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Haley Adams, a sophomore at RHAM High School, has her hair cut during her lunch period last week. The school's National Honor Society sponsored the event that brought two Colchester salons to the school to raise money and awareness for breast cancer in honor of RHAM teacher Kirsten Erlandsen.

RHAM Students and Staff Get Hair Cut for a Cause

by Sarah McCoy

Last week RHAM High School students and staff raised money for breast cancer research and honored a teacher – simply by getting their hair cut.

On Aug. 15, RHAM High School math teacher Kirsten Erlandsen was diagnosed with breast cancer. Not wanting her long strawberry-blonde hair to go to waste, she looked for options to donate it. Erlandsen stumbled across the website for Wigs for Kids, a nonprofit organization that provides free wigs to children who have lost their hair.

Erlandsen made an appointment at Shattered Endz salon in Colchester to cut her donation.

Wigs for Kids takes ponytails measuring at least 12 inches to make their wigs. As a sponsoring salon, Shattered Endz provides free haircuts to those donating their hair to the organization.

Erlandsen went to the salon with her friend Sharon Naples, who came along under the guise of providing moral support. But when the two arrived, there were two chairs ready for them. Naples surprised her friend by donating her hair too.

“It was a complete surprise and an emo-

tional day,” Erlandsen said of her haircut at Shattered Endz.

While the two were at the salon, the employees talked about holding an event to raise money for the Susan G. Komen For the Cure for breast cancer research. Debi Rushford, the owner of Shattered Endz, is a breast cancer survivor herself. The mother of another Shattered Endz stylist, Cindy Klaja, also had breast cancer. “It’s something that effects so many women and we just try to do what we can to raise money for the cause and raise awareness about the disease,” Rushford said.

Last week the salon took to the road, as it partnered with Always Love Yourself, another Colchester salon, to provide haircuts to students and staff. Participants could either donate \$20 to cancer research or receive a free cut with a 12-inch hair donation to Wigs for Kids.

Of the 15 or so haircuts given, about half paid in hair.

Haley Adams, a sophomore at RHAM, was among the students who got a haircut last week. Many of her family members have had breast cancer. Needing a haircut

anyway, she came to the RV parked outside of the high school, to honor her family members.

Erlandsen said she is grateful for the support she has gotten from the community. “I am a benefactor of the research, since I am suffering a lot less than someone would have with my diagnosis just 10 years ago,” she said.

Despite undergoing chemotherapy every other week, Erlandsen continues to work. While she tries to give 100 percent to her students, she admits that it’s been tough given her health and she doesn’t get much of a let-up when she goes home to a three-year-old son and five-month-old daughter.

“My husband has been wonderfully supportive,” she said. “He’ll say to me, ‘Just go to bed. Just go to bed.’ But I can’t leave him with two kids that need to be washed and put to bed. I just take the one that’s being most agreeable at the time.”

Erlandsen said she has good days and bad but continues the chemotherapy process. She is thankful for individuals like those at RHAM last week, who are fighting to bring an end to cancer.

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

"What a long strange trip it has been."

While I'm fairly certain those words weren't originally written to describe a presidential race, they're nonetheless fitting. And they seem particularly fitting this year. For the 2008 presidential race has indeed been a long and strange one, and was already in full swing by the time the first caucuses and primaries rolled around in early January. Remember that brief period of time when it looked like Rudy Guiliani might be the nominee? Or when it looked like Sen. Fred Thompson might have half a chance to resonate with....anybody? (Turns out that *Law & Order* love can take you only so far, I guess.) And don't forget our own Chris Dodd throwing his hat in the ring.

And then there was the strangeness of the primary season, one that saw Mike Huckabee hanging on for a very long time and Hillary Clinton hanging on for an even longer one. The VP picks came over the summer, and with them came America's somewhat short-lived fascination with Sarah Palin (she scored the cover of both Time and Newsweek multiple weeks in a row; who knows how many more covers she'd have netted if this pesky economic crisis hadn't come along).

There's been discussion and analysis, followed by even more discussion and even more analysis, of the number of houses John McCain owns, Sarah Palin's shopping trips, Barack Obama's lapel pins, even the whiteness of Joe Biden's teeth. (Okay, maybe that's just me; but they really are quite white, don't you think?) And the phrase "Is the country ready for a black President?" has been uttered approximately 50 zillion times.

And in less than a week, it'll all be over. Anyone who's been this column knows who I'll be voting for next Tuesday (hint: it's not McCain), but I'm not here to tell you

how to vote. I'm here to simply tell you *to* vote. The phrase "the most important election of our time" was used only slightly less often in 2004 than it has been this year; voter turnout that year, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, was 64 percent nationwide. While that's higher than the 60 percent that turned out in 2000, it still means more than a third of the country didn't vote. Now, here in Connecticut voter turnout fared much better in 2004, as 78 percent of registered Nutmeggers showed up at the polls. It'd still be pretty great to push that rate up to 90 percent though, wouldn't it? (I realize that that 78 percent number is still much higher than turnout usually is in elections that are strictly municipal in nature; but the disappointingly low turnout rates for local elections is a subject for another column.) It's pretty easy to do; swing by a polling place on your way to or from work and cast a ballot. Most polling places are open from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m.

There's of course other things on the ballot besides the presidential race. Statewide, voters will be faced with two additional questions: one asking if there should be a state Constitutional Convention, and one asking if the voting age should be tweaked a bit, allowing people who will be 18 by Election Day in a given year to vote in the February primaries. And you'll also be asked to cast votes in various races for Congress, the state Senate and the state House of Representatives. (Inside this issue, you'll find stories profiling the various races in the *Rivereast* towns.) Also, depending on where you live, you may see a referendum question or two that's specific to your town.

So there's a lot going on next Tuesday. And it's important for you to get on out there and be a part of it. So go, vote. Who knows, your vote just might decide a race.

Selectmen Working to Address Marlborough Town Hall Asbestos Issue

by Hannah Charry

First Selectman Bill Black is working in partnership with the Board of Selectmen (BOS) and the Department of Labor's Division of Occupational Safety and Health (CONN-OSHA) to address the presence of asbestos in Town Hall.

Town officials have been aware of the issue since the building was transformed from the Mary Hall School into Town Hall in 1984. The original structure was built in 1947. During the 1984 renovation, workers discovered asbestos on floor tiles. Encapsulation – the installation of new adhesive over older tiles – occurred rather than abatement.

The asbestos issue emerged again last year when a contractor inspected the building to examine worn and unraveling carpet. Funding to begin the process of the asbestos work was received at a total of \$11,200 from the 2007-08 budget. However, the contractor discovered that the new layer of adhesive mastic from the 1984 renovation is now also contaminated.

"From time to time people have experienced running noses," Black said. "Throughout the building there have been inordinate reported amounts of head colds and respiratory issues."

The finding last year pushed the selectmen to call an abatement contractor to examine the building. An appropriation from the 2007-08 budget was approved to fix the asbestos in crawl spaces provided an additional \$2,500.

In May, CONN-OSHA came to Town Hall to perform a more in-depth investigation of the premise and identified six different layers of hazards, Black said. The visit was part of a free consultation CONN-OSHA offers to both public and private employers. According to its website, penalties and citations are not issued as a result of the consultation.

CONN-OSHA released a report to the town on Aug. 21 revealing the existence of some hazards that could cause an accident or long-

term health problems. CONN-OSHA standards say that if three square feet of the original mastic are exposed when removing carpet, the entire floor of the room must be abated, Black said. Small pieces of asbestos remained in the crawl spaces that hold pipes beneath the main floor. This report changed the expected cost of the asbestos problem to make it now total \$37,000.

In early September, the BOS requested an additional \$22,500 from the 2008-09 budget in response to the additional needs mentioned by CONN-OSHA, but this amount was denied by the Board of Finance (BOF). The following week, a Town Hall employee tripped and fell on a portion of the carpet, and as a result experienced reddening of the wrists and minor scrapes. Black took this as more evidence that the carpet needed replacing.

On Sept. 14, Black gave a tour to a member of the BOF, to call attention to the problem areas. But Black said he is worried that not enough attention was called to the severity of the situation. According to Black, no mention was made of the tour at the BOF's October meeting.

On Oct. 21 the BOS moved to transfer \$10,000 from the emergency contingency fund to address the asbestos issue, but this number still falls short of completely fixing the problem.

Black said the town needs to report back to CONN-OSHA fairly soon. "In two weeks we must clearly demonstrate to OSHA that we have taken their recommendations seriously. We plan on asking for a 30-day extension to complete work, which will cost a total of at least \$37,000," Black said. "We have a serious hazard and have until Nov. 14 to act. The town and Board of Selectmen takes safety concerns seriously and are taking decisive action to move ahead with what needs to be done."

Fire Destroys Andover Home

by Sarah McCoy

A Sunday night fire drew 60 firefighters from neighboring towns and completely destroyed a Burnap Brook Road home.

The Andover Volunteer Fire Department received a phone call at 7:01 p.m. alerting firefighters of what seemed to be an outside fire at 69 Burnap Brook Road. When the firefighters arrived on scene, though, they found the outside fire was actually a structure fire, consuming a single-family house far back in the woods.

Andover Fire Marshall John Roach estimated the house was set back from the road about 600 feet. He said the fire, from the road, looked like "a glow in the woods."

The Andover fire department was first to arrive at the house but, due to the strength of the blaze and lack of water supply, eight additional fire crews were called. Sixty

firefighters from Andover, Bolton, Columbia, Hebron, North Coventry, South Coventry, Tolland, Lebanon and Marlborough worked for two hours to control the fire.

But despite their work the house was a total loss, as it eventually collapsed into the basement under the pressure of the blaze.

"It clearly had a good head start on us," Roach said of the fire. "It was so far back in the woods that people passing by couldn't see it until the house was fully involved. When we arrived it was one big ball of flames."

Town records indicate the house is owned by Faith Austin Casares of New Britain. No one was living at the house at the time of the fire. Roach said it appeared the home was undergoing renovations when it caught fire. The cause of the blaze is still under investigation, Roach said.

East Hampton Police News

10/15 — Teresa M. Miceli, 47, of 55 Tryon, Middletown, was arrested for storage of a prescription not in its original container and possession of drug paraphernalia, East Hampton Police said.

10/21 — Christian R. Mock, 26, of 63 Waterhole Rd., was arrested for operating under the influence of alcohol and failure to appear, police said. He was also arrested for disorderly conduct and violation of a protective order, police said.

10/21 — Judith Keefe, 48, of 91 Middle Haddam Rd., Middle Haddam, was arrested for second-degree harassment, police said.

10/23 — William W. Rudnick Jr., 42, of 227 West High St., was arrested for disorderly conduct and for interfering with an emergency call, police said.

Portland Police News

10/20 — Peter Huegen, 61, of 32 Grand St., Danbury, was charged with insufficient insurance and operating an unregistered motor vehicle, Portland Police said.

10/22 — A 17-year-old male was charged with possession of narcotics, police said.

10/23 — Ralph Lentz, 64, of 235 Candlewood Hill, Higganum, was charged with DUI and disobeying officers' signal, police said.

10/27 — A 17-year-old male was charged with risk of injury to a minor and second-degree sexual assault, police said.

Two Arrested in 2005 East Hampton Murder

by Michael McCoy

East Hampton Police have arrested two men in connection with a three-year-old murder case.

Edgar Canterbury, 40, of Mayer, AZ, and David Hill, 24, of Wethersfield have each been charged with murder and conspiracy to commit murder. The two are charged with killing Louis D'Antonio, 38, in September 2005.

On Sept. 12, 2005, Douglas Bosquet and Timothy Rinell, acquaintances of D'Antonio, found his remains in the woods, somewhat near the intersection of Routes 196 and 151, according to an affidavit on file at Middletown Superior Court.

Police found what appeared to be skeletal remains with "little to no remaining tissue on the bones," according to the court documents.

At the site, Sergeant Michael Green located a wallet that contained identification for Louis J. D'Antonio, the affidavit said. According to the affidavit, D'Antonio had a "long history of drug and alcohol abuse and a significant criminal history." The affidavit also called D'Antonio "an avid outdoorsman, skilled in hunting and fishing, and ... known to live in the woods in the area where his campsite and remains were found."

In fact, jail has served as D'Antonio's last official residence, the affidavit said, and friends or family had not seen him in several weeks before his death.

Eventually a previous incident was revealed that cracked open the case. The affidavit said that, according to Holly Rinell (Timothy's wife), D'Antonio told her that he and Canterbury went on a clamming trip to Rhode Island. Near the close of that trip, Canterbury's estranged wife, Tricia, showed up. Holly Rinell said in the affidavit. Tricia was upset with Canterbury and, after speaking with D'Antonio, took some of Canterbury's clams and left. Canterbury "got very angry" with D'Antonio because of this, Holly Rinell said,

and an argument ensued.

Later, when Canterbury and D'Antonio were returning from their fishing trip, they stopped for gas and, according to the affidavit, Canterbury left D'Antonio at the gas station, taking his clams and supplies with him. This occurred "somewhere in or around Norwich," the affidavit said.

After this incident, several acquaintances heard Canterbury express his rage over the incident and express his intent to harm D'Antonio.

After D'Antonio was found dead, Brendan Seymour, a friend of David Hill, contacted the East Hampton Police and said Hill might be a person of interest.

Hill told police that that on or about Aug. 17, 2005, Canterbury asked Hill to drive him to the site where D'Antonio was eventually found. (Hill was friends with Canterbury's brother.) Hill told police that, as he stood near the site, he saw Canterbury swing an object and hit D'Antonio "hard on the upper body," according to the affidavit. Hill said this happened at least two times. (The Chief Medical Examiner deemed this blunt force trauma, but police are still investigating just what D'Antonio was struck with.)

Hill said the man was knocked out. On the way back to the car, Canterbury kept telling Hill things like, "I'll f—ing kill you too if you say anything!"

Canterbury was arrested on Oct. 22; while Hill was arrested on Oct. 27, police said. Canterbury is being held on a \$2 million bond and is scheduled to next appear at Connecticut Superior Court in Middletown on Nov. 4, police said, while Hill is being held on a \$1 million bond and was due in the same court Oct. 28.

East Hampton Police Chief Matthew Reimondo said the better part of the entire police force was involved in the investigation.

Undercover Operation Leads to Portland Man's Arrest

by Michael McCoy

An East Hampton man has been arrested after police said he tried to strike up a sexual relationship with what he believed to be a 15-year-old girl.

However, the girl was actually a state trooper, posing as a teen on the Internet.

Robert Muzzy, 29, of 47 Main St., was arrested Oct. 6 and charged with criminal attempt at impairing the morals of a minor, criminal attempt at enticement of a minor and obscenity.

According to an arrest warrant affidavit on file at Meriden Superior Court, Trooper Samantha McCord, who is part of the Connecticut State Police's Computer Crimes and Electronics Evidence Laboratory, started an undercover online investigation on May 9, using the chat program Yahoo Messenger. She signed into a chat room called "Connecticut Romance," using the "persona of a 15-year-old female," listing that age in the profile for all to see, the affidavit said.

Due to "continuing undercover investigations," McCord did not reveal the screen name she used in the affidavit, instead referring to it as "15-year-old female persona."

McCord said that she did not initiate a conversation, but instead waited for someone to send her an instant message. At 9:59 a.m. on May 19, she received a message from "dilibertyankee," whose Yahoo profile labeled him as "rob m." An investigation would later determine him to be Muzzy.

The conversation started off benign enough, with Muzzy's first messages commenting on his employment at Yale Hospital and his hav-

ing "a 5 person sea doo jet boat." McCord told Muzzy she was in the ninth grade and, in a later conversation, she told him she would turn 16 on Jan. 13, the affidavit said.

At 1:52 p.m. that day, Muzzy shared pictures of himself with McCord, the affidavit said. The affidavit did not describe the pictures as being sexual in nature. However, according to the affidavit, just two minutes after he shared those pictures, he asked McCord, "have u had sex yet?" When she answered, "I don't wanna say yet.lets chat mor," Muzzy responded, "I am not judgmental...im a very open guy."

In another online chat on May 21, the affidavit said, Muzzy told McCord that he likes when girls wear high heels and offered to take her shopping for some. He then directed her to a website that, according to the affidavit, sells "discount stripper shoes and exotic dancer outfits."

He then added, "it turns me on to see a girl in heels," and soon after asked her, "so what have u done with a guy." Muzzy then offered a picture described as a "partial nude down below shot," though it was not actually sent.

On June 17, McCord was signed into Yahoo under another 15-year-old female persona. Muzzy initiated a conversation with her. Though it never became criminal, he did comment on how close her Meriden home was to him and said, "wish I knew what u looked like."

On June 25, McCord was using the first persona again, and the conversation with Muzzy became explicitly sexual, with him saying such things as, "I don't mind if a girl is rough," according to the affidavit. Later in the conversa-

tion, the two were discussing an encounter McCord said she had had with another male, and, according to the affidavit, Muzzy asked her, "did u do anything sexually with him or any other guys?"

Before long, Muzzy steered that conversation to explicitly discuss various sex acts, including intercourse. After making a particularly graphic sexual reference, Muzzy asked, "would u ever be able to meet me for lunch or something."

Soon after, the chat reverted back to the high heels Muzzy enjoys, and McCord modeling them for him, the affidavit said.

Later that day, McCord found a DMV image of Muzzy that matched the one sent to her from "dilibertyankee" on May 19.

The following day, the affidavit said, McCord discovered that a detective from the FBI Undercover Task Force was contacted by "dilibertyankee" on May 7, while the detective was in the guise of a 14-year-old female. The detective described the conversations as "suspicious" but not "criminal," the affidavit said. According to the affidavit, the detective said Muzzy wanted to trade pictures and said he would "...like to see whats out there...like to have fun and open to trying new thing."

On June 26, the affidavit said, a background check revealed that Robert Muzzy worked for Yale-New Haven Health and was formerly employed by "Little Acorns Children Center/Babies and Up Too Inc," which are both daycare centers that operated out of the same location in Portland at different times. The check showed that Muzzy had most recently received wages

from the daycare in the last quarter of 2006.

According to the affidavit, Muzzy used two different IP addresses during his chats with McCord. On Aug. 6, McCord linked one of these addresses to 47 Main St., Muzzy's residence, with the other from Yale-New Haven Hospital. On Oct. 2, she found that the specific computer was located in the information technology department. Hospital personnel said Muzzy was the only individual to use it.

After learning where Muzzy apparently lived and worked, McCord continued her chats with him. On Aug. 26, the affidavit said, he showed her a picture of his genitalia and began discussing searching for hotels the two could have sex in. It appears Muzzy was not ignorant of what he was getting into, as one message said, "but if anything sexual happened I could got to jail."

And then on Sept. 15, the affidavit said, Muzzy propositioned sex, and discussed condoms, a vibrator, anal sex and even group sex.

According to the affidavit, on Oct. 4, at 5:10 p.m., McCord knocked on the door at 47 Main St., pretending to be a pollster. Though a female answered the door, McCord viewed behind her "a tall white male...in a T-shirt, socks and no shoes," the affidavit said. According to the affidavit, McCord said the man matched the DMV photograph of Muzzy.

State Police searched Muzzy's home on Oct. 6 and subsequently arrested him at the East Hampton Police Department, the affidavit said. He was released on \$50,000 bond, police said, and was due in court Oct. 20. The case has been continued to Nov. 3.

Prague, Sawyer Running Unopposed for Reelection

by Sarah McCoy

While state senators and representatives across Connecticut anxiously watch voting returns next Tuesday night, State Senator Edith Prague and State Representative Pam Sawyer will be resting easy, knowing their tickets have already been punched for a return trip to Hartford.

That's because the two longtime politicians are running unopposed for their respective seats.

Prague, a Democrat, is seeking her eighth term as State Senator for the 19th District, which includes Andover and Hebron, as well as Columbia, Bozrah, Franklin, Lebanon, Ledyard, Lisbon, Montville, Norwich and Sprague. She serves as chairman on the Labor and Public Employees Commission and vice-chair on the Commission on Aging.

The opportunity to run unopposed has come at a perfect time for Prague, as it allows her to focus on other aspects of her life before the legislative session begins in January.

Prior to serving as State Senator, Prague served in the House of Representatives for eight years and was also the commissioner of the state Department on Aging, which has since been disbanded.

Prague sees helping the elderly in Connecticut as a top priority in the coming years. She hopes to increase the staffing in nursing homes and in-home care options for seniors. She also hopes to see more seniors in the workplace. "They have skills that are needed and many of them need jobs," Prague explained

Other priorities she lists are protecting the money needed to educate children, helping stimulate job growth and ensuring that the state budget includes adequate funding for town governments. To pay for all this, Prague has at least one idea. By putting tolls on Connecticut roadways, she feels, the state could pay for transportation infrastructure, which, in turn, would create job opportunities.

"The bottom line is everybody is worried about the economy," she said. "They're worried about their jobs and they're worried about this country going down the drain."

With another two years in Hartford, Prague hopes to address some of these items, which she calls "unfinished business."

Sawyer also considers the economy to be the factor her constituents are concerned about. "People between the ages of 25 and 34 are leav-

ing the state at the greatest rate," she said. "Jobs are scarce, houses are expensive, and the cost of goods are higher than elsewhere. We need to do something to stop this trend."

Sawyer, a Republican, is seeking her ninth term as State Representative for the 55th District, which covers the towns of Andover, Hebron and Marlborough, as well as Bolton. She is a member of the education, higher education, legislative management and transportation committees. A former schoolteacher, Sawyer got her start with politics by serving on the Bolton Board of Education. She continued serving in that capacity until 1993, when she was elected State Representative.

Sawyer said this next term looks to be the most challenging of her career. "We all know the money isn't going to be there and we all want to help our constituents," she said. "Something's got to give."

Looking back on her political career, Sawyer said she is proud of the hard work put in to ensure the funding for Marlborough and Bolton's sewer projects would be there when the towns needed it. She is also proud of the Safe Haven Act that she introduced in 2000.

The legislation allows for parents to leave their child (as long as he or she is less than 30 days old) at any hospital without fear of legal persecution. "It's a positive law that protects both our children and our parents," Sawyer said.

She is happy to report that eight babies have been saved through the Save Haven Act, and seven of those have been adopted. (The birth parent reclaimed the eighth.)

Sawyer is also looking forward to the opening of the Connecticut Aero Tech School in January. Sawyer has worked to secure funding for the relocation for the past seven years. "It's a two-year, reasonably priced program that prepares graduates for good paying jobs," she explained. The school is relocating from Danielson to the more centrally located and easily accessible Brainard Airport in Hartford.

Sawyer said that, while campaigning last week, one woman told her that she had already cast her absentee ballot for her. "So I guess that means I'm in," Sawyer laughed.

Both Prague and Sawyer said they would make themselves available to their constituents after the election to hear about what's important to residents.

Candidates Address Voters at Colchester Forum

by Hannah Charry

Candidates for the State Senate and State House were at the Senior Center Tuesday, as a public forum was held in anticipation of Election Day, which is coming up next week.

The format allowed for three-minute introductions from all of the candidates, then specific questions, open inquiries from the audience and then a meet-and-greet at the event's conclusion.

Moderator Mary Tomasi said the purpose of the event was to inform members of the community on important issues going into the election, and also provide discussion on matters most relevant to seniors.

State Senator Eileen Daily, who represents the 33rd District, was present, as was her opponent, Republican Vin Pacileo. (The 33rd District includes Colchester, East Hampton and Portland, as well as Chester, Clinton, Deep River, East Haddam, Essex, Haddam, Lyme, Old Saybrook and Westbrook.)

State House of Representatives candidate for the 48th District Linda Orange also appeared to appeal for votes, even though she is running unopposed. (The 48th District covers Colchester and East Haddam.)

Speakers came to represent Democrat Joe Courtney and Republican Sean Sullivan for Connecticut's Second District in the United States Congress. (Assistant Attorney General Matthew Budzig representing Senator Barack Obama for the presidential election.) Most candidates spoke of how national issues concerning the economy are affecting their local constituencies.

"It's important for the elderly to hear what the candidates have to say and see how they speak," Tomasi said after the forum. She was a teacher in town for 33 years and has lived in Colchester for 17 years.

"Energy is big on the people's minds, even as the prices for gas are coming down the price of food and medicine is going up," Tomasi added. Other issues she was pleased to hear addressed during the forum were Medicare, healthcare and assisted living for the elderly.

Orange said she thinks it's important to continually address seniors.

Seniors "are the people who have raised kids here," Orange said. "They have given others the right to vote through their service. As people continue to retire, the world is changing rap-

idly. We have a global economy that is ever-changing and seniors have seen it evolve through those its ups and downs."

Pacileo called for "new ideas and solutions in these difficult times."

"We can't continue in this cycle of people leaving the state, due to the high cost of living for both seniors and younger residents," he said. "Revenue is lost when people leave." He said it is important for public officials to instill confidence in their constituents, but also acknowledges concerns. "I understand why people are feeling anxious now and I am a realist, so I think we should prepare ourselves."

"With the stock market decline and state deficit, there's not a lot of good news out there," he said. "With regards to finances, we must recognize that individuals are the ones who will help turn the economy around, not Washington. The more confidence we have, the more we can spend and invest in businesses."

Pacileo made a connection between a generational gap and how to close it. "We have an obligation to cultivate the next set of leaders so they can in turn get excited about public service," he said. "It's time for a fresh outlook."

Between 15 and 20 seniors were at the forum, although only one of them addressed the candidates during the question-and-answer section of the forum. Resident Ken Herman didn't actually address any of the issues the candidates had brought up, and rather, spoke about special education.

"Having the state pick up special education costs can be one of the most important things that can be done," he said. "If you look at the statistics, towns and cities aren't equipped to pick up those expensive costs. Kids in places like Fairfield Country get more opportunities with the system we have now."

In response to Herman's question, Pacileo said, "We should look into funding for special education that would alleviate a large burden on our small towns."

Polls will be open from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Election Day this Tuesday, Nov. 4. District 1 votes at Town Hall, 127 Norwich Ave., District 2 will vote at The Assemblies of God Hall at the corner of Middletown Road and Skinner Road, and District 3 will vote at Bacon Academy, 611 Norwich Ave.

Handley Facing Blackwell in State Senate Race

by Hannah Charry

Democrat Mary Ann Handley is seeking her seventh term in the State Senate, and she's running this year against Republican David Blackwell, who has some experience in the state legislature himself.

Handley and Blackwell are vying for the Fourth District seat. The district serves Marlborough as well as Bolton, Glastonbury and Manchester.

Both candidates are taking the main issues of this year's national election into consideration – the economy, energy policy, education and healthcare – and adjusting their platforms to a local level specific to their constituencies and Marlborough.

Democratic Town Committee Chair Shawn Fisher said he thought the most important issues related to the town this year are making sure that the education system is supported and continually improved. "We must also balance the considerations of the town finances in a complete, responsible and diligent way," he said.

Republican Town Committee Chair Kenneth Hjulstrom said, "It is critical that our elected representatives make sure that towns like Marlborough are thoroughly represented when it comes to supporting local projects such as those for sewers, education, economic development and assistance with repairs to our infrastructure. It often seems as though small towns like Marlborough take a back seat to larger municipalities."

Senator Handley's introduction to politics came in 1987, when she started a two-year term on the Manchester Board of Directors. She was then Deputy Mayor in Manchester from 1991-96. Handley said employment in education helped to prepare her for a career as a politician.

"I spent 30 years as a teacher at Manchester Community College and those were some very good days in which I learned a lot about the business of teaching and the business of working with people on a daily basis," she said.

She identified her biggest concerns of her campaign to be the cost of living, healthcare, securing an economic future and developing an energy efficient workforce. As co-chair of the Human Services Committee, Handley backed the state and federally-funded HUSKY health insurance plan, which provides low-cost or free coverage for children and their families. There are no income restrictions for those who are eligible and coverage includes doctor's visits, dental, vision and mental health services. She said this was the most far-ranging and important piece of legislation she has worked on during her tenure.

Handley is currently the chair of the legislature's Public Health Committee, and said members of that committee "are continuing to work on expanding health care and working to make it affordable," Handley said. "It's our responsibility in the world in which people live and work to make them safer in terms of their health in all kinds of ways. We got several hundred thousand kids insurance they might not have."

On health reform, Handley said she worked hard to get a bill passed this year that requires hospitals to deal with strep infections. She said she is proud of the work she has done for seniors in the area by providing home health aides so they don't have to go into nursing homes.

"I think it will be a combination of the presidential election and the economy that will affect things like health care," she said. "If the economy is improving rapidly and Obama is elected [we can make changes because] he has some plans to extend healthcare so all people will be covered. We still have several thousands of children in Connecticut who still don't have coverage. McCain's plan is a little less comprehensible. If you don't have a lot of money and don't have insurance I don't see how a tax refund is going to work. The nationalization of health insurance, which he's talking about, might work but I think it also lends itself to some mischief."

Handley said that, while she has had occasional conversations with constituents about health care, she thinks most of them are focused on the larger economic picture.

"Most people who have any kind of private retirement plans, 401ks, and have money invested in one way or another in stock funds have seen their retirement funds diminish by 50 percent or so," Handley said. "For people who are just getting ready to retire this is a scary situation."

Handley recently voted for a bill that will now provide \$75 million to fund winter fuel assistance to lower income households. The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) extends these benefits to school districts and also gives tax breaks to home-owners who find more 'clean energy' ways to heat their homes.

"We're already working so that people will get enough heat for the winter," she said. "I've worked on supplying food to food pantries and getting people who are eligible for food stamps. We don't want people to be cold or hungry in the winter."

"In the long run we must commit ourselves to assisting development of new industries such as bio tech, nano tech and green transportation," Handley said. "It's important to work with our universities and labor force so that they can work in these new industries. That can't happen overnight."

Handley is taking national economic woes into consideration to deal with her local constituencies.

"Everyone's feeling the failed energy policies in the rise of heating oil and gas prices of cars," Fisher said. "Marlborough is primarily a commuting community, this impacts Marlborough in a significant way."

"We can't address the macro issues because they're global, not national, in origin. I think what we can do is address some of the fall-out from some of these problems," Handley said. "People won't be left alone on a raft by themselves. We're all going to have to work on this together. It's going to have to be a joint effort of the nonprofit community, legislation and constituents working together on all levels."

She thinks that the economy will affect local businesses, coffee shops and restaurants in a number of ways. "Of course one of the first things you do when times get tough is you don't eat out and stay at home," Handley said. "Kids and their parents are worrying if there's enough cash for college, if they don't get enough money through scholarships and student loans. The financial crisis is affecting people in a number of ways."

Handley said she stays in tune with the needs of Marlborough residents by making frequent visits to speak with residents. She regularly takes her grandchildren to the Marlborough playground and sees the structure she helped to build being used by parents and children.

"The big thing there is the development of the Marlborough Commons," she said. "It's one of the important things that's happened to stir that development is the new sewer system that will affect the lake and center of town and school. That was an important project that I was involved in speeding up the state funding for the project. It will clean up the lake which is one of the great natural resources for the town. It puts great encouragement to the development to whatever businesses four corners area."

Handley said she is familiar with her opponent's background.

"David and I were in the legislature together and on local issues we worked very well. He is a guy who can work very well with others. That's to his credit."

However, she said she thinks his perspective is not the best to address the wide range of issues during this election period.

"My opponent is a Republican and I think his response to issues is based on the Republican agenda," she said. "He is focused on deregulation, which is a problem. I think that's not the direction we need to go in."



Handley

Blackwell also said the two worked well together when he served the 12th House District as a State Representative from 1999-2003. During this time period he was a member of the Education Committee, Finance Committee and served as the ranking member of the Planning and Development Committee.

Blackwell said his primary concerns are releasing the state from high bonded debt, decreasing or keeping tax rates as is, attract more businesses and address homelessness.

Hjulstrom said, "I trust that Senator Handley sees David Blackwell as the strongest competition she has faced in many years. It is not a surprise since those who meet David are instantly impressed by his knowledge of the issues. I am very confident that David will win the election and help to level the playing field in the State Senate."

Like Handley, Blackwell is a Manchester native and received his undergraduate degree from Central Connecticut State University in 1987. Upon graduation, Blackwell worked for Chris Shays' winning congressional campaign. Blackwell then worked for a year and a half overseas as a teacher in the Republic of Palau, a series of islands in the Pacific near Micronesia. As a Jesuit volunteer he met his wife. He returned to the University of Hartford to receive a Masters in Public Administration, was named a Woodruff Fellow in Public Administration, and then moved to Miami for a year and a half to work as a fundraiser for a coalition for the homeless.

"Through that experience I noticed that everyone who was doing work with development was an attorney," Blackwell said, "so I returned to Connecticut to go to law school."

Blackwell graduated from the University of Connecticut School of Law in 1998 and then immediately ran for state legislature. He was reelected for the position in 2000.

"As Manchester legislators [Handley and I] frequently worked with each other," he said. "We're both fierce advocates for our towns. I believe we agree on the issue of supportive housing that is being contemplated in Manchester. I like to think I'm a leader on that issue. There have been some detractors and some people who have expressed their disinterest of the housing. We both agree that this is necessary."

At that point his daughter was six years old. "I made the decision to be a better dad, coach soccer, and start a law firm" so he didn't stand for reelection in third term but remained involved with his community through the Manchester Initiative for Supportive Housing. The advocacy will result in units being built over the next few years.

Blackwell also said he favors education and hopes to keep that as a main part of his platform. "The good thing about Connecticut is we have a highly educated work force, we have more colleges than any place in the world if you draw a circle around Hartford," he said.

"Education is going to be one of the primary ways that Connecticut gets out of its economic situation," Blackwell continued. "We already have a highly educated workforce and we have to continue to maintain that excellent education in all of our towns."

Blackwell said he thinks that keeping this educated workforce intact will help bring more and better businesses. "I think that the legislature hasn't been paying attention to what we do well to bring some of those 20-34 year olds back home."

Also, Blackwell added, "We should look at the way Hartford is using its money. If you get 35 percent of your budget from the state of Connecticut maybe those of us who are providing that money are entitled to ask Hartford how they are spending it."

Blackwell added, "We were known for pre-



Blackwell

cision manufacturing with tool and dye and metal stamping place and used to be known as the insurance capital of the world. We do have a really intelligent service sector. It's what we do well. If [Connecticut] starts to set the table we should aggressively recruit businesses from other states in a way that says we can do something that other states can't provide."

Blackwell thinks this is a way to keep different demographics from mass exodus.

"Connecticut is frequently a place where teens go to visit their grandparents and seniors are now saying that they can't afford to live here," he said. "We have to look at how we tax people, look to other states that have a high regulatory system and are doing it well, then replicate that."

Blackwell is a fierce proponent of keeping taxes as they are.

"We absolutely must not raise taxes," he said. "It's an easy answer to get more money but we've seen time and time again that is what is driving the exodus out of Connecticut. If we do raise taxes, it'll drive people out again. I tell people we can't tax them when they're not here. We have to recognize that we're spending too much money."

Blackwell also said the state can look at its debt. "Connecticut has the third highest bonded debt in any state in the nation," he said. "Eleven percent of our entire state budget goes to interest. Now, if you were paying 11 percent of your budget on your credit cards, you would probably sit at your kitchen table and cut up your credit cards. If we can do that as a state, hold off on borrowing, save 10 percent – that's 200 million dollars. Immediately we can begin to do something right there. That's a realistic approach."

Like Handley, Blackwell sees the national economic malaise directly afflicting Connecticut residents.

"We all know what's going in the stock market," he said. "It is projected that there may be 40-50,000 projected job losses off of Wall Street. Now, a lot of those jobs are held by people in Fairfield County, which provides Connecticut with about 50 percent of revenue on income taxes for the state. If we're going to see this kind of job loss by people who hold stocks and bonds, we have to recognize that we're going to see even greater problems in terms of the state of our economy."

Blackwell also addressed the energy situation.

"Basically we don't create much power in Connecticut, and we've hampered ourselves from getting energy from other places we should look at ways to generate more power here," he said. "And I like to say that we should look at solar and wind but let's also be aware that Connecticut just isn't sunny enough – we're not Arizona or Florida. We are going to have problems. It's not simple enough to go to solar. The Farmington Valley isn't windy enough. We're going to have to do some new power creation but in this conversation is critical one of the best ways we can deal with energy issues is to weatherize old homes, businesses."

"Conservation is paramount," Blackwell continued, "creation of new power generator and other ways to supplement energy needs. Let's look into fuel cells again. Let's give tax credits to innovative ways to solve energy issues."

Hjulstrom said, "We need our elected representatives on both the State and Federal levels to remember that they work for us and not for special interest groups. I am confident that the Republican candidates will provide just such representation."

Overall, Blackwell said, "I believe I have the experience necessary to serve on the state legislature. I would need no on the job training and I believe that different people talents have different talents and sometimes the time calls for certain people to address these issues. ... I believe I have the talents necessary to add the challenges of the state, community, and of this time. I would be honored for opportunity to represent the four towns."

Voters in Marlborough can cast their ballots at Marlborough Elementary School, 25 School Dr., from 6 a.m.-8 p.m. next Tuesday, Nov. 4.

Courtney Seeks Second Term in Congress

by Sarah McCoy

In 2006 Joe Courtney defeated Republican three-term incumbent Rob Simmons by 83 votes to become Connecticut's 2nd District U.S. Senator. It was the closest race in the nation.

"I won by 83 votes last time, so I can't say I'm confident this time around," Courtney said. "It's a privilege to serve. You've got to go out and earn it everyday."

Next Tuesday, Nov. 4, Courtney will match up against Republican candidate Sean Sullivan in a battle for the 2nd Congressional District. The district encompasses 65 towns in eastern Connecticut, including Andover, Hebron, Marlborough, Colchester, East Hampton and Salem.

Courtney, a Vernon resident, said he lets his record over the past two years speak for itself and hopes to make significant strides with health care, education and economic growth in the next two.

Sullivan, a Gales Ferry resident, is a 26-year Naval veteran. After retiring from the Navy in 2006 he began work as an attorney in Norwich. He says he is running because he's "not happy" with the way Courtney has served the district. Sullivan's number one priority is spurring the economy through job growth.

Sullivan said that during his years in the military, he developed the leadership qualities necessary for this position. Courtney "is a follower," Sullivan said. "I intend to make a difference and take issue with my own party if it's

in the best interest of Connecticut."

Sullivan said he is disgusted to see that Courtney has voted with his party 98 percent of the time and feels that the incumbent is part of a broken system.

Courtney retorted that it's irrelevant how many times he's voted with his party. "It's meaningless. You've got to look at the issues," he said. Courtney was quick to highlight how, despite his party's feelings, he voted against both bailout bills. He was the only Connecticut representative to do so.

"I voted with my party to protect Medicare. That's a good thing," Courtney said. "I voted with my party on a farm bill that would help Connecticut farmers. That's a good thing. I've pushed hard to raise minimum wage and to raise fuel efficiency standards, both good things."

Courtney is happy to stand by his record, but he'd rather look forward. "Bill Clinton once said that elections are about the future," Courtney said.

In the future, Courtney said, his priorities are reforming health care (especially for children),



Courtney

making college more affordable and creating jobs. "We need to, in the first hours of Congress being in session, pass a bill that will provide our children with health care," he said. "Last year we were so close but it didn't happen. It needs to happen."

Courtney said he is proud that while he was in office Congress restored 100 percent funding of college tuition to the G.I. Bill (it had previously dipped to 60 percent) and fought to cut student loan interest rates. However, Courtney said he believes more needs to be done. "The best thing we can do for our country is invest in its people," he said. "College is becoming so prohibitively expensive we're shooting ourselves in the foot."

While education and health care are certainly priorities in his campaign, Courtney said the number one concern he hears about is the economy. And to fix it, Courtney said he wants to get people working. "There are 3,000 load [construction] projects that are ready to go – already designed and planned – that are just being held back by funding," he said. "If we



Sullivan

took just a small fraction of the bailout money, say \$20 billion, we could get a lot of these projects off the ground and get people working as quickly as possible."

Sullivan, too, agreed that the key to fixing the economy is through job growth. He doesn't, however, believe Courtney is doing enough. "For two years people wrote about what's coming and yet we chose not to do anything until a crisis hit," Sullivan said. "There is too much partisanship in Washington and it's preventing anything from getting done."

"Mr. Courtney will tout getting money for this or that project but, in reality, what happens is the leadership demands compliance and in return they'll sprinkle little earmarks to keep constituents happy," Sullivan said.

Sullivan, certainly not one to hold back his opinion, believes he can be the independent voice that gets things done in Washington. He wants to see Connecticut develop a national grid for electricity that could, one day, act as a conduit for renewable energy. He'd like to see the government fix the business climate to promote job growth, and he'd like to increase infrastructure projects that will address some physical shortfalls in the country as well as develop new jobs.

Registered voters may cast their ballots in their respective towns on Nov. 4 from 6 a.m.-8 p.m.

Adamsons Challenging O'Rourke for House Seat

by Michael McCoy

The race for the 32nd Assembly District (which encompasses Cromwell, Portland and a portion of Middletown) pits a veteran Democratic representative against a fresh Republican face.

But that fresh face may be a familiar one, at least to those who follow Portland politics.

Scott Adamsons, 34, who grew up in West Hartford, hails from Portland, where he has lived with his wife Jennifer for five years. The couple has four children. He has been treasurer of the Portland Republican Town Committee and served on the town's Economic Development Commission and Board of Selectmen.

Adamsons graduated from Central Connecticut State University in 1997 with a bachelor's degree in political science. He has spent the past 10 years in the banking industry.

Adamsons, whose candidacy became official in May of this year, called Connecticut the "worst state in the country for business growth," and worried that Hartford was putting undue stress on small businesses, such as recently bumping the minimum wage to \$8.

He figured that most small businesses are composed of workers whose excellence is average, while about two might be exceptional and then, "a couple stragglers." Explaining that, because of the minimum wage, business owners have no money left to reward the company's most diligent employees. "You're basically, taking control out of the business owner's hands," he said. "I don't think that's the way to do it."

Adamsons has been going door-to-door, for the past few weeks, and, talked to one particular business-owner in Cromwell who was seriously talking about relocating to Massachusetts.

Adamsons said Connecticut is the fifth costliest state to do business in. "I think it's time for change," he said.

Adamsons said he figures the state should "help businesses do what they do best by just getting out of the way."

Adamsons also voiced his disdain for the amount of help small towns received from the state. According to him, for every dollar Hartford residents contribute in taxes, they receive \$6.65 in return. However, in Cromwell, Adamsons said that number is between 1 and 26 cents.

"There are more representatives from towns than larger cities, yet the larger cities seem to always get the money because of mismanage-

ment," Adamsons said.

Another issue Adamsons seemed to have on his mind was the long tenure in Hartford by his opponent. (Democrat Jim O'Rourke has been in the State House since 1991.) Adamsons proposed that a 10-year term limit be placed on state representatives.

Furthermore, he continued, state representatives "receive the world's best medical benefits," and added, "what part-time job do you know of that gives any kind of medical benefits?"

He said, "That makes me sick," and added the representatives are supposed to be volunteers.

Adamsons recently taught a few U.S. History classes, composed of juniors and seniors, at Middletown High School. The Middlesex Chamber of Commerce sponsored the program. During the course of the program, the students heard from candidates from both sides. Adamsons seemed to relish to opportunity, saying, "If they want to support Democrats, I'm all for it. I want them to get involved."

Adamsons thanked the different town committees in Portland, Middletown and Cromwell for allowing him to be an individual. "They respect me when I have a difference of opinion," he said, and added, "They didn't blacklist me when [Democratic Middletown First Selectman] Jeremy Shingleton gave a \$5 donation."

O'Rourke, 44, has lived in Cromwell for 20 years. He and his wife Kim have three children, ranging in age from six to 13.

O'Rourke was born in Boston, but has lived in Connecticut since he was in second grade. He is a graduate of UConn, holding a bachelor's degree in political science. He is the community development director for The Connection, a nonprofit organization that aids families coping with things like addiction, abuse and neglect.

In 1991, he won his first bid for the State House. "I've always been interested in government and civic affairs," he said. "I believe the government should protect us as consumers."

In 1991, O'Rourke won a three-way primary.



Adamsons

One of these included Portland's own Fred Knauss, who is himself a former state senator. He would go on to defeat Bob Jahn. "We still work together up at the capital," O'Rourke said of Knauss, who is now a member of Portland's Economic Development Commission.

O'Rourke founded the Small Town Legislative Coalition in 2002, which he chairs today. However, he considers the Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) the feather in his cap. STEAP was a bill written by O'Rourke. Prior to this, funding for capital improvements was quite difficult for small towns to attain, with cities receiving the lion's share. However, O'Rourke noted that "one million people in Connecticut live in small towns."

In the past two years, O'Rourke helped Portland secure \$600,000 in state money for its downtown beautification project.

Last year, O'Rourke successfully opposed legislation the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC) was seeking that would tax non-MDC member towns like Portland to fund a sewer project in Hartford. He said MDC chairman Bill DiBella led the effort.

According to O'Rourke, when DiBella told him this would be a reality, he responded, "Well, you're in for World War III." He later said the legislation "is the most perverse thing I ever heard of," labeling it "taxation without representation."

He also calls himself "a big proponent of education." "My highest priority these past two years was to increase state aid" for public education, he added.

O'Rourke has come under fire from Adamsons for his employment at The Connection, due to its receiving state money. Because of this, Adamsons proposed O'Rourke recuse himself from the annual budget vote.

"That's ridiculous," O'Rourke said, adding that most state representatives have full-time jobs. He said one of the most prolific professions for Hartford legislators are attorneys. "We vote on laws," said O'Rourke, saying this poses



O'Rourke

no conflict of interest. He also said there are teachers in the General Assembly and education bills are commonly voted on. "A nonprofit is no different," he said. (The only jobs off-limits to state legislators are state employees.)

"I'm always there when they need me," O'Rourke of his constituents, "and they know I do a good job representing them in Hartford."

While most of the *Rivereast* towns fall into the Second Congressional District, Portland is an exception. It's in the First Congressional District, so Portland voters must choose next Tuesday between incumbent John Larson, a Democrat, and challenger Joe Visconti, a Republican.

Larson has represented the district since 1999, and is currently in his fifth term. A former history teacher and business owner, Larson, 60, and his wife, Leslie, are lifelong East Hartford residents. They have three children.

West Hartford resident Visconti, 51, is a Hartford native. He currently sits on West Hartford's Town Council and is a father of three. A graduate of the University of Hartford, he has founded nonprofit organizations, as well as a construction company. As a result of the former, he received an Emmy in 1997, for a program he helped produce.

Portland voters will also see two separate but related referenda on the ballot Tuesday.

The first asked residents whether they wish to spend \$1.025 million for water storage tank improvements, including the replacement of a 54-year-old 500,000-gallon tank on High Street.

The other involves spending \$816,000 to replace a nearly mile-long water main located on Main Street. Should it be voted forward, the project would be funded by the Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Fund. The Board of Selectmen affirmed the project in late August.

Portland Police Lieutenant Ron Milardo recently issued some information regarding voting locations. Voting will once more take place at the public library on Freestone Avenue. However, traffic will be one way. Automobiles may only enter the library on Freestone Avenue, and may only exit through the senior center parking lot, onto Waverly Avenue. Parking will be available at the library, senior center and at an additional lot across from the library and behind Burger King. This lot may be accessed from Freestone Avenue.

Pacileo Challenging Daily for State Senate Seat

by Michael McCoy

One of the many decisions voters Colchester, East Hampton and Portland (three of the 12 towns in the 33rd senatorial district) have to make is the decision between Democratic incumbent Eileen Daily and Republican newcomer Vin Pacileo.

The district also includes Chester, Clinton, Deep River, East Haddam, Essex, Haddam, Lyme, Old Saybrook and Westbrook.

Daily, 65, has lived in Westbrook for over 30 years, though she originally hails from Boston. She and her husband Jim have two grown children. She has also studied sociology at Northeastern University and has done graduate study in business management at Cambridge College.

Daily was serving on the Board of Education when she “thought she could be of some help” in Hartford. That was in 1992, and she has served on the state senate ever since.”

“I’ve been a great help to each municipality,” Daily said of her tenure in the State Senate, specifically pointing out that Economic Cost Sharing (ECS) funds, state money for public schools, have increased over the last 16 years, calling last year a “significant increase.”

She also pointed to securing the status of the senior center and Goodspeed Opera House in East Haddam as particular achievements.

As for the future, Daily said, “The economy’s the biggest thing,” and noted the importance of maintaining services without increasing taxes, never an easy task. Still, she looked at “maximizing our federal funds” as the best way to go about this, and said she would be meeting with

congressmen as early as this week to address that.

Energy seemed to be another issue in the forefront of the senator’s mind, and said the state must begin pursuing alternative energy sources. She called Connecticut the “fuel cell capital of the world,” with eight manufacturers in the state.

The ballot question concerning whether or not the state should have a Constitutional Convention, something all state voters will find on their ballot, seemed to concern her. In her opinion, the passing of this bill would threaten the legality of abortion and same-sex marriage. She called this “a big thing for ... the state of Connecticut.”

Daily said her opponent’s criticism of her being a career politician was “just hogwash,” and added, “My career is as a public servant, not a politician, number one.

“I don’t think you’ll find any constituents that say I’ve lost touch,” she added. She said she’s often at local events in the district’s towns, and added that, on more than one occasion, people from towns in the district other than Westbrook have told her they thought she lived in their town. Going back to the allegation, she added, “It’s pretty insulting for him to say that.”

Pacileo, 52, originally from New Hampshire, has lived in Ivoryton (part of Essex) with his wife, Laura, for 22 years. The couple has three children, the youngest of which is a senior at Valley Regional High School.

Pacileo holds a bachelor’s degree in accounting from Quinnipiac University and an MBA in finance from the University of New Haven.

Until Labor Day, Pacileo was the associate director of human resources for Pfizer. However, Pacileo reported, “I join the ranks of people whose jobs have been eliminated.”

Yet, if the ordeal has taxed his mind, he did not let on, and added, “I’m a firm believer that when a door closes, a window opens,” hoping to turn the challenge into an opportunity.

Currently, Pacileo serves on the Essex Board of Selectmen, and has been on that board since 2003. Prior to that, he spent four years on the town’s Board of Finance and, from 1995-98, he served on its Board of Education.

Pacileo formalized his candidacy for State Senate on June 1 of this year, and said, “I think we need to give people a choice in our elections.” To this end, Pacileo criticized his opponent for her 16-year tenure. “When someone is in office that long, you’re a career politician,” said Pacileo who said eight to 10 years is the ideal maximum for state senator.

“When you’re there too long, you become part of the establishment in Hartford and forget why you ran in the first place,” said Pacileo.

He then added, “If you want change, you can’t vote for incumbents.”

As for issues facing the state, Pacileo said, “Clearly, Connecticut is the least attractive state to do business in,” and claimed that his opponent “has created an environment where, frankly, businesses don’t want to move here.”

He also lamented the idea that young people just entering the work force cannot afford to stay in their home state, and that senior citizens find themselves in a similar position. Speaking on the former, he said, “That’s not a

formula for growth.”

Pacileo also voiced an issue with the state’s high taxes. “Connecticut does not have a revenue problem; it’s because we spend too much,” he said.

Pacileo added, “Government is at its best when they’re helping people help themselves.”

Pacileo endorsed the repealing of the business entity tax, as well as the estate tax. Of the latter, Pacileo said, “It punishes success... The last thing the state does before they put you in the ground, they tax you again.”

“The government needs to take some lessons from the private sector,” Pacileo continued, alleging that since Daily’s first term, the budget, as well as bonding has averaged a seven percent increase each year. At the same time, he cited Connecticut as having the highest gas tax, rate if income tax, sales tax, energy costs in the country; something he said is especially fatiguing for senior citizens on fixed incomes.

“I’m in favor of a property tax cap,” he said. “My opponent is not.” To this end, Pacileo proposed this cap be four percent annually, unless a town itself votes to exceed it, figuring, “Ultimately, local towns and local people should decide on the best course of action.”

Pacileo also cited the cost of energy as a priority, singling out electricity. “You’ll never see a data center in Connecticut because of the cost of electricity,” which he partially blamed on the deregulation of electricity. To address this, Pacileo endorsed the pursuits of alternative fuel sources, such as nuclear power.

The polls are open Tuesday, Nov. 4, from 6 a.m.-8 p.m.

Hamm Squares off Against Bauer In State House Race

by Michael McCoy

Next Tuesday, East Hampton residents will get their chance to cast their ballots in the state house race for the 34th District, which also includes part of Middletown.

The race is between incumbent Gail Hamm, a Democrat, and Republican challenger David Bauer.

Bauer, 56, has spent virtually his entire life in Middletown, his birthplace and current residence. He has one grown son and is currently a consultant programmer, specifically working on databases.

Bauer called himself “completely educated in the city of Middletown,” beginning in elementary school and ending at Wesleyan University, where he studied mathematics.

In 1972, he left Wesleyan to enlist in the Air Force, where he served until 1978. During that time he was a member of the Connecticut Air National Guard.

Bauer is currently serving his second term on the Middletown Common Council, and is chairman of the Middletown’s Republican Committee. (His first term on the council came after a controversial 2005 election, after the results, which he called “very suspect,” said he lost. Bauer then sued the town, a case that went to the state Supreme Court. The court ordered a second election which Bauer then won.)

Like many others, Bauer cited the economy as the chief priority right now, something he

called a “freight train ready to flatten every local in our state.” He continued, “I don’t think we’ve seen economic times like this in my lifetime.”

“It’s going to take quite a battle,” Bauer said of fixing the financial mess. “There’s a whole lot of painful decisions to go around.” Furthermore, Bauer pledged, “I’m ready to go up to Hartford and challenge the prevailing power structure.”

“I’ve got a lot of pet things I’d like to do,” Bauer said. But, he added, he could not in good conscious pursue them until the economy was addressed. “If we have any time left, and we get to work on pet projects, that would be a joyful thing,” he said.

Bauer also pointed to the \$300 million deficit bearing down on Connecticut. However, when asked if he chalked this up to Hartford Democrats, he quickly responded, “Oh, golly no! There’s more than enough blame to go around.”

Bauer also said energy was a priority. He said the days of “cheap oil” were over, and added, “We need some fresh thinking.”

Like many others, Bauer also denounced unfunded mandates.

Hamm, the incumbent, has been in office for 10 years. Born and raised in Hillsdale, MI, Hamm, 57, graduated from Western Michigan University in 1973. She triple-majored in En-

glish, political science, and communications. In 1978, she graduated from law school at Valparaiso University.

Hamm has practiced law since 1980 and has come to specialize in troubled families and children. She is married to Alan Hurst, long-time East Hampton Board of Education member.

From 1991-98, Hamm served on the East Hampton Board of Education, the last three of which were spent as chair.

“I’ve always loved government,” she said. “I have an interest in political science and public policy.”

When asked what her proudest achievement on a statewide level is, Hamm promptly responded that after years of effort, she managed to pass a bill in 2006 that eliminated offender status for domestic runaways.

Minors that do so were formally placed on probation, so issues such as breaking curfew or associating with old friends, which would not normally be offenses, qualified as violating probation.

More locally-specific issues Hamm is proud of include the successful opposition of a gravel pit near Salmon River several years back.

After receiving an outcry from some local businesses, Hamm also noted her role in opposing the arrival of Shaw’s (which eventually opened two years ago). Hamm proposed what became known as “the lake law.” This prohib-

ited buildings of a similar size to what was being proposed from coming within 500 feet of a 500-acre lake. To get the legislation passed, Hamm said, she needed to introduce a clause that made an exception for reservoirs.

However, the developer fought the town, and Lake Pocotopaug was eventually deemed a reservoir, which cleared a path for the arrival of Shaw’s.

More recently, Hamm has also advocated on the behalf of the opponents to Belltown Place, a proposed 127-unit development on South Main Street. (The East Hampton Planning and Zoning Commission rejected it earlier this year, but the developer immediately appealed the decision in court. The case has not yet been heard.) To this end, Hamm hopes to work on legislation that would deem more existing East Hampton properties as affordable, taking away state pressure to allow the project, which qualifies as a Housing Opportunity Development.

Like Bauer, Hamm also recognized the \$300 million deficit as a major problem. “It’s gonna be worse in 2010,” she added.

Hamm also recognized the position a state is put in during a recession. Once people lose their jobs, she said, “people need services from government more, and yet the government has less money.”

Voting will take place at the East Hampton High School gymnasium, 15 North Maple St.

Obituaries

Marlborough

Rae Marie Stack

Our hearts are broken by the loss of our sweet and dear friend, Rae Marie Stack. Rae has been a shooting star, and a bright light in the lives of her family and friends. Born in 1983, she has courageously and fearlessly battled all that life has thrown at her, and was a contagious joy to those who met her. It is impossible to list all the things she has done, and the people she has touched in these few short paragraphs. She loved to work with children, and experienced many wonderful moments at Camp Rising Sun, Fairfield University, and during her summers working with teens at St. Joseph Seminary in New Jersey. She was our sunshine and our laughter, and we will miss her so much.



She was sadly bid farewell by friends and family on Oct. 21. She is lovingly remembered by her mother, Donna Henderson of Marlborough; her father and step-mother, Gene and Barbara Stack, Jr. of Manchester; her brother, Sean Stack of Marlborough; her sister, Joanna Bosch of Pennsylvania; her grandmother, Dolores Stack of Waterbury; her great-grandmother, Harriet Gruzaz of Waterbury and many aunts, uncles, cousins, and dear friends. So many dear friends, it would take pages to express our deepest sympathies to them. We know her grandparents, who passed before her, Fran and Bob Henderson, and Eugene Stack, have welcomed her with open arms.

Our family would like to offer special thanks to the Cardiothoracic Intensive Care Unit at Hartford Hospital. We have been touched by the tenderness, gentleness, and care they have shown Rae over the last six weeks.

A Memorial Mass was celebrated Monday, Oct. 27, at St. James Church, 896 Main St., Manchester. The Watkins Funeral Home in Manchester had care of arrangements.

Memorial donations to Camp Rising Sun, c/o Tina Saunders at the American Cancer Society, 538 Preston Ave., Meriden, CT, would be appreciated. We also encourage you to become a regular blood donor, as the need is great. To sign the online guestbook, go to www.holmes-watkinsfuneralhomes.com.

Marlborough

"Shirley" Gene Blake

"Shirley" Gene (Ward) Blake, 73, of Willimantic and Marlborough, died Sunday, Oct. 26, at Middlesex Hospital. Born Sept. 29, 1935 in Jersey City, NJ, she was the daughter of the late Evelyn Ward. Shirley had been employed for more than 25 years as a nurse's aide at Marlborough Health Care in Marlborough before her retirement.

Shirley is survived by her two sons and their wives Raymond and Susan Blake of New York, Timothy and Lena Blake of West Suffield, her daughter and son-in-law Victoria Blake and Craig Porter of Willimantic, a brother Clyde Decuio of Pennsylvania, two sisters Patricia Caldwell and Maureen Dahl of Pennsylvania and her three beloved grandchildren Connor, Caroline and Tianna.

Funeral services were held Wednesday, Oct. 29, at 11 a.m. in the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton with the Rev. David Reed-Brown officiating. Burial private at the convenience of the family at Marlborough Cemetery. Friends called at the Spencer Funeral Home on Wednesday before the service.

In lieu of flowers memorial contributions may be made to the American Heart Assoc., 2550 U.S. Highway 1, North Brunswick, NJ 08902-4301 or American Cancer Society, Franklin Commons 106 Route 32, Franklin, CT 06254-1800.

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

East Hampton

Peter Arol Adams

Peter Arol Adams, 71, of East Hampton, dearly loved husband of Elaine L. (Lundberg) Adams for 48 years, passed away Sunday, Oct. 26, at home, surrounded by his family. Born in Hartford, he was the son of the late Dudley and Theresa (Mader) Adams.

Peter graduated from Newington High School in 1955 and was a member of the 103rd Unit of the Connecticut Air National Guard as a jet engine mechanic, from which he was honorably discharged in 1963. He was a local entrepreneur in East Hampton for over 40 years, with business ventures ranging from the owner of P.A. Adams Co. of custom cabinets, formica countertops, and flooring, and owner of E. Hampton Self-Storage. He was an active member and past vice president of the Ford V8 Club.

Besides his wife, he is survived by his three children, Cynthia Skripol and her husband, Mark, Kathryn L. Jameson and John P. Adams; his grandson Adam J. Jameson; a sister, Barbara Guerrieri and her husband, Richard, a brother, Gordon Adams; a very special aunt, Grace Clemson; brother-in-law Edward Lundberg and his wife, Maureen, many nieces, nephews, cousins and friends.

The Adams family would like to extend special thanks to the oncology and infectious disease staff of Middlesex Hospital, especially Doctor Susannah Hong, MD, for the exceptional care Peter received over the past two years.

A memorial service will be held Saturday, Nov. 1, at 10 a.m. at St. Patrick's Catholic Church, 47 West High St., East Hampton, with the Rev. Charles R. LeBlanc officiating. Interment will be at the convenience of the family.

There will be no calling hours. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Peter's memory to the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, 300 Research Parkway, Suite 310, Meriden, CT 06450.

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

The Doolittle Funeral Home, 14 Old Church St., Middletown, is handling the arrangements.

Hebron

Doris E. Todd

Doris "Dottie" "Gay" E. Todd, 78, passed away Friday, Oct. 10. She was born in Caribou, ME, the daughter of Donovan and Bessie Todd. "Gay" lived most of her life in Hebron and Coventry. "Dottie" was employed at Pratt & Whitney Aircraft in East Hartford, for over 35 years. She was currently residing in Zephyrhills, FL.

"Gay" is survived by her brother, Donovan Todd, Jr., two sisters, Myrtle Stevens and Barbara Foster, and many nieces and nephews. She also leaves behind many friends in Connecticut, Maine and Florida.

She loved all animals (domestic and wild), playing her guitar, country music and all sports. She spent many happy times at her camp on Big Boyd Lake in Orneville, ME.

A memorial service will be held shortly in Zephyrhills, FL, and another service will be held in Maine in the summer of 2009. Burial will be at the convenience of the family.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to any animal welfare organization, Gulfside Regional Hospice, 37826 Sky Ridge Circle, Dade City, FL 33525, or to a charity of the donor's choice.

Portland

Lauren Gibbons

Lauren Gibbons, wife of Thomas Gibbons of Great Hill Pond, Portland, died Friday, Oct. 24, at St. Francis Hospital, Hartford, following a brief illness. She was born Sept. 3, 1949, in Middletown, daughter of Louis Corvo and the Late Eleanor (Gemma) Corvo. She was an associate with the Wm Raveis Realty Co. She was a graduate of Mercy High with the first graduating class.

Besides her father and husband she is survived by two sons, Shawn and his wife, Julie Gibbons of Durham and Darren Gibbons of Portland; a sister, Pamela Campanelli and her husband, David of Middletown; two grandchildren, Connor Tomas Gibbons and Darren Louis Gibbons; also, several nieces and nephews.

Funeral services were held Tuesday, Oct. 28, from the D'Angelo Funeral Home, 22 South Main St., Middletown, followed by a Mass of Christian Burial at St. Pius X Church. Burial will be private and at the convenience of the family. Relatives and friends called at the funeral home Monday, Oct. 27.

In lieu of flowers, donations in her memory may be made to Life Choice Donor Services, 8 Griffin Rd., Suite 200B, Windsor, CT 06095.

Portland

Nellie Checko Lane

Nellie Checko Lane, 87, of Portland, passed away Friday, Oct. 24. She was the wife of the late Elmer Lane; beloved mother of Dianne LaPiene and her husband Robert of Nantucket, MA, Richard Lane and his wife Judy of Portland; grandmother of Matthew Lane and his wife Jaime of Milford, Joshua LaPiene, and Robin LaPiene of Nantucket, MA; great-grandmother of Audrey Mae, Dalton, and Bennett Lane of Milford. She is also survived by her sisters, Mary Yesukevich of South Windsor, Josephine Alletta of Cromwell, and Blanche Popienieck of Meriden, and many nieces and nephews.

She was predeceased by her sister, Veronica Faraci, and her brothers, Stanley and Frank Checko.

Born in Montville, July 18, 1921, a daughter of the late Stanley and Belvina Kogut Checko, she had attended school in Middletown and had worked for the Goodyear Rubber Co and later had been employed by the McCutcheon Burr and Sons at Wesleyan University in Middletown. She was a lifelong parishioner of the Church of Saint Mary and for many years had been a member of the Altar Society. She also canvassed her neighborhood for the Heart and Cancer funds. Nellie loved to play bingo, sew, and tend to her garden and just stay close to her family.

Her family received relatives and friends in the Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland, Monday, Oct. 27, before the funeral cortege proceeded to the Church of Saint Mary, where a Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated. Interment followed in the State Veterans Cemetery in Middletown.

In lieu of flowers, gifts in Nellie's memory may be sent to the Middlesex Hospice, c/o Office of Philanthropy, 28 Crescent St., Middletown, CT 06457.

For directions or to leave an online expression of sympathy, visit www.portlandmemorialfh.net.

Colchester

Norma Geer-Dickinson

Norma Rossiter (Dorph) Geer-Dickinson, 95, of Colchester, widow of Luther Dickinson and Hollis Geer, passed away Friday, Oct. 24, at Liberty Specialty Care Center, after a long battle with Alzheimer's. She was born in Windsor on Aug. 14, 1913. She was a daughter of Bernhard and Irmagarde (Rossiter) Dorph.

She had resided in Windsor, Hadlyme, Newington, Cromwell, East Haddam and Florida, and had graduated from Chaffee's (now Loomis Chaffee), Class of 1932. She made friends wherever she lived. Prior to her retirement at age 65, Mrs. Dickinson was employed by Trinity College in the comptroller's office, where she made many friends. She was a member of the First Church of Christ Congregational in East Haddam and many other organizations.

She is survived by her children, Hollie and husband Arthur Cummings, Ann and husband Richard Walther, April and husband Patrick Fitzgerald and Priscilla Geer; eight grandchildren, Joann, Cathy, Erskine III, Laura, Eric, Lyle, Sarah and Douglas; 13 great-grandchildren, Mark, Melissa, Emily, Nicole, Amie, Arron, Rebecca, Hannah, Daniel, Denise, Michelle, Jacob and Samuel; and five great-great-grandchildren, Ryan, Megan, Karlee, Zachary and Gabrielle. She is also survived by a niece.

She is predeceased by her husbands, her son, Erskine H. Geer, and her sister, Helena and her husband R. E. Tyson.

There are no calling hours. A memorial service will be held Saturday, Nov. 15, at 1 p.m., at the First Church of Christ Congregational.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the First Church of Christ Congregational, PO Box 445, East Haddam, CT 06425-0445. Swan Funeral Home of Old Saybrook has charge of arrangements.

For online remembrances, visit www.mem.com.

Hebron

Diane L. Weisel

Diane Weisel, formerly of Hebron, passed away Monday, Oct. 13, at her residence in Hampstead, NC. Born in Richland County, OH, she was the daughter of the late James and Nancy (Snodgrass) Clemens.

Mrs. Weisel was a graduate of Bowling Green State University in Bowling Green, OH. She was a bus driver with Pender County, an avid gardener and enjoyed swapping plants. She also enjoyed walking the beach at Topsail Beach. She was a longtime resident of Hebron and enjoyed talking with old friends on the Internet.

She is now with her well-loved husband of 33 years, Jack Weisel. To remember her always is her beloved daughter, Shain and son-in-law Nolan; also a granddaughter, her heart, Becca; also her two furry companions, Maggie Mae and Skye; and a few scattered relatives in Ohio and West Virginia.

We had a grand time watching the river run...

A memorial service is planned for Sunday, Nov. 2, at 10 a.m. at the bridge at Grayville Park, Hebron. All are welcome to attend.

Portland

Patrick F. Rodgers Jr.

Patrick F. Rodgers Jr., 55, of Portland, died unexpectedly Tuesday, Oct. 28, at Middlesex Hospital. He was the husband of JoAnn Blondin Rodgers. Born in Hartford on March 17, 1953, the son of the late Patrick F. and Rosa (Giuffrida) Rodgers, he was a lifelong Portland resident.

He had been employed as an Engineering and Highway Operations Maintenance Manager for the State of Connecticut Department of Transportation for 32 years until his retirement earlier this year. He had been athletic all his life, playing softball well into his 40s and for many years was a member of the Space Cowboys softball team which later became the Cowmen golf club. He served as a coach for the Portland Parks and Recreation girls basketball team. He was a parishioner of the Church of Saint Mary.

Besides his wife JoAnn, he is survived by his daughters Melissa Rodgers and Meaghan Rodgers; his sister and brother-in-law Rosemary and Alain Munkittrick, all of Portland, and many cousins, nieces, nephews and in-laws.

His family will receive relatives and friends in the Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland, Sunday, Nov. 2, from 3-7 p.m. A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated Monday, Nov. 3, directly at the Church of Saint Mary, 51 Freestone Ave., Portland, at 10 a.m. Interment will be private in the Swedish Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, gifts in Pat's memory should be sent to the charity of one's choice. For directions or to leave an online expression of sympathy, visit www.portlandmemorialfh.net.