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## Annual Harvest Fair Returns to Hebron

by Sarah McCoy

It's that time of year again. The time when summer's heat is waning and families are returning from vacation. It can only mean one thing.

No, not the start of school. The Hebron Harvest Fair is back.

The Hebron Lions Club will open its fairgrounds for the 38th annual fair next weekend with a smattering of food, entertainment, food, rides, food, animals, crafts ... oh yeah, and food too.

The Harvest Fair begins Thursday, Sept. 4, and will run until Sunday, Sept. 7. The four-day event takes place on the Lions Fairgrounds on Route 85.

This year's fair includes many favorites from years past, including Reithoffer's Shows, which provided the carnival rides last year. Additionally, fairgoers can expect to see most of the same food vendors, as well as local band Columbia Fields, which gathered a huge crowd at last year's fair. They will play on the main stage on Friday at 8 p.m.

However, this year's fair also includes some new highlights.

The main off-season project for the Hebron Lions Club was the leveling and paving of the carnival area. This renova-

tion will, according to Assistant Fair Superintendent John Johnson Jr., allow for easier and safer walking for visitors. Also, because of the flat ground, Reithoffer's Shows will be running more rides, Johnson said, including Tango, a large roller coaster.

Behind the leadership of Lions Club member Richard Griswold, the fair will also include a larger family entertainment area. This section of the fair, which Johnson dubbed the "agritainment" area, will include the Birds of Prey show, which has been a popular attraction at the Hebron Maple Fest each March, and a pig racing arena.

According to Johnson, there hasn't been pig racing at the Hebron Harvest Fair in over five years.

There are approximately 70 members of the Hebron Lions Club. Throughout the year, club members work to plan and prepare for their biggest fundraiser, the Harvest Fair. Last year the club was able to give away over \$110,000 to various charities and organizations, largely through the money raised by the fair.

"I would say over 90 percent of the

money we give away is a result of the fair," Fair Superintendent Steve Beauchene said. "If people support our fair we can support groups that really do great things."

All Lions clubs are committed to eye research and providing reading assistance to those who need it. The Hebron Lions also gives annually to local groups such as AHM Youth and Family Services, the Douglas Library, and Hebron Interfaith Human Services.

In total the club has given away \$1.8 million since the fair began in 1970.

Volunteers have put "endless" hours into preparing the grounds and booking vendors for the annual event all in the name of community and charity, Beauchene said.

"We come together as people with a common goal," he said. "We want to create a fair that people enjoy and that brings in enough funds to contribute to our charitable side."

This year's Hebron Harvest Fair will run Thursday, September 4, from 4-10 p.m., Friday from noon-11 p.m., Saturday from 9 a.m.-8 p.m., and Sunday from 9 a.m.-8 p.m. Tickets are \$9 on Thursday and Friday, \$10 on Saturday and Sunday. Chil-

dren under 12 are admitted free of charge with an adult. Admission for senior citizens is free on Friday from noon-4 p.m.

Tickets will be available at the fair gates or by visiting the Hebron Harvest Fair's web site, [www.hebronharvestfair.com](http://www.hebronharvestfair.com).

Also online is the fair schedule with the list of activities and times. The main musical event this year will be America. This English-American band first rose to fame in the 1970s and went on to record number one hits such as "A Horse with No Name" and "Ventura Highway." They will perform at the fair on Sunday at 3 p.m.

Other highlights include the Demolition Derby on Thursday at 7:30 p.m. and the Figure 8 Demolition Derby on Friday at 6:30 p.m.

Those interested in the carnival rides will have the option of purchasing individual tickets or bracelets for unlimited riding during specific time slots. The bracelets are \$20 on the fair's website or \$25 at the fair. There are five separate time slots for the unlimited riding option: all day on Thursday, Friday from noon-5 p.m., Friday from 5-11 p.m., Saturday 10 a.m.-2 p.m., and Saturday noon-8 p.m.

## Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

As I'm sure many of you did, I spent some time this week watching the Democratic convention on TV. While Barack Obama's acceptance speech occurred after press time, the earlier events of the week did not, and this included Hillary Clinton's speech Tuesday night.

Her speech did not disappoint. In the days leading up to Tuesday, various media pundits spent a lot of ink writing about her speech, and whether she'd be able to convince her supporters to now back Obama. And while we won't really know if she was successful until November, on Tuesday night she sure did give it her level best. Not only did she clearly throw her support behind Obama, she basically threw down a challenge to those who voted for her in the winter and spring. After reading off a list of reasons why she ran, she asked her supporters, were they in the campaign just for her, or were they in it for the issues for which she stood?

It was a point I'm glad she made. Because I've got to be honest, I've been a little confused by the various polls that have come out in recent weeks, indicating that a decent-sized number of Hillary supporters are either going to vote for McCain in November or just stay home. In fact, a CNN poll taken just days ago (Aug. 23 and 24) shows only 66 percent of Hillary supporters saying they'll vote for Obama in the fall. Granted, Obama's still got the majority of Hillary supporters, but we've all seen in recent years how just a few thousand votes really can make a difference.

I voted for Hillary in the primary in February, but I had no problem moving over to Obama after she withdrew from the race. I just sort of assumed most Hillary supporters would do the same. After all, when it comes down to it, Hillary and Obama stand for a lot of the same issues. So, that's why I was glad she said what she said Tuesday night. This election isn't all about her, or any one person. It's about getting a Democrat back in the White House, someone who can help to get this country off the unfortunate path we've been on for the past eight years.

Hillary also seemed looser Tuesday night than in earlier speeches I'd seen her give when she was still campaigning for the Presidency. Even when she would win primaries, and was giving victory speeches, her line readings just seemed flat, rehearsed (I realize all candidates rehearse their speeches ahead of time; you could just really, really tell it with her) and just not very inspiring. The contrast between her and her husband just really stood out for me, since Bill Clinton could flat out give a speech. He just had an effervescent appeal to him, and kept speeches lively and interesting, and – most of the time – could really get you wrapped up in whatever cause he was speaking about. (Our current President, on the other hand, has had this annoying tendency to lean over the podium and, with a smirk, talk down to people.)

Hillary even injected some humor into her

speech, including that of the self-deprecating variety, as when she referred to her champions as “the sisterhood of the traveling pantsuits.” And later on in her speech, she said it made sense both Bush and McCain were going to be in the Twin Cities next week (the Republican convention is being held next week in Minneapolis-St. Paul) since, as she put it, “these days they're awfully hard to tell apart.” The line got a roar of approval from the crowd.

So, it was a good speech. And, like I said earlier, while we won't know until Election Day whether she won enough of her supporters over to the Obama side, I certainly hope she did.

\* \* \*

As I'm sure most of you know by now (and for those of you who don't, go get the *Rivereast* from two weeks ago. Go ahead. I'll be here when you get back), the Marlborough Barn will unfortunately soon be closing its doors. There has been a good deal of media coverage about it, too. In addition to the cover story we had two weeks ago, our sister paper *The Glastonbury Citizen* also had a big story about it, as did the *Journal Inquirer* in Manchester. And I'm sure there have been other papers that have mentioned it as well. As word has spread, people appear to be really flocking to the store. I heard this week there's currently a two-hour wait, just to get in! That's really a tribute to the high-quality enterprise they've run over there. It's nice to see so many people wanting to pay the landmark store one last visit.

If you haven't yet gotten out to the Barn, don't worry, you've still got time. The sale is still continuing; this weekend's hours are today (Friday) until 9 p.m., from 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Saturday and Sunday and then from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. on Monday.

\* \* \*

I discovered a new taste sensation last weekend. I was down in New Jersey, visiting a friend, and we went to a place called the Brownstone Diner & Pancake Factory for breakfast. As the name of the restaurant suggested, it was big on pancakes. And its specialty proved just too good to pass up: scrambled eggs, sausage and cheese, wrapped up in a pancake. It was like a giant breakfast burrito, only with a pancake in place of the tortilla. And what a pancake it was: flavorful and very moist, the kind of pancake that you pour syrup on and it soaks it right up, like a beautiful sponge.

Afterward (to help walk off some of the huge amount of calories I'd no doubt just ingested), my friend and I went walking around Liberty State Park in Jersey City. I'd never been there before. It's a beautiful park, and offers a great view of the New York City skyline, as well as the Statue of Liberty. Well, her backside anyway. (I'm sure I could make a joke about the Statue of Liberty showing her butt to New Jersey, if I really wanted to. But I'll be nice.)

\* \* \*

See you next week.



Five-time Emmy award winner Karyl Evans recently signed a contract to serve as executive producer of the film *Testimonies of a Quiet American Town*, a joint venture between Hebron resident Matt Troy and the Hebron Historical Society. Evans' hiring was funded through a \$10,000 grant the Historical Society secured through the CT Commission on Culture and Tourism.

## Peters Film Nets Emmy-Winning Producer in Hebron

by Sarah McCoy

What started out as a small film about Cesar and Lewis Peters has turned into a large-scale professional documentary, complete with an Emmy award-winning executive producer, thanks to a grant secured by the Hebron Historical Society.

The artistic eye of Hebron resident and current film school student Matt Troy, combined with the historical knowledge and resources of the Historical Society, looks to be an exciting pairing, as they prepare for filming next spring.

In 2006, Troy approached Historical Society President Donna McCalla with an idea of making a film about the two former Hebron residents who, in 1774, were captured and almost sold into slavery only to be saved by their townspeople. The Historical Society jumped on board and filming was scheduled for this past May.

As Troy prepared for filming, McCalla began hunting for grants. “As is common in the film industry, we rely on our budget to set the schedule,” Troy said.

Realizing they had an opportunity to secure additional funding for the production, Troy and the Historical Society agreed to postpone filming in hopes of raising money to improve the quality of the endeavor.

Earlier this spring, McCalla received word that the production had received a \$10,000 Special Initiatives Grant (SIG) from the Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism. That money allowed the production team to hire Karyl Evans as executive producer of the film as well as a certified historian for the film.

Evans is a five-time Emmy award winner and has worked on a number of productions dealing with slavery in New England including the Steven Spielberg film *Amistad*. McCalla first met Evans as they both worked on a Yale University documentary on the Peters story in 2006.

“We're thrilled to have this opportunity to work with Karyl,” McCalla said. “Her vast

knowledge and experience in producing films on slavery and abolitionism has already helped us significantly in framing the final project.”

The Historical Society has yet to hire the certified historian for the project.

In addition to receiving the \$10,000 grant, the Historical Society was also invited by the Commission on Culture and Tourism to apply for a second SIG to cover the remaining costs of the film, \$46,362. That would bring the total budget for the project to \$62,474.

McCalla expects to hear whether the production will receive the grant in November. She wouldn't go so far as saying she's expecting the grant, but McCalla is optimistic about their chances.

The film is entitled *Testimonies of a Quiet New England Town*. It will be 26 minutes in length, to coincide with a half-hour time slot on such television channels as Connecticut Public Television (CPTV).

In addition to submitting the film to festivals and television stations, McCalla reported that the production crew is also looking to hire a certified education professional. “We hope to be able to submit to the state Department of Education not just a film but curriculum material to go along with the film so teachers can tell the story of Cesar and Lewis in a way that fits into their certified curriculum,” she said.

The filming, according to Troy, will focus mainly on the courtroom scenes where Cesar and Lewis' future hangs in the balance. Their abduction will be shown through character flashbacks. “It's about the drama in decisions and the actions that decide their fates,” Troy said.

There will be five or six principal cast members, with 30-50 extras. Troy anticipates holding open casting calls in Hebron over the winter.

“It has, and always will be, a story about Hebron, for Hebron and with Hebron,” he said.

# Two Charged in Theft of DOT Steel Beams in Colchester

by Kristina Histen

Two Norwich men have been charged in relation to the 2005 theft of steel bridge I-beams from the state Department of Transportation (DOT) garage in Colchester, which resulted in a loss of approximately \$8,000, State Police said.

In 2005, state police received a complaint from the state DOT that two 30 foot steel bridge I-beams had disappeared from the DOT garage some time during Columbus Day weekend.

After what police described as a "lengthy and extensive investigation," Eric Tobey Sr., 47, of 10 Aspen Court, Norwich, was charged with second-degree larceny last Monday, Aug. 18, and Jon Barass, 48, of 15 Grosvenor Place, Norwich, was charged with second-degree conspiracy to commit larceny last Thursday, Aug. 21, police said.

According to an arrest warrant affidavit on file at Norwich Superior Court, it was originally believed to be a possibility that the beams were removed by another state agency for an unknown project. Witness statements from DOT employees suggested that heavy-duty equipment would be required to remove and transport the beams, it said, which is what led employees to believe another agency had removed them.

However, when the investigation was taken over by Detective Christopher Greer of the Eastern District Major Crime Squad in December 2006, interviews with family and friends of Tobey Sr. indicated that he was involved.

That month, according to the affidavit, Tobey Sr.'s son's mother said she had actually witnessed Tobey Sr. and another DOT employee allegedly use a front-end loader to lift the beams so they could be cut up into smaller pieces and removed from the property. She also said that Tobey Sr. allegedly used to take "light poles,"

"light heads" and "spools of wire" from DOT locations, the affidavit said.

In March 2007, Tobey Sr.'s daughter gave a written statement that she had been present on several occasions with her father when he allegedly took scrap metal from D.W. Scrap in Montville and other scrap metal from the Montville DOT Electrical Station. In July 2007, Greer spoke with the DOT Transport Distribution Electrical Supervisor at the Montville station about items that had been stolen from that location. Around that time, it was rumored that Barass was involved with the missing I-Beams, the court documents said.

Then, in August 2007, Tobey Sr.'s son gave a written statement that said he was at the Colchester DOT garage sometime in the fall of 2005 when his father was allegedly cutting and loading steel beams into his red mason dump truck. According to the statement, another DOT worker was with Tobey Sr. and helped get the DOT front-end loader from the garage to lift the beams.

This past February, a witness told police he once overheard Tobey Sr. supposedly talking about pulling some heavyweight scrap from a DOT location that turned out to be steel beams which were cut up into smaller lengths and then loaded onto a trailer, the documents said.

In April, interviews with Tobey Sr.'s other son indicated that his father had allegedly called him on the Wednesday before the long holiday weekend in October 2005, the affidavit said. Tobey Sr. allegedly asked his son to bring him a couple of acetylene torches to cut up some steel beams at the DOT garage in Colchester. On that Saturday, Oct. 8, 2005, the son being interviewed said he and his brother were allegedly told by their father to bring the mason dump truck to the Colchester garage. Although

the one son being interviewed did not go, his brother later told him that their father and another man had supposedly cut up steel beams and used a DOT loader to put them into the dump truck, the documents said.

In June, a DOT employee was interviewed about his involvement in the stolen beams. Although he was aware of the situation, he denied being a part of it and mentioned that he had heard Tobey Sr. and possibly Barass were involved in the theft, the affidavit said.

According to the affidavit, Barass was also interviewed in June. He gave a written statement that he and Tobey Sr. had worked together at DOT for about eight years. He remembered meeting Tobey Sr. at the Colchester DOT garage on a Saturday about three years ago, during Columbus Day weekend. Barass told police Tobey Sr. had told him he would give him a "couple of hundred bucks" to help him with the steel beams. When he arrived at the garage, Tobey Sr. was already there with his red mason dump truck, Barass told police, and allegedly asked him to get the front-end loader from the garage to pick up the beams so they could be cut into smaller pieces.

Tobey Sr. allegedly used an acetylene torch to cut the beams into four pieces and then loaded them onto the flatbed trailer attached to the dump truck, according to the affidavit. When they were done loading the steel, the court documents said, Barass supposedly followed Tobey Sr. to D.W. Scrap in Montville. Tobey Sr. allegedly scrapped the steel and then Barass followed him to his house, where they dropped off the mason dump truck. Tobey Sr. apparently gave him \$200 in cash for helping him. When state troopers showed up asking about the missing steel a few days later, Tobey Sr. allegedly told Barass not to worry about anything because

the police would never find the steel, Barass told police.

Greer followed up at possible locations as to where Tobey Sr. may have scrapped the beams, the affidavit said. Sources close to Tobey Sr. said he regularly did business with D.W. Transport/CT Scrap in Montville, Calamari's Recycling Co. Inc. in Essex and Schiavones/Metal Management Inc. in North Haven, the court documents said.

When Greer was able to meet with the office manager from CT Scrap last month, she pulled up the October 2005 Certified Public Scale receipts, the documents said. A receipt from Saturday, Oct. 8, 2005, was found with Tobey Sr.'s name on it showing he was paid for approximately eight tons of unprepared steel and received \$736 in cash, the affidavit said.

When Greer contacted the DOT Special Investigator regarding the possible weight and value of the beams last month, he found out that after a consultation with DOT Bridge Engineers, a single 20-30 ft. steel I-beam should weigh approximately four tons and is valued at approximately \$4,000.

Tobey Sr. was interviewed on Aug. 11, and denied any involvement in the missing steel I-beams, the affidavit said. Tobey Sr.'s record revealed arrests for violation of probation, first-degree burglary, second-degree burglary, third-degree burglary, first-degree larceny, second-degree larceny, breach of peace and disorderly conduct, the affidavit said.

Tobey Sr. was held on a \$100,000 bond with a court date of Aug. 19 at G.A. 21 in Norwich. It has been continued until Sept. 15. Barass was processed and released on a \$10,000 non-surety bond with a court date of Sept. 4 at G.A. 21 in Norwich.

# Governor Pays a Visit to Valley View Kids in Portland

by Michael McCoy

Portland students may have a long academic year ahead of them, but for kids in Pre-Kindergarten to second grade, the first day of school Thursday had a special feel to it.

At exactly 8:30 a.m. Thursday, Aug. 28, as buses were unloading, Gov. M. Jodi Rell stepped on the sidewalk at Valley View to welcome students back from their summer vacations.

As students stepped off their buses, they may not have known what they were in for. The scene included, Board of Education Chairman Chris Phelps, selectman Carl Chudzik, First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield, superintendent Sally Doyen, principal Deborah Graner, Sergeant Jim Kelly, Rell and her Secret Service, a handful of media members – and quite a few excited parents with cameras, more than one of which directed their children, "Shake hands with this woman."

It was unclear just how many of the backpacked students realized just who this lady on the sidewalk was. One girl, upon meeting with the governor, told her what teacher she was assigned to for the year. She asked Rell, "Is she nice?"

"Absolutely wonderful," responded the governor.

Later while a boy sporting Yankees garb approached her, Rell said, "A fellow Yankees fan! Nice to meet you!"

Recounting this story to town officials a few moments later, she laughed, "He looked at me

like I lost my mind!"

Phelps said the governor stopping by was "a great way to really celebrate the start of the school year." He also applauded Rell's enthusiasm for education, and that of early childhood in particular.

"It adds a little something special to the first day of school," Doyen said about Rell's visit. She also pointed out that, serendipitously enough, the students would attend an assembly later that morning concerning the Governor's Reading Challenge, which encouraged kids to keep the pages turning and their imaginations working during the hot months. During the assembly the students would discuss what they read in July and August.

Doyen also expressed her delight over how many students she heard asked, "Oh, is this Governor Rell?"

"Oh, it was thrilling," Bransfield said. "It was special day to have our governor to start the school year."

She continued, "She really is a wonderful governor, and we are so happy to see her."

Bransfield recalled that Rell was at the Portland schools previously. In 2004, while Lieutenant Governor, she visited Brownstone School, to recognize the students for sending care packages to U.S. troops.

While many kids might view the back to school blues with trepidation, the 380 or so pupils at Valley View were sent into the year in gubernatorial fashion.



Gov. M. Jodi Rell, left, welcomes students at Valley View School Thursday, while Superintendent of Schools Sally Doyen looks on.



**Cromwell resident Joe Branciforte moved his business, Appliance Discounters, from Middletown to Portland earlier this year. The business is now located at 162 Main St.**

## Portland Now Has Appliance Retailer Thanks to Cromwell Man

by Michael McCoy

Tucked between the Arrigoni Bridge and Route 66 in Portland is Appliance Discounters, which moved to town in April

Joe Branciforte, a lifelong Cromwell resident, was working odd jobs at 7Eleven and tending bar, while pinching every penny, a decision that paid off.

"I never got anywhere with college, so I saved my money," remembered Branciforte, who graduated from Cromwell High School in 1977.

In July 1994, he and his business partner, Bill Dralle, who had worked for JP Appliance, opened Appliance Discounters at 175 East Main St. in Middletown. Dralle left the business just a year later, so the operation has been all Branciforte for the past 13 years.

Eventually, Branciforte said, he realized he needed more space for his business. Also, he said, the Middletown location was at "a big intersection, but it wasn't exactly a main drag."

The need for a larger location became "very critical," Branciforte said, when insurance rates went up on commercial vehicles about a year ago. "I ended up not using my box truck," he said. And, with a store that's entire square footage came to only 600, he had depended on that truck for storage.

In February, Branciforte found out that the 162 Main St. location in Portland was available, as the building's tenant, Cycles Unlimited, had gone out of business late last year. He also learned the building was owned by one of his customers, Tim Welch.

He said the space in the new building "is twice as big as what I had, and there's more exposure too." The Portland location has about 14,000 square feet.

So, Branciforte secured the spot in April and spent the better part of that month moving. He

opened by the end of the month. "It was really the perfect set-up," he said.

However, since the move, "there hasn't been a very significant pick-up" in business, Branciforte said. He figured that, though the location is optimal, a sizable tree obstructs the view of his sign.

Appliance Discounters offers sales, as well as service. Branciforte gets his stock from Northeast Appliance Recyclers in West Haven, and sells washers, dryers, stoves, refrigerators, air conditioners, and, occasionally, microwaves. The business accepts MasterCard, Visa, as well as cash. Most items carry a 30-day warranty with them.

Though Branciforte subcontracts much of the service, he also performs a lot of it on his own. He picked most of these skills up from his former coworker Jim Fitzgerald, who carries 30 years of experience with him.

Appliance Discounters carries an array of lines, but Branciforte made special mention of one: "The older Maytags were really built to last." Thanks to the "huge warehouse" at northeast, Branciforte is also able to acquire special requests that may not be in his store at a given time.

Furthermore, Branciforte has continued his longtime offer: any dryer in the store is \$99 with the purchase of a washer at regular price. The business also offers free local delivery, which extends to the Middletown/Portland/Cromwell area.

Appliance Discounters is open Monday through Friday, from 10 a.m.-5 p.m., and Saturday from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. It is located near Portland Restaurant and can be reached by phone at 346-5722.

### Colchester Police News

8/14-Stefanie Lafferty, 28, of Groton, turned herself in for the charges of first-degree larceny, third-degree larceny, first-degree forgery, operating unregistered vehicle, failure to have insurance and operating motor vehicle while under suspension, State Police said.

8/19-Paul Kus, 38, of 319 Meadowgate, Granby, was charged with first-degree forgery, illegal use and third-degree larceny, State Police said.

8/21-A 17-year-old youthful offender was charged with DWI, failure to drive in established lane and operation without insurance, State Police said.

8/21-Robert Rutchick, 33, of 77 Hillcrest Ave., Middletown, was charged with two counts of first-degree failure to appear, State Police said.

8/21-Danny Spaulding, 25, 83 Lebanon Ave., was charged with disorderly conduct and reckless endangerment, State Police said.

8/22-Danny Spaulding, 25, of 83 Lebanon Ave., was charged with third-degree assault, State Police said.

8/22-Marta Kutcheon, 54, of West Hartford, was charged with DUI and failure to maintain lane, State Police said.

### East Hampton Police News

8/13 — Janice E. Wilkie, 51, of 30 North Maple St., was issued a ticket for operating an unregistered motor vehicle, East Hampton Police said.

8/18 — A 16-year-old male juvenile was issued a ticket for failure to obey a traffic signal, police said.

8/19 — Christiane Elyosius, 56, of 33 West High St., was issued a ticket for using a cell phone while operating a motor vehicle, police said.

8/20 — Stephanie A. Broad, 27, of 36 Ridgeview Dr., was issued a ticket for using a cell phone while operating a motor vehicle.

8/19 — Robin Baldelli, 45, of 205 West High St., was arrested pursuant to a warrant on charges of attempt to obtain a controlled substance and second-degree forgery, police said.

## Propane Leak Forces Evacuation in Colchester

by Kristina Histen

A propane leak closed down parts of South Main Street and forced several downtown businesses to evacuate for about an hour last Thursday, Aug. 21.

The leak was dispatched to the Colchester Hayward Fire Department around 8:45 a.m. after a sulfur-like smell drifted through the center of town from Amerigas at 275 S. Main St. and headed toward Halls Hill Road, Fire Chief Walter Cox said. The smell was actually Mercaptan, an additive used in propane so it's easily detectible in case of a leak, because the gas in its natural state has no odor, Cox said.

Workers at Amerigas were going through the process of putting horizontal 1,000-gallon tanks out of service when the safety valve malfunctioned on one. A visible plume of vapor was released from the tank, which had approximately 400 gallons of propane still stored in it, Cox said. Because propane quickly freezes and chills, a white frosty plume could be smelled and seen moving in a northeast direction.

The Subway restaurant, Philips 66 gas station and businesses in the immediate area were evacuated and residents were encouraged to stay inside, Cox said. Parts of South Main Street and Halls Hill Road were blocked off right away.

Pagers notified emergency personnel, including the First Selectman, the Highway Department and the Public Works director, almost immediately. The town has done an extensive amount of emergency planning as they are always looking at ways to be better prepared for residents, First Selectman Linda Hodge said. After the June 13 fire at M&J Recycling, town officials realized they needed to communicate faster, Hodge said. Therefore, pagers were purchased that send out programmed information during a crisis situation to an emergency management team, she said.

"The people part of the team got the information at the same time and we were able to mobilize a whole lot faster," Hodge said.

Water nozzles were used on the plume itself to suppress the vapors, Cox said, and Amerigas was able to plug the leak area in time. No residents were affected.

"We were lucky that there was no fire," Cox said. "We were able to suppress the possibility of an explosion and any other events that we didn't want to occur. We were very fortunate to be able to handle it."

The whole event lasted about an hour with help from Salem, Gardner Lake, Bozrah and Hebron responding to the scene, Cox said.

## Water Restriction Finally Lifted in Colchester

by Kristina Histen

After two months, the voluntary water use restriction put into place for the town was finally lifted last Monday, Aug. 18.

After a review of the water levels held in storage coupled with enhanced production capabilities at the Taintor Hill Treatment Facilities, the Colchester Water Department informed its customers the voluntary restrictions regarding water use had been lifted.

"We wish to thank all of our customers who assisted us during these very challenging times," Water Department Supervisor Steve Klobukowski said in a press release last week. "Notwithstanding lifting of the voluntary restrictions, we continue to urge our customers to use water wisely."

Since last June, the town has been working on a \$2.6 million water treatment plant project. The Colchester Water Department has had difficulty maintaining adequate levels of water in storage, due to a number of necessary changes made in daily operations to accommodate the treatment plant reconstruction project. Some of the operations changes included renovations to the aeration tower providing temporary loss of Production Well No. 3, the department's primary source of supply, and a reduced pumping capacity at production Well No. 5A.

It also didn't help that the town alone had to use 150,000 gallons of water to put out the fire at M&J Recycling on June 13. Immedi-

ately following the fire, a mandatory water-use restriction was in effect for all but necessary needs. It wasn't until June 16 when the voluntary water-use restriction was put in place.

However, now that improvements at the aeration tower are complete and Well 5A is now pumping at a capacity to maintain desired storage tank water levels, the voluntary water-use restriction is no longer necessary.

"We were able to maintain an adequate supply with the decreased pumping capabilities we had," Public Works Director Mark Decker said. "We believe people were aware of it and certainly able to help us out. So it appears people were in compliance with the voluntary water-use restrictions."

It won't be until the whole construction project is totally complete that full production capabilities will be available, Decker said, but currently they are in good shape as far as meeting all of their demands. He believes the project will finish up sometime in October.

"I'm just really glad the citizens have been very good about cooperating," First Selectman Linda Hodge said, "and I'm really glad the restriction has been lifted. The water renovations are at the end point in being done ... and that part is very exciting as it will increase our capacity and be able to provide the water we're going to need for the business park expansion."

### Portland Police News

7/24 — A 15-year-old male was referred to Juvenile Court on charges of possession of less than four ounces of marijuana, Portland Police said.

8/7 — Christopher Loveland, 20, of 78 Spellman Point Rd., East Haddam, was charged with possession of less than four ounces of marijuana, police said.

8/13 — Todd B. Goodspeed, 18, of 129 Parker Rd., East Haddam, was charged with third-degree criminal mischief, possession of alcohol by a minor and disobeying signal of officer, police said.

8/13 — Jared F. O'Hearn, 18, of 300 Young St., East Hampton, was charged with possession of alcohol by a minor, police said.

8/13 — Brendan J. Turner, 18, of 22 Dog-

wood Dr., East Hampton, was charged with possession of alcohol by a minor, police said.

8/13 — Thomas J. Doran, 18, of 59 Freestone Ave., was charged with possession of alcohol by a minor, police said.

8/14 — Steven Ellam, 18, of 126 Middlesex Ave. Ext., was charged with second-degree threatening and disorderly conduct, police said.

8/16 — Ramon Quiles, 25, of 34 Chatham Ct., was charged with breach of peace and interfering with emergency call, police said.

8/16 — A 15-year-old female was referred to Juvenile Court on charges of third-degree assault, police said.

8/18 — A 16-year-old male was referred to Juvenile Court on charges of possession of drug paraphernalia, police said.

### Salem Police News

8/18-Kevin Holmgren, 54, of 47 Stonewall Rd., was charged with disorderly conduct and interfering with a 911 call, State Police said.

8/18-Richard Peavey, 41, of 4B Frontage Rd., Westerly, RI, was charged with third-degree larceny, State Police said.

### Andover Police News

8/23- Seth Constantine, 21, of 9 Harrison St., Montville, was charged with third-degree burglary, third-degree criminal mischief and fourth-degree larceny, State Police said.

8/23-Scott Kegler, 23, of 40C East Brook Heights, Mansfield, was charged with traveling unreasonably fast and weapons in vehicles, State Police said.

# Obituaries

## Colchester

### Walter J. Koss

Walter J. Koss, 87, of Colchester, husband of Norma Bertussi, died Friday, Aug. 22, while at sleep following a gathering of his loving family. Born Jan. 26, 1921, in Colchester, he was the son of the late Michael and Rozalia (Kobylarz) Koss. Walter had lived in Colchester and Marlborough for most of his life.

Walter had a long and successful career in the construction industry, owning a firm started after the end of World War II. Long after retirement he continued to enjoy following the industry, reviewing the work of peers around Connecticut and the country. Walter was also a proud member of the United States Army during World War II. On his first trip to Europe, he landed in Normandy with the 83rd Infantry Division. This tour of duty took him through northern France, Rhineland and the Ardennes. He earned a number of citations including the Bronze Star. While not one to be outspoken, he remained proud of his military service, our country, his profession and his heritage. He was a member of a number of military, construction industry and social groups reflecting these parts of his life.

Besides his devoted wife and long time companion Norma, he is survived by many nieces and nephews in Connecticut and afar. He was predeceased by his first wife, Helen (Planeta) Koss, three brothers, Adam Koss, Joseph Koss and Michael Koss, and four sisters, Stella Golnik, Mary Koss, Anna Woynar and Victoria Koss. The family extends its thanks to the nurses and doctors of Middlesex Hospital's Palliative and Hospice Care Unit for the help and kind treatment they provided to Walter.

Funeral Services were Tuesday, Aug. 26, in the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, with the Rev. Michael Giannitelli, Pastor of St. Andrew's Church, Colchester, officiating. Burial will follow in Saint Joseph's Cemetery in Colchester. Friends called at the Spencer Funeral Home Monday evening, Aug. 25. To leave online condolences or for directions, visit [www.spencerfuneralhomeinc.com](http://www.spencerfuneralhomeinc.com).

## Portland

### Emmi Mayr

Emmi Edle Schuller Mayr, 68, of William St., Portland, died Friday, Aug. 8, at Middlesex Hospital. Emmi was born in Austria Feb. 27, 1940, and had been a Portland resident for 40 years, and was a big part of the Portland community.

She spent most of her working days employed by David and Helen Hedstrom Carlson in the operation of the Carlson Farm, in Portland, where she was a caretaker and horse trainer. Emmi traveled extensively to Austria, India and Switzerland, and she loved all animals, but she did have her special dogs. Emmi was a healer who practiced the spiritual healing of Reiki.

She is survived by a nephew in Austria as well as her many special and spiritual friends. Her graveside funeral services will be held today, Friday, Aug. 29, at 10 a.m. at the Carlson family plot in the Swedish Cemetery in Portland. The Rev. Jane Hawken, Pastor of the First Congregational Church of Portland, will officiate.

In lieu of flowers, gifts in Emmi's name may be sent to the Arabian Horse Club of Connecticut, c/o Michelle Laudano, Treasurer, 250 Killingworth Tpke., Clinton, CT 06414-1122 or to the Doberman Pinscher Club of America, Rescue, c/o Robin Kelley, Treasurer, 17 George St., Framingham, MA 01702-8710. Arrangements are under the direction of the Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland. To leave an online expression of sympathy, visit [www.portlandmemorialfh.net](http://www.portlandmemorialfh.net).

## Colchester

### Margaret B. Stepp

Margaret B. Stepp, 77, of Old Lyme and formerly of Colchester, passed away Tuesday, Aug. 26, at Camelot Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in New London, surrounded by her loving family. Born Jan. 6, 1931, in Norwich, she was a daughter of the late George and Philomena (Dion) Perry. Mrs. Stepp was a Gater for Wyman-Gordon in Groton for many years before her retirement.

She is survived by four daughters, Linda Park of Norwich, Rose Saunders of Old Lyme, Karen Duncan of Ladson, SC, and Carole Stepp of Quaker Hill; three sons, Willis H. Stepp, III of Old Lyme, Richard Stepp of Colchester and David Stepp of Norwich; 12 grandchildren; five great-grandchildren; her sister, Emma Benko of Lorton, VA; and numerous nieces, nephews and friends.

She was predeceased by two infant children, George and Deborah Stepp.

She was an avid Yankees and Jets fan. She enjoyed reading, knitting and bowled for many years. Margaret looked forward to her frequent visits to her sister in Virginia and enjoyed going to DC with her nephew, Jeff. She was an animal lover and was especially close to Buster, her hero.

Friends may gather starting at 10:30 a.m. Saturday, Aug. 30, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester, before an 11 a.m. Memorial Service. Burial will be private and at the convenience of the family.

The family would like to thank her circle of angels that took care of her at Camelot.

In lieu of flowers, donations in her memory may be made to the American Diabetes Assn., 306 Industrial Park Rd., Ste. 105, Middletown, CT 06457 or to the charity of one's choice.

For online condolences, visit [auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com](http://auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com).

## East Hampton

### Dennis Michael Griswold

With his wife and soul mate, Gladys Yeager-Griswold at his side and surrounded by his devoted family, Dennis Michael Griswold lost his courageous battle for life on Wednesday Aug. 27. His sunny and charismatic personality endeared him to all he met and he leaves numerous loyal friends in shock at his sudden passing.

Born Feb. 28, 1948, in Troy, NY, he was the son of Catherine Monty and Paul William Griswold. Besides his wife, he leaves, to weep, his children, Ryan MacLelland Griswold, Johnna Maria and husband James Kulpa, David Moseley MacLelland, Jason Quentin and wife Jennifer MacLelland, Kamey Peterson and Steven Peterson. "Papa" also leaves the "lights of his life," his grandchildren, Richard, Connor, and Brady MacLelland, Victoria and Ethan MacLelland, Jack and Caroline Kulpa, and Bailee and Emilee Ahrens. Dennis was predeceased by his father, Paul William Griswold, and brother, Gary Griswold. He leaves to mourn his loss his sisters, Patricia/Fred Genthner and Kathleen/Carl Seibels, his brothers Michael/Nancy Griswold, Timothy/Pam Griswold, and Paul Griswold, as well as many nieces and nephews.

Dennis graduated from Lansingburg High School in New York and served his country as a member of the United States Air Force during the Vietnam War. He graduated from Central Connecticut State University and received his graduate degree as a mechanical engineer from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute at Hartford. After completing his education he was employed by United Technologies at Pratt and Whitney Aircraft in East Hartford.

When he retired, he opened West Shore Marine/The Happiest Paddler in East Hampton. He served as president of The Friends of Lake Pocotopaug, acting as an advocate for his beloved lake. He was also known to his friends and grandchildren as Santa Claus during the holidays, when he and Gladys would arrive at the homes of loved ones as Mr. and Mrs. Claus. All the proceeds from this endeavor were donated to the Easter Seals Camp Hemlocks in Hebron.

His family would like to express their thanks for the valiant efforts of the staff of the CCMU at Middlesex Hospital. In lieu of gifts, donations can be made in his memory to The Friends of Lake Pocotopaug.

Dennis' family will receive friends at Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton today, Friday, Aug. 29, from 4-8 p.m. Funeral service will be held at the same location Saturday, Aug. 30, at 10 a.m. Burial will follow in Lakeview Cemetery.

To leave online condolences or for directions, visit [www.spencerfuneralhomeinc.com](http://www.spencerfuneralhomeinc.com).