



Santa Claus is Coming to Town

Once again, the good people at Marlborough Girl Scout Troop 65220 helped area children get their letters to Santa Claus. And once again, they've let us at the *Rivereast* sneak a peek at them before shipping them off to St. Nick.

The letters were great, and we decided to share some of them with you readers. We hope you find them as fun to look at as we did. (And yes, we left in any spelling mistakes on purpose; we found them charming.) Don't worry, kids, we didn't horde the letters, and we've been assured they received safe passage to the North Pole.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from all of us at the *Rivereast*.

Here are some of the letters:

Dear Santa,

I have been a good boy. Can I please have a Handy Mamy and a Ben 10 toy. Have a safe trip visiting all of your children. Say hi to your reindeer and Mrs. Claus and all our teachers.

Love,
 Max

Dear Santa,

Is Mrs. Claus doing well? Are the reindeer doing well? Can you bring me a picture of the North Pole and everybody? I have been really good this year. Don't give [name omitted] any toys. Just give her coal. She's very mean to me.

These are the things I want for Christmas: PSP, Wii, Grand Theft Auto for PSP, Bakugan and Arena, a robot that obeys my commands, a real picture flip cell phone, Uno Flash, Xbox 360, Are You Smarter Than a 5th Grader, Guitar Hero for DS, The Bat Webkin, Any of the two Webkins fish, a TV plug-in snowboard game, Wii Sports, Wham-O Snowball Maker and Blaster (4), Playstation Major League Baseball 2K9 game

Love,
 Ross
 XOXOXOXOXO

Dear Santa,

I love you a lot. I really want you to stay here. I really want you to play outside with us. I really want to see everyone because I really love Santa. I think I would like some cymbals, okay, now. I'd like a guitar with a thing that plays the guitar. Maybe I would like a water trumpet and a firetruck. Maybe we would get a new Barbie doll for Keira. Thank you for the top Santa! That's it!

Love,
 Austin

Dear Santa,

These are a few things I want for Christmas. The ones that are written in red I really want: idog softspeaker, iteddy (editor's note: this was in red), Fosters home for imaginary friends seasons 1-2, cheese and bloo plush, dollhouse furniture, Kota the Triceradops (this was in red too), My Meebas interactive pets, lovable dog factory, Intendo D-S and the game Hamsterz, gumball machine, Webkinz birds (any), clownfish, brown dog (all in red), a framed picture of you, I really want a iteddy!! (also in red).

That would make the best X-mas ever!
 Rachel

Dear any elf:

I am sorry to interrupt your toy making but I really want to write to you. So how are you and Santa? Is Mrs. Claus making cookies. Dose Santa think I am being good? Do you? Here are 6 things I want for Christmas: a spa factory, a Girl Gourmet, 5 or more Claymates, Nails Gliter and Jem, a D.S., horten hears a who

Love,
 Eve

P.S. What is your name?

Dear Santa,

If you are real and Roudolf at least I think it's spelled that way. Ow yeah can you put a picture of your reindeer and you right here (editor's note: a big space was left here). My Christmas list: All the six Soldiers of Bakugan and Wavern and Nava. I can't think of anything else but you know what I want right! Ow yeah do you give presents to parents? One more thing, can I have a bell from your sleigh. Yes or no, circle the one.

From,
 Joshua

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Dear Santa Claus,
I've been very good this year! I donated 10 inch's of my hair to locks of Love! I hope you are doing well up in the North Pole. I will make sure to leave carrots and water for the reindeer, cheese for Santa Mouse, and of course cookies and milk for you. I even planed making presents for you, your 9 reindeer including Rudolf, and Santa Mouse. Here is what I want:

fur-Real white cat, fur-Real parrot, fur-Real dog biscuit, fur-Real smores pony, American Girl patriot, cupcake maker, western horse, Palamino horse with sleigh, guitar, Baby Bella cards, a rocking horse, Felicity's riding outfit;

Horse playset for American Girl, a horse head with a wooden pole as a body with raeins, picture of horse with wings and a horn, Mustic Beanie Baby Unicorn, Snort Beanie Baby Bull-cow, Goaty Beane Baby Billy goat, Derby Beanie Baby horse.

**Love,
Isabella**

Dear Santa,
Do you give people coal? I think you are so nice. Your awesome! Can I have a kangaroo Webkinz, a computer, some clothes for my american girl doll like pajamas, a bed, a dog, a hores, a cheerleading outfit, a fan, a neckaless, a bag, shose, sunglasses, hair brush, an ipod, and a house and a purse.
Thank you Santa.

**Love,
Olivia**

Dear Santa,
Ho, ho, ho! Merry Christmas!
I would really appreciate if I got some gifts on X-mas this year. I think I've been good most of the year. I've had my ups and downs with my sisters though. But I try really hard to be good. I have some X-mas presents I would like to receive on X-mas. Here they are: There are in order of how much I wants them: 1. IPod Nano, 2. Wee, 3. Chipmunk or bottle nose dolphin Webkinz, 4. trambeline (big), 5. DDR to hook up to the Wee.

These are the top items I want. I'll make sure I leave out stockings. I'll also leave out milk and cookies for you and carrots for your reindeer. I have two questions: How much cookies do you eat on X-mas and how do reindeer fly? Thank you!

Sincerely,

[**Editor's note:** the name got cut off, but this letter was too cute not to print.]

Main Street Bridge in East Hampton Should Be Open Just After the New Year

by Michael McCoy

"We're all aware that the bridge isn't done, and that it's past its third deadline," Public Works Director Bob Drewry said at last Tuesday's (Dec. 16's) Town Council meeting.

Drewry was kicking off another discussion concerning the unfinished Main Street Bridge. The quote refers to the fact that deadlines for the bridge's opening, first in October, then in November and finally earlier this month, have all come and gone.

The latest schedule for the bridge calls for it to be delivered Monday, Dec. 22, Town Manager Jeffrey O'Keefe said. Contractor Standard Demolition Services has said it will take two days to install. However, according to Drewry, the bridge will not be "passable" for another two to three weeks thereafter.

O'Keefe said once the bridge is installed, the roadway and sidewalks must adequately allot for vehicle and pedestrian traffic before it can be opened. In addition, the contractor must backfill the precast bridge units.

Representatives of CONTECH Bridge Solutions, the company that had been constructing the bridge, were present at last week's Town Council meeting, and council chair Melissa Engel directly asked them why the delivery of the bridge has been held up for so long. However, before the representatives could answer, Drewry interjected, "I don't think it's an appropriate discussion for this forum."

O'Keefe later chalked the wait up to "contractor/subcontractor delays," and explained that the bridge footings were not completed until Nov. 28. On Monday, O'Keefe said the precast concrete sections were to be completed by Thursday, after press time.

The Town Council voted to replace the Main Street Bridge on June 24, and bonded the project for \$1 million. (Of that, \$785,734 is for

the bridge itself, while the rest is for engineering and the cost of the bond.)

Since July 28, the section of Main Street between Niles and Skinner streets has been shut down, due to site preparation. Since then, residents of Niles Street have expressed concern over the amount of traffic the street has been receiving. (Drivers have apparently chosen the narrow road as an unofficial detour.)

O'Keefe said the town received "some calls" anticipating the opening of the bridge. The bridge is made primarily of reinforced concrete and includes "decorative metal rails with bell silhouettes."

The bid for the project went to Standard Demolition, who installed "cast-in-place concrete footings" that the bridge would be lowered onto. Standard Demolition then subcontracted the building of the bridge to CONTECH Bridge Solutions, which manufactures bridges at its facility and delivers them whole to the site. The manufacturing of the metal railings was subcontracted to L.B. Foster Company by Standard Demolition Services.

O'Keefe explained that the town was exploring the possibility of seeking "liquidated damages" from Standard Demolition in light of the delays, which would consist of \$300 per day.

However, Drewry admitted, "There's enough blame to go around for everyone, including the Public Works Department."

Last Tuesday's Town Council meeting was Drewry's last one before retirement. (Drewry also served as acting Town Manager for the better part of a year before O'Keefe started this Labor Day.) At the close of the bridge discussion, council members, O'Keefe, his assistant Cathy Sirois, and some of the public in attendance honored him with a standing ovation.

From the Editor's Desk

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

It's Dec. 19, which means you only have five days left to get your Christmas shopping done. I confess, I still have the majority of my shopping left to do. Every year I generally find myself in the same boat: with most of my gift-buying still ahead of me a week – or less – before Christmas Day. And while that's never really my goal, it doesn't really bother me either. If it did, I'd make sure to buy all my gifts in November, maybe even October. But I rather enjoy running around the stores this time of year, looking for that perfect gift for a family member or a friend.

And while I'm out doing my last-minute shopping, I enjoy looking at the different decorations in the stores, listening to the various pieces of Christmas music being played in the background and, if there's a Starbucks nearby, sipping a delectable egg nog latte. I even enjoy seeing the throng of people pass me by. It's sort of a neat feeling knowing you're surrounded by a herd of people who mostly have the same goal you do: buying presents for loved ones to open on Christmas Day.

I'm a Catholic, and I go to Midnight Mass every year. Yet, the "commercialism" of Christmas has never really bothered me. And it's mostly because the "commercialism" doesn't really go against what Christmas is all about. Yes, the tradition of exchanging gifts on Christmas might have its roots more in Pagan history than in the Three Wise Men bestowing gifts upon Jesus, but the process of gift-giving is still a pretty Christian thought. I mean, think about it. You're giving someone a present, with the hope of putting a smile on their face, in the hopes that they like it. You're bestowing a gift upon someone that you care about. What's so un-Jesus-like about that?

Another reason why the "commercialism" of Christmas isn't really a terrible thing: Animated Christmas specials abound on the airwaves this time of year, and while most (except for *A Charlie Brown Christmas*) don't really invoke any Bible verse, they still preach messages Jesus preached: being good, decent people; helping others in time of need; not forgetting that friends and family are the things that really matter, not material items. (After all, remember, all the Whos down in Whoville continued to celebrate Christmas even though the Grinch had made off with all their presents; the Whos had each other, and that was what mattered.) Even the story of Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer teaches kids to be more tolerant of each other, and a message of tolerance is what a lot of people, Christians and non-Christians alike, need to hear.

Another aspect of the Christmas season that isn't specifically tied to religion but nonetheless is something Christ would likely approve of is the whole idea of giving to charity. There have been a host of food, clothing and toy drives, many of which have been publicized in this very paper. There have also been plenty of bell-ringers stationed outside the various stores, collecting money for the Salvation Army. I try to dip a buck in those collection buckets whenever I pass one, and I'd imagine many of you do the same. While you might not be doing it in the name of any specific church or religion, the act of donating to those less fortunate than you is a very Christ-like one.

A lot of people lament this time of year that there isn't enough "Christ" in Christmas, that people have forgotten what the holiday is all about, the "reason for the season," as the saying goes. But let's not forget what Jesus stood for, and a lot of that is still around at this time of year, whether or not the name "Jesus" is specifically mentioned. When you read the Bible, you don't come away thinking Jesus had a terrifically big ego. He could probably care less if we name-dropped him this time of year or not. He'd just like us to live the way he taught us to live. The Christmas season encourages us to do just that.

* * *

Last week I shared the story behind "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas." This week, I've another Christmas song origin story, and it's a great one. It's the story of "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer," and it all started with a poor advertising copywriter

for a now-defunct department store chain.

In 1938, Bob May, a copywriter for Montgomery Ward, was living in a two-room Chicago apartment with his four-year-old daughter Barbara and very sick wife Evelyn. Evelyn had been fighting cancer for two years, and wasn't going to make it. By this point in her illness she had become basically bedridden and one night Barbara came up to Bob and asked him, "Why isn't my mommy just like everybody else's mommy?" Bob was stuck looking for an answer, looking for a way to tell Barbara that her mother was very, very sick and while she desperately wanted to do all the normal mommy things with Barbara, she just couldn't. Bob also remembered his own childhood. He was a small, thin boy, often picked on by other kids. Bob wanted to find a way to let his daughter know that just because someone was different doesn't mean they had to be ashamed.

So, that night, Bob told Barbara the story of a reindeer with a red nose. She loved the story, so much so that he retold it every night. And while some details were a little different from the Rudolph story we know today, the crux of it was the same. Rudolph was embarrassed by his glowing nose and other reindeer poked fun at him for it. But then, one foggy Christmas Eve, Santa showed up at Rudolph's door. The fog was so thick he knew he couldn't make it to all the houses to deposit people's presents, and he needed Rudolph and his nose, to act as a beacon to guide the way. Rudolph acquiesced, and he and that shiny red nose of his saved the day.

Not having much in the way of money, Bob decided to make a poem out of the story and transform it into a homemade book, to give to Barbara on Christmas morning. While he was finishing the book, Evelyn died. Bob completed the project anyway, and gave it to Barbara, who was thrilled.

A few days later, Bob went to a company holiday party, at the insistence of his co-workers. His colleagues also asked him to recite the Rudolph story. He did, and when he finished the crowd at the party gave him a huge ovation. Sensing there was something special in that story, the chairman of the board for Montgomery Ward purchased all of the rights to Rudolph from Bob, who desperately needed the money. Tens of thousands of copies of *Rudolph* were printed and shipped to Montgomery Ward outlets across the country. The title was a huge hit. For the next six years, every child who visited Santa in a Montgomery Ward store received a free copy of *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer*. By 1946, the company had given away six million copies of the book, and the company was getting flooded with offers from various publishing houses who wanted some of that *Rudolph* success.

This next part of the story is truly amazing. The chairman of Montgomery Ward, the same man who seven years earlier had bought up the rights to the story from Bob, turned around and gave them right back to him. A year later, a mass-market version of *Rudolph* came out, and Bob became a very rich man.

The success for Bob, who was now remarried and had a growing family, didn't end there. His brother-in-law, Johnny Marks, turned the story into a song. He offered it first to Bing Crosby, who turned it down, as did Dinah Shore. Finally, Gene Autry agreed to record the song and it became, as we all know, a tremendous hit. To this day, that song is all over the radio, the *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer* television special has become a tradition and numerous Rudolph toys and dolls line store shelves. For something that was born from a tragedy – his wife's dying of cancer – *Rudolph* became quite the success story.

I learned of the history of *Rudolph* in this interesting little book I picked up last week. Called *Stories Behind the Best-Loved Songs of Christmas*, it has short little behind-the-scenes anecdotes of a bunch of holiday favorites. It's worth a read.

* * *

I won't see you next week. As I indicated on the cover – and several other places throughout this week's issue – the *Rivereast* is not publishing next week. Rather, the next issue will be Jan. 2, 2009. So I'll see you all then. In the meantime, I hope you have a safe and happy holiday season.



Local band Tip the Van is heading on a national tour next month, opening for the group Reel Big Fish. Pictured, clockwise from top left, are band members Bryan Howard of Montville, Brian Dunnigan of Durham, Bryan Briggs of Montville, Stephanie Allen of Bolton and Nicole and Simone Oliva, both of Marlborough. Next month they will join Reel Big Fish on a nation-wide tour that will take them to 15 cities in 16 days. Photo courtesy of Sean P. Rogan.

Marlborough Band Heads on National Tour

by Sarah McCoy

Tip the Van, a ska band fronted by two Marlborough natives, is heading out on another national tour.

The group will be the opening act for Reel Big Fish, the band that gained fame in 1997 with the hit song "Sell Out." The national tour will take Tip the Van to 15 cities in 16 days.

Formed in 2002, Tip the Van is a six-piece band recognizable for its use of horns and its two lead singers. Those singers, sisters Simone and Nicole Oliva of Marlborough, founded the band and have been the glue that keeps the group moving forward.

After developing its sound and playing in local venues, the band accepted invitations to play on the Vans Warped Tour in 2005 and again in 2006. They're also frequent performers at Hartford's Webster Theater. "We play at least four times a month," Nicole said. "With some of us in school and others with full-time jobs, it's difficult to travel much but we make the most of our weekends."

From Syracuse down to Pennsylvania, the band uses its weekends to travel anywhere within a six-hour radius of Connecticut to perform.

However, thanks to winter break from classes and vacation time from work, Tip the Van is going to do more than just play on weekends. The nationwide tour will run from Jan. 10-25 – and the band will be opening for one of its biggest influences.

"It's pretty amazing," Nicole said. "We've played in shows with Reel Big Fish before and have kept in contact with them over the years, but being part of their tour is a great step for us."

The tour will begin in Minneapolis, MN, on

Jan. 10 and finishes up in Washington D.C. on Jan. 25. The only Connecticut stop on the tour is Friday, Jan. 23, at Toad's Place in New Haven. That show starts at 7:30 p.m.

Earlier this week the band added one last-minute show before they hit the road. Tip the Van will open for legendary ska band The Mighty Mighty Bosstones Friday, Dec. 30, at 8 p.m., also at Toad's Place.

Tip the Van has no plans of slowing down once the group arrives back home at the end of January. The band will celebrate the release of its EP *Passion, Love & Pride*, the follow-up to the group's 2006 full-length album entitled *Something Wicked*.

Something Wicked is currently available through iTunes and the band expects *Passion, Love & Pride* to be downloadable in February.

Something Wicked was put out through Asbestos Records after the band won a battle of the bands competition in Danbury in 2005. This time around Tip the Van is doing everything itself. "We're having fun with it," Nicole said. "And to be able to say we did everything ourselves is really rewarding."

Tip the Van consists of the Oliva sisters on vocals, Bryan Briggs of Montville on drums, Bryan Howard of Montville on bass, Brian Dunnigan of Durham on guitar and Stephanie Allen of Bolton on trombone. Nicole and Simone are RHAM High School graduates and current students at Eastern Connecticut State University.

To see a full schedule of the band's tour or to hear songs off of its last album, visit www.myspace.com/tipthevan.



Volunteers work to finish work on the Girard family's new home in Voluntown last week. Many local contractors pitched in on the project, which will be featured on *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition* on ABC in February.

Local Workers Chip In for *Extreme Makeover*

by Sarah McCoy

Local contractors gave of their time and skill this week all in the name of helping a family they never even met.

The Girard family of Voluntown has faced its share of struggles these past few years. First, Thomas Girard was laid off from his job at Pfizer resulting in the family falling behind on their mortgage payments. Then, last year, the family of seven was left homeless after a fire destroyed their home. In June, tragedy struck again when Thomas and 18 year-old son, Marc, drowned at a family outing.

For the past year the family has been living in Old Lyme with Carol Girard's mother.

Last Thursday, Dec. 11, the family came home.

Thanks to ABC's *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition*, the Girards have a home, or make that a castle, again.

Thousands of volunteers, including builders from Colchester and Hebron, donated their time and skill to the project. A home-building project of this magnitude normally takes about six months to complete, but crews worked for six tireless days to bring the Girards home.

Bruno Hayn, who owns Home Designs by Bruno in Colchester, served as the builder for the project. Hayn said ABC approached him in late October and asked him if he wanted to be part of the project. He said yes and, for six weeks, Hayn lived and breathed the project, gathering volunteers, making plans, and, finally, building the home.

"It was extreme," he said of the process. "The show's name is very appropriate."

Hayn said there were over 3,500 volunteers who gave of their time to make the project a reality. That number includes everyone from tradesmen to people preparing food six times a day for 400 hungry workers. "That kind of support shows a lot of integrity and offers hope that our society has a chance when we help each other," he said.

Last week Hayn and the other volunteers did plenty to help out. Hayn worked 20-hour days in the most miserable conditions to make sure the project was completed. "Snow, sleet, rain," he said of the weather last week. "Mother Nature sucked."

Still, Hayn and his group persevered and the Girard's were welcomed home last Thursday.

Hayn has been in business for 30 years, primarily as a designer. He got involved with the *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition* project as a way of offering the Girards "a new beginning."

Tony Skut, who owns R.A.S. Home Builders in Colchester, served as a project manager for the build. He spent the weeks leading up to construction organizing volunteers, securing donations, and making sure the group was prepared for what lay ahead. Last week, the Colchester native worked four 20-hour days to make sure everything was completed. "My family's doing good. I have what I want. But, I realize not many people can say that," Skut said of why he decided to get involved with the project. "I just wanted to give back."

Skut said that he lost his father at a young age and empathizes with the four Girard children growing up without a dad. "I remember hearing about the family on the news and my heart just went out to them," he said. "Now, months later, I'm honored to be a part of helping the family create a new beginning."

Not only did Skut get involved, he made sure others did too. Bart Nicolo, owner of Nicolo Builders in Hebron, worked for 22 straight hours, beginning Sunday, Dec. 7, pitching in wherever he could. "Initially I had signed on to do the roof but, when I got there and saw how far behind everything was, I started working on whatever they needed," he said. (Due to inclement weather, the project was about a day behind schedule when Nicolo climbed aboard.)

Nicolo, his eldest son, and about a half-dozen other friends and family joined Bart on the build. They were a small contingent of the 2,000-plus volunteers that handled everything from wiring and plumbing to framing and interior design. "It really restores your faith in humanity to be part of something like this," Nicolo said.

The *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition* episode featuring the Girard Family will air Sunday, Feb. 8, at 8 p.m. on ABC (locally on WTNH-Channel 8). Foxwoods Casino has donated the use of the MGM Theater for a special viewing of the show.

Portland Woman Again Arrested on Robbery Charges

by Michael McCoy

A Portland woman again racked up burglary, robbery and larceny charges last Friday. It was her third robbery-related arrest over the course of just two weeks.

Jean Graham, 36, of 200R Main St. was charged Dec. 12 with burglary third degree and larceny first degree for an October incident.

The incident was reported on Oct. 1, when a resident of an Old Marlborough Turnpike home returned from work around 8 p.m., after having been gone since 7 a.m. When the resident got home, they found jewelry and a "jug of money" missing, Portland Police Officer David Knapp said. Knapp said the stolen items exceeded \$10,000 in value. Knapp added that Graham entered through an open side door.

Knapp said that, while Graham is also a suspect in other burglaries in Portland and Glastonbury, "This was the only burglary we were able to link her to." He called the burglary drug-related.

Portland Police arrested Graham at Superior Court in Middletown, where she was transported from York Correctional Institution in Niantic, where she had been incarcerated due to prior charges.

Just two weeks earlier, on the night of Nov. 29, Graham was charged with first-degree robbery, sixth-degree larceny, and carrying a dangerous weapon after holding up the Super Moon Mart on Main Street in Portland, making off with about \$150.

However, the gun turned out to be a BB handgun that Lieutenant Milardo said was unrecognizable from a real gun by sight.

Prior to this, Graham was arrested Nov. 15 for being an accomplice in a reported Glastonbury burglary that occurred on Oct. 11. That time, Glastonbury Police charged her with first-degree larceny, third-degree bur-

glary, first-degree conspiracy to commit larceny, third-degree conspiracy to commit larceny, and interfering with a police officer.

The most recent arrest will go to pre-trial in Middletown on Dec. 23. Knapp said another arrest was pending related to this incident.

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On an unrelated note, Lt. Ron Milardo reported this week that the town was hit with two more burglaries on Monday, between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. One was on Penfield Hill Road and one was on Cox Road. Both cases involved forced entry and the taking of jewelry and electronics. In the case of the former a laptop was taken, while, in the cases of the latter, a camera was taken.

Milardo said Portland Police are working with other departments, such as East Hampton and Glastonbury, who have also experienced recent burglaries. On Wednesday, Officer Gary Jarzabek spent the day scouring pawnshops in places like Hartford, East Hartford, Meriden and Waterbury to piece together the case.

Milardo advised residents, "If you do have jewelry, don't leave it wide open and visible somewhere," and suggest that residents store in a less conspicuous spot. In these most recent burglaries, "they are going right for the master bedroom," Milardo said.

He also asked that anyone who sees something suspicious should contact police. He said this might be a suspicious vehicle, someone who isn't from the neighborhood, or even people knocking on doors and asking for directions.

"We'd rather check it out and have it be a false alarm," Milardo said, preferring that scenario to the opposite. Such information may be provided by calling 347-2541.

Colchester Police News

12/9-Owen Burgess, 28, of 72 Shailor Hill Rd. was charged with violation of probation, State Police said.

12/9-Uruasi Thaker, 48, of 11 Birch Circle, Apt. 4, was charged with fifth-degree larceny, State Police said.

12/11-Sidney Nute, 43, of 44 Eager Rd., Franklin, was charged with third-degree criminal trespassing, third-degree larceny and breach of peace, State Police said.

12/12-Lori Coffin, 47, of 720 Deep River Rd., was charged with DUI and driving in the wrong lane, State Police said.

12/16-Antonio Garcia, 31, of 920 Riverside

Dr., Apt. A, Willimantic, was charged with failure to appear, State Police said.

12/16-Michael Lawrence, 56, of 164 Linwood Ave., was charged with interfering with police and disorderly conduct, State Police said.

12/16-Keri Golias, 30, of 4 Bellevue St., Apt. B, East Hampton, was charged with failure to appear, State Police said.

12/17-Jesse Ramke, 21, of 20 Mill Rock Rd., Old Saybrook, was charged with fifth-degree larceny, second-degree criminal mischief, first-degree criminal mischief and third-degree burglary, State Police said.

Salem Police News

12/9-Michael Perry, 36, of 606 West Rd., Salem, was charged with third-degree assault, risk of injury to a minor and interfering with emergency calls, State Police said.

12/13-Jarod Sampson, 25, of 7 Kim Ileen Court, was charged with DUI and driving too fast for road conditions, State Police said.

East Hampton Police News

12/29 — Alan Dufault, 52, of 195 Maple St., New Britain, and Cliff McKanne, 41, of 27 Carriage Dr., were involved in a two-vehicle accident at the intersection of Rt. 16 and Old Coach Road, East Hampton Police said, adding that Dufault was issued a ticket for failure to drive right.

12/1 — Marc R. Nicolletta, 46, of 13 West St., was arrested for operating under the influence of alcohol, police said.

12/6 — Joseph J. Epstein, 19, of 17 Sherry Dr., was arrested for operating under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs, possession of marijuana and failure to drive right, police said.

12/7 — Stanley J. Wood Jr., 37, of 39 Barton Hill Rd., was arrested for disorderly conduct and third-degree criminal mischief, police said.

12/9 — Brian M. Krajewski, 33, of 4 Ellis Rd., was arrested pursuant to a warrant for third-degree burglary and sixth-degree larceny, po-

lice said.

12/9 — William W. Rudnick, 42, of 227 West High St., was arrested for violation of a protective order, police said.

12/9 — William Doyle, 21, of 126 Longwood Dr. East Haddam, was charged with possession of a controlled substance and drug paraphernalia, State Police said.

12/11 — Jeremy D. Eldridge, 24, of no certain address, was arrested pursuant to a warrant for third-degree assault and probation violation, police said. Eldridge was arrested on a second warrant for third-degree and probation violation, police added, and was also arrested for disorderly conduct and violation of a protective order.

12/11 — Christian Mock, 26, of 73 Main St., was arrested for disorderly conduct and violation of a protective order, police said.

A New Hope Comes to East Hampton in 2009

by Michael McCoy

Come the New Year, East Hampton Bible Church will be no more. But only the name, not the church itself, will be history.

On Jan. 1, the church will change its name to Hope Church, and a week and a half later, services will move from the current building at 22 Midwood Farm Rd. to the East Hampton High School auditorium, 15 North Maple St.

The high school is planned to serve as an interim location until the church finds a new spot closer to the town center, which is possibly the most interesting facet to the change.

Moving closer to the town center "fits the whole direction we want to be taking," lead pastor Roger Martin said, speaking of the desire the church has to meet the needs of the community. (Martin, an East Hampton resident, has been with the church since 2002. He has a wife, Joy, and four children, ranging in age from 14-23.)

Martin said, "We have a vision for a building that would be more of a community center. ... We don't want to be building a building we're using once a week."

Martin envisioned the use of the community center entailing a modest fee, but said every cent would go to a certain cause that would be explicitly stated, be it digging wells in Rwanda or treating a cholera outbreak in Indonesia.

The current building is in a somewhat remote location, prompting Martin to joke, "You sort of need GPS to find it."

The church started in 1973, under the name Haddam Neck Church, and met out of a parishioner's home. The next year, the church built its current Midwood Farm Road location and changed its name to East Hampton Bible Church (EHBC).

The new location made sense at the time. The members were just happy to have a permanent spot, and churches are allowed in most

all zones. Also, it was a residential, quite rural, area, a good way from the center of town, so the church was able to get a good deal financially on the property.

In one form or another, the church has actually been planning a move from its present location since 2006. That year, church leaders put the building on the market, but they never moved because a suitable interim spot was never found. However, they were contacted by organizers of the Connecticut Korean Central United Methodist Church, who were looking for a location.

When it became clear that EHBC would not be able to move, church leaders told the Methodist church that they would be happy to share the building. Martin said EHBC has basically just charged the Methodist church for the cost of utilities during its service time. According to Martin, that arrangement has worked out well, with EHBC meeting at 9:30 a.m. on Sundays, and the Methodist Church's service (which is in Korean) following at 11:30. Martin estimated that the closing of the sale between the two churches would happen in January or February.

On a couple of occasions, the churches have actually teamed up for a joint service. Martin said the Methodist church draws about 75 people on a typically Sunday, from not just East Hampton, but places like Hartford, Old Saybrook and East Hartford.

EHBC has about 175 people at its services each week and contains about 70 registered members, Martin said.

While Martin is the lead pastor, there are two other staff members. Tom Ingala is the administrative pastor, while Pete Zipf is the youth pastor.

Church leaders have not yet drawn up any professional plans for a building and have not

yet had any contact with the town. And while the plan all along has been to make the church more of a community center, Martin said that it was just a couple months ago that the church had what he called a "light bulb" moment." He said it may sound hard to believe, but it was then that the church realized, "It doesn't make a lot of sense for us to decide what is right for the community." So before any planning for a new building goes any further, Hope Church plans to solicit input from the town and the residents at large. As of this week, he was unsure exactly how that would happen, but thought some sort of online survey might be one way to approach it.

Martin said the church's vision was to own the new building and pay for the entire cost of constructing it. He made clear that the church is not looking for the town or public-at-large to kick in any money for the construction.

While the church does not have any specific building fund to speak of, Martin said the sale of the existing building would be put toward the new building.

However, he hoped the building would be used as a community center for the majority of the week, potentially housing anything Parks and Recreation events to free medical screenings, to Lions Club or Rotary meetings.

"It's really open to a broad array of groups or people," figured Martin.

Reaching out to the community is nothing new for the church, which has overseen Lydia's Closet for years. This free store offers "nice, gently used clothing," Martin said, for any who need it, and is not limited to East Hampton residents.

In addition to the main service, the church also has children's programs on Sunday a youth groups called Alien Youth that holds a number

of events, including their monthly regular meeting, "Access." Locations for Alien Youth events in the past include the Goff House and Epoch Arts. The church also has "life groups," which are basically opportunities for home fellowship.

The church also gets involved with efforts outside the immediate area. In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, a number of people from the church went on several different work trips to Biloxi, MS, which included the rebuilding of a ravaged church.

Though meeting in a school, where the area will have to be unpacked and packed up again every week, the arrangement is not without a silver lining. "It keeps us a little from being a church up on a hill," comfortable and isolated from the rest of the community. Martin figured the interim location will keep Hope Church on its toes, ready to adapt to the needs of the community. "It's very easy for any church to get real comfortable," Martin said.

Martin links this with the overarching plan for the church. "This church has had a shift in identity over the last several years," he said. He admitted the church "had a reputation for being a little judgmental," but said that in recent years, the focus of the church has shifted from "grace for broken people rather than judgment for broken people."

Martin boiled it down to, "We've got to be people of hope. We believe God brings hope. We want to be that kind of people."

Services for Hope Church will commence Sunday, Jan. 11, at the East Hampton High School auditorium. All are welcome.

More information is available by phone at 267-9607 or at the church's new website, cthope.com. (Its old website, ctehbc.com, is also currently running parallel, but will be discontinued soon.)

Belltown Gets New Jewelry Store

by Michael McCoy

Heather March wanted to open her new jewelry store, Heather's Fine Jewelry, in time for holiday shopping, as that's prime time for a jeweler.

And she just made it, as the store launched on the so-called "Black Friday," Nov. 28, the day after Thanksgiving.

The new Heather's Fine Jewelry is located at 34 East High St. (Route 66), and is actually March's second store in the area. She and her husband, Sean Soltanpanah, also own Heather's Fine Jewelry in Glastonbury; Soltanpanah runs the Glastonbury store, while March operates the Belltown one.

The two used to manage a jewelry store in West Hartford, which is also where they met. March began working there in November 2002. At the time, she was doing graphic design work out of her home, but had finished all her current projects. So, she took what she thought was a seasonal job. Instead, March stayed on as she was immediately enamored by the position.

"It was always a happy environment," she said, "because people were there to get gifts for people they love."

Looking for more flexibility in their schedules, March and Soltanpanah decided to open their own store. The Glastonbury Heather's Fine Jewelry opened in 2005, just three months after March gave birth to the couple's son, Hunter. (She also has a 7-year-old stepson named Alex.)

The couple pooled their talents to start the business. In addition to both having years of experience selling jewelry, Soltanpanah is a graduate of the American Institute of Diamond Cutting in Florida, while March holds a degree in marketing and graphic design, allowing her to not just manage the business' website (www.heathersjewelry.com), but to design all the advertising and promotional materials.

March and her husband had informally kicked around the idea of a second store for a while, but had not pursued it. Then, this summer, they were camping in Lebanon, and their neighbors there "kept saying great things about East Hampton."

March and Soltanpanah were thinking about moving from East Hartford, so they began driving through East Hampton, looking at houses. And while they were on that search, they came across a vacated building on East High Street,

where Rosebuds Florist used to be. Four days later, Sept. 1, they signed the lease.

So the couple immediately got to work. Over the next three months, they painted the walls and ceilings, resanded the floors, and put in new ones. They installed display cases and track lighting. They even set up a sitting for area, designed for men to lounge while their better halves browse. A television is on the way.

"We spent our entire Thanksgiving here," March said, adding that she did not even have time to step out for Thanksgiving dinner; instead, her cousin brought some food by, which March heated up next door at Food Bag.

While the couple used to work side by side, March now runs the East Hampton store, while her husband runs the Glastonbury.

"My jewelry is definitely out-of-the-box," March said, which makes sense, since, she added, "I'm definitely an out-of-the-box kind of person."

March said she does not keep stocking the same pieces over and over, but can special order virtually anything. Heather's Fine Jewelry has a relationship with a cooperative of three New York goldsmiths.

She said she and her husband attend trade shows four or five times a year in places like New York City or Las Vegas to stay current.

"I don't want to be anything like a corporate chain," March said, and instead called the store "the new style mom and pop jewelry store."

Heather's carries gold, sterling silver, precious and semi-precious stones, homemade beads, and the recent craze, European Charm Bracelets by Biagi. They also sell collectible purses by Mary Frances.

In addition, they also do repairs, engraving and setting. They also buy collectible and scrap gold, as well as estate pieces.

About four or five times a year, Heather's conducts a trunk show, where one of their suppliers will showcase their whole line. The East Hampton location will be perfect for this, as March noted the new store is about four times as big as the 500-square-foot one in Glastonbury. "If you have 10 people in there, you're cramped," she said.

In Glastonbury, March said, "We do a lot of charity events." In February, she took part in the Sweethearts Dance that Glastonbury stu-



Heather March opened Heather's Fine Jewelry on East High Street late last month. This is her second area store; she and husband Sean Soltanpanah also own Heather's Fine Jewelry in Glastonbury.

dents put on at Glastonbury Hills Country Club, which benefited Habitat For Humanity. She also added the Glastonbury business usually coordinates an event with Protectors of Animals around Christmastime. March said she hoped to do something similar in east Hampton, specifically singling out the Friends of Lake Pocotopaug.

Along this line, March has a soft spot for Locks of Love, and has donated just over four feet of her hair over the past six years. She said Heather's will give a \$25 gift card to anyone who donates to the cause.

So far, March said, the initial weeks for the Belltown location has been fruitful. The store has been doing "wonderful, better than I expected," she said, adding that she felt the town has greeted them with a "warm welcome."

Right now Heather's is offering a "buy two, get one free" sale on the glass charm beads.

(She noted that even if your bracelet or current charms are a brand other than Biagi, her beads are still compatible.) Also, a charm comes free with the purchase of a charm bracelet.

March admits she's been busy this Christmas season, but acknowledges it is the life of a jeweler. No matter what two people splitting themselves between two stores will never be easy. (As of this past Monday, March was working her 29th consecutive day at the store. But she appeared to take it in stride, figuring, "It's the busy time.")

Heather's Fine Jewelry is open for the holidays daily from 10:30 a.m.-7 p.m. (Call the store at 467-4848 for post-holiday hours.) March said pets are welcome, and her own golden retriever, Molly, visits form time to time.

The store accepts cash, checks, MasterCard and Visa. More information is available at www.heathersjewelry.com.

More Obituaries

Portland

Albert F. Schwantor

Albert F. Schwantor, 79, of Portland, died Tuesday, Dec. 16, at the Portland Care and Rehabilitation Center. He was the husband of Jo Berner and the late Barbara (Hale) Schwantor.

Born in Hartford, April 29, 1929, a son of the late Albert and Clara (Albrecht) Schwantor, he was a Portland resident for over 50 years. He had been employed as an executive for the United Technologies Corporation at the corporate headquarters in Hartford until his retirement. He was a veteran of the U.S. Army having served in the Korean War and was a lifelong member of the Shriners.

Besides his wife Jo, Al is survived by his children from his first marriage, his daughter Amy Wilson and her husband John of Charlotte, NC; his son Harry A. Schwantor of Gales Ferry; his grandchildren Adam Wilson, Seth Wilson, Elizabeth Schwantor, and David L. Schwantor, Jr.; his brother Anson A. Schwantor of WI, and his sister-in-law Elsie Hale of Portland.

Besides his first wife Barbara, he was predeceased by his son David L. Schwantor.

His family will receive relatives and friends in the Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland, Saturday, Dec. 20, from 11 a.m. until the time of his funeral service at noon. Interment will follow in Center Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, gifts in his memory may be sent to the Portland United Methodist Church, 381 Main St., Portland, CT 06481, or to the charity of one's choice.

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

Portland

Walter Sajek

Walter Sajek, 77, of Burr Street, Portland, died Saturday, Dec. 13, at Middlesex Hospital. He was born in Portland, the son of the late Albert and Marya (Pehota) Sajek. A veteran of the Korean War, he served with the U.S. Marines. Prior to his retirement, he was employed with Pratt and Whitney as a skilled tool and dye maker.

He is survived by a brother, Stanley Sajek of Portland; a sister, Mary Sajek of Portland; and several nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by three brothers, Joseph, Frank and Edward Sajek; and a sister, Helen Sajek.

The funeral liturgy will be held today, Friday, Dec. 19, at 11 a.m., at St. Mary Church of Czesochowa, South Main St., Middletown. Burial, with military honors, will be held in St. Mary Cemetery, Portland. Friends called at Biega Funeral Home, 3 Silver St., Middletown, today from 9:30-10:30 a.m.

Those who wish may make memorial contributions to Portland Volunteer Fire Department, P.O. Box 71, Portland, CT 06480 or to American Legion Post 69, P.O. Box 161, Portland, CT 06480.

Hebron

Rosemarie D. Murphy

Rosemarie D. Murphy, 80, of Port Orange, FL, formerly of Hebron, entered into eternal rest at 7:47 a.m. Sunday, Dec. 14, at her residence.

A memorial service will be held today, Friday, Dec. 19, in Florida. A memorial service will be held at a later date in Connecticut.

The family has requested that in lieu of flowers, memorials be made out to the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses.

Rosemarie was born Oct. 6, 1928, in Dover, NH, the daughter of John and Lillian Dowaliby. She was a graduate of the University of New Hampshire and of the Peter Bent Brigham School of Nursing in Boston. Rosemarie was a member of the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses in New Smyrna Beach. She was a registered nurse and dedicated her life for many years to helping others.

Survivors include her five children and their spouses: James (Jane) Murphy of Connecticut, John (Debie) Murphy of Connecticut, Ann (Robert) Murphy-Dubiel of Connecticut, Susan (Ken) Godburn of New York and Carol (Hal) Ballentine of Port Orange; and brother, James Dowaliby of Virginia.

She was preceded in death by her parents. Condolences may be shared with the family at www.lohmanfuneralhomes.com. Arrangements are under the careful direction of Lohman Funeral Home, Port Orange, FL.

Obituaries

Portland

Kathleen Scanlan Sullivan

Kathleen F. Scanlan Sullivan, 66, wife of Andrew Sullivan, of The Villages, FL and Farmington, passed away unexpectedly Nov. 23. Born in New Britain, June 21, 1942, a daughter of the late Thomas and Dorothy Shanahan Scanlan, she had lived in Farmington for many years before moving to The Villages.

She was a graduate of Mary Immaculate Academy in New Britain and had been employed by Travelers Insurance Company for over 40 years until her retirement. She was a member of the Greater Hartford Jaycees and had the well-deserved honor of being their first woman president in 1978/1979 and one of the first woman Jaycees presidents nationwide. She was a parishioner of St. Mary Star of the Sea Church in Unionville.

Besides her husband, she is survived by her sisters, Marilyn Scanlan White and her husband A. Thomas White, and Susan S. Bransfield and her husband Thomas Bransfield, all of Portland; her nephews and niece, Eamonn Bransfield and his fiancée Angela Penna of Middletown, Thomas Bransfield, and Meara Bransfield of Portland, step family members, several cousins and many close friends.

Her family will receive relatives and friends Saturday, Dec. 27, in the Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland, from 9:30-10:30 a.m., when the funeral cortege will proceed to the Church of St. Mary, where a Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 11 a.m. Interment will follow in St. Mary Cemetery, New Britain at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, gifts in her memory may be sent either to the American Stroke Association, division of American Heart Association, 5 Brookside Dr., Wallingford, CT 06492; Berman-Gund Laboratory, Mass. Eye and Ear Infirmary, 243 Charles St., Boston, MA 02114, or the Portland Food Bank, Town Hall, P.O. Box 71, Portland, CT 06480.

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

Marlborough

Anthony J. Maiorano

Anthony J. Maiorano, 85, of Marlborough, beloved husband of Helen C. Maiorano, died peacefully at home Monday, Dec. 15. He was born in Norwich on Feb. 12, 1923, the son of Prospero and Concetta (Sanquedolce) Maiorano.

Tony was a Navy veteran of World War II. Early in his career, he worked as a watchmaker at G. Fox and Company, and later became a self-employed carpenter. He was a lifetime member of the Knights of Columbus of Newington and a member of St. Joseph's Polish Society of Colchester. He was also a ham radio operator for 50 years, and a 38-year member of the AMRS program.

Tony was a 60-year resident of Marlborough and was active in the community. Beginning in 1969, he served on the town's Board of Selectmen. Then in 1973, he was elected the first full-time First Selectman and served in that capacity for 14 years until his retirement in 1987. Following his retirement, Tony continued to serve the community in various ways.

During his tenure as Marlborough's First Selectman, Tony served on several State boards and commissions, including the commission for the establishment of the State E-9-1-1 system, the Capital Region Council of Governments, and as chairman of the Connecticut Council of Small Towns. He was a member of Marlborough's first Board of Finance, later serving as the chairman for several terms, and a member of the building committee for the Marlborough Elementary School. Tony was a founding member of St. John Fisher Church where he was an active parishioner until his illness.

Tony leaves behind his wife, Helen, of 61 years; his two sons and their spouses, Michael and Diane Maiorano of Bolton, and Paul and Holly Maiorano of Andover; and his pride and joy, his granddaughter, Theresa. He is also survived by his siblings and their spouses: Dominic and Gloria Maiorano of Tucson, AZ, Carmela Ciriello of Norwich, Mary Bunyea of Mahopac, NY, Joseph and Johanna Maiorano of Glagler Beach, FL; and sister-in-law Lucille Maiorano of Taftville. Tony was predeceased by his older brother, Rosario, of Taftville, and brothers-in-law Arthur Bunyea and Alfred Ciriello.

A memorial funeral Mass will be held in St. John Fisher Church, on Jones Hollow Road in Marlborough, on Saturday, Dec. 20, at 10 a.m. There will be no calling hours. Burial will be private at the convenience of the family. In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be made to the Roy B. Pettengill Ambulance Association, Inc., P.O. Box 308, Marlborough, CT 06447; or Middlesex Hospice, 28 Crescent St., Middletown, CT 06457.

The Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, has care of the arrangements. To leave online condolences, visit www.spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Colchester

Royal Bernie Goodwin

Royal Bernie Goodwin, 88, of Dr. Foote Road, Colchester, widower of the late Beverly (Houghton) Goodwin, passed away Wednesday, Dec. 10, at the Middlesex Hospital in Middletown surrounded by his loving family. Born June 27, 1920, in Craftsbury, VT, he was a son of the late Bernie Royal Goodwin and Bessie Lane.

He proudly served with the 654th Army Engineer Division during World War II. Following the war, on Dec. 17, 1945, he and Beverly were married in Greensboro, VT. Together, they shared 58 wonderful years before she predeceased him on Feb. 26, 2004. Mr. Goodwin was an auto mechanic for many years before his retirement.

Survivors include four daughters, Jean Scroggins of Killingworth, Eleanor Bedell of Colchester, Linda Hnatiuk of Manitoba and Marilyn Moroch of Colchester; three sons, Steven, Mark and Brian, all of Colchester; a brother, Paul, of Iowa; nine grandchildren; six great-grandchildren; several nieces and nephews in Vermont and numerous extended family members and friends.

Friends called Monday, Dec. 15, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. A chapel service with full military honors was observed Monday night.

Donations in his memory may be made to the Colchester Hayward Volunteer Fire Department, 18-54 Old Hartford Road, Colchester, CT 06415.

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

East Hampton

Margaret Emelia Clark

Margaret Emelia (Nilsen) Clark, formerly of Haddam Neck, passed away early Friday morning, Dec. 12. She was born Jan. 22, 1923, the daughter of Harry Severen and Ruth (Dreilick) Nilsen.

One of five children, she is survived by brother, Harry William and his wife Mary Louise (Heidt); her brother, John Arthur; and her sister, Ruth Emma Yates.

Her other sister, Myrtle Henrietta, as well as husband Robert William Olsen preceded her in death, as did her husband Robert Selden Clark, who died in 1985.

She is also survived by her three children, 10 grandchildren, and 11 great-grandchildren. Her children are: - Thurston and his wife Maryellen Elisabeth (James). They have four children and five grandchildren.

- Carylyn Mildred Grandos. She has four daughters and six grandchildren.

- Anita Louise, husband Wayne Maurice Sinclair, their son Raymond Joseph and their daughter Nicole Marie.

Margaret spent most of her life in Haddam Neck. She grew up on a farm there and except for a brief time as a secretary in Middletown lived within a block of where she grew up. She met her husband-to-be Robert while selling eggs door to door. Both attended the East Hampton school system. She was active in several community groups, including the Haddam Neck Fair Association, and the Haddam Neck Congregational Church. For the latter, she was part of the Ladies Aid group, and held several positions in the church, for example, Deacon and secretary. She loved to sing in the choir with her sister Ruth.

The last four years of her life she was a resident of the Village at South Farms, an assisted living facility in Middletown. There she was active in many projects and sang in their choir. Margaret loved the country town of Haddam Neck and was always found outside in the garden, mowing the lawn or just going for a walk down to the Connecticut river. But her greatest love was her grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She especially liked little boys, so whoever was the youngest boy at the time in her extended family got just a little bit more attention from her.

There were no calling hours, just a service on Wednesday, Dec. 17, at Haddam Neck Congregational Church, followed by a service at the gravesite, also in Haddam Neck.

Hebron

Merle Porter

Merle Natalie Jones Porter, beloved widow of G. Earl Porter, died peacefully at Hartford Hospital Sunday, Dec. 14. She was born June 17, 1923 at St. Joseph Hospital, Willimantic and was a lifelong resident of Hebron.

She married her lifelong best friend, G. Earl Porter, on Aug. 17, 1946, at St. Peter's Church in Hebron and they enjoyed 42 years together before his death in 1988. She was a graduate of Arnold College in New Haven. She was a physical education teacher for almost 30 years, teaching at Hawley High School in Newtown, Middletown High School and 23 years at East Hampton High School.

She was a talented woman athlete who played first base for the Burham and Brady Girls Softball Team of Hartford. "Jonesy," as she was known, appeared in games both at Madison Square Garden and Boston Garden. She was a horsewoman who loved to ride and hitch up the buggy, surrey and sleigh and drive her family around the pasture. She was an environmentalist, feminist and a lifelong liberal. She loved her family, all of her animals (especially her donkeys and goats), strawberries, ice cream, the holidays and birthday celebrations. One of her greatest pleasures was taking her grandchildren on wonderful adventures.

She leaves her three daughters, sons-in-law and four grandchildren: Kimberly and Brian Reed of Hebron, Patricia and Vincent Buttice and their sons Ryan and Kyle, of Newport Center, VT, and Gayle Kataja and her daughters Allyson and Kristen, of Glastonbury; and her sister and brother-in-law, Aceynath and David Porter; and numerous nieces and nephews. She was predeceased by her son-in-law Peter Kataja in 2007.

A memorial service will be held at St. Peter's Episcopal Church, 30 Church St., Hebron, at 11 a.m., today, Friday, Dec. 19, followed by burial in the family plot at St. Peter's Cemetery. A reception will follow in Phelps Hall, St. Peter's, at the conclusion of the service.

In lieu of flowers, please send donations in her memory to the Connecticut Humane Society, 701 Russell Road, Newington, CT, 06111 or to Connecticut Community Care, 43 Enterprise Drive, Bristol, CT, 06010.

The Potter Funeral Home, Willimantic assisted with arrangements. Visit www.potterfuneralhome.com for online memorial guestbook.

Salem

Dona J. DeRoche

Dona J. DeRoche, 66, of Salem, beloved companion of Terry Forsberg, passed away Saturday, Dec. 6, at the Parkview Specialty Hospital in Springfield, MA. Born July 4, 1942, in Portland, ME, she was the daughter of the late Donald and Eleanor (McDuffie) Leighton.

She attended Portland (ME) High School as well as Vinal Technical School and went on to study at the Ona W. Wilcox School of Nursing in Middletown. Dona was a licensed practical nurse for the state of Connecticut at Connecticut Valley Hospital and Norwich State Hospital for many years before her retirement in 1995.

She was an active member of The Congregational Church of Salem and was also a volunteer with Easter Seals. Her favorite week of the year was the one she spent with Terry and her family in Jonesport, ME every summer. She enjoyed doing crossword puzzles, e-mailing her friends and family, and spending time with her cats Gert and Mary, who will miss her dearly.

In addition to her longtime companion Terry, she is survived by her beloved nieces, Susanne Delisle of Scarborough, ME and Sandra Ventura of Westwood, MA; a sister, Barbara Sawyer and her three children, Ken Sawyer, Karen Kelley, and Paul Small.; a cousin Doris Pratt and her family of Fairfield, ME, and numerous extended family members and friends. She was predeceased by a sister, Mary Leahy.

A memorial service will be held Saturday, Dec. 20, at 1 p.m. directly at The Congregational Church of Salem, 244 Hartford Rd. (Rte. 85), Salem, with Pastor Timothy B. Dubeau officiating. There are no calling hours and burial will be private.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Dona DeRoche Scholarship Fund, c/o The Congregational Church of Salem.

The family would like to acknowledge and thank the many wonderful healthcare professionals who cared for Dona over the years, with a special thanks to the staff of Parkview Specialty Hospital in Springfield, MA.

Care of arrangements has been entrusted to the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester. For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Colchester

Bernard "Bernie" Meisler

Bernard "Bernie" Meisler, 90, of Colchester, passed away Sunday morning, Dec. 14, at the Westside HCC in Manchester. Born Sept. 26, 1918, in Colchester, he was the son of the late Philip and Rebecca (Schulman) Meisler.

Mr. Meisler was a truck driver for many years and had also worked as a machinist for Pratt & Whitney.

He is survived by six children and numerous grandchildren, nieces, nephews and extended family members and friends.

He was predeceased by two children and three sisters, Beatrice Sherman, late of Norwich, Sophie Kowalski, late of Willimantic and Pearl Searle, late of Durham.

May his memory be for a blessing.

Graveside funeral services were observed Monday, Dec. 15, at the Colchester Jewish Aid Cemetery, Gillette's Lane, Colchester.

Care of arrangements has been entrusted to the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester and the Hebrew Funeral Association.

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

East Hampton

Mildred Etta (Tomblor) Lynch

Mildred Etta (Tomblor) Lynch, 83, of Moodus and State College, PA, and formerly of East Hampton, widow of the late Michael R. Lynch, passed away Saturday, Dec. 13, at the Chestelm Health Care Center in Moodus, surrounded by her loving family. Born Feb. 22, 1925 in Philadelphia, PA, she was the daughter of the late Charles and Ida (Griesemer) Tomblor.

She earned her bachelor's degree in home economics education from Drexel University in 1946 and later earned her master's degree in education from Penn State in 1963. On Jan. 31, 1948, she and Michael were married and shared 35 wonderful years of marriage before he predeceased her on Aug. 31, 1983.

An accomplished woman, she was proud to be an educator, entrepreneur, administrator and volunteer. Some highlights of her career included being Instructor of Family Studies at the College of Human Development at Penn State, owner and operator of The Loft Art and Craft Gallery in State College, Executive Director of the PA Guild of Craftsmen and her appointment by the Governor to serve on the PA Travel Industry Advisory Council. She was also very proud to be a summer host for children in the "Fresh Air" program for 14 years. Above all else, she felt her greatest achievement was found in her family, to whom she was ever devoted.

She is survived by three children, Martha Lynch and husband Aldo Passarelli of East Hampton, Melany Ann Lynch of Spring Mills, PA and Mark C. Lynch of State College, PA; four grandchildren, Cara and Ian Lynch-Passarelli and Rachel and Julian Lynch; and numerous extended family members and friends.

Mildred had lived with Martha in East Hampton for a time, before her convalescence.

Services will be observed in State College, PA, at the convenience of the family.

Mrs. Lynch was a volunteer for many agencies throughout her life. In her memory, donations may be made to the following groups that she was active with; The Salvation Army, 440 West Nyack Road, West Nyack, NY 10994, the American Cancer Society, 106 Franklin Commons, Franklin, CT 06254, UNICEF, 3 United Nations Plaza, NY, NY 10017, or to the charity of one's choice.

The family would like to extend their gratitude to the staff at Chestelm for the care and concern extended to Mildred during her time there.

Care of arrangements has been entrusted to the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester. For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

