in Marlborough since 1957. She was a member of the Women of the Moose and a member of the Marlborough Grange.

She is survived by her son and daughter-in-law Samuel J. and Rhonda Totedo of Marlborough; her daughter Deborah A. Totedo of Manchester; two sisters, Thelma Boule of Manchester and Janet Walker of Glastonbury; and several nieces and nephews. She was predeceased by a brother Robert Read and a sister Dot Kowalski.

Funeral services will be private at the convenience of the family. Burial will be at Marlboro Cemetery at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Marlborough Senior Center c/o Marlborough Town Hall, PO Box 29, Marlborough 06447 or Roy B. Pettengill Ambulance Assoc. PO Box 308, Marlborough 06447.

The Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton has care of arrangements.

Colchester

Mike Dawson Memorial Service

There will be a memorial service at the Westchester Congregational Church in Colchester on Saturday, Feb. 17 at 11 a.m. to celebrate the life of Mike Dawson. Following the service, there will be a reception at the home of Beth and Michael Coleman, 54 Waterhole Rd., Colchester, CT. Please join friends and family for fellowship and reminiscing.

Hebron

Tammi Purks Rombach

Tammi Purks Rombach, 39, of Richmond, VA, passed away Tuesday, Dec. 5, 2006. She is survived by her husband of 17 years, Jeff Rombach; three children, Katy, A.J. and Grace; her parents, Wesley and Martha Purks of Hebron; four sisters, Benita Petruck of Middletown, Arlene Ullmar of Glastonbury, Mary Jane Saucier of Manchester and Roxanne Carbone of Newington; and two brothers, Wesley III of Rhode Island and Scott of Hebron.

Tammi was an employee of Perot Systems (Owens & Minor Medical Supplies). She was a member of Sigma Kappa Sorority from the Florida Institute of Technology. She was a graduate of RHAM High School as well.

Calling hours were at the Nelsen Funeral Home in Richmond on Dec. 8. Funeral services were held Saturday, Dec. 9 at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in Mechanicsville, VA. Interment was in Washington Memorial Park.

Contributions may be made to the American Cancer Society.

Hebron Police News

2/2—Police are investigating an incident of vandalism to three granite benches behind the AHM Youth Services building.

RHAM Leos Celebrate a Year of Service

The RHAM Leo Club is a year old this month.

The Hebron Lions Club reactivated the RHAM Leos, a youth branch of the Lions for young people ages 12-18, in February 2006. Club president is senior Hillary Federico. Advisors are Hebron Lions Club president Richard Griswold and RHAM Guidance Counselor Jeannie Kmetz.

Since the beginning of the 2006-2007 school year, club members have been actively recruiting new Leos to work on community service projects. So far, 26 new members have been added to the roster making the Leos one of the larger service clubs at RHAM with a membership of 42.

The RHAM Leo Club has endorsed the International Leos "Spotlight on Children" program and many of the club service activities focus on children in the local community and beyond.

One such project involved collecting student, staff/faculty donations and crating a condolence poster to send to the Nickel Mines Children's Fund. The fund was established following the murder of seven Amish girls in their one-room schoolhouse last year. A collection of tulip bulbs and the poster were sent to the families of the children.

The Leo Club also donated pledge funds to three RHAM staff/faculty members participating in the Hartford Marathon to raise money for the Connecticut Children's Medical Center. The donation was made in memory of RHAM student Nikki Giampolo.

During the December holiday season, the club sponsored a CandyGram sales fundraiser. RHAM students could send best wishes and holiday greetings to friends and loved ones. Funds from this project were matched with donations from the staff/faculty and the student body for a special project called "Holiday Gift Giving to Families in Need. The program obtained winter clothing, nonperishable foods and gifts for distribution to needy families in the three towns served by RHAM High School.

Club members are currently planning for winter and spring fundraisers and community service activities. These include a Paintball Tournament to raise funds for the international project "Smile Train" for children born with cleft pallet birth defects.

In April the club will celebrate the 50th year of the International Leos Club program. They anticipate a local event providing yard and home services to the elderly and needy families in Hebron, Andover and Marlborough.

In May the Leos will volunteer at the Eastern Regional Special Olympics, supporting Team RHAM Special Olympians and helping to run one of the sports venues. They will also be working with the Lions at the Maple Fest Pancake Breakfast this March and at the town picnic and fireworks.

There are more than 139,000 Leos in 5,500 clubs in 135 countries, according to the Lions.