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Chris Langlois, a junior at RHAM High School, had his first experience with AHM Youth Services in 2005, when he was cast in a summer production of *Joseph and the Technicolor Dreamcoat*. Chris is just one of many success stories associated with AHM Youth Services, which is celebrating its 25th anniversary this month.

AHM Youth Services Marking 25 Years

by Sarah McCoy

The year was 1983. Cabbage Patch Dolls were all the rage, the Rubik's cube had just been invented and everyone wanted feathered hair. It was also the year the AHM Youth Services began.

Only one of these four is still relevant today. And it's not the toy doll.

In honor of its 25th anniversary, AHM will hold a party tonight, Friday, Oct. 24. Refreshments will be served at 5 p.m., followed by a recognition ceremony at 6 p.m.

In 25 years, AHM has grown from a one-room dream to an all-encompassing support system for the children and families of Hebron, Andover and Marlborough. With focuses on prevention, intervention, and positive youth development, AHM has created a myriad of programs and supports to help all children reach their full potential.

Because of the breadth of services offered by AHM and the variety of people involved with the program, it would be virtually impossible to succinctly tell the story of AHM. Instead, the *Rivereast* hopes to tell the AHM story through the people who make the organization what it is. This is by no means everyone who is important to the organization but rather a

sampling of the perspectives that make AHM unique.

The Visionary

The year was 1981 and Cynthia Goodrich happened to be reading a magazine. There was nothing particularly noteworthy about the event in itself, but it was the beginning of something that would become bigger than Goodrich had ever imagined.

Six years earlier Cynthia and her husband Paul, had come to Hebron. Paul was to be the town's first dentist and Cynthia would help out with the business and raise their children.

Everything was going according to plan when Cynthia opened a magazine and read about David Toma.

Toma, a New Jersey police officer, worked tirelessly to battle narcotics on the streets of Newark. Despite seeing the devastating effects of drug abuse, Toma would form an addiction of his own to prescription painkillers after the death of his five-year-old son.

Having kicked his habit, Toma decided to leave the police force in the 1970s, to

begin a career as a lecturer. Toma spoke around the country about the need for parent involvement and how the war on drugs needed to be fought in schools from an early age.

Toma was the inspiration behind the popular television show *Baretta*.

Inspired by his message, Cynthia Goodrich approached then-Superintendent of Schools Joe Reardon about having Toma come to RHAM High School to deliver a speech.

Reardon gave the OK if Goodrich could raise the funds. Five thousand dollars was a hefty price tag but Goodrich felt it was a paltry amount considering the return on the investment. "I was just a parent who knew nothing about drugs," Goodrich explained. "I knew if I was like that, there had to be others."

Using what some have described as a "bulldog approach," Goodrich raised the money through grants and donations, and Toma came to Hebron.

It wasn't just Toma who came.

Families from all the neighboring towns flocked to the high school to hear him

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speak. So many, in fact, that a television feed had to be set up to broadcast the presentation into the middle school where the overflow was seated.

Toma told his story. He told the crowd about what he saw on the streets. He told them of his own personal struggles.

At the end, he and local mental health professionals and clergy were on-hand to help anyone who wanted to talk. The event was a huge success.

"I thought it was more about curiosity that people came," Goodrich explained. "But I came to realize how many people needed this."

She couldn't let it stop with just one lecture. Goodrich recognized the need for opportunities in Hebron that would get an anti-drug message out and create positive activities for the youth.

Leading a small group of volunteers Goodrich raised money through every avenue she could. They incorporated AHM on April 15, 1983 and, soon after, rented a small office above Hebron Travel. One of the first initiatives Goodrich began was to begin the Summer Youth Theater program. That first summer, students from the three towns put on *Once Upon a Mattress* and Goodrich was there making costumes, doing make-up, and helping create sets.

"The students were all so into it," she remembered. "It was great to see how it helped their self-esteem and how they all bonded together."

By the following year the AHM Board of Directors was ready to hire its first employee. Joel Rosenberg interviewed for the position (more on him later) and was hired immediately. "He is such a dynamic person, we knew right away he was the perfect fit," Goodrich said.

Soon after Rosenberg was hired, the Board of Directors brought Sandy Plummer to work as a counselor for the youth bureau. Together the pair expanded AHM into a model agency that helps parents from the day their child is born to the day that child is graduating from high school.

"I look back, knowing that we started with so little, and I'm just so impressed," Goodrich said. "We dreamt of having a building of our own. Now they do. We dreamt of having programs in the schools. Now they do. We dreamt of having a teen center. Now they have it. It's unbelievable."

Goodrich continued to serve as president of the Board of Directors until 1987.

Goodrich and her husband continue to live in the same "starter" home they bought in 1975. She continues to be active at Concordia Lutheran Church in Manchester. Her children, Rob and Aimee, are now grown and, Goodrich is happy to report, have always stayed away from drugs.

The Man in Charge

When talking about AHM it's impossible to get very far without talking about Joel Rosenberg.

He was the bureau's first employee and its steadfast leader. He's the one who took AHM from a small office to having its own building. He's expanded programming to reach all grades with a presence at all the local schools.

But, if you ask him, he'll be the first to give credit elsewhere.

That's just his way.

He grew up in Connecticut's "Quiet Corner," always knowing he wanted to help others. His first job was as a youth counselor for the United Way before heading off to college at American University in Washington, D.C.

Rosenberg knew he'd be back though. "I always loved northeast Connecticut. I didn't need to find the rest of the world," he said.

He came back and soon after took a job with the Windham County 4-H Foundation. While serving as director there, Rosenberg found himself drawn to an advertisement in *The Hartford Courant* in a town he'd never heard of. The ad wasn't big or fancy but it sounded intriguing to Rosenberg. A new organization was looking for someone to grow a youth bureau and expand its programming.

"It sounded challenging," Rosenberg re-



Cynthia Goodrich

called.

In his first interview with the Board of Directors Rosenberg remembers being struck by their serious vision for their future. "This was a grassroots organization run by volunteers but they talked about providing everything from a teen center to counseling," he said. "It was something you wanted to be a part of."

Rosenberg dove into a position with very little in terms of expectations. "I thrived on the chaos," he said. "I was working for a group of people who were so confident that it was hard to believe that good things weren't going to happen."

Whether it was selling fruit or holding car washes, Rosenberg was always amazed at how people stepped up. And as AHM expanded its programming it also expanded its staff. "I am surrounded by people who see something special in their job. That's why I've stayed here so long," he said. "There are wonderful people everywhere."

The cornerstone of AHM has always been its mental health services. Almost from the beginning there has been a therapist on staff to help families, couples or individuals.

Over time, AHM added programs like the Family Resource Center, which promotes a lifetime of learning through workshops, play groups, and parent education. One of the model programs AHM started is the Juvenile Review Board. The board offers teens arrested for a misdemeanor to avoid the court system by partnering with local social workers, police officers, and community members to, as Rosenberg puts it, "make good on a bad decision."

Numerous other youth bureaus have copied AHM's Juvenile Review Board format across the state.

"Over the years we've been able to strike a balance," Rosenberg said. "It's not all about mental health services. It's about kids having an opportunity to discover what it is about themselves they love and appreciate."

There are countless success stories from the Juvenile Review Board. There are hundreds of kids who have utilized the teen center rather than sit at home alone. There are even more families who have experienced a tragedy in their lives and received support from AHM. "You just can't put a value on the work being done here," Rosenberg said.

As he looks back on his tenure at AHM Rosenberg can reflect on the good times and challenges. He's quick to say that despite times of financial uncertainty that AHM has always made it through. Although Rosenberg says that as if money somehow appears at AHM's doorstep and not through hours of hard work hunting for grants and holding fundraisers.

Throughout his time at AHM Rosenberg says he's never lost hope – only hair.

AHM has only known one director in its history and, at some point, Rosenberg will step down from his position. "The beauty of AHM is it's become an organization built on credibility, respect and quality programs," he said. "It doesn't need me to be successful."

In a way, Rosenberg will never leave AHM. In 1993, after the passing of his mother, Rosenberg wanted to do something in memory of his parents. He approached the Board of Directors about starting an endowment. The Children's Trust Fund was established out of Rosenberg's generosity and exists to help fund future programs and services at AHM.

The One Behind the Scenes

The backbone of AHM has always been its volunteers.

Volunteers started the organization and it continues to be run, in large part, thanks to volunteers.

Andover resident Kay Corl is one of those volunteers. She got involved over 10 years ago with her neighbor, Vicki Wallace. "I knew what they did but I didn't know the extent," she said of her knowledge of AHM.

Corl and her daughter were in the audience in 1983, listening to David Toma. She saw the impact that speech had. So, when her kids were out of the house and Corl had more time, she signed up. "I heard there was work to be done and there were very few people from Andover involved with AHM," she said. "I wanted to give our town a voice on the Board [of Directors.]"

In addition to serving on the Board of Directors, Corl has served in the trenches, if you will. She's mentored a student through AHM's Lanterns program. She's been the face of AHM on the television program the organization ran called *Youth Today*. The show ran for about five years on the Community Voice Channel.

Corl credits that experience with showing her the ins and outs of AHM. Each show would focus on a different aspect of AHM, allowing Corl to see what programs existed.

Over the years, Corl has gotten involved in any way possible, even partnering with her husband John to lead phase two of the teen center construction. "Everything I've done at AHM has been a pleasure because of who you're working with," Corl said. "There is never a cross word said and everyone knows the value of the work being done [at AHM]."

With a background in education (from the nursery school to college level), Corl may be the best one to judge the worth of AHM. "It's made a huge impact on many kids that I know," she said.

Now a grandmother, Corl takes her grandson to various programs through the Family Resource Center. It's an opportunity for them to bond and to foster a love of learning.

The State of Connecticut doesn't mandate towns having a youth service bureau, but, if a town does have one, they must support it. Corl knows that, on its own, Andover is just too small to support a bureau. "We are so lucky to have AHM as an option for our youth and families," she said. "I just hope people know all the things AHM offers. I truly believe there is something for everyone."

After serving as AHM President from 2005-2007, Corl said she's in no hurry to go anywhere. She enjoys working with the youth and believes it's important to give back where you can. When the time comes for her to step down from the BOD, she's already found a suitable replacement. Her husband John would like to take her place.

"Both of us on the board would be too much, but I know he wants a turn when I take a break," she said.

The Reason for AHM

Now a junior at RHAM High School, Chris Langlois can easily remember his first experience with AHM. It was the summer of 2005 and he had just been cast in the Summer Youth Theater production of *Joseph and the Technicolor Dreamcoat*.

"I was so excited," Langlois said. "I've always loved acting and this was my start."

For six weeks that summer he immersed himself in the role of Joseph's brother and developed friendships he never expected. "For me it was an easy decision to do the Summer Youth Theater," Langlois said. "I enjoyed acting and a lot of my friends were doing it. I didn't realize, though, how many other kids were just like me."

Later that year Rosenberg came to RHAM Middle School to talk to students about serving as Youth Directors on AHM's Board of Directors. Langlois was selected for the honor, a position he's held for the last three years.

Once a month, Langlois sits in on the predominantly adult meeting. He listens to financial discussions and gives his input on programming suggestions. "I'm listening to conversations most 14, 15, 16 year-olds don't get to hear," he explained. "I'm learning how to run a non-profit organization."

While the experience is one Langlois values, it's the people that make him stay involved. "It's easy to volunteer when the people are nice and you're the one who benefits from their hard work," he said.

Since that first summer, Langlois has gone on to participate in three other Summer Youth Theater productions, including this past summer's *Fiddler on the Roof Junior*. He says the shows give him more self-confidence and a chance to meet students he otherwise wouldn't. The Summer Youth Theater has also fueled Langlois' love for acting. He continues to participate in other community theater outlets in neighboring towns. This weekend Langlois will star as Willy Wonka in the *Willy Wonka Junior* production put on by the East Hampton Podium Players.

But, if acting doesn't pan out for Langlois, he now has a back-up plan. "I can see myself going into business or communications," he said. "I'm confident to express my opinions in front of adults now and I'm not afraid to take chances even though I might mess up. I think AHM's supportive environment really helped me to mature."

Langlois said he's really never been in trouble and he thanks AHM for keeping him busy. When he's not rehearsing for a play or attending board meeting, Langlois has helped with car washes, the annual telethon, and he serves as a Peer Helper at RHAM High School.

As someone in the unique position of both volunteering for and receiving services from AHM, Langlois is thankful for the organization. He feels that the organization has prepared him for the future and he's happy to give back in return. "I think it's important to help out when you can," he said. "For me, as a high school student, it's easier for me to give time than money. There are plenty of opportunities for both at AHM."

He encourages more students and families to get involved with AHM, convinced that there's a program for everyone. "I don't think people realize everything that AHM offers because, after 25 years, it's become the norm in these three towns," Langlois said. "There are definitely people out there who don't know that there is probably a program run by AHM that fits exactly what they need."

Langlois is doing his part to get the word out. This past summer his younger sister, Danielle, joined him onstage during the Summer Youth Theater production, an experience she too loved.



Joel Rosenberg



Kay Corl

Worn-Down Bacon Track Discussed at Colchester Meeting

by Hannah Charry

The replacement of a worn-down – and possibly dangerous – track at Bacon Academy was the focal point of discussion at a meeting of the boards of education, finance and selectmen this past Monday, Oct. 20, at Town Hall.

The Board of Education presented a report at the meeting it had issued that day to the boards of selectmen and finance. The report detailed the cost analysis for the proposed track, and also explained the need for it.

The current track was built in 1993 and came with a life expectancy of 10 years. In 2005, the BOE pushed a successful bid to recoat and repatch the surface. Renovations were made in 2006 at a cost of \$20,000.

“At the time they said that we’re lucky if we get three seasons [out of the renovated track], and this is our third,” Superintendent of Schools Karen Loiselle said.

The report presented Monday was filed by M.R. Roming Associates, P.C. a landscape planning and architectural firm based in West Hartford. Loiselle said the BOE has a total of \$50,000 saved for the project. But the report estimated total construction costs for 2009 to range from \$508,700 to \$875,000. This quote covers four different options, two of which would include provisions for a trench drain along the edge if an artificial turf field were ever placed. Non-negotiable ‘soft-costs’ total \$34,300 to \$46,200 and are necessary in all four versions of the proposal. This would include design fees, surveying, bidding and testing.

The BOE has yet to determine which option it would go with.

“I personally had sticker shock when I first saw the high estimate, but keep in mind it’s a 20 year investment,” BOE vice chair Timothy Lamp said. “Upon inspection it fits with what we need over time. I am prepared to continue going forward with it and hoping for a referen-

dum in January or February at the drop-dead latest.”

About 10-15 high school students were present at Monday’s meeting, including Brooke Bailey, a senior at Bacon, who is on the school’s track team.

“A lot of girls feel strongly about it being fixed,” she said. “It’s in such bad condition.”

Bacon junior Andrew Hill was at the Bacon track Tuesday afternoon. He said he has been running on track teams since he was in the sixth grade. He now runs long distance races ranging from 800 to 3200 meters.

“When you run on other tracks it’s softer and you can feel more cushioned, the way a track is supposed to be,” Hill said. But on the Bacon track, he added, “it feels like you’re running on pavement. We’d be better off running on dirt.”

Hill said that it is typical to run anywhere from one to three miles on the track during practice, which has lent itself to some injuries.

“I’m coming off an injury because of the track,” he said. “I could feel the difference running on the road.” He said he often feels sore knees and ankles. “I don’t think it’s possible to get the full potential of our training while running on this track,” he added.

Bacon Men’s Track Coach Steven Browning said Tuesday the track issue affects at least 500 members of the community throughout the year. He has been the head coach for a decade, while organizing a new middle school running program that brings in about 65 students each year. Browning said that last year 55 boys and 35 girls joined the high school team in addition to 150 runners from the area running through a Hershey youth program. Also, a local Special Olympics branch practices at Bacon at least once a week for the entire spring season.

“Kids of all abilities get to run and compete,

we have kids who run to keep in shape and have a good time doing it,” Browning said. “That’s why we have at least 80 kids out last spring. Also, [the team] is important because we have a lot of multi-sport athletes at the school who run to improve their speed. One of our best football receivers ran track last year, and you could see how his workouts in the spring brought speed to the fall football season.”

Last year, Browning sent seven runners to the New England Championship meet, and had a total of nine All-State athletes from the men’s and women’s teams. The women finished fifth in their class last year and the men took the ECC title division. The women’s outdoor track team has won a total of three state titles, the most of any sport in Bacon history.

However, the Bacon track is not approved to be used for home meets this year, Hettrick said, because it is in such bad shape. Sections that have risen due to undergrowth of nearby tree roots have been sectioned off. The BOE is waiting for approval from the RHAM Board of Education to bus the Bacon teams to RHAM High School in Hebron for practice once a week. The cost of bussing is approximately \$5,000, and Loiselle said the BOE already has the funds to cover it.

During Monday’s meeting, school officials expressed concern with the timeframe for any track replacement project. Greg Plunkett, Director of Facilities for Colchester Public Schools, said that any bid should be approved by March 1 for summer construction, since companies typically don’t perform such work after Labor Day. The temperature must be at least 70 degrees, and school could not be in session because construction would affect the field in the middle of the track, on which the soccer and football teams regularly practice.

If the proposal for a new track is put up to bid, construction could be completed at the earliest for the 2010 spring season.

“What lit a fire under me is that the future of our track program is in jeopardy,” Lamp said Monday. “We have a competitive team but they are on the ropes now. I’m seriously concerned and this isn’t to create an artificial sense of urgency but if we don’t do it the entire track program is in trouble.”

Browning on Tuesday drew a parallel to a decline in numbers with RHAM’s track program after they bussed students to Bacon for two years over 2003-2004 for several times a week. “As a casual observer I saw a sharp decline in their numbers, but they also went through several head coaches during that period.”

Selectmen and finance board members expressed the most concern Monday with transparency to the public, as well as negotiating needs for other town departments. First Selectman Linda Hodge said the Federal Office of Civil Rights require that Bacon complete several handicapped accessible projects they have already started. Additionally, a new horn and strobe fire alarm system needs to be installed in 40 rooms. There is existing capital in the town budget for this, she said. She also cited the need for a new fire truck because the current one has outlasted its life expectancy by six years. A new ambulance and repairs to the senior center are also needed, Hodge said.

More research is necessary to follow through with a final proposal before the track can be put up for referendum, the boards concluded. The BOE formed a special Building Committee that will develop a timeline and provide a presentation for the next joint meeting, to be announced.

New East Hampton Salon Takes Youthful Approach

by Michael McCoy

Designing Kids bills itself as a “unique hair salon for kids,” and it certainly is that.

The salon opened Oct. 1 and held a grand opening event on Oct. 5, which was attended by members of the Economic Development Commission (EDC), as well as Chris Edge. Edge works for Connected to Connecticut, a firm employed by the EDC.

Owner Wendy Tine grew up in East Hartford and spent many years as a Certified Nurses Assistant (CNA). However, in 2002, she realized, “I needed a change.”

So, she headed to hairdressing school, enrolling at the Brio Academy in Meriden. “I was always interested in hair,” Tine said, “even when I was younger.”

According to Tine, there is something both careers have in common that she loved. “I like working with people, it was just getting depressing.”

After graduating from Brio, Tine took a job at New Image in Cromwell. However, she left in 2005. Tine recalls, “I got pregnant with my son and stayed home with him.” Bryden is now three-and-a-half; Tine also has a daughter named Karla.

Tine remembers, “I always wanted to own my own business. ... I always had ideas of opening a salon of my own. I just didn’t know it was going to be a kids salon.”

Upon returning to work earlier this year, Tine briefly worked at Scissor Kids in Glastonbury. As the name suggests, that establishment specialized in kids’ hair.

“I really enjoyed it,” Tine said of her time at Scissor Kids. When it was her turn to start a business, she figured, “There’s a lot of salons in town, but never anything geared for kids.”

She continued, “A lot of adult salons say they do kids, but I don’t really think they like to,” and added that people are turned off when kids start acting like kids. “Here, you can do whatever you want,” she said. “You can scream, you can cry. ... I want people to feel relaxed.”

Designing Kids does not only exclusively cater to children. However, they are not a full-

service salon and do not offer chemical services, such as coloring or bleaching, or perms, which Tine recognized, might turn some women away. However, Tine said, “Anyone’s welcome here,” pointing out that the salon offers cuts to women and men alike, in addition to children.

“My sign says ‘Designing Kids,’ but I’m a hairdresser,” Tine said. “I’ll take anybody.”

Tine and her husband Duane moved to East Hampton three years ago. Then just early last month, Wendy figured the time was ripe for a salon of her own. So, she and her husband looked for spots, going as far as Higganum. However, before they got far into the search, they saw the space at 36 East High St. open.

When asked if she knew immediately that it would work, Tine responded, “Oh my gosh! This was just the perfect spot.”

Also, she said, “We were able to stay in the community we live in.”

They signed the lease soon after and spent the next few weeks getting the salon ready. Most recently a real estate office, it did not need a dramatic overhaul. But, the Tines installed Pergo flooring, painted the walls a vibrant lavender and yellow, installed the stylist stations and built an enclosed play area for young kids.

With a play area, Tine said, a parent with more than one child can watch the one getting the cut and “know [the other] won’t run out the door.”

And kids getting their hair cut do not have to settle for an ordinary chair. Why would any kid, when they ride a red sports car or multi-colored quad, which is an option at Designing Kids. “You have to have them if you’re going to open a kids’ salon,” Tine said.

Tine said her husband Duane, a police officer, often helped out in getting the building ready to house a salon. “He was down here every chance he got,” she said.

Starting in the New Year, Tine hopes to start offering birthday parties at the business, and hopes to bring in a karaoke machine.

One special service she offers now is that when babies are brought in for their first haircut, she provides a small, stuffed bear that holds



a picture frame as well as the tiny bag to keep those first locks. The gifts were assembled by Tine and her daughter.

Tine said the standard price for a cut is \$15, but she is willing to work with parents to adjust the price to suit the specific service they are looking for.

Designing Kids also offers a line of products from Bed Head, Catwalk, Paul Mitchell and Crew. For kids, they sell Paul Mitchell’s Baby Don’t Cry line, as well as Fairy tales, a New Jersey outfit that makes organic hair products.

Resident Stacey Chaloux brought her son into Designing Kids for a cut on Monday. “It’s beautiful,” she said. “It’s nice to have a kids place in town and not have to drive to Glastonbury.”

Tine said the business has also received ku-

dos for its eye-catching sign, which was designed by O2 Design Group from Middletown.

So far, Tine said she is not only drawing customers from East Hampton, but also Colchester, Marlborough, Hebron and Portland, basically “the Route 66 corridor,” as Duane put it.

Tine said the public as well as the town has made her feel quite welcome. One woman even told her, “I hope you stay there forever.”

Designing Kids is located on Route 66 in East Hampton, just next to Subway and across the street from American Distilling. Tine prefers appointments, but walk-ins are acceptable as well. The business can be reached at 267-7900. Hours are Monday from noon-5 p.m., Tuesday through Friday from 9:30 a.m.-6 p.m. and Saturday from 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

PHS Gets Money for New Water Program

by Michael McCoy

Superintendent of Schools Sally Doyen said on more than one occasion that she was not used to the sort of crowd that showed up to Tuesday evening's Board of Education (BOE) meeting.

The first line of business after the pledge of allegiance was a check presentation by the Connecticut Section of the American Water Works Association (AWWA.) According to Tom Chaplik, chairman of the Connecticut section, the AWWA is "a nonprofit scientific and educational society dedicated to the improvement of drinking water quality and supply. He said that the Connecticut Section alone "represents more than 700 water utility professionals who are affiliates with over 60 water utilities that supply water to approximately 3,000,000 Connecticut residents."

The giant (literally) \$7,500 check was presented to the BOE as seed money for a high school water curriculum that will start in January. This curriculum, the first of its kind in the country, is a sort of labor of love by Dave Kuzminski.

Kuzminski, who owns and operates Connecticut Valley School of Music and Dance, has worked for the town for 35 years. Most of that time has been spent in the water department. However, in 2003 he started the Portland Town Tech program, which he was selected to head up. (This partially grew out of Portland on the Move, a student-run public access television show that has aired since 1990.) Furthermore, Kuzminski has been part of the Connecticut Section of the AWWA since the early 1980s and served as chairman during the 2006-07 year.

"We've been working on this project for almost three years," Kuzminski said. He said he was inspired to start this water curriculum project because, out of the 1,082 certified water system operators in Connecticut, 48 percent will be eligible for retirement in the next five years. He added that the average professional in the industry is about 50, and these trends stretch nationwide.

Kuzminski called the loss of so many professionals with decades of water system knowl-

edge under their belt a "40 percent brain drain," adding, "That's huge!"

In addition to Kuzminski and Chaplik, the presentation was also attended by Kate Powell (education resource coordinator for the Regional Water Authority), Vickey Carrier (of the Connecticut Department of Public Health), and Bill Large (editor of *Inflow Line*, a quarterly magazine published by the Connecticut Section). Also in attendance was Seb Agostino, an environmental science teacher at Portland High School, who will teach the class alongside Kuzminski.

The course that Agostino will teach in the new year will cover what careers are available in the water industry, as well as an introduction to the ins and outs of it. This will give them a leg up on the state examination, which may only be taken after graduation from high school. Once that test is passed, the student will be a certified operator-in-training. Further education in the field is available at various community colleges. Kuzminski has a specific relationship with Gateway Community College in New Haven through professor Wes Winterbottom.

"Our relationship with the Town of Portland has been almost nine years," Chaplik said. This is due, once again, to Kuzminski, as the first website Town Tech designed was for the Connecticut Section.

Chaplik said he presented the program to the BOE in Portland, ME, earlier this month, and early next month would be doing likewise in Washington, D.C.

"We need experts like you to guide future leaders," Chaplik said of Agostino.

Eighteen students are already enrolled in the course for January. Kuzminski hopes that during the 2009-10 school year, one section of the course will be offered before and after Christmas. Though the idea is that the BOE would budget money for the program in the future, Kuzminski said he is working to find what federal grant money might be available.

Kuzminski called it a win-win, adding that



The Board of Education received \$7,500 this week from the Connecticut Section of the American Water Works Association. Shown here with a giant ceremonial check are, from left, Board of Education Chairman Chris Phelps, Superintendent of Schools Sally Doyen, Vickey Carrier of the state Department of Health, resident Dave Kuzminski (who will help teach the class), Portland High School environmental science teacher Seb Agostino, and Connecticut Section of the AWWA Chairman Tom Chaplik.

this also satisfies demands by the state to offer career strand education.

Kuzminski also described a perk with a career in this industry. "These are viable careers that really are recession proof," he said. "It's not like our water department is going to be outsourced to India."

Kuzminski said that such careers do not only include the obvious such as water operators or meter readers. He said jobs in areas such as finance and construction are options too.

Kuzminski had a hard time hiding his en-

thusiasm for the new curriculum, saying, "It's new stuff, it's great stuff, it's something that's innovative."

The new high school program is the first of its kind in the country.

The BOE also unanimously voted Brenna Kosicki onto the board. She will fill the Republican vacancy left by Mark Buchieri, who passed away last month. Kosicki is currently the director of special education for the Hebron public school district.

Committee Looking Into Colchester Dog Park

by Hannah Charry

A committee of approximately 30 citizens is continuing to propose Colchester get its very own dog park – and now the committee has a location in mind.

The site the Dog Park Committee is looking at is the now-defunct garbage disposal site on Old Amston Road. The committee has held monthly meetings in Town Hall since July, and published a revised second edition of their report on Oct. 22.

The report says that the land the committee members chose has several positive aspects, including: it is in close proximity to the center of town, it is already owned by the town and there are no neighbors on either side of the site. Also, the committee said, the proposal is cohesive with the national "green" movement of reusing land.

According to resident Keith Kelley, who helped write the report, there are 1,500 registered dogs in Colchester. "I'm hopeful that we'll get this passed because about 1 in 10 people here own dogs," he said. Kelley owns two black Labrador retrievers and says that leash laws ordinarily inhibit the ability for pets to get the exercise they need.

"Although I have a partially fenced-in yard, going to nearby parks helps them to interact,"

he said. "Dogs already lead solitary lifestyles but with a safe environment where they can have leashes off, there's less aggression. They get to socialize and when they are well exercised they are quieter and bark less. So, this ends up being beneficial to the community as well."

The proposed park would have a dirt entryway and cover two total acres of open space. Amanda Nelson, a committee member who helped complete research for the report, said that most dog parks have a main entrance, and then an additional fence to separate smaller dogs.

The report calls for a four-foot high fence around both areas designated for the small and large dogs, a dirt parking lot, signage and proper waste disposal. Desired additional features include a gravel parking lot, benches, additional trees, agility equipment, a bulletin board and communal toys. Possible future enhancements include an additional fenced in area and a pavilion.

The most expensive provision is fencing, which would require approximately \$25,000. Permits, waste removal, and planning would cost an additional anticipated \$10,000.

However, Kelley stressed, if the park were approved by the town, no money would be taken

from public funds. The committee plans to pay for the project solely through fundraising. Committee member Karen Porzio listed donations, T-shirt sales, sponsorship, and advertisement sales as possible ways to raise money.

Nelson, as a fairly new resident of town (she has lived in Colchester for three years), said she thought that a park would both bring current residents together and attract new people in. She has owned a border collie named Cooper for eight years.

"We're really hoping that town residents will recognize and support the need for the park," Nelson said. "We're working hard to better the town and this is another positive feature of Colchester to help current residents and possibly interest some new residents to come here. It's great for socialization and for people who don't have dogs can meet them and learn about different breeds. It's great for owners to meet other owners and for dogs to become better socialized instead of being caged inside all day."

According to the report, enclosed play areas such as dog parks "prevent off-leash dogs from infringing on the rights of other community residents and park users such as joggers, small children and those who may be fearful of dogs.

A dog park helps build community and lasting friendships between dogs and their owners. Dogs help to bring people together and break down many social or economic barriers."

Nelson said committee members "have heard that some people may get nervous because of a perceived raise in taxes, of the barking, of a potential mess but this isn't going to add problems, but only help townspeople."

So far, Nelson said, the committee has found some support for the park. With her husband, Tom, she manned a booth at the Pumpkins and Pooches annual festival on Oct. 5. The event has been held by the Lions Club for the past 11 years. Committee members were present to raise awareness of the proposal and sign new members to the committee.

Kelley said he is optimistic about getting the plan passed because there are benefits for all. Nearby Glastonbury, Rocky Hill, Bristol and Manchester are all in the process of researching and planning similar parks.

The official dog park proposal will be presented during a Planning and Zoning Commission meeting at 7 p.m. Monday, Nov. 3, at Cragin Memorial Library Room B, 8 Linwood Ave.

Berlin Sentenced to Nearly Three Years in Prison

by Michael McCoy

“At least there is some end in sight. At least you can see the day when this is over.”

Those words from Judge Vanessa Bryant may be the silver lining to what was otherwise an undoubtedly heart-wrenching day for Bob Berlin and his friends and family.

Berlin, who in May pled guilty to health care fraud, was sentenced Tuesday to 33 and a half months in jail, followed by three years of supervised release, and 250 hours of community service. He was also ordered to pay \$564,661 in restitution to his victims – in this case, health insurance companies.

Berlin, 54, was the owner and operator of Thatcher’s Pharmacy in Marlborough (the business had been located in East Hampton until 2004). According to a statement issued by the state’s attorney’s office, beginning in 1998, Berlin submitted fraudulent claims for prescriptions to ConnectiCare and other health insurance programs. (According to Bryant, Berlin submitted these fraudulent claims up until 2007.) The claims were for prescriptions that were never written and never filled. Most of the false claims were for prescriptions issued to Berlin or his family or employees, the statement said.

Berlin’s sentencing hearing, held at the United States District Court in Hartford, lasted more than two hours. Between court personnel and spectators, about 25 people were on hand for the proceedings, including Berlin’s family and former town council members Derek Johnson and Alison Walck.

Prosecuting attorney David Sheldon and Berlin’s attorney Richard Brown were also present, as well as U.S. Probation Office and FBI personnel.

Berlin faced a maximum sentence for health care fraud of 10 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine, on top of the \$564,661 restitution.

Berlin, along with his wife and three children, moved to East Hampton in 1994. However, Berlin began working for Thatcher’s Pharmacy in 1981, and assumed ownership of the business in 1989. Eventually, the property was sold to Shaw’s supermarket, and Berlin was forced to relocate to Marlborough in 2004.

Berlin served on the East Hampton Town Council from 2005-07. Despite receiving more votes than any other Town Council candidate in the 2005 election, Berlin did not seek another bid in 2007.

There were many kind words about Berlin’s character at Tuesday’s sentencing, suggesting this offense was simply a one-time mistake. Brown said that while “the conduct, which my client does not dispute, is not only illegal, but immoral and unethical,” the crime seems “totally inconsistent” with Berlin’s character.

Brown said Berlin’s actions were not to fund

extravagances such as expensive cars, a lavish house, jewelry or “trips around the world.” Instead, the money went into the struggling business, which Berlin owned for 19 years. “It was his life,” said Brown. “That’s where he spent the bulk of his time.”

“There was a series of unfortunate events,” Brown continued, “that caused him to uproot his business from one location to another. So, he gets this harebrained scheme...”

Brown related one story where a woman with a mental disorder was having trouble affording her medication. Brown said Berlin “ultimately paid for her bill,” and added, “the pharmacy was his extended family.”

Brown said Berlin “had touched many, many people’s lives in a positive way,” and added that Berlin helped with various clubs and senior centers, providing advice and delivery of medication. Brown said he even published health tips in a local newspaper.

Brown also noted that though Berlin took money, it was not from senior citizens or any other customers. He added that instead of stonewalling the FBI, once the investigation began, Berlin, “made the fundamental decision to be truthful,” and added that “at all times my client was called, he met them at their pleasure.”

“I don’t think anyone is more disappointed in my client than my client himself,” Brown said. “It’s torn away at him.”

Once the investigation began, Berlin put Thatcher’s up for sale. The business was eventually sold to Osco for \$397,000. He has not yet sold the building, or his non-pharmaceutical inventory.

A trio of people spoke on Berlin’s behalf. First was Barbara Owens, who said she has known Berlin for 14 years and her oldest son was best friends with Berlin’s son. Also, she said, two of her sons worked at Thatcher’s.

Owens voiced her gratitude for Berlin’s help with pharmaceutical advice for her son when he first went to college. She also recognized his willingness to hire elderly people, figuring, “It’s very difficult for an older person to find a job.”

Owens said she was forced to raise her children alone, but said of her oldest son, “Mr. Berlin calls him his adopted son, and he’s certainly treated him in that manner.”

Walck also spoke, noting that she has known Berlin since 2004, and served alongside him on the town council from 2005-07. She said Berlin “knew every customer by name,” rare in this age of impersonal business transactions.

She also said that while campaigning with Berlin, “I was amazed by how many people he knew.” She said that a typical response when going door-to-door was, “I know Bob; I trust Bob; therefore you have my vote,

enough said.”

Walck added that Berlin “was too honest to be a politician.”

“I’m not asking for leniency or forgiveness,” Walck said. “I’m asking for compassion.” She too said the crime was not consistent with Berlin’s character, she said. “He had that ‘just once syndrome,’” she said. “He did what we all do, fall to temptation to one extent or another.”

She continued that “Bob has been punished by the press” and the victim of “stinging” blog entries.

Eventually, Walck said, Berlin “made the ultimate sacrifice by closing his business.”

Perhaps the most poignant moment came during the remarks of Berlin’s daughter, Jennifer, who fought tears the whole time.

“My father has been the biggest influence on my life,” she said, and added, “He was often at work when I was growing up. ... He bent over backwards for his customers even when I told him he should not have.”

She also noted that though her father is Jewish, he has and continues to this day to attend church with the family. (His wife is Roman Catholic.)

“My father is the most thoughtful man I know,” and said, “He gave me confidence when the odds were against me.”

She candidly shared that, “My father has lost a lot of weight” of late and “has started taking anti-anxiety medication.”

“Honestly, I don’t think less of him,” she said. “His decision does not change the...caring, loving, kind man he is.”

Her comments reduced more than a few in the crowd to tears as well, including Berlin himself, who spoke on his behalf.

“I want to say how sorry I am,” Berlin said. “During the year...I have had a lot of time to think...” Berlin added that his actions “have affected a lot of people,” including family employees, friends, customers and the insurance companies.

“At this point, I accept my responsibility, and I accept whatever happens to me,” Berlin said. He concluded, “I need to get on with my life, and I have to make sure that [my family gets] on with theirs.”

Sheldon noted the \$490,000 taken from ConnectiCare, and said, “their loss affects all of their insured, and ultimately everyone.”

Sheldon added that Berlin cooperated with the investigation from the beginning, saving the government thousands of dollars. Still, he said, “His post-search behavior does not absolve him,” and added, “The health care system relies on the honor system.”

Despite the volumes of testimony of behalf of Berlin’s character, and the lack of indignance

from Sheldon, Bryant ended the proceeding with a tirade against Berlin that ran the better part of 10 minutes. She managed this without raising her voice once.

Bryant said “sentencing an individual is one of the most difficult things a court is called upon to do.” She spoke a bit about the flailing economy and “the precarious positions of our financial institutions, which, by the way, include our insurance companies.” She said actions such as Berlin’s are just the sort of thing that make insurance costs less and less affordable. “Those are the people who were not fortunate enough to afford to be your customer,” she said.

“Mr. Berlin, you claim to be a Robin Hood ... to steal from insurance companies to give to your community,” Bryant said. But she said such sentiments “call into question, sir, your credibility. Moreover, your logic is irrational.”

She also refuted the testimony by the many who said Berlin’s action was a one-time occurrence. “Mr. Berlin is not an honest man who succumbed to a momentary lapse,” pointing out that the fraud occurred for the better part of a decade.

Bryant also noted, “He didn’t stop before he was caught; he stopped *because* he was caught.”

She declared that people caught defrauding insurance companies “must be punished as an example for others,” though “rarely, rarely is this ... unearthed.”

When Bryant had ended her rebuke, Brown requested that the incarceration commence after the holiday season, being that it would already be hard enough for Berlin and his family. Because Bryant deemed Berlin “neither a flight risk nor a risk to the community,” she granted that.

The federal facility where Berlin will serve his sentence has not been chosen yet. Brown requested that it be relatively close, somewhere in the northeast part of the country. Bryant said this was a reasonable request, though she could not make any guarantees.

Considering that the court could have given Berlin a harsher sentencing, Brown said after the hearing, “I look at [the sentence he received] as a positive thing. The court, I think, is reasonable in its sentencing order.”

Brown said “it goes without saying that this has been a very difficult time for him and his family.” Noting those who spoke on Berlin’s behalf, he added, “He certainly appreciated their support during this difficult time.”

Berlin must surrender himself to the United States Marshals Service on Jan. 8, 2009. Though the sentence means he would be released in October 2011, he could potentially be exempt from up to 15 percent of the sentence due to good behavior. This would make his release May 2011.

East Hampton Police News

10/2 — Keith Rader, 54, of 183 White Birch Rd., was issued a ticket for having a nuisance dog, East Hampton Police said.

10/6 — John W. Lane, 70, of 131 Westchester Rd., Colchester, was arrested pursuant to a warrant for second-degree stalking, disorderly conduct and second-degree harassment, police said.

10/8 — Krista L. Christensen, 22, of 17 Ellis Rd., was arrested for operating under suspension, police said.

10/9 — Henry Morehouse, 42, of no certain address, was issued a ticket for creating a public disturbance, police said.

10/9 — Michael A. Latronica, 57, of 15 Portland St., Middletown, was arrested for criminal attempt to commit fifth-degree larceny and

fifth-degree larceny, police said.

10/10 — Sharon McGuigan, 38, of 26 Walnut Ave., was issued a ticket for failure to carry her license, police said.

10/10 — Russell J. Baker, 20, of 5463 Durham Rd., Guilford, was issued a ticket for failure to obey a control signal, police said.

10/11 James E. Meyers Jr., 41, of 119 Harris St., Glastonbury, was arrested for disorderly conduct and second-degree threatening. He was arrested again 10/13 for disorderly conduct, police said.

10/11 — William W. Marchinkoski, 38, of 42 Cone Rd., was arrested for violation of a protective order and violation of probation, police said.

Portland Police News

10/14 — Ramon Quiles, 25, of 34 Chatham Ct., was charged with disorderly conduct, and third-degree criminal mischief, Portland Police said.

RHAM Superintendent Pleased with Test Scores

by Sarah McCoy

They're not perfect, but RHAM Superintendent of Schools Robert Siminski is very pleased with the regional school district's performance on last year's set of standardized tests.

On Monday, Siminski, along with RHAM High School Principal Scott Leslie and RHAM Middle School Principal Michael Seroussi, presented student scores from the Connecticut Mastery Tests (CMTs) and Connecticut Academic Performance Tests (CAPTs) to members of the RHAM Board of Education.

The RHAM high and middle schools serve students in Andover, Hebron and Marlborough.

All students in grades seven and eight take the CMTs, while all high school sophomores must take the CAPTs. The tests are given in March of each year.

"I'm really very pleased," Siminski said Tuesday. "I believe these scores reflect the hard work put forth by our students, our teachers and our entire staff."

On the CAPTs, 72 percent of students met or exceeded the state goal in math. This is the highest percentage the district has ever achieved. Seventy percent of students met or exceeded the state goal in science. This is the highest percentage for the district since 2005 when 71 percent of students achieved goal or advanced performance. In reading 63 percent of students achieved state goal and, in writing, 79 percent met or exceeded the state goal. The writing scores shattered the previous high by the district of 67 percent achieving or exceeding the state's goal, which happened in 2007.

RHAM Board of Education chair Sue Griffiths said she was particularly impressed with the students' performance on the science portion of the CAPTs. In 2006 and 2007, scores had dipped to 67 percent and 59 percent, respectively, of students meeting or achieving the state goal. This year that number rebounded to 70 percent.

To be in compliance with the No Child Left Behind Act the school has to show at least 95 percent of students achieving proficiency level. Last year, 93 percent achieved proficiency or above in math, 96 percent in science, 94 percent in reading and 97 percent in writing.

Siminski said to move those numbers up will be a challenge for the district because those students not meeting proficiency level are small in numbers and, for the most part, are "intellectually disabled." In math only 18 students did not achieve proficiency, 10 in sci-

ence, 14 in reading, and nine in writing.

"There has been a good deal of work put in to maintaining our scores, now we have to look at how to improve individual scores," Siminski said. He added that the district will work to provide individualized academic support whenever possible.

Siminski credited the positive scores to the hard work of the school's staff. Through a multi-targeted approach the district has been able to identify the students in need in need of academic support and deliver services that meet the needs of each individual student.

Siminski also said he felt the updated curriculum and newly developed pacing guides have assisted teachers in teaching material that is aligned with the state frameworks.

"The bottom line is you can have all those things, a new curriculum, pacing guides, teaching pedagogy, but if the teachers don't work hard it doesn't matter," Siminski said. "This is proof that our teachers have been working very hard."

CMT scores for the seventh and eighth grades tended to stay flat, with the exception of the Grade 7 reading portion of the test, which jumped six percentage points to 87 percent of students achieving mastery.

In seventh grade, 76 percent of students achieved mastery in writing. That's down a percentage point from last year. In math scores are up a percentage point, to 82 percent achieving mastery.

Eighth grade scores went down by two percent in reading to 80 percent achieving mastery. Writing and math went down by a percentage point, to 80 percent and 81 percent, respectively. In March, eighth-grade students also took a science portion of the CMTs, a new initiative. Seventy-six percent of students achieved mastery level. The state average is 59 percent.

Siminski is pleased with these scores as well. "We're continuing a solid level of achievement," he said.

At Monday night's school board meeting, Siminski, Leslie and Seroussi outlined the school district's strategies for continued improvement. Taking a three-pronged approach the administrators will focus on curriculum development, professional development for instruction, and assessment data to identify areas for continued instruction.

Copies of the CMT and CAPT presentations are available in the Superintendent's office temporarily located in the high school main office.

From the Editor's Desk

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

Yes, folks, it's another baseball-related column this week, but after last Thursday's game between the Red Sox and the Rays, who can blame me? After all, it was sure an interesting night for baseball fans. I had been watching *Life on Mars*, which is a pretty neat little show I've started watching, and would recommend checking out; it's about a New York City cop who gets hit by a car and is seemingly transported back in time to 1973. (He's a cop in '73 too, and it's neat watching his 2008 mentality clash with that of the early-'70s NYPD.) During commercials, I had been peeking in on the score of the game, and saw Tampa Bay had a pretty commanding lead. After *Life on Mars* went off at 11, I flipped over to TBS to watch the end of the game. It was the middle of the seventh inning, and Tampa Bay was up 7-0. I figured I'd watch the final three innings of the game, and the ensuing celebration by the Rays, as this game would clinch the pennant for them. Now, I've seen a lot of baseball in my life, and seen a lot of late-inning meltdowns, but this game just felt pretty safe to me. Tampa Bay had looked so sharp during the LCS, and besides, Boston had mustered only two hits during the first six innings of last Thursday's game. I was pretty confident the Rays would be named American League Champions by the end of the night.

Then everything fell apart.

Apparently, the top of the seventh lasted like 45 minutes or something (I was watching *Life on Mars* at the time), so when the bottom of the seventh rolled around, Tampa Bay manager Joe Maddon lifted pitcher Scott Kazmir (who again had been two-hitting the BoSox) and went to the bullpen. And the pen did something it hadn't done much of this postseason: it faltered on him. After Boston got a couple of men on, Dustin Pedroia hit a ball to right field that Tampa rightfielder Gabe Gross could've dove for, but instead opted to play it on a couple of hops. TBS announcer Chip Caray described the move at the time as "playing it safe." True, it allowed a run to score, but that run just made it 7-1, and it looked like the biggest significance of the Pedroia hit would be that it allowed Boston to avoid a shutout (they hadn't been shut out in a postseason game at Fenway since 1918). Gross' non-dive would be second-guessed the next day, but at the time, I didn't think anything of it. Yes, it brought up David Ortiz with men on base, but Big Papi hadn't been himself all postseason, garnering all of one hit in the LCS up to that point. Whereas, if Gross had dove for the ball and missed – a very real possibility, given how shallow the ball was hit – it likely would have rolled all the way to the wall, and Pedroia could have wound up with a triple, plating two runs, and there'd be a rally brewing.

Little did I know the rally had already started. Papi uncorked a three-run blast, and all of a sudden it was a 7-4 game. Maddon then brought in Dan Wheeler, and Wheeler got the third and final out of the inning. So, we went to the top of the eighth. Yes, the score was a lot tighter than it had been, but the Rays were still up by three, and they only needed to get six more outs. They were still in the driver's seat, right?

Well, one look at the two benches during the top of the eighth, and you'd think Boston was the one doing the driving, while Tampa Bay had been dumped on the side of the road. While the Red Sox players looked relaxed, were smiling and laughing with each other, the Rays players just stood on the top step of their dugout, with an "I can't believe this is happening" look in their eyes. They sure didn't look like a team six outs away from a World Series berth. It seemed as if the bottom of the seventh had sapped them of their confidence, that all of a sudden there was a very real possibility the Rays would turn out like the '04 Yankees or the '07 Indians: another victim of an improbable Red Sox postseason comeback.

Tampa Bay went quickly and quietly in the top of the eighth, and in the bottom of the eighth

Wheeler, who had effectively stopped the bleeding in the seventh, couldn't finish the job. Unfortunately, Maddon didn't seem to realize this until it was too late. After J.D. Drew, who had a lifetime batting average of under .200 against Wheeler, hit a two-run homer to make it 7-6, Maddon should've brought in another reliever. But he kept Wheeler in there, and Coco Crisp would eventually work an 11-pitch at-bat to his favor, hitting a single to right that tied the game. Crisp was thrown out trying to stretch said single into a double, thus finally ending the inning, but the damage had obviously already been done.

In that brief period of time in the bottom of the eighth after the score was 7-6 but before it was 7-7, a thought flashed in my head for a split second, that maybe it would be better for Tampa Bay to lose this game and then win in Game Six, rather than to crawl into the World Series as the team that just barely managed to avoid blowing a seven-run lead in Game Five. But I quickly discarded that thought from my brain. Even though Tampa Bay would still be up 3-2 in the series, there'd still be no guarantee they'd win Game Six. Or even Game Seven. Especially since they're playing the Red Sox, who, if you give them an inch, they'll swim all over you.

But after Boston tied the score, you just had a feeling there would be a Game Six after all. The meltdown of the Rays' bullpen was complete. They'd blown the second-largest lead in postseason history (the Chicago Cubs coughed up an eight-run lead to the Philadelphia Athletics in a 1929 World Series game). Between that, and the magic of Fenway Park (it was here, after all, that David Roberts stole second base in the ninth inning of Game Four in the '04 LCS, sparking that glorious comeback against the Yankees; see, readers, I do root for the Red Sox in the postseason. I just didn't do it this year), it didn't look like things were going to go Tampa Bay's way. And as we all know, it didn't.

Probably the best thing about last Thursday's game, at least from Tampa Bay's point of view, was the timing of it. It was the last game they'd have to play at Fenway. Plus, they had a day off, to travel back to Florida, and to regroup. Had the series been continuing in Fenway, or had there been no game off, I'd have been very worried indeed about the Rays' chances. As it was, going into Saturday's game, I was....well, alright, I was still pretty worried. That was one heck of a punch to the gut they took Thursday night. I wasn't really sure how they'd respond.

Sure enough, the Rays looked a little anxious on Saturday, and wound up losing. This set up Sunday's Game Seven, which was a great pitcher's duel, a real nail-biter, which ended the way I wanted it to end: with Tampa Bay winning. I know the words "there's always next year" aren't much solace to Red Sox fans right now. But remember: you'll always have last Thursday. It truly was a game for the ages.

* * *

I'd be remiss if I let this week's column pass without reminding people that the Congregational Church of Salem is putting on its annual Apple Festival this Saturday at the church, located on the Salem town green. The festival specializes in all things apple, from apple pies, apple turnovers and apple crisps to hot apple cider and even hot dogs with apple sauerkraut. My only recommendation (aside from coming with an empty stomach) is to come early. I showed up last year a little after noon, and a lot of the items had already sold out. I was still able to have one of those aforementioned hot dogs – which was quite tasty – and some hot cider, and also picked up some bottled cider to take home, but the pies and other treats were gone. The festival starts at 9 a.m., and I'd recommend going closer to that time. Err on the side of caution; your sweet tooth will thank you.

* * *

See you next week.

Obituaries

Colchester

Richard George LaFlamme

Richard George LaFlamme, "Rick," 46, of Lake Hayward, Colchester, passed away unexpectedly Saturday, Oct. 18. Born Aug. 15, 1962, in Middletown, he was a son of Richard and Rosemarie (Buzzell) LaFlamme of East Haddam.



Ricky was a 1980 graduate of Nathan Hale-Ray High School in East Haddam, where he was an accomplished basketball player. He went on to work as a mechanical engineer for W.R. Grace for a number of years. In his spare time, he enjoyed tinkering, fishing with his friends and he was a member of the East Haddam Rod & Gun Club.

In addition to his parents, he is survived by two sisters and their husbands, Laurie and David Epler of Griswold and Lisa and Greg MacDonnell of Foxborough, MA; his brother, David LaFlamme of Colchester; nieces and nephews, Kristen and Sean MacDonnell, Taylor and Morgan Epler and Rachelle and Connor LaFlamme; and numerous extended family members and friends.

Friends called Thursday, Oct. 23, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Road, Colchester.

The Funeral Liturgy will be celebrated 11 a.m. Friday, Oct. 24, directly at St. Andrew Church, 128 Norwich Ave., Colchester, with Fr. Michael C. Giannitelli, officiating. There are no calling hours Friday morning and burial will be private.

In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory may be made to the Lake Hayward Memorial Fund, P.O. Box 230, Colchester, CT 06415

For online condolences, visit www.auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Colchester

Frederick B. Clark Jr

Frederick B. Clark, Jr., 84, of Colchester, beloved husband of Barbara (Warzecha) Clark, joined the angels in Heaven peacefully surrounded by his loving family on Monday afternoon, Oct. 20, after a courageous battle with cancer. Born Nov. 18, 1923, in Middletown, he was a son of the late Frederick and Mary (Odermann) Clark Sr., and would continue a 300+ year family tradition of calling Colchester home.

He was a 1942 graduate of Bacon Academy in Colchester and would go on to lead a fruitful life as a dairy farmer, lumberman, and that of his true passion, a tree farmer. His tireless labor of love was that of the Sugar Plum Tree Farm, as well as the former Fred. B. Clark Corp., both of North Westchester. Fred was a communicant of St. Andrew Church in Colchester, a former member of the Colchester Lions Club and a member of the CT Christmas Tree Assn. His interests were quite diverse. He was an avid Red Sox fan, loved to be outdoors working with his hands; and his memory will forever live on in the hearts of his family and friends — he will be greatly missed. "Love you Dad."

In addition to his loving wife of 61 years, to whom he was ever devoted, he is survived by his four children, Steven Clark of Norwich, Pam and husband, Daniel Maresca of Bloomfield Hills, MI, Thomas and wife, Beth Clark of Westford, MA and Fred B. Clark III of Cobalt; seven grandchildren; two sisters, Evelyn Turner of Colchester and Mary Lou and husband, Richard Wall of East Hampton; his brother, Everett and wife, Faye of Summerville, FL; and numerous extended family members and friends.

In addition to his parents, he was predeceased by a grandson, Christopher, and two sisters, Margaret "Peg" Clark and Dorothy Johnston.

Friends may call from 3-5 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 26, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. The Memorial Liturgy will be celebrated at 11 a.m. Monday, Oct. 27, directly at St. Andrew Church, 128 Norwich Ave., Colchester, with Fr. Michael C. Giannitelli, officiating. Burial will be private and a Repass will follow Mass in the Parish Hall.

In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory may be made to Hospice CT VNA, 339 Flanders Rd., Ste. 215, East Lyme, CT 06333.

For online condolences, visit www.auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Hebron

George E. Borsotti

George E. Borsotti, 81, of West Hartford, passed away Monday, Oct. 20, at home, surrounded by his family. Born in Hebron to the late Severino and Irma (Pattirini) Borsotti, he graduated from Windham High School where he received a state farmer degree and was president of the local chapter of the Future Farmers of America.

In 1954, George served in the Army for two years. He worked at Pratt & Whitney for 33 years where he retired in 1989. As a volunteer during his retirement years, he enjoyed preparing the flower gardens at Elizabeth Park. He also enjoyed working on the farm, his workshop, gardening, fishing, hunting and watching the Red Sox and UConn women's basketball.

He is survived by his wife of 52 years, Lillian (Miner) Borsotti; his daughter, Darlene Borsotti of West Hartford; his two sons, Steven Borsotti and his wife Carol of West Hartford and Kevin Borsotti and his wife Corinne of Glastonbury; his sister, Rena Zachmann and her husband Joe of Hebron; seven grandchildren, Jason and Miranda Shilati, Kristy and Carl Borsotti, Julie, Kelly and Leslie Borsotti and one great-grandchild, Piero Papili.

Funeral services will be Saturday, Oct. 25, at 10:30 a.m., at Holmes Funeral Home, 400 Main St., Manchester. Burial with Military Honors will follow in Gilead Cemetery, Hebron. Calling hours will be today, Friday, Oct. 24, from 5-8 p.m. at the funeral home. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Camp Isola Bella, c/o The American School for the Deaf, 139 North Main St., West Hartford, CT 06107.

To sign the online guestbook, visit www.holmes-watkinsfuneralhomes.com.

East Hampton

Kyle Frank Johnson

Kyle Frank Johnson, 10, of East Hampton, beloved son of Frank and Melysa (D'Amato) Johnson, died peacefully at his home Monday, Oct. 20. Born Sept. 17, 1998, in Hartford, Kyle had lived in East Hampton his whole life.

Kyle was a student at the Center School in East Hampton and was a communicant of St. Patrick Church. Kyle was involved with Mixed Martial Arts, and was awarded the 2008 People's Champion Award by the USF. Kyle had endured a lifelong fight with SMA.

Besides his mom and dad, Kyle leaves to mourn his passing his brother and sister, Tyler and Dyonne, both of East Hampton; paternal grandparents, Burton and Gail Johnson of Colchester; maternal grandmother, Ann Bartalotta of Colchester; maternal grandfather, Butch and his wife Jean D'Amato of Cromwell; great-grandmothers, Mary Racik of Colchester and Eileen D'Amato of Middletown; great-grandfather Patsy D'Amato of Florida; aunts, uncles and several cousins; and godparents, Sal Garofalo and Kimberly Downing.

A Funeral Liturgy will be celebrated today, Friday, Oct. 24, at 11 a.m. in St. Patrick Church, East Hampton. Burial will follow in Calvary Cemetery in Middletown. Friends called at the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, on Thursday, Oct. 23.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Kyle Johnson Memorial Fund, c/o Liberty Bank, P.O. Box 188, Marlborough, CT 06447. To leave online condolences, visit www.spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Hebron

George E. Snyder Sr.

George E. Snyder Sr., 93, of Hebron, the husband of the late Lillian (Caffrey) Snyder, died Thursday, Oct. 16, at a local convalescent home.

He was born in Johnsonburg, PA and had lived in the Hartford area for many years. He was a retired conductor for the New York, New Haven, Hartford Railroad. George was a distinguished Army Veteran of World War II.

He is survived by his son and daughter-in-law, George E. and Brenda Snyder of Hebron, and two brothers, Owen Snyder of New York and Richard Snyder of Arizona.

Funeral arrangements are private. In lieu of flowers memorial donations are requested to be made to: House of Bread, 1453 Main St., Hartford, CT 06120. The Mulryan Funeral Home, Glastonbury has charge of arrangements.

Portland

Robert Emmett Cleary

Robert Emmett Cleary, 88, of Salem, MA, and formerly of Portland, died Thursday, Oct. 16, at the John Bertram House in Salem. He was preceded in death by his wife of 56 years, Barbara M. (Fitzgerald) Cleary. He was born in Holyoke, MA, son of the late Dr. Robert Emmett, Sr. and Helen (Fitzgerald) Cleary.

After graduating from Holyoke High School, he went on to earn both a B.S. and M.S. in chemistry from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, and a Ph.D. in chemistry from the University of Notre Dame. In between earning degrees, he and his wife were married Feb. 10, 1945 in Edgewood Arsenal, MD. He served as a 1st Lt. in the Pacific Theater for the U.S. Army, followed by a stint in the Army Reserves.

Mr. and Mrs. Cleary had six children and settled in Portland where they lived for 40 years. Mr. Cleary worked as a chemist, most notably for Pratt & Whitney Company for 27 years of his career. However, his greatest achievements were the results of his enduring community work in the town of Portland, where he served on the Library Board, the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Education, as chair of the Democratic Town Committee, and on the Board of Directors of the United Fund, among many other civic and charitable activities.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Cleary were known for their lively entertaining as well as their commitment to their community, to each other, and to the Boston Red Sox. Mr. Cleary was loved and admired for the ease with which he captured a crowd with a story, led a dinner table in a song and made a friend of any stranger.

He is survived by six children and their spouses, Ellen and Philip Dube of Portsmouth, NH, James Thomas Cleary of Portland, Robert Emmett Cleary III and Alison White, of Chelmsford, MA, Barbara Ann Cleary and David Hart, of Salem, MA, David and Candace Gray-Cleary of East Hampton, and Michael Thomas and Theresa Cleary of Portland. He also leaves 10 grandchildren, Matthew Dube of Easthampton, MA, Kate Dube of Chicago, IL, Liza Dube of Portsmouth, NH, Alison and Ryan Cleary of Middletown, MA, Brenna and Colin Cleary of Chelmsford, MA, Robert Laumann of the Netherlands, and Brendan and Desmond Cleary of Portland, and one great-grandchild, Simon Weber of Chicago.

He was the brother of the late, James Cleary who died at the Battle of the Bulge.

Services will be held in Connecticut in the spring. The family asks that in lieu of flowers, contributions may be sent Hospice of the North Shore, 75 Sylvan St., Suite B-102, Danvers, MA 01923.

For online guestbook or additional information, contact the Murphy Funeral Home, 85 Federal St., Salem, MA, 978-744-0497 or visit www.MurphyFuneralHome.com.

Portland

James Edward Williams

James Edward Williams, 68, of Portland, husband of Ellen N. (Jacobs) Williams, passed away on Monday, Oct. 20, from injuries sustained in a motor vehicle accident. Born in Adams Center, NY, he was the son of the late Frank M. and Catherine K. (Crisman) Williams.

Jim lived in Portland for 26 years and was a member of Zion Lutheran Church in Portland. He graduated Adams High School in Adams Center, NY, worked as an electrician at Pratt & Whitney Aircraft in Middletown for over 30 years and had served in the U.S. Navy.

Besides his wife, Jim is survived by his daughter, Melissa Lincavicks and her husband, Zachary, of Middletown; three brothers, Roland S. Williams of Leesburg, FL, Earl A. Williams of Cortland, NY, and Clifford M. Williams of Watertown, NY; three sisters, Thea E. Brown of Watertown, NY, Beulah M. Barnes of Folton, NY, and Alice C. Heher of Manchester, NY and many nieces and nephews.

He was predeceased by a sister, Edna Mullen and two brothers, Richard L. Williams and Alfred F. Williams.

Funeral services will be held Saturday, Oct. 25, at 1 p.m. at the Doolittle Funeral Home, 14 Old Church St., Middletown, and interment will be private and at the convenience of the family in the State Veterans Cemetery. Friends may call at the funeral home tonight, Friday, from 6-8 p.m.

In lieu of flowers friends may make donations in Jim's memory to the Middlefield Volunteer Fire Department, 405 Main St., Suite 1, Middlefield, CT 06455 or American Cancer Society, PO Box 1004, Meriden, CT 06450.

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

Portland

Erwin A. Steinkamp

Erwin A. Steinkamp, formerly of Portland, dearly loved husband of Catherine (Foley) Steinkamp, passed away on Saturday, Oct. 18. Erv was born in Hayward, IA, on Dec. 26, 1922, to Reverend George and Hilda Baade Steinkamp. He had seven beloved brothers and a beloved sister, two of whom survive.

He served in the United States Army and landed on Normandy during the D-Day invasion. In 1943 he married Dorothy Kilgas Steinkamp of Dudleytown, IN. Dorothy predeceased him in 1969. Erv was a graduate of Hanover College and earned a master's degree from Indiana University. In Indiana, he taught biology at New Albany High School, was principal of Borden High School, and was an instructor of zoology and developmental anatomy at Indiana University. His gift for teaching earned him much recognition, including nomination for Indiana's Science Teacher of the Year.

In 1966, he moved to Portland to join Xerox Education Publications, where he was an editor for *Current Science* magazine until he retired in 1986. He married Dorothy DiMauro LaBella and the couple was married for 31 years until her death in 2000. Erv generously shared his love of music, art, photography, cartooning, and writing with his family and many friends. He was a member of the Lyme Art Association and his artworks have been exhibited in Florida and Connecticut.

Erv was a longtime member of the Connecticut Gilbert and Sullivan Society and enjoyed performing in many of their productions. After moving to Heritage Commons in Middletown, he led discussions on stem cell research and genetics as well as directing sing-a-longs. In 2006, he married Catherine Foley who brought much love and laughter into his life.

Besides his wife Catherine, Erv is survived by children: Suzanne, Cynthia, and Steven and his wife Elizabeth; step-children, Robin and Mark and his wife Debbie LaBella; brothers Norman Steinkamp of Illinois and Rev. George Steinkamp of Minnesota; and many loving nieces, nephews and grandchildren.

Erv was predeceased by a daughter, Laura.

Erv was an inspiration to his family and many friends. He will be greatly missed. Family and friends were invited to pay their respects Tuesday, Oct. 21, at the Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland. A funeral service for Erwin A. Steinkamp was held Wednesday, Oct. 22, at Zion Lutheran Church, 183 William St., Portland. Burial will be private and at the convenience of the family.

Portland

Hazel Walker

Hazel "Sookie" Louise (Reese) Waller, 71, of West Cotton Hill Road, Portland, beloved wife of 53 years to James Waller Sr., died Tuesday, Oct. 14, at the Middlesex Hospital, surrounded by her loving family. She was born in Beaumont, TX, the daughter of the late Henry and Louise (Vinson) Reese.

Prior to her retirement she was employed as a nurse assistant for 30 years at Connecticut Valley Hospital. Hazel had a great love of the outdoors which included spending time in Cape Cod, fishing, gardening and she enjoyed teaching her grandchildren about life's beauty. Some of her favorite pastimes included shopping, playing bingo, tag-saling with her sons and trips to the casino with her husband. Hazel was known for her outpouring of generosity and she will be deeply missed by many.

Besides her husband, she is survived by three devoted sons, James Waller Jr. and his wife Linda of Portland, Michael Waller and his wife Lisa of Portland, Jeffrey Waller and his wife Wendi of Colchester; a brother Robert Reese of Pittsburg, TX; six grandchildren, Nicole, Gina, Christopher, Jaclyn, Griffin, and Grayson. Burial will be in the State Veterans' Cemetery.

At the family's request services are private; Biega Funeral Home has care of the arrangements. Those who wish may send memorial contributions to the Portland Fire Department EMS, PO Box 71, Portland, CT 06480.

Portland

Paula Jean Heitmann

Paula Jean Heitmann, 49, of Portland and formerly of East Hampton, died Thursday, Oct. 16, at Middlesex Hospital. Born Feb. 8, 1959 in St. Johnsbury, VT, she was the daughter of Hubert and Shirley Benjamin of East Hampton.

Besides her parents she is survived by her two daughters, Jennifer Swan of Manchester and Melissa Swan of Marlborough; four brothers, Robert, Raymond and David Benjamin and Gary Messier; and her beloved granddaughter, Olivia Tozier.

Funeral services will be private at the convenience of the family. Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, has care of the arrangements.

To leave online condolences, visit www.spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Marlborough

Nellie L. Cronin

Nellis L. Cronin, 96, of South Main Street, Marlborough, died unexpectedly Friday, Oct. 17, at her home. Born Dec. 7, 1911 in Lawrence, MA, she was the daughter of the late Michael and Lucita (Catanzoro) Masenti. Nellie had lived in Marlborough since 1983.

She is survived by her son, Joseph Cronin; four daughters, Nancy Moore, Geraldine Black, Carolyn Cronin and Judy Cronin, nine grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren.

She was predeceased by her two daughters, Mary Patricia Cronin and Lucy Danneman.

Funeral services will be private. In lieu of flowers memorial donations may be made to Protectors of Animals, P.O. Box 24, South Glastonbury, CT 06073. The Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, has care of the arrangements.

To leave online condolences, visit www.spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

East Hampton

Cheryl A. Turner

Cheryl A. Turner, 52, of East Hampton, beloved wife of Philip Turner, died Sunday, Oct. 19, at Hartford Hospital. Born Nov. 16, 1955 in Toledo, OH, she was the daughter of Patrick Gaynor and Marilyn (Burgin) Krizen. Cheryl had lived in East Hampton for more than 10 years and had worked for the East Hampton School system as a cafeteria worker.

Besides her parents and husband, she is survived by her beloved daughter, Sara Turner of East Hampton; a brother, Curtis Gaynor, and a sister, Kathy Willis.

A graveside service will be held today, Friday, Oct. 24, at 11 a.m. in the Lakeview Cemetery in East Hampton, with the Rev. Thomas Kennedy officiating.

In lieu of flowers memorial contributions may be made to the American Cancer Society, Franklin Commons, 106 Route 32, Franklin, CT 06254-1800. The Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, has care of arrangements.

To leave online condolences, visit www.spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.