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Tyler Cormier, age 21 of Marlborough, passed away last weekend at Hartford Hospital, but the impact of his life extends far beyond his youth. Here he is pictured on the evening of his senior prom in 2005.

Tyler's Friends Honor a Well-Lived Life

by Sarah McCoy

Tyler Cormier, a 21-year-old from Marlborough, passed away last Saturday.

As a journalist, I can tell you the facts about Tyler.

I can tell you he was a die-hard sports fan and even better friend.

I can tell you what he did during his life and what awards he received.

But, as someone who has known Tyler for most of my life, I can also tell you that those bare facts wouldn't do him justice.

To know Tyler is to know the impact he had on this community. As judged by the hour-long wait visitors had at his wake on Tuesday night, his impact was far-reaching.

While a student Elmer Thienes-Mary Hall Elementary School, gym teacher Tony Colavecchio dubbed him, "The Mayor of Marlborough." For those of you who think this might be a misnomer for a kid with Down's syndrome, you obviously didn't know Tyler.

With a perpetual smile and outgoing personality, friendship with Tyler was imminent. "You couldn't be around him for more than five minutes without falling in love," Libby Gifford said. Gifford first met Tyler when she was 5 years old and he was 2. The two remained close friends throughout high school and even after she moved

to Boston for college.

For the first eight years of their friendship, Tyler called Libby "BeeBee," because the L-sound proved to be too difficult for him to pronounce. But when he was 10, Tyler did something that changed Libby's life. With great concentration and a little slurring, Tyler managed to call his friend by her first name and then proudly boasted how he had been practicing it with his speech therapist.

That moment is etched on Libby's heart so deeply that when it came time to pick a major in college, she knew exactly what

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to choose. She now works as a speech pathologist in Framingham, MA.

Bobby Hopkins also had his life turned around by Tyler. After transferring to RHAM as a sophomore, Bobby met Tyler while playing on the basketball team. The two quickly developed a friendship that lasted long after Bobby graduated from RHAM in 2004. He is now pursuing a degree in Special Education because of the relationship he had with Tyler Cormier.

Perhaps no one had their life changed by Tyler more than RHAM boys basketball coach Steve Emt. Emt took a job as Tyler's aide at RHAM Middle School in 1997. From that first day the pair became inseparable.

Tyler took on the duties of the basketball team manager. They went to UConn games together. They hung out at each others' houses. And in that time Tyler gave Steve the gift of joy. "No matter what the day, no matter what was going on, there is more to life than sorrow," Steve said. "Tyler had a love of life so deep that you could not look at him without smiling."

When he spoke at his friend's funeral on Wednesday, Emt recalled a typical Tyler moment. The RHAM boys were losing to a Bolton team that they should have been beating, so Emt called a time-out to motivate his team. After the time-out, he looked down the bench and saw every one of his players with their heads down. Every one except one. Down at the end Tyler sat with a grin as wide as the ocean, saying that everything would be all right.

For Tyler there was joy in everything.

That isn't to say Tyler was always happy. He had his moments, as we all do. Once, after a Special Olympics' speed skating race which Tyler failed to win, he sat down on the ice, threw his gloves, and ripped off his skates in disgust. A true competitor at heart, Tyler loved to win.

On their way home from what would be his last game as the basketball team's manager, Tyler and his dad, Paul, sat quietly in the car. When Paul asked what was wrong, Tyler responded, "I just want to win, dad."

It didn't matter if he was cheering from the sidelines or playing, Tyler loved a good battle.

For the last two months of his life, Tyler fought the bravest battle of them all. For seven weeks he lay in Hartford Hospital's Intensive Care Unit with what started as, a severe case of pneumonia. Tyler stared death directly in the eyes three times and won before it became too much. He succumbed to respiratory failure on February 24.

Maybe even more than competition itself, Tyler loved participation. In 21 years he did more than most do in a lifetime. He won medals for basketball, softball, speed skating and swimming as a member of both the Glastonbury and RHAM Special Olympics teams. He loved watching the Red Sox and UConn men's basketball. In addition to managing the basketball team, Tyler also assisted the RHAM High School baseball team. He worked at Eastern Connecticut State University where he was recently offered a full-time position.

Tyler wasn't this active because his parents forced him. He was this active because he wanted to be. When there was something he wanted, Tyler had the initiative and drive to go and get it.

"He was so intent on participating in so many things that he opened doors for other special education students without even knowing it," RHAM High School Principal Scott Leslie said. "He was instrumental in creating an environment where students with special needs could mingle with anybody they wanted to."

Tyler not only mingled, he thrived. He was named Prom King of the Senior Prom in 2005.

That same year he also suited up for a varsity basketball game where he scored two points on Senior Night.

On a typical day you could look over the RHAM cafeteria at lunchtime and see students all mixed together. Tyler would be eating with the basketball team, while other special education students would be dispersed throughout the cafeteria, each with their friends. Not only is this type of integration unusual at high schools, it probably wouldn't have happened without Tyler blazing trails.

"Tyler was one of those rare students who fundamentally changed RHAM," Leslie said. "That is his legacy."

Tyler was a rare kid in that he loved school. He couldn't wait for vacations to be over, and every morning he'd wake up at 6 a.m. raring to go. He'd do his best to coax his sister, Cathleen, out of bed, not understanding why she didn't share the same excitement for the morning. Tyler loved his sister so much that he wanted her to share in all the things he enjoyed so much.

Throughout his life, Tyler's love knew no bounds. He began each day by kissing his mother. And, after his school day Tyler would run out of the locker room and run into his father's arms. Paul has served as the assistant boy's basketball coach for the past four years, a position he obtained through Tyler.

Even in his last days Tyler had love.

Tyler's friend Matt Grosso visited him a handful of times in January before he had to leave for college in Maine. The weekend before Tyler's passing Matt had an opportunity to come home. On Saturday he went to visit Tyler but found him asleep.

Matt returned on Sunday and now calls it one of the best decisions he has ever made. "When I walked into the room his face lit up," Matt recalled. "Tyler has given big smiles in the past, but this one took the cake."

He snapped a photo of Tyler on his cell phone, an image Matt said he "will treasure forever."

Even in intensive care, Tyler could overlook his problems and express the love and joy he had in seeing his friend's face.

For every person that knew Tyler there are hundreds of stories. There are stories of his sense of humor, of his kindness, of his determination.

With this in mind his friends and family have established the Tyler Cormier Memorial Scholarship Fund. The scholarship will be awarded yearly to a RHAM High School male and female student who embody Tyler's spirit and have participated in the RHAM Unified Sports program.

In lieu of flowers the family asks for donations to the fund. Donations are currently being accepted at Liberty Bank in Marlborough.

Tyler is survived by his parents Paul and Anna Cormier, of Marlborough; sister, Cathleen Cormier, of Marlborough; and grandmother, Mildred Pilch, of Charlestown, RI. He also leaves his uncles and their wives, David and Frederica Cormier, of Tolland, William and Wilfred Cormier, of Alabama, Steve and Marcia Pilch, of East Windsor, David Pilch, of East Hampton, Paul and Ingrid Pilch, of Enfield, and several cousins.

In life and in death Tyler brought unity. Hundreds, if not thousands, descended on Glastonbury for his wake on Tuesday. On Wednesday it was standing room only at St. John Fischer's Church for his funeral. Friends and family traveled from across the country just for Tyler.

Eight of his former RHAM basketball teammates served as pallbearers. In saying goodbye to their friend, they, and all other basketball team alumni, huddled around Tyler's casket. Together they put their hands in the middle and cheered for their friend one last time.



Tyler Cormier (second from right) with (from left), Matt Grosso of Marlborough, Jeff Bottaro of Hebron, and Paul Cormier during a Special Olympics Basketball Tournament in 2004.



Fallen Colchester Soldier to be Buried at Arlington National Cemetery

by Jim Salemi

Friends and family of former Colchester resident Sgt. Richard Ford paid their final respects this week.

Sgt. Ford died last week from wounds he sustained in a battle just outside of Baghdad Feb. 20th.

A wake was held for the fallen soldier on Wednesday at St Andrew's Church. His funeral was held Thursday. He will be laid to rest at Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia.

Ford, 40, was an East Hartford resident for the past 10 years, but he grew up in Colchester and was a graduate of Bacon Academy. He loved sports and was an avid Red Sox fan, said his family.

At the time of his death Ford was a rifleman assigned to 2nd Battalion, 325th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, Fort Bragg, N.C.

He served with the elite White Falcons regiment, an outfit of paratroopers trained to jump into hostile territory anywhere in the world within a matter of hours.

Ford's fellow soldiers in Iraq paid last respects to their comrade at a memorial service in Baghdad last Tuesday, Feb. 27.

Lt. Regina Grant, of the 143 Combat Sustainment Support Battalion stationed in Iraq, attended the memorial service there. While she wasn't in Ford's outfit, she served with him for

10 years when they were both with the 143rd Area Support Group in the Connecticut National Guard out of Hartford, and became close friends over the course of their service there. Grant is on a one-year deployment in Iraq.

"Members of his platoon paid a heartfelt tribute to the legacy he left. Although he was in his company for less than three years, he made a significant impression. The soldiers spoke of him as a brother and as a father figure. Because I knew what kind of a person he was, it was no surprise. He gave his life for the security of his platoon and for that he will be forever revered," Grant said via an email message.

Lt. Grant said Ford transferred to the regular Army because he always dreamed of being a Drill Sergeant, a dream Grant urged him to pursue. And Grant, knowing Ford for over a decade, knew that if anyone was cut out to be a soldier, it was Ford.

"Richard was always the consummate soldier, looking for ways to challenge himself and be an even better soldier," she said.

And knowing what kind of soldier Richard was, Grant "was adamant" in letters to him during his first two deployments (Ford was on his third tour), that she did not want him to "be a hero."

"He always thought of others over himself," she said. "That's one of the qualities I loved

about him."

Ford is survived by a son, Michael Patrick of Bridgeport, his father Mason Ford of Colchester, a brother and a sister.

Ford is also highly-decorated, having earned the Purple Heart medal.

Gov. Rell on Feb. 23 ordered U.S. and State of Connecticut flags to be lowered to half staff to honor Ford. Flags will remain at half staff until the sergeant has been interred.

In a statement, Ford's son Michael Patrick said he was "proud" of his father.

"I would like everyone to know that I'm extremely proud of my dad's service to our country," Patrick said. "I love him deeply and will miss him terribly."

As will Lt. Grant.

"Words cannot express how deeply I will miss Richard," she said. "He was a dear friend and his memory will remain with me forever. I have to remind myself to smile nonetheless because I know he is looking down at me with that great warm smile he was known for."

Besides his father, Mason Ford of Colchester, Richard is survived by his 11-year-old son, Michael D. Patrick of Bridgeport; his sister and brother-in-law, Vanessa and Robert Migliore of East Hartford; two brothers, Matthew L. O'Connor of Lebanon and Mason Ford Jr. of California; and his grandmother, Marjorie Gor-



Sgt. Richard Ford

don of Middletown. He also leaves a host of aunts, uncles and cousins. He was predeceased by a brother, Kevin Ford; grandmother, Thelma R. Ford and grandfather, Carter Ford.

Valor Recognized

In 2005, Ford received an Army Commendation Medal with a "Valor" device for courage under fire, determination and a complete lack of concern for personal safety while helping to defeat the enemy and saving the lives of his crew in Mosul, Iraq, according to a statement by the Army.

He has since been awarded the Bronze Star Medal and Purple Heart.

RHAM Board Issues Financial/Budget Update

RHAM recently returned some extra funds to its three towns.

Upon the completion of the financial audit for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2006, the Regional School District No 8 Board of Education voted to distribute the fund balance to the region's towns in the following amounts: \$79,750.70 to Andover, \$233,331.13 to Hebron, and \$142,376.17 to Marlborough.

Superintendent of Schools Robert Siminski delivered checks to the Boards of Finance in January.

The building project audit is complete, and the state owes the district a final reimbursement of \$474,484, according to the RHAM Board of Education. These funds will be used to retire the short-term note used as a bridge to the final bonding completed in January. The district retained its A rating, and the average interest rates on the bonds were 4.08%, 4.08%, 4.16%, and 4.22%.

In addition, the board has refinanced the \$18,145,000 general obligation bonds; an ac-

tion expected to save the district an average of \$25,000 per year over the life of the bond. Information regarding the building project audit and financing can be obtained through the Superintendent's office.

Superintendent Siminski provided the board with his proposed 2007-2008 budget at the Feb. 5 meeting. The proposed budget of \$22,673,258 represents a 5.89% increase over the current year budget. Budget information is available on the RHAM Middle School and High School websites in the Board of Education section.

The RHAM Board has scheduled budget meetings for 6:30 p.m. in the RHAM High School choral room for the following Mondays: March 5, 12, 26 and April 2. The next regular board meeting is April 26.

All meeting agendas provide an opportunity for public input. Board member contact information is also available on the school website.

Hebron Veterans Plan to Join in Watch over War Memorials

A contingent of area veterans is traveling to Washington, D.C., on March 17 as part of the "Gathering of Eagles" vigil.

The veterans plan to protect the Vietnam and Korean War memorials and other monuments from potential damage during planned anti-war activities on that date, and show support for troops currently on active duty.

Veterans from the Hebron American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars posts have joined forces to charter a bus for the trip and have a limited number of seats available for area veterans who want to take part in the vigil.

A Gathering of Eagles is a nonpartisan, non-confrontational grassroots vigil to protect the war memorials on the national Mall from possible vandalism from groups taking part in a planned march on the Pentagon.

Groups associated with the March 17 march also were involved in anti-war activities in January that resulted in vandalism to the nation's Capitol, and attacks on disabled veterans, according to the veterans group.

Veterans groups nationwide became concerned about the potential for similar vandalism to the memorials after it was learned that the gathering point for the march on the Pentagon is adjacent to the Vietnam War Memorial. Public statements from organizers of the march

on the Pentagon, in addition to postings on Internet websites referring to the veterans and active-duty service personnel now serving in Iraq as war criminals, added to those concerns, said organizers of the vigil.

A Gathering of Eagles began in early February as an informal effort by individuals and veterans' groups to encircle the Vietnam Memorial to prevent vandalism. It has since grown to include dozens of veterans' organizations including the Rolling Thunder, and Patriot Guard motorcycle riders, the National Purple Heart organization, and the Gold and Blue Star Mothers organizations, representing families of service personnel killed in action and currently serving.

The Gold and Blue Star Mothers will be arriving in a nationwide caravan that will start in California and arrive in Washington on the 17th.

Organizers for A Gathering of Eagles now expect tens of thousands of veterans and their supporters to attend the vigil. More information on A Gathering of Eagles can be obtained at www.GatheringOfEagles.org.

Information on the reserving a seat on the bus from Hebron can be obtained by contacting Hebron VFW and Legion member Ronald Winter by email at RWinterbooks@comcast.net.

Officials Move Quickly to Deal with Hebron School Radon Discovery

by Sarah McCoy

High levels of radon forced Hebron Superintendent of Schools Ellie Cruz to shut down a well at Hebron Elementary School, but the fix is forthcoming.

At the beginning of January Cruz received word of high radon counts from well number one at the school. She immediately ordered the well to be shut down and the school has been operating solely on well number two since then.

Normal radon levels in tap water, as set by the Department of Public Health, are 5,000 picocuries a liter. Well number one at HES tested at 20,000—four times the norm.

Earlier this month both the Board of Selectman and Board of Finance approved a \$7,500 appropriation for an aeration system that would remedy this problem. The funds will come out of the Capital Improvement Program budget.

Two years ago the Board of Education requested an \$8,000 CIP appropriation to fix a well problem at Gilead Hill. That problem has since been remedied through regular maintenance and the funds were not needed. Cruz and Board of Education Chairman Jane Dube asked the selectmen and Board of Finance to redesignate the funds for the aeration system at Hebron Elementary.

This request was approved at the February 1 meeting.

Before the aeration system can be installed, it must be approved by the Connecticut Department of Public Health. Cruz reported that the state is currently reviewing the plans, but she anticipates an approval shortly.

The hope is to have the system in place

before the end of the school year. Hungerford's Connecticut Water of New Haven, which currently maintains the schools' water systems, will handle the installation and maintenance of the new equipment.

In the meantime HES is operating on well number two. While this change has forced no changes in the day-to-day activity of the school, Cruz said she will be glad to have both wells in full operation.

"You can drink from the fountains. You can use the tap water. Running on only one well means that I don't have a back-up," she explained.

Prior to the shut-down the school operated one week with one pump and switched to the other the following week.

This is the first time the district tested for radon in the water. The state will require testing for every school beginning in January of 2008, but Hebron was able to participate in a free pilot test last fall.

"I am truly grateful for the timing," Cruz said. "If it wasn't for the water test, we wouldn't have known [of the high radon level] for another year."

Radon is a naturally occurring gas found in soil. While there is no harm when the gas is in the water, it has been linked to lung cancer after prolonged air exposure.

Cruz did note that both Hebron Elementary and Gilead Hill elementary schools' air quality tested within normal limits. "We are in uncharted territories," Cruz said, "and I wanted to be conservative in my approach."

Notices were sent to parents in the middle of January notifying them of the situation.



Ryan Bengsten and Ryan Rubin were recently honored by various dignitaries, including State Senator Eileen Daily and State Rep. Linda Orange, for attaining Eagle Scout rank.

Two Honored in Colchester for Attaining Scouting's Highest Rank

Colchester had reason to be proud Feb. 18 as Boy Scout Troop 13 honored Ryan Bengsten and Ryan Rubin for attaining the rank of Eagle Scout.

Proclaimed as "Bengsten & Rubin Day" by Gov. Jodi Rell, the day saw both young men honored for their scouting achievements. State Senator Eileen Daily and State Representative Linda Orange presented the "Bengsten & Rubin Day" proclamation to the two scouts.

Senator Daily and State Rep. Orange observed that less than 5% of all scouts actually achieve the rank of Eagle. Many years of hard work and dedication are needed, along with a tremendous amount of support from family, friends and especially the scout leadership.

Mohegan District Advancement Chair Bill Grasser administered the Oak of the Eagle to the two scouts. Also attending the ceremony was Colchester First Selectman Stan Soby who acknowledged the importance of "taking time out to acknowledge and recognize the hard work of these young men and not get caught up in the day to day."

Side by side with the young men on this journey have been both dads, Mike Rubin who is an Assistant Scoutmaster, and Paul Bengsten, Eagle Rank Advancement Advisor and Assistant Scoutmaster.

Each scout started with Troop 13 over six years ago as they crossed over from Cub Scouts.

The requirements for Eagle Scout include 12 specific Eagle-required merit badges and nine free choice merit badges, as well as rank progressions from Scout to Life Scout. There are over 100 merit badges to choose from so there

is something for everyone.

Other requirements include service hours, participating in a troop leadership position, and participating in troop campouts.

Each young man chose individual Eagle Service Projects that reflected a particular personal interest. Ryan Bengsten chose to erect a commemorative marker and flagpole at the Governor or Samuel Huntington Homestead Museum in Scotland, CT. The marker was purchased by the State Historic Preservation Office to commemorate the march of the French regiments through Connecticut on their way to aid George Washington and his troops.

Ryan Rubin organized a Walk for Warmth to raise fuel funds for the local residents of Colchester and the Social Services Department of Colchester. Working closely with Director Janet Taylor, Ryan Rubin's project raised over \$1500 for the fuel bank. The funds arrived at a time when fuel subsidies are empty and people are forced to make hard choices. Thanks to the Walk for Warmth, many citizens received aid.

The common thread between the projects and the scouts, is the dedication of many in the "Scouting Family" who have persevered along side the boys who get them to meetings, take them on campouts, train them in life skills and support them on this journey. Troop 13 looks forward to working with the boys as they continue on their journey as Eagle Scouts. The troop will depend on their sense of Honor, Duty and skill, to foster relationships with the scouts and those who are on their way to becoming Eagle Scouts.



The Colchester Land Trust has announced the acquisition of 18 acres along the Airline Trail, a trail enjoyed by hundreds of hikers, bikers and equestrians. The land borders the Salmon River State Forest and is the gateway to the trail from the parking area on Bull Hill Road.

Land Trust Acquires Open Space on Airline Trail

The Colchester Land Trust this week announced its first acquisition of open space in town.

The property consists of 18 acres situated along the Airline Trail bordering the Salmon River State Forest and Bull Hill Road.

This property forms a gateway to the trail where hundreds of hikers, runners and equestrians enter the trail after parking at the "hairpin curve" on Bull Hill Road. As visitors enter the trail traveling east, this parcel is to the left for approximately 3/10 of a mile.

A linear property, paralleling the trail, it consists of a deeply wooded area with a small brook that passes through it on its way to the Salmon River.

The property is rich with over 20 species of trees and provides shelter to a wide variety of wild life, including wild turkey and deer. The current owner of the property spotted a bobcat on the land several years ago.

"This land is a prime example of why Colchester formed a land trust five years ago," said Lisa Hageman, president of the Trust. "To build homes along this trail would diminish the recreation value and lose the environmental benefits this land provides."

The trust only has until July 15 to raise the needed balance of \$170,000 for the property. They will be speaking with financial institutions as well as applying to Connecticut DEP and other land grant organizations.

"We have our work cut out for us," says Hageman. "This effort will determine the support the citizens of Colchester have for land preservation and a quality of life that open space provides. We will announce a capital campaign shortly to raise funds for this property, as well as others we are working on."

"While the trust is applying for various grants, 68% of land acquisition funds come from individuals and business within a community," Hageman points out. "Each member of the land trust's board has pledged money for the next three to five years. Collectively we have committed over \$30,000 of our own, personal money to make this happen and show just how committed we are."

Hageman said she hopes others will join to show their support and pledge annual contributions as well. "It's a legacy for our town, which can't wait for a government to act on our behalf, although their support is critical to our success," she observed. "When we show financial institutions commitments from state, town and individuals, they are more willing to provide long-term financing to an organization that can demonstrate significant support."

The Colchester Land Trust invites anyone who would like to join them on March 4 at 1 p.m. at the hairpin turn parking area on Bull Hill Road for an official announcement of this acquisition and a three-mile history hike of the Airline Railroad.

Former Colchester Employee Arrested for Embezzlement

A former town employee turned himself in to police Tuesday, Feb. 27 for allegedly embezzling money from the transfer station.

According to reports, Howard E. Daniels, 53, of 53 Kramer Rd., was arrested and charged with first degree larceny. He was released on a \$25,000 non-surety bond and is scheduled to appear in court March 8th.

While police did not disclose the exact amount of funds allegedly skimmed from the till, they said it amounted to "thousands" of dollars taken over a three-year period.

According to reports, Daniels was taking

funds from the cash register in the small office at the entrance to the town's transfer station. Residents pay fees to dispose of certain items, and that money goes into a cash register in the office.

The investigation by local police and the Resident Trooper's office was led by Colchester Officer Robert Susecki and had been ongoing since November of last year.

Daniels was hired in 1993 and worked for the highway department until 1994, when he moved to the transfer station.

Portland Police News

2/18 – Donald King, 36, of 228 Grove St., East Berlin, was charged with DUI and failure to drive right, said Portland police.

2/19 – Talon Longey, 26, of 23 Wallace St., Enfield, was charged with burglary 3rd degree, larceny 3rd degree and conspiracy to commit criminal mischief 3rd degree, said police.

Obituaries

Marlborough

Tyler P. Cormier

Tyler Paul Cormier, 21, of Marlborough, a student of RHAM High School, passed away on Saturday, Feb. 24, at Hartford Hospital.

Tyler was born on Jan. 20, 1986, the son of Paul F. and Anna (Pilch) Cormier. Tyler was the manager of the RHAM Boys Basketball Team for seven years and due to his enthusiasm, was selected co-captain of the team in 2005 where he scored the only two points of his career on senior night.

Along with participating in the Glastonbury Special Olympics until 2004, he also played for Team RHAM Special Olympic Basketball and Softball as well as the RHAM High School Unified Basketball team.

Tyler was the recipient of the Spirit of Life Award in 2006 from the CT Special Olympics and won numerous gold medals for swimming, speed skating, softball and basketball. He was awarded the Peter Au'coin award from RHAM High School in 2006 for most outstanding student.

Tyler was a huge Red Sox, UConn Men's Basketball and UConn Football fan.

Tyler leaves to mourn in his passing, his loving family; his parents, Paul and Anna Cormier, of Marlborough; a sister, Cathleen Cormier, of Marlborough; a grandmother, Mildred Pilch, of Charlestown, RI. He also leaves his uncles and their wives; David and Frederika Cormier, of Tolland, William Cormier and Wilfred Cormier, of Alabama, Steve and Marcia Pilch, of East Windsor, David Pilch, of East Hampton, Paul and Ingrid Pilch, of Enfield, and several cousins, second cousins and many friends.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Wednesday, Feb. 28, at 12 noon in St. John Fisher Catholic Church, Jones Hollow Road, Marlborough, followed by burial in Marlborough Center Cemetery. Calling hours were Tuesday evening at Glastonbury Funeral Home, 450 New London Tpk., Glastonbury.

In lieu of flowers, guests may make a donation to the Tyler Cormier Memorial Scholarship Fund c/o Liberty Bank, PO Box 188, Marlborough, CT 06447. The Tyler Cormier Memorial Scholarship will be given to a graduating RHAM High School senior male and female who have demonstrated active participation in the RHAM Unified sports program and are intent on furthering their education.

His family would like to thank all the nurses, doctors, physical therapists and staff on Bliss 11 of the I.C.U., Hartford Hospital, for their care of Tyler in the last two months. Tyler's spirit is the kind that brings out the best in us – love, understanding, compassion and joy. Tyler always saw the beauty in everything around him and was always ready to experience new things. Above all else, Tyler brought much love and joy to everyone's life that he came in contact with, in both school and community. He was always able to, and will still, bring a smile to anyone, not only on their face but in their hearts. He'll be forever missed!

Marlborough

Mary Cull

Mary (Corry) Cull of Marlborough, devoted wife of the late John J. Cull, entered into the Lord's embrace, Wednesday, Feb. 21, at home. Mary was born in County Clare, Ireland, the daughter of the late Michael and Ellen (Killeen) Corry.

Mary was a devoted member of St. John Fisher Church of Marlborough and its Prayer Shawl Ministry. Prior to moving to Marlborough she was active in the St. Thomas Beckett Church in Cheshire. For many years she worked as a bank teller in New Haven and more recently at Stop & Shop Supermarket in Cheshire and Colchester.

She is survived by her loving children, daughter, Maura Masotti of Marlborough, son John Cull and his wife Colleen of Prospect. Mary was a loving Nana to Ryan and Garrett Masotti of Marlborough and Jack and Connor Cull of Prospect. Her memory shall will also be honored by her sisters, Anne Egan and her husband Michael, Margaret McCann and her husband Patrick, her brothers; Martin Corry and his wife Mary, John Corry and his wife Mary Anne, and Flannan Corry and his wife Mary, all of Ireland, and many nieces, nephews, cousins and friends. In addition to her husband and parents she was predeceased by her son-in-law John P. Masotti.

Funeral services were held Wednesday, Feb. 28, from the Farley-Sullivan Funeral Home, 50 Naubuc Ave. Glastonbury, followed by a Mass of Christian Burial at 10 a.m. in St. John Fisher Church, 30 Jones Hollow Rd., Marlborough, Ct. Burial was in St. Mary's Cemetery, 3124 Whitney Ave., Hamden. Calling hours were Tuesday evening at the funeral home.

Portland

Melvin V. Bornhorst

Melvin V. "Mel" Bornhorst, 68, of Portland, beloved husband of Kathleen (Fizmaurice) Bornhorst, died Friday, Feb. 23, at Hartford Hospital.

Born July 27, 1938 in Minster, OH, son of the late Anthony and Loretta (Sommer) Bornhorst, he had lived in South Glastonbury prior to moving to Portland 18 years ago. He was an engineer for NCR, and retired in 1995 as a manufacturing representative for specialized electronics devices.

Mr. Bornhorst graduated from the University of Dayton with a Electrical Engineering degree.

Besides his wife, he is survived by his three sons and daughters-in-law, John C. and Catherine Bornhorst of Colchester, Michael C. and Heather Bornhorst of Boston, MA., Patrick N. and Jennifer Bornhorst of Dallas, TX.; two brothers, Roger Bornhorst of Minster, OH, Elton Bornhorst of Dayton, OH; two sisters, Thelma Hogencamp of Minster, OH, Janet Boerger of Troy, OH; five grandchildren, Eric, Anne, Lucy, Sally and Sasha. He was predeceased by a brother, Kenneth Bornhorst.

A Mass of Christian Burial was held Tuesday, Feb. 27 at 10 a.m. in St. Augustine Church, 55 Hopewell Rd., South Glastonbury. Burial will be at the convenience of the family. There are no calling hours.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the American Cancer Society, 538 Preston Ave., Meriden, CT 06450 or to the Wellfleet Conservation Land Trust, Wellfleet, MA 02667. The Mulryan Funeral Home has care of arrangements.

Portland

Donna Marie Klember

Donna Marie Klember, 53, of Portland, was called to eternal rest Friday, Feb. 23 following a brave and valiant battle with cancer.

Donna was born March 30, 1953, a daughter of the late Joseph and Jennie (Masselli) Klember, and had attended schools in Portland and Middletown. She was a customer service representative in Hartford, Berlin, and Cromwell and had held other community positions throughout her life. She, along with her partner, also ran D and V Hot Dogs for 18 seasons in South Windsor.

Donna will always be remembered for her love of animals, with love and compassion for strays and finding them homes in safe environments. Left to mourn her passing is her loving and devoted partner of 26 years Victoria Simmons, of Portland with whom she resided; her beloved sisters, Barbara J. Landman of Northford, Patricia A. Holland and her husband John of Portland; her nephew John J. Holland, his children Kayla and Brendon of Middletown; her niece Julie B. Rafferty, her husband Rob, their children Chloe and Emmy of Cohasset, MA; her niece Michelle N. Linares, her husband Paul, their children Brian, Jacob, John, and Brooke, of East Haddam (Moodus), with special thanks to her aunt and godmother Mary Klemba and her daughters Susan, Jane, and Laura, and her special friends Marsha, Joyce and Betty. She also leaves her angels Timmy, Alex, Mackie, Hope, Guido and Sophie, her darling pets. She was predeceased by her beloved niece Jeanne M. Landman as well as her precious bassets Molly and Timmy.

Donna fought her illness with courage, dignity, and determination. She will always be remembered for her kindness and love to her family and her many friends. A beautiful girl, from the inside out, and every day that we had with her was a gift, the light of many lives. We want to thank the staff of Middlesex Hospital Hospice Unit for their devotion and care given to Donna and her family during this difficult time, truly a life support system. We are eternally grateful to all of you, angels of mercy.

Calling hours were Thursday evening at the Portland Memorial Funeral Home. A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated today (Friday, March 2) at 10:30 a.m. in the Church of Saint Mary, 51 Freestone Ave., Portland.

In lieu of flowers, gifts in her memory may be sent to the Middlesex Hospital Hospice Unit, 28 Crescent St., Middletown, CT 05457 or to the Connecticut Humane Society, 701 Russell Rd., Newington, CT 06115.

Colchester

Sgt. Richard L. Ford

Sgt. Sgt. Richard L. Ford, 40, of East Hartford, died Tuesday, Feb. 20, in Baghdad, Iraq from injuries sustained in combat.

Born in Middletown, on April 4, 1966 to Mason L. Ford of Colchester and the late Claudette Y. Ford of Middletown, Richard was raised in Colchester where he graduated from Bacon Academy. A resident of East Hartford for the past ten years, Richard joined the Connecticut National Guard in 1995 and was stationed in Windsor Locks at the Detachment 1 Company G 104th Aviation.

He entered active duty in 2004 and was assigned to the White Falcons 2nd Battalion, 325th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division in Ft. Bragg, NC. A decorated soldier, he had previously served two tours in Iraq. He was a recipient of the Army Medal of Valor, the Bronze Star and Purple Heart among several other honors.

Besides his father, Mason Ford of Colchester, Richard is survived by his 11-year-old son, Michael D. Patrick of Bridgeport; his sister and brother-in-law, Vanessa and Robert Migliore of East Hartford; two brothers, Matthew L. O'Connor of Lebanon and Mason Ford Jr. of California; and his grandmother, Marjorie Gordon of Middletown. He also leaves a host of aunts, uncles and cousins. He was predeceased by a brother, Kevin Ford; grandmother, Thelma R. Ford and grandfather, Carter Ford.

An avid sports fan, Richard was thrilled to see his team, The Boston Red Sox, win the 2004 World Series. He was a devoted father and loving brother with strong ties to his extended family. His happy spirit and beautiful smile will be sorely missed by all whose life he touched. Richard is truly our Hero.

Calling hours were held Wednesday, Feb. 28 from 4-8 p.m. at St. Andrew's Church, 128 Norwich Ave., Colchester. Funeral services with full Military Honors were held on Thursday, March 1, at St. Andrew's Church. A 2 p.m. graveside service will be at Arlington National Cemetery on Monday, March 5.

Belmont Funeral Home of Colchester has care of arrangements. In lieu of flowers donations may be made payable to Michael D. Patrick Fund c/o Vanessa A. Migliore, 100 Mulcahy Drive, East Hartford, CT 06118.

East Hampton

Norma E. DeFlorio

Norma E. (Metcalf) DeFlorio, 84, of East Hampton, formerly of Hartford, widow of the late David DeFlorio, died Monday, Feb. 26, at Middlesex Hospital.

Born July 19, 1922, in Middletown, she was the daughter of the late Charles and Edna (Charleson) Metcalf. She had retired from Chandler Evans Corp. in 1996.

She is survived by her son, Ronald and his wife Terry Canfield of Montana; a daughter, Lynda and her husband Gary Yeaton of East Hampton; a brother, Charles Metcalf of Somers; four grandchildren and five great grandchildren. She was predeceased by a sister Jeanne Cooke.

Funeral services will be private at the convenience of the family. Burial will be in the family plot in Lakeview Cemetery in the spring. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions can be made to East Hampton Ambulance Assoc., PO Box 144, East Hampton, CT 06424. The Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton has care of arrangements.

Hebron

Margaret Jones

Margaret Jones entered into eternal rest on Tuesday, Feb. 27, after a brief stay at Middlesex Hospital.

Born in New York, she was a resident of New Britain for most of her adult life. Along with her late husband Ronald, she raised her three sons and a daughter. The last two years she has lived in Hebron with her daughter Lynn and son-in-law David Yachaina. She is also survived by two sons, Laine Jones and his wife Allison of West Newburyport, MA., and Larry Jones and his wife Laura of Plainville. A third son, Lee, predeceased her in 1981. Margaret has eight grandchildren and one great grandchild whom she loved dearly, Bryce and his wife Iza Yachaina, Blair and Ty Yachaina, Todd, Eric, and Scott Jones of Plainville, Kate and Molly Jones of West Newburyport, MA. A great-grandchild was born last year Damian Yachaina.

Besides the love of her family and friends, she was a great supporter of animals and animal rights. Her dogs Brownie and Dusty were her constant companions who also brought her many years of love, joy, and happiness.

Funeral services will be private at the convenience of the family. In lieu of flowers memorial donation can be made to Connecticut Humane Society 701 Russell Rd. Newington, CT. 06111. The Spencer Funeral Home 112 Main St. East Hampton, CT. has care of arrangements.

Rutland, VT

Natalie S. McLeod

Natalie Shaw McLeod, 89, of Rutland, died peacefully, surrounded by her loving family, Sunday, February 25, 2007, at Fletcher Allen Health Care in Burlington.

She was born in Rutland on February 24, 1918, the daughter of Edmund P. and Patricia (Coates) Shaw. She graduated from Rutland High School in 1936 and Weylister Secretarial School in Milford, Conn. She was employed as a secretary for GE in Connecticut, CVPS and Stewart Smith Buick in Rutland.

Natalie was a 76-year member of Grace Congregational United Church of Christ. She was the financial and recording secretary for many years and was a member of the Diaconate. She was active in Fortnightly, Hexagon and the Women's Fellowship. She was also a proud member of the 1918 Club.

Natalie was an avid bridge player and an outstanding cook. She loved being with her family, especially her grandchildren. She always looked forward to spending time at Lake Bomoseen in the summer.

Natalie is survived by three children, Sharon M. Goodwin of Cobalt, CT, Hugh "Sandy" McLeod III and his wife Diane of Clinton Township, MI, and Dianne M. Arthur and her husband Kevin of Essex Junction; eight grandchildren, Laura McBeth, Elizabeth Anderson, Hugh McLeod IV, Andrew McLeod, Ashley and Jeffrey Goodwin, and Hillary and Caitlin Arthur; and nine great-grandchildren. She is also survived by one sister, Beverly Seward of Rutland; her cousin, Harlow Shaw of Massachusetts; and many nieces and friends. She was predeceased by her brother, Stanley "Bud" Shaw, and her sister, Marian Pray.

The McLeod family would like to thank the incredible staff in the Surgical Intensive Care at FAHC. Their kindness, compassion and the exceptional care they provided for our mother was most appreciated. Special thanks to Dr. Charash and Dr. Hamlin and their team, nurses Katarina and Bob, as well as the other wonderful nurses and doctors who treated Natalie. We'd also like to thank the Visiting Nurse Association and Jeanni Vargas of M&M Private Care Inc., whose help enabled Natalie to live independently.

Her funeral service will be held Saturday, March 3, at 11 a.m. at Grace Congregational Church. Burial will be in Evergreen Cemetery at a later date. Friends may call at Tossing Funeral Home from 3 to 6 p.m. on Friday, March 2.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Memorial Fund at Grace Congregational UCC, 8 Court St., Rutland, VT; or Rutland Area Visiting Nurse Association and Hospice, P.O. Box 787, Rutland, VT 05702.

Colchester

Richard Arsenault

Richard Alan "Rich" Richard Alan "Rich" Arsenault, 35, of Jacksonville, FL died Sunday, Feb. 18, in the arms of his wife and in the company of his family. During his courageous fight with cancer, Arsenault maintained the same courage, faith and humor that was so much a part of the way he lived his life, the family said.

A native of Colchester, Mr. Arsenault served in the United States Navy as an Electronic Warfare Systems Technician. After leaving the Navy, he earned a bachelor's degree in Computer Science from the University of North Florida. He was employed by Nuvell Financial Services in Jacksonville as a marketing analyst and was previously employed by JEA.

He enjoyed the love and support of his current and former co-workers. Thanks are sent to The National Family and to the people of Community Hospice.

Mr. Arsenault is survived by his wife, Kathleen, and their three young children, R.J., Megan and Thomas; parents, Richard and Elaine Arsenault; sister, Jody (Karl) Kress and their daughters Kiera and Isabella; grandmother, Annette Kristoff and many aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces and nephews. His grandfather, Raymond Kristoff, died in August 2006.

A memorial service was held in celebration of his life on Feb. 24, at the Community Presbyterian Church in Atlantic Beach, FL. Donations may be made to his children's college funds, checks made out to Kathleen Arsenault, c/o Community Presbyterian Church, 150 Sherry Drive, Atlantic Beach, Florida. For on-line condolences, please visit www.courant.com and www.jacksonville.com.

