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Nike, an 8-year-old golden retriever jumps up to catch a flying disc at Hebron Elementary School last Wednesday. The Hebron dog won the U.S. Disc Dog International title last year. He and his trainer, Barry Griffin, formerly of Hebron, will compete on Sept. 6 in hopes of qualifying for this year's international competition.

Hebron Dog Seeks Back-to-Back Global Titles

by Sarah McCoy

For 8-year-old Nike, Frisbee isn't just a game. It's a way of life.

Nike, a golden retriever from Hebron, captured the world title in the sport last year and looks to qualify again later this fall.

When Nike was a hyper 2-year-old pup, his owners, Patti and Barry Griffin, took him to Wickham Park in Manchester to check out a Frisbee competition. "We just planned on watching but ended up competing," Barry said.

Nike wound up coming in 17 out of 30 dogs that day. But, more importantly, Barry and Nike had found a passion. The tall, 76-pound retriever had a knack for sprinting and jack-knifing his body to grab flying discs.

All winter they practiced tossing and catching, tossing and catching. "Our goal was to win once," Barry said of the 2003 season.

The duo won their first competition that year and went on to win five more before the season came to a close.

In the toss and fetch event, which Barry and Nike compete in, dogs are awarded points for catching the Frisbee in the air

and the distance the disc traveled. There are two rounds where dogs can score a maximum of 25 points each round. As true with any game of catch, success is dictated by the performance of both the thrower and the catcher.

Last year Barry and Nike were at it again, traveling the Frisbee circuit to compete in whatever event they could find. Last summer they competed in the Eastern National Qualifier Tournament in Massachusetts. The top three finishers in the event would qualify for the U.S. Disc Dog National Championship to be held in Louisville, KY, later that fall.

Barry and Nike finished in third and squeaked into the National Championship.

Sixty dogs qualified for the nationals but only 20 were able to show up. To qualify for the International Championships, Barry and Nike would need to finish only in the top 15. They finished 14th.

However, once they got to the international competition, which was held the next day, also in Louisville, it was a different story. Barry and Nike clicked, scoring a 46.5 of the possible 50 points.

The pair competed against teams from

Germany, Japan, the Netherlands, Canada and Poland.

Barry said herding dogs, such as Australian or German shepherds, typically make the best dogs for Frisbee-ing. But Nike, he said, is "just a natural born Frisbee dog."

After his big victory in 2007, Nike has stumbled a bit. He failed to qualify for this year's nationals at the New England Disc Dog Qualifier held in Wrentham, MA, on July 26. Nike and Barry will have one more opportunity to qualify at the Yankee Flyer Disc Dog Fall Classic Qualifier on Sept. 6.

Until then, they'll practice 2-3 times a week, throwing and catching. If it were up to Nike, they'd never stop. (Barry moved to Hanover, MA, two years ago, as he and Patty are now divorced; Patty still lives in Hebron, and has kept Nike. But Barry has remained the dog's trainer.)

Either way, Barry will travel down to this year's National Championship as his dog, Toga, has already qualified. Toga, a 1-year-old Australian Shepard, is full of boundless energy, as evident by her 7-foot leaps into the air.

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

Though I've been editor of the *Rivereast* now for about a year, I've mostly kept my thoughts to myself. Or at least I haven't printed them. But I've decided to put pen to paper (or would that be keyboard to computer screen?) and offer up thoughts and occasional news nuggets from our circulation area as well as other parts of the country and/or world. Longtime readers of Jim Hallas' column needn't worry; it will still appear each week, right under mine (as it does this week).

Reporter Sarah McCoy has a nice story in this week's paper about a garden Hebron school administration and staff is installing at Gilead Hill School. The garden is in honor of Linda Thibodeau, the longtime administrative assistant for the Hebron and RHAM superintendents of schools who died of cancer last November. Installing the garden is a classy move, and one I'm glad Hebron school staff is making.

I covered Hebron for the *Rivereast* from 2002-04. That was during the era of the multiple budget referendums for the RHAM schools. I remember many spring and summer evenings spent driving out to the little office building on Pendleton Drive (where the RHAM Board of Education offices were at the time) and climbing the stairs to the second floor, to stand alongside other reporters as we waited for Linda to field phone calls from the Andover, Hebron and Marlborough town clerks. It didn't matter if we were there for the first time or the 10th time – Linda always greeted us with a smile on her face and a chipper voice, even though I'm sure she, like probably everybody else in the room, would have preferred spending her evenings someplace else. (On occasion, Linda would even bake some brownies for us to munch on as we waited for the votes to come in; a very nice gesture indeed.)

Another thing about Linda – she was always there. In a column she wrote last fall shortly after Linda's passing, Hebron Superintendent of Schools Ellie Cruz referred to Linda as a Central Office "fixture." And that's a good way to describe her. Whenever I'd drive out to that Pendleton Drive office building, I would almost always see Linda's yellow Volkswagen bug sitting there in the parking lot. In fact, when I came across Linda's obituary last November, I remember being shocked, as I'd just spoken with Linda on the phone a couple of weeks earlier. Sarah writes in her story that Linda was actually at work just two days before she died. This is a woman who was dedicated to her job, and she did it well. Kudos to Hebron school administration for honoring her. She deserves it.

While I'm not a Red Sox fan (I've always bled orange and blue – the colors of the New York Mets), I was disappointed – and rather surprised, really – last week when they traded Manny Ramirez. While I realize Manny came here from Cleveland, he was such an exciting player to watch, and made so many great achievements during his time in Boston, that it was hard to think of any time when he wasn't in a Red Sox uniform. I was kinda always hoping he'd stay in one until he retired.

Now, I realize Red Sox fans received a nice consolation prize in Jason Bay. I've been following Bay's career with interest, and occasional sadness, for years. (Why 'occasional sadness,' you might ask? Bay was a promising minor leaguer in the Mets' farm system when, in 2002, they traded him at the July 31 deadline in an ill-advised move for some bullpen help. The trade was unnecessary; the Mets went on to lose 86 games that season, a feat they surely could have accomplished even with Bay in their minor league system. Bay, meanwhile, went from San Diego to Pittsburgh, and really

blossomed.) He's already had a nice debut in Boston, going 9-for-21, with eight runs scored, in his first five games. But he just doesn't bring that excitement to the table that Manny did. I can't picture Bay catching a ball on the run, high-fiving a fan in the stands, then turning around and doubling a runner off first base. Was it all just "Manny being Manny"? Perhaps. But Manny being Manny was awfully fun to watch.

And by the way: if a year ago you told me that Manny Ramirez would be playing for Joe Torre on the Los Angeles Dodgers, I'd have said you were crazy. I realize it's the way baseball is today, players and even managers can switch teams, leagues and even coasts in the blink of an eye. But this one just feels weird, particularly for a Connecticut resident. For years, you could turn on NESN, and catch Manny in a Red Sox uniform. Go a little up the dial to the YES network, and there's Torre, sitting in the Yankee Stadium dugout. And then of course there's the little matter of the Red Sox-Yankees rivalry. To see them both clad in Dodger blue and white....it just doesn't seem quite right.

Two of my favorite pastimes are baseball and eating. So it should come as no surprise that when I go to a ballgame, I look forward to all that lovely, greasy ballpark food that's awaiting me. I go down to Mets games fairly often, and noticed a couple of months ago that the calorie content of each item is posted right there on the menu board of every concession stand you go to. You can't get anything there without being told how many calories it contains. Apparently, there's a new law in New York City requiring eateries to do this. And since concession stands at ballparks do sell food, they have to deal with the law just like everybody else. But is it really necessary? I mean, if you're buying an Italian sausage grinder covered with sauteed onions and peppers, chances are you know it packs more of a caloric punch than a bowl of Special K.

When I'm at a ballgame, I just want to sit back, have a hot dog and a couple of beers (although I might have to take out a small loan to do the latter), and enjoy the game. I don't expect to eat healthy. And I think others agree with me, at least down at Shea Stadium. For the first half of the season, they had this concession stand that sold "healthy alternatives" – garden salads, veggie dogs and similar dishes. But about a month ago I noticed that concession stand was gone, and in its place was one selling pulled pork sandwiches, beef brisquets and bratwursts. I was enthused by this development, and asked the woman at the concession stand why they made the change. The reason was simple: the healthy food wasn't selling.

People just like being able to eat like slobs. And I say, let 'em. I've always been opposed to attempts to force restaurants to put the fat and calorie content of their items right there on the menu, so that people can see what they're getting into before they order. But again, it's just simple common sense. If you order a double cheeseburger topped with bacon strips and fried onion straws, I think you know what you're getting yourself into. Why should restaurants be forced to tell you that food that sounds bad for you really is bad for you?

And now the first in an occasional feature I'd like to call "Things I learned this week while watching *Jeopardy!*": Question: Who said, "You should always go to other people's funerals; otherwise, they won't go to yours"? Answer: Yogi Berra. Like most things Yogi said, it's a great quote.

See you next week.



Karen Conderino, left, and Ellie Cruz work to construct Linda's Garden on Tuesday afternoon. Cruz began raising money for the memorial garden after her administrative assistant, Linda Thibodeau, passed away last November. Conderino, who served on the committee for the garden, now works as the current administrative assistant to Cruz.

Memorial Garden Being Constructed for Beloved Secretary

by Sarah McCoy

For 28 years, Linda Thibodeau worked alongside Hebron public school administration. Now roles are reversed as school staff work to install a garden in her memory.

An old red barn used to sit on the western side of Gilead Hill School with equipment and tools scattered about. In the last few weeks that space has been transformed into Linda's Garden. The garden is a place where visitors can come, sit on the bench, and soak in the beautiful flowers that surround them- most of them blue, silver, and yellow to match the color's Linda wore to work.

Last November, Thibodeau, who had worked as the administrative assistant to eight different superintendents, passed away at the age of 63, after a two-year battle with cancer. To honor her, Superintendent of Schools Ellie Cruz sent out notices to parents and staff asking for donations to construct a memorial garden.

The results were "overwhelming," Cruz said. Within days Linda's Garden fund grew larger than anyone expected. The money raised was used to purchase a granite bench and stone pavers for the garden.

But the giving didn't end there.

Hebron business GreenScapes Landscape Construction donated their time to take the stone pavers and create a small walkway. The Parks and Recreation Department leveled the ground and cleared away the existing grass to make

way for the garden. And, each day it seems, someone has left a plant outside Cruz's door to be a part of Linda's Garden.

"It's touching," Cruz said of the outpouring of support. "[Linda] was involved in every aspect of the district for so long. We're seeing, now, how far reaching her impact truly was."

Thibodeau came to Hebron in the 1975 after growing up in Newington. She took the position with the school system soon after and never left. In fact, she was at work on Friday, Nov. 16, just two days before her passing.

Cruz envisions Linda's Garden to be a place where "little kids can clamor about and grandmas can sit and rest." In addition to perennial and annual plants, the garden will also have bird feeders, and blueberry bushes – Thibodeau's favorite.

In addition to her work with the Hebron public school system, Thibodeau was an active member at The Church of the Holy Family and the Hebron Volunteer Fire Department.

A dedication of the garden is expected for September. Until then Cruz and other school staff will continue to battle the heat and put together a little more of Linda's Garden each day.

"It's been nice to step outside and remember her everyday," Cruz said. "It's a little bit of a sanctuary."

Gilead Hill Principal Looking to Build on Chinese Experience

by Sarah McCoy

The Hebron elementary schools are taking a global approach to what it means to be a community. Through artwork and letters, students of all ages are communicating with their counterparts in China.

In April, Gilead Hill School (GHS) principal Kathryn Veronesi, along with other local school administrators, traveled to the Shandong province of China through a sister-school program sponsored by the Connecticut Department of Education. While there, she tasted the local cuisine (including duck head), stood on the Great Wall, and, most importantly, saw firsthand the educational methods of the Chinese.

"The Chinese are pretty remarkable in math and science," Veronesi said. "We'd like to learn from them how that kind of thinking, expertise, and skill are cultivated."

On the flip side, Veronesi said one of the questions many Chinese educators asked of her was: how do you cultivate creativity in children?

Captivated by educational reform, Chinese school administration and government officials questioned Veronesi as to her approach to teaching a class versus teaching the individual child. Accomplishing both is a difficult task for anyone, especially considering the average Chinese class is around 50 students.

The Hebron public school system has partnered with the Zhangqui Shuangshan Primary School in China to promote a partnership of learning for both students and educators. Last year, Susan Bottaro's first grade class made paper kites to send to students in China. And fifth grade teacher Sarah Valentin set up "pen friends" for her students to e-mail with Chinese students.

The students wrote back and forth on the "One World One Dream" Olympic motto for the upcoming summer games.

While in China, Veronesi asked a group of elementary school students what their dreams and goals were. One said to solve the housing problem in their country. Another said he'd like

to play soccer like David Beckham. A third wanted to go to Harvard. "I met some student with outstanding goals for themselves and for their community," Veronesi said. "It's inspiring to me and to our students."

As the country with the second-largest economy and booming population, China has become a relevant player in world politics and culture. By spreading awareness about the country, Veronesi hopes to convey that China isn't so different than Hebron.

"On of the big things we stress here is community," Veronesi said of GHS. "We are a community at Gilead Hill. What I'm hoping for is for our kids to have a conceptual understanding that the world is a community and they're a part of that."

Currently Veronesi, Hebron Superintendent of Schools Ellie Cruz and Board of Education Chair Jane Dube are planning what the school's partnership with China will be for the coming school year. Cruz and Dube traveled to China last fall through the same state-sponsored program.

As one of the only elementary schools in the state partnering with a foreign school for worldwide learning, Veronesi is becoming a pioneer. There most likely won't be student exchanges or the teaching of Mandarin anytime soon at GHS, but Veronesi hopes that teachers between the two countries will soon be able to discuss strategies and methods.

She is proud that Hebron parents, staff and students have joined her in the desire to further the sister school program. "We could just sit back and say China Schmina," Veronesi said. "I'm proud that the town recognizes the forward thinking in becoming involved with a global education partnership like this."

While no formal plans have been made, Veronesi said she is very open to the idea of returning to China. Until then she and other school staff will continue to build on the current momentum for the upcoming school year.

East Hampton Police News

6/30 — A nine-year-old male juvenile, an 11-year-old male juvenile, a 12-year-old male juvenile and a 15-year-old male juvenile were referred to Juvenile Court for third-degree criminal mischief, East Hampton Police said.

7/30 — Chris R. Pratt, 41, of 44 Smith St., was arrested pursuant to a warrant for violation of probation and possession of a narcotic, police said.

7/25 — William E. Spaulding, 43, of 19 Lake Rd., Portland, was arrested for breach of peace and sixth-degree larceny, police said.

7/26 — Ricky L. Hallowell, 37, of 57 Falls Rd., Moodus, was arrested for operating an unregistered motor vehicle, misuse of plates, operating without insurance and defective windshield, police said.

7/26 — Edward L. Wingate Jr., 43, of 162 Route 6, Columbia, was arrested pursuant to a warrant on charges of operating under the influence of alcohol and failure to drive right, police said.

7/27 — Thomas D. Archer, 24, of 154 Shunpike Rd., Cromwell, was involved in a one-vehicle accident at the intersection of Anderson Way and Abbey Road, police said, and added that Archer was arrested for evading responsibility and traveling too fast for conditions.

Colchester Police News

7/31-Erika Schreiner, 21, of 151 Kingsley Rd., Burnt Hills, NY, turned herself in to State Police on the charges of identity theft and conspiracy to commit, State Police said.

7/31-John O'Brien, 46, of 337 McDonald Rd., was charged with second-degree failure to appear, State Police said.

8/1-Tiffany Kennedy, 18, of 331 Westchester Rd., was charged with evading responsibility and failure to drive in proper lane, State Police said.

8/2-Susan Krauth, 40, of 82 West Rd., was charged with DWI and failure to obey an officer's signal, State Police said.

8/3-Chrisopher Vickers, 57, of East Lyme, was charged with DUI and failure to drive right, State Police said.

Portland Police News

7/31 — A 15-year-old male was referred to Juvenile Court on charges of possession of less than four ounces of marijuana and possession of drug paraphernalia, Portland Police said.

8/2 — Michael Cichon, 27, of 32 Tuccitto Rd., was charged with violation of protective order, police said.

Marlborough Kid a Karate Champ

by Kristina Histen

A local child's hard work and love of karate has brought him success.

Andy Wu, 7, has moves. The soon to be second-grader at Elmer Thienes-Mary Hall Elementary School was ranked first among hundreds of competitors from Maryland, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York and Connecticut for the Worldwide Kenpo Karate League (WKKL) under black belt 2007-08 season.

His natural gift of speed and his passion for karate has brought him success, but it didn't happen overnight, Andy's father, Ya Wu, said. At age five, Andy began his karate training at Defensive Edge in East Hampton, under the direction of Richard Northam. At such a young age, he did not stand out at all, Ya said. When he was six, he improved slightly but was still only average compared to others.

Nevertheless, Andy continued to train hard almost everyday, not only during his karate lessons three times a week but also at home, and within the last half year he jumped up to the top of his class. He became known at Defensive Edge for his high kicks and good stands, his father said. Currently, Andy wears a brown/red belt as the youngest in his advanced level class and is way ahead of the game for his age, Ya said. It's also been said that he may be the best at the training school.

"I'm very proud of him," Northam said. "He works very hard, trains very hard, and his parents support him and work with him. He has the right attitude and shows people what they can build up to if willing to work for it

and put the effort into it. He works hard and it pays off."

Each year, the WKKL organizes three tournament events in Baltimore, MD, Long Island, NY and Windsor. Every competitor gets a certain amount of points dependent on their rankings at each tournament which tallies up to their final score for the season. Andy missed the first tournament last October in Baltimore, but was able to attend the other two. On April 6 at the American Karate Championships in Long Island, he placed first in form, weapon and sparring. At the New England Classic held in Windsor on June 8, he placed first in both form and weapon, and won second in sparring.

"I love it," Andy said, "and I'm very happy."

His hard work paid off. As a result of his outstanding achievements in the tournaments, he placed first among hundreds of competitors for the WKKL 2007-08 under black belt season final ranking, despite missing the first tournament. Andy will be honored at the Awards Ceremony for the 2007-08 Season Grand Champions in Baltimore on Saturday, Oct. 18. He is the only one to receive a special award for the "Under Belt Grand Champion" and tied with three others to receive the "Under Belt Forms Grand Champion" award.

"We are very excited," his father said. "It took everyone by surprise that he was ranked so high because he comes from such a small, unknown school. ... It is so amazing."

Maybe Andy should be the star in the next *Karate Kid* movie.



Andy Wu, 7, has proven to be quite the karate kid. He's shown here with three trophies he won in April at the American Karate Championships in Long Island, NY.

Marlborough Superintendent's Contract Renewed

by Kristina Histen

Board of Education (BOE) members have renewed the superintendent of schools' contract for one more year, saying that he "has a unique gift for facilitating and encouraging student excellence."

BOE members agreed unanimously in June that Superintendent of Schools Sal Menzo's three-year contract should be extended for another year. The new contract, which took effect July 1, gives Menzo a salary of \$126,104, a 4.2 percent increase over his previous salary. Menzo started as the Marlborough superintendent in February 2005.

"I could not be happier to be here," Menzo said Thursday. "I think the community has been very supportive of me and of course the Board of Education has allowed me to be creative and that excites them. We are more creative than the towns around us and are willing to take chances. They have really given me an opportunity to excel."

In its composite review of Menzo, the BOE spent two whole pages praising the hard work Menzo has done not only for the school district but also for the community.

Menzo "has been a true educational leader for the Marlborough School District," school board members wrote in their review. "He has excelled in all areas creating a positive school culture and continuously improving student achievement in our district. Dr. Menzo works effectively with the Board of Education, school staff and community to facilitate a vision of learning that sets high performance expectations for students. Through presentations and curriculum updates to the board, he demonstrates best practices related to learning, teaching, and student development. Dr. Menzo has maintained an excellent relationship with the Board of Education, school staff, children and the Marlborough community."

The board members wrote that Menzo "sets high standards of ethics, honesty and integrity in all professional matters and is a dedicated educator and administrator." Also, they said, "he is attentive, empathetic, patient and committed to the educational needs of our community."

The board members described Menzo as "very proactive in terms of soliciting input and informing all constituents: board members, municipal, state and community members." Also, they wrote, he "assembles data and information to highlight solutions to potentially contentious issues. Within the school setting, he models practices and strategies so the district has no doubt of his expectations. He has a unique gift for facilitating and encouraging student excellence."

The board said Menzo's "special rapport with the children is remarkable."

The board members also wrote that Menzo

excels at organizational management, is "personable and professional" and keeps the school board informed of all issues, ranging from the functioning of the school to building maintenance.

The school board members wrote that Menzo's work has benefited not just the school system but the town as a whole. They said he "worked to procure utilities and health benefits for the district and the town at a reduced price." They also said he developed "consortium purchasing opportunities" in the areas of health insurance, oil, gasoline, diesel, electricity and supplies. This "contained our costs at levels significantly below the state and national trends," the board wrote.

Menzo has also, board members said, taken a "leadership role" in the monitoring of the water system for all town buildings on School Drive, through the coordinating of all water testing and small water district requirements. They also said he "spearheaded conservation efforts" by exploring the use of solar energy and the energy-saving generator program Demand Direct.

Menzo, the board members wrote, "consistently exceeds expectations in the area of community and Board of Education relations." They said he attends school functions and many town events, and that his "high visibility has resulted in him being known by most of the members of the Marlborough community."

In conclusion, the board members wrote, "The Marlborough School District is fortunate to have had Dr. Menzo working on behalf of our school and our community for the past three years." The board said Menzo "has placed our school on the right track in a multitude of areas and has personally been a strong asset for our community. We are most fortunate to have him as a member of our administration."

"We are incredibly lucky to have him in our district and in our town," BOE Chair Maria Grove said Wednesday, "He is an excellent superintendent."

Menzo said he was very flattered by the review and glad that the BOE is pleased with him. He admitted humbly that he is also proud of himself in receiving his Doctorate earlier this year and that his international background experience continues to expand.

And Menzo returned the praise bestowed on him by the school board. "I'm proud of my board," he said, "and I'm proud of what we're able to do. They are a very unique board. They challenge each other, which is good, and they challenge me, which is great. They are very committed and thoughtful. We have fun. Education is a serious job but you need to have fun with it or you won't succeed at it."

Andover Selectmen Get Back to Work

by Sarah McCoy

With an approved budget, it was back to the grind for the Board of Selectmen (BOS) Wednesday, as board members acted on several motions regarding the personnel and economic climate of the town.

Prior to Wednesday night's meeting, the selectmen conducted a brief public hearing on the hiring process of the Zoning Enforcement Officer. To fill the vacancy in the position, First Selectman Bob Burbank was asking the board to forego the competitive exam typically associated with the hiring of the Zoning Enforcement Officer. Since John Valente, who currently serves as the town's Inland Wetlands Agent, was already a town employee and qualified for the position, Burbank felt the exam was unnecessary.

Valente is in the process of completing his certification for the position; however, he has many years working alongside the town's former Zoning Officer Stuart Popper. Because he is not yet certified, Valente would be paid at a slightly lower rate.

"He is more than qualified, and the Planning and Zoning Commission voted unanimously to hire John," Burbank said.

The BOS agreed, also unanimously voting in favor of hiring Valente.

"I'm comfortable with this because of the unique nature of the situation and the expertise John brings. However, I would like this to be a one-time action by the board," selectman Susan England said at Wednesday's meeting.

The BOS also voted to re-advertise the Administrative Assistant to the Assessor position that has been vacant for the last six months. Initially the town advertised the position and chose their preferred candidate. That candidate, however, had already secured employment elsewhere.

Rather than settle for their second choice, the BOS voted unanimously to advertise the position again in hopes of finding an individual that would "more adequately meet the needs of the town," Burbank said.

Last fall the town of Andover, in conjunction with Bolton and Columbia, applied for a Small Towns Economic Assistance Program grant to conduct an information survey for economic development of the Route 6 corridor. The three towns received word in June that they would each receive \$65,000 for the project.

On Wednesday, the selectmen scheduled a town meeting for Sept. 9 to allow for Burbank

to expend the necessary funds associated with the project. "The project will not cost the taxpayers a penny," he explained. "We've already received the grant, now we just need to vote to expend the funds."

The town charter calls for the BOS to hold a town meeting in any case where town officials will expend more than \$20,000.

The grant will go to study as to how to best approach enhancing the business development along the local highway.

Also, to officially close the 2008-09 budget season, the selectmen voted on their recommendation as to what to do with the excess taxes that will be collected this year. At a June 3 emergency meeting the BOS voted to set the town's mill rate at 27.6. The budget was then approved at 27.3 mills. The .3 mill discrepancy will amount to an excess of \$82,000 worth of taxes being collected this year.

The board weighed out several options before unanimously voting to recommend to the Board of Finance to apply this money to next year's budget.

To return the excess money to taxpayers this year, the town would run into several problems, Burbank said. It would cost the town about \$10,000 for the printing, labor, and postage associated with mailing out 5,900 checks to taxpayers. Also, for those who pay taxes through an Escrow account associated with their mortgage, there would be no guarantee that they would receive their refund at all. "Escrow accounts aren't set up to take checks," Burbank said. "And, by law we're not able to give the taxpayer back that money."

And those whose refund is less than \$5 wouldn't receive a rebate at all, as per the town charter.

"We considered all of this and decided applying it to next year's budget made the most sense," Burbank said.

What will happen next year, according to Burbank, is once the town sets the budget the \$82,000 plus whatever interest the money earned over the course of the year will be applied to individual tax bills based on the percentage they over paid this year. Burbank said the amounts will be "within a couple dollars" of each other but won't be exact as the town's grand list is subject to change.

For homeowners who will sell their property in the coming year, they will be eligible for a prorated overpayment reimbursement at their closing.

Heated Comments Pepper Portland Public Hearing on Streetlights

by Michael McCoy

"I'm learning a lot about streetlights this week, and I'm learning a lot about water systems this week," First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield said before an impassioned public hearing Wednesday night.

The hearing was to give residents a chance to comment on the proposal to eliminate up to 43 percent of the town's streetlights. About 80 people went to the hearing, leaving the Mary Flood Room at Portland Library bursting at the seams.

The 2008-09 town operating budget, passed in May, called for turning off of 25 percent, or 182, of the town's streetlights. This would save the town \$30,000. Bransfield later commissioned Public Works Director Rick Kelsey to compose a list of potential lights to be turned off, being sure to leave at least one in each intersection and cul-de-sac untouched. This list of potential lights accounted for 43 percent, or 311, of the town's lights, and would have resulted in a savings of \$49,000. However, no town official ever actually proposed to shut off all 43 percent.

Prior to the public comment portion of the hearing, selectman Carl Chudzik said, "We have almost double the amount of streetlights going right now that's necessary by code." He said that eliminating some of the lights would reduce the carbon footprint and "keep the skies bright at night, so we can see the Milky Way and so forth."

Cliff Haas, who runs Citizens For Responsible Lighting out of Rocky Hill and has spent more than three decades in the lighting business, said, "There are a lot of myths about light and safety," adding, "Unfortunately, light is not a magic forcefield. ... There is nothing light will help you do other than see." Haas said more than 60 percent of crime occurs during daylight.

Leo Smith, who serves on the board of directors for the International Dark-Sky Association, said streetlights "do not serve the public safety purpose we thought they did." He also said that one streetlight emits about 500 pounds of carbon every year.

With two exceptions, what followed was a barrage of residents ranging in demeanor from perplexed to furious, sounding off on their displeasure with the proposal.

John Cooney said he has lived in town for all of his 72 years, and has owned a home for 49 of those. "That's a lot of taxes," he figured. Mentioning that there is only one streetlight on Sunset Terrace, where he lives, he said, "It took a lot of blood, sweat, and tears to get that there. ... Instead of taking one down, I would like to see you put one up."

His comments were met with rapturous applause which was par for the course that evening.

"I applaud [the Board of Selectmen for] trying to save us money," Joseph Biles said. However, noting that all four lights on Cross Street were listed as potential eliminations, he said, "You can't tell a dead kid that he shouldn't have been in the street."

Karen Spencer recalled a time when the streetlight across the street from her William Street home was out. One night, every mailbox was smashed on that strip. "If the light was on, I don't think they would have done that," she said.

Her neighbor, Chris Peterson, said she fell ill at one point while the same light was out and firemen subsequently had trouble finding her home.

Perhaps Bill Willinsky made the biggest scene. "Why don't you shut off all the lights?" he shouted. When posing this question to the experts who spoke at the hearing's commencement, Bransfield said she would not allow a back and forth during a public hearing with such attendance, due to efficiency.

"Why don't you allow them to answer?" Willinsky hollered. "I'm going to stay here for an hour if I have to!"

Eventually, he relented and said, "It looks like we're not going to get answers here." He later added, "Thanks for nothing," prompting someone from the audience to say, "That's rude."

Willinsky also worried about how this may affect property values. He also predicted, "When Hartford, Bridgeport, New Haven, all the burglars hear about the lights out in our town, get ready!"

He later added, "I don't care what the experts say about lights on or lights off; they're wrong. ... We want lights on in this town"

Lambros Lambrinides, upon making his

way to the podium garnered a howl of laughter, when he said, "I almost didn't make it here. The lights were off!" This prompted another would-be comedian to briefly dim the lights.

Mike Kirchberger also credited the selectmen for trying to save money, but exclaimed, "I do not agree with turning off the lights in any form!"

Addressing comments made earlier about people being trusted to obey the speed limit, especially at night, he said, "People drive slowly? Ha! ... Ha!" Speaking on Main Street, he said, "I have never seen anybody do the damn speed limit!"

Turning to the selectmen, he said, "Work smarter, not dumber."

Looking for other ways to save money, he said, "We need LED lights. We need new technology."

Along that note, Richard Smith said he took a drive Tuesday night, scoping out the municipal buildings. "Every school was lit up like it was Christmas time!" He was one of a number of residents who suggested turning off lights that burnt all night without use instead of turning off streetlights.

John Clemens said he moved here three and a half years ago and bought a house one year ago "because I liked this town so much," he said. However, he said he never would have if he knew streetlights would be turned off. He admitted being especially sensitive to the issue "as someone who has been injured in multiple car accidents because of other people's negligence."

He called the notion "penny wise and pound foolish," admitting, "Immediate savings of \$50,000 is probably pretty tempting." However, he predicted that such savings would be "sucked away" through eventual litigation.

Finally, he asked, "What price do we place on the safety of the citizens of Portland?"

Despite the hostile room, Andy Bauer, chairman of the town's Clean Energy Task Force, endorsed the initiative. Recalling a vacation with his daughter in New Hampshire, he remarked on the beauty of the night sky, while noting that this scenario and downtown Portland are two different things.

However, his remarked also echoed those of Kirchbergers. He asked, "What do we want from our streetlights? Are we getting that?"

Bauer suggested that lights do not diminish crime, but merely diminish the fear of crime. He concluded, "I would absolutely love to have the streetlight in front of my home turned off."

Roy Guild seemingly agreed with Bauer, and said, "When it's dark, you should come in." Speaking of the streetlights, he said, "They burn all night for nothing. At \$50 a month, that's a lot of money."

He added, "That's the first step in saving our planet." He continued, "There's more cuts to come. We've got to get used to it, folks."

Speaking about energy costs, Bransfield said, "Some of the bids for oil will make you fall out of your chair, noting one of these as \$4.30 a gallon."

She then closed the public hearing, saying "I wouldn't doubt that there might be another public hearing on this matter."

During the Board of Selectmen's meeting that followed, Carl Chudzik said, "Times are changing. I have volumes and volumes of other towns who are doing this in many different ways."

Furthermore, Chudzik, 55, said, "Most of the people [at the hearing] were my age or older," and said it's the younger residents who will have to bear the brunt of the tax burden.

However, the consensus among the selectmen seemed to be not to eliminate any streetlights.

"I'd like to light smarter," said selectman John Anderson.

Bransfield responded, "You have to spend to save."

Chudzik commented that he felt the best thing to come out of the hearing was the mass display of public participation in municipal government.

The selectmen subsequently created a Streetlight Evaluation Committee to address lighting concerns, and Chudzik, Anderson and Flood all agreed to serve on it.

The committee's first meeting will be Wednesday, Aug. 20, at 6:30 p.m.

Portland Gazebo Graffiti Artists Avoid Court

by Michael McCoy

Portland Police believe they nabbed the juveniles responsible for the vandalism to the senior center gazebo.

"Sgt. [Scott] Cunningham spent a serious amount of time on the case," said Lt. Ron Milardo

The town shut down the gazebo and adjacent playscape in early June after they were marked up with red and black permanent markers. The Junior Women's Club of Portland donated the gazebo in 2001, and the playscape was built three years ago with state money as well as funds raised by local parents.

The playscape vandalism included things like, "I love hippies," and "I feel gay" and other comments that, from the way authorities have spoken of it, were much worse.

While the playscape is dark in color, the gazebo is white, making the graffiti all the more glaring. Furthermore, virtually the entire gazebo was covered with random words or phrases such as "America=Hell," "pastor," "roid rage," "crotchal region," "Footy pajamas," "ass cheez," "jean jacket," "imitation crabmeat," "Find Nemo," and "I did your mom." All in all, the gazebo graffiti was not offensive, save a few explicit drawings of genitalia.

Milardo said police studied the seemingly random words on the gazebo, and were able to "decode" the language. "It just took a long, long time," Milardo said.

Furthermore, "several youths" came forward as witnesses. "We put the word out on the street to the kids," Milardo said.

In addition, the police viewed security camera footage taken from the police department parking lot helped police to identify who was

involved. (The gazebo is located just behind the police parking lot.)

The responsible party was composed of five Portland boys between the ages of 12 and 15. Each was charged with either second-degree criminal mischief or third-degree criminal mischief.

A press release from Cunningham also said that, "Each of the juveniles and their families were very cooperative and expressed a desire to clean/paint the gazebo and were referred to the Juvenile Diversion Board."

This is a four-person board, composed of town volunteers, said Mary Pont, director of Youth Services, which the board falls under. According to Pont, when a juvenile commits a crime, the police have the option of sending that minor to the board, in lieu of going through the court system. However, this is a one-time opportunity and does not apply to repeat offenses.

Pont said a date to hear the case was yet to be reached, but that once the board does make a ruling, the punishment will remain confidential.

The press release also said that these five "participated in writing only their names and the random words and were not responsible for the racial/derogatory remarks." The investigation for this and the remainder of the playscape vandalism is ongoing.

"I'm very proud of our police department for finding the responsible parties," First Selectman Susan Bransfield said. "I think it sends a clean message that we will not tolerate this." She also added, "I certainly hope these youngsters have learned their lesson."

Bransfield Updates Portland Residents on Water Controversy

by Michael McCoy

Portland water woes have not yet been solved yet, however the state is saying the water is fine to drink.

On July 21 and 23, testing revealed the presence of total coliform bacteria in the water system. After increased chlorine treatment, the water was tested once more on July 28, however, the results still came back positive.

Additional tests on Aug. 4 proved somewhat murkier. The EML laboratory of Wallingford, who routinely tests the water sampled by the town, reported the presence of the bacteria, while the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC), which also tested on Aug. 4, reported none.

Town officials have said that total coliform bacteria is merely an "indicator bacteria" that may suggest the presence of harmful bacteria, and is not harmful in and of itself. However, so far, no harmful bacteria, such as fecal coliform or E. coli, have yet been found

First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield said the town has administered, and will continue to administer, increased chlorine to the water system, as well as flush out the system. Furthermore, Bransfield will continue to meet with engineers, MDC, the Chatham Health District and the state Department of Public Health (DPH) to fix the problem.

"I can't say enough good things about our water department personnel," Bransfield said at a Board of Selectmen's meeting Wednesday night.

She also reported that the DPH declared that the town "did everything right," as far as responding to the issue. This included notifying the public three days after the first positive

sample was taken. (Tests results take at least a day to receive.) By state mandate, they have 30 days to notify the public of such an issue.

Furthermore, Bransfield said the state altered their protocol template and are no longer advising residents to boil their water or find alternative water sources. However, she did add that those with compromised immune systems are advised to consult their physician on just what to do.

Despite the state's new position, Bransfield recognized, "Dealing with 25,500 customers and dealing with test results is very important."

Bransfield said the cause of the bacteria has not yet been pinpointed, though she mentioned a few possible factors. These include a water main break on high street, increased water demand from South Glastonbury, a granted request from one of the local golf courses to use 200,000 gallons of water a day over the course of the weekend and a series of electrical storms.

"Water is a very complicated world," said Bransfield, admitting she was no expert on the topic.

Bransfield also said several water customers have wondered if the town would reimburse them for money spent on energy to boil water or funds spent on purchasing water.

But, she said, "We are not a water company that makes money. We realized a deficit last year."

Selectman Brian Flood figured that if this measure was taken, those people would simply pay that money in taxes later. Though no formal decision was made, it did not seem as if such a reimbursement would happen.

New Portland Finance Director Looks at Life from Different Side

by Michael McCoy

Appropriately enough, the beginning of the fiscal year brought with it a new finance director to Portland.

Tom Robinson, 36, started as the town's new finance director on July 7. He grew up in Glens Falls, NY, graduating from high school in 1990. He immediately went on to attend State University of New York (SUNY) at Oneonta, where he graduated *magna cum laude* with a bachelor's degree in accounting and business economics in 1994. That year, he was recognized as the outstanding senior in the business and economics program. During his time at SUNY, he was also given the President's Award and made the National Dean's List.

"Numbers have always interested me," Robinson, who sees himself as performing a helpful service as an accountant, said. "I think it's important to know where the figures are coming from."

Robinson immediately went to work as a public accountant in his home state with the firm of Urbach, Khan & Werlimpc. In 1997, he was offered a job with West Hartford accounting firm Blum Shapiro, which he accepted, bringing him to the Nutmeg State. The move didn't rip him away from all connections, as his brother Chris resides in Connecticut.

Two years later, he took a position in Glastonbury as manager in the governmental accounting division with Scully & Wolf, a company he referred to as "the premier government auditing firm in the state of Connecticut." In an interesting coincidence, Blum Shapiro bought out Scully & Wolf in 2006, so Robinson found himself working in West Hartford once again at the beginning of last year.

Looking back at those jobs, when asked what he enjoyed most, he responded, "I think it was interacting with the client base." He also praised his coworkers, saying, "We had a good group of people."

In May, Portland's finance director Rob Buden resigned to take a position as Plainville's finance director. The town hired Linda Savitsky to fill in during the interim, and in June, Robinson applied for the position. The town awarded it to him, and he began on July 7, just days after their new financial software went live.

"I thought this was a good fit," Robinson said of the Portland job. He added, "I thought it was time for to transfer out of public accounting."

Robinson said taking a position at a town such as this was something he had been thinking he would like to do for several of years. He seemed to think Portland was just the right size community for him, and said, "You get to work with the board closely," displaying his eagerness to work alongside the boards of selectmen and education.

"I think most things are familiar," Robinson said about switching positions. "I guess it's just seeing it from a different side."

By the end of the calendar year, municipalities must conduct an audit of the previous year's budget. In his previous positions, Robinson would be working with town finance directors. And now he is one.

Robinson figured that his start date was basically the perfect time to take this position. "You have a fresh start on the New Year," labeling it something of a "clean slate."

Robinson also complimented his predecessors, saying, "Before I was here, it was running smooth."



Robinson, a big fan of the Red Sox, New York Giants, and the Sun, stands in his new office in town hall.

Along that line, Robinson said, "I'm working well with everyone," having gotten acquainted with many of the town's officials. In addition, he said, "I'm excited to be the finance director [and was] excited to be offered the position."

First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield said she

is "very pleased to have Tom Robinson as our new finance director. He's extremely hard-working and dedicated. ... He's played a big role in the integration of our new financial software. I can't say enough good things about him."

Peszynski Speaks Out on Proposed East Hampton Ordinance

by Michael McCoy

Proponents of the recently voted-down no phosphorous fertilizer ordinance have repeatedly singled out Paul Peszynski for its May failure and now, in the wake of the Chatham Party's announcements of a petition to revisit the ordinance, Peszynski sounds off on the issue.

Last month, Chatham Party Chairman Kyle Dostaler criticized the Town Council for not sending the proposed fertilizer ordinance to a public hearing as well as for allowing Peszynski and no one else to give input prior to their vote during a March meeting.

Peszynski, who was appointed to the Lake Commission in May, seemed to take issue with this and appeared at a loss to figure out just why someone would give him preferential treatment. Also, he said, he was never informed that there should be any limit to his speech.

And, Peszynski said, "The reason I talked for 22 minutes was because I had something to say about this ordinance."

Peszynski, 70, is longtime owner of Paul's and Sandy's Too, a nursery in town that has been in business for nearly 40 years. (Technically, he is retired and owns just a portion of the business today.) He has lived in town for 60 years, though prior to that, he vacationed here yearly with his family. He now lives on Day Point Road.

"I have a substantial interest in the lake; I own 130 feet of it," Peszynski, who has lived on the lake for the past 40 years, said. "I raised my children on the lake," he continued.

"I walk this lake every single day," Peszynski said. He added that, in the last 15 years, he has only missed 12 days. "I know every foot of it."

"The problem with the lake is erosion," Peszynski asserted. Furthermore, Peszynski said, he agrees with those that say phosphorous is the major factor leading to the ill health of the lake. However, he simply holds that this phosphorous comes from erosion and not fertilizer.

The Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency (IWWA) began seriously looking into

drawing up an ordinance in 2006. Noting that their ordinance was modeled on that of Wisconsin, he called it "an agricultural state," suggesting that the state is a far cry from Connecticut.

However, Peszynski, pointing out that the IWWA was commissioned by the Town Council to compose an ordinance, said, "They did the best they could. They did a lot of hard work. I have nothing bad to say about them. ... They acted in good faith."

However, Peszynski said, "We need education, not legislation," adding, "Virtually every town in Connecticut has one lake or stream that is impaired."

Peszynski said that Enser tests the lake three or four times each year. Peszynski said the company's conclusion is that the phosphorous either comes from runoff or lawn fertilizer, but that they cannot seem to nail down which one is chiefly responsible.

Peszynski said his business has informed customers on the pros of cons of various fertilizers for the past decade, especially those who live in the Lake Pocotopaug Watershed area. In fact, a map of the watershed is posted in the store.

Alluding to measures such as an alum treatment administered to the lake seven years ago, Peszynski said, "All of these things were just taking an aspirin for cancer."

As for the ordinance, Peszynski said he "could not care less" whether it passes, and added, "My fear is that it will give people the idea we are doing something to help that lake."

He also said the ordinance would be "unenforceable. The people are going to be buying the stuff at Home Depot and compound the problem."

The front of a fertilizer bag has three numbers on it. According to Peszynski, today, most read 33-3-3. This means that 33 percent of the bag's weight is nitrogen, three percent is phosphorous and three percent is pot ash, or potas-

sium. (The rest of the bag's weight is "carrier," which simply allows the elements to be released and is not a fertilizing agent itself.) With a typical bag weighing about 50 pounds, this means most bags contain 1.5 pounds of fertilizer, which is meant to cover a 15,000 square foot area.

Peszynski said the store also carries liquid and mineral fertilizers. The latter is 10-10-10, and Peszynski said, "If the customer gives us opportunity to give advice, we never recommend a mineral fertilizer," adding that he especially tries to steer those living in the watershed away from this type of product.

Peszynski pointed to facts he shared during the April informational session. He quotes Cornell University professor Martin Petrovic who conducted a study in Westchester County, New York: "The amount of phosphorous in runoff from lawns *without* phosphorous was significantly *higher* than from lawns fertilized *with* phosphorous."

The study continues on, "My professional opinion is that the proposed ban of phosphorous containing lawn fertilizers will *have little or no influence* on the surface water quality in Westchester County." Further more, Peszynski says he has done extensive research and has found no instance where a fertilizer ban ended up improving the quality of a water body.

In fact, Peszynski said that a study from the University of Wisconsin actually reported that low levels of phosphorous in grass could lead to soil erosion, causing more phosphorous to hit the lake.

"If you could see that, I'd be signing the petition," Peszynski said.

However, he figured, "It could take us three years to wait and find out we didn't achieve anything," and added, "This is not something I made up."

Furthermore, Peszynski said that tests throughout the last 10 years show that phosphorous levels typically rise about 50 percent

after serious rainstorms, while "nitrogen levels are only fractionally increased." If fertilizer is to blame for this, and fertilizer typically contains 10 times the amount of nitrogen to phosphorous, Peszynski wondered why the nitrogen levels did not rise accordingly. Peszynski said he has yet to receive an answer to this.

Peszynski also took issue with allegations that the council was just looking out for a "good ol' boy" when rejecting the ordinance. "There is no question in my mind that this is political," he said.

He likens this recent petition effort to the Chatham Party's saying, "We care about Lake Pocotopaug, and the democrats and republicans don't."

Dostaler holds that the matter should go to public hearing. Peszynski "was the only one allowed to speak without it ever going to public hearing," he said. Dostaler said that he stifled his own comments during the March meeting out of respect for the Town Council.

Peszynski seemed to feel the April informational session was as good as a public hearing, but Dostaler said, "Those sessions were really workshops for the Town Council." When asked to comment on the poor attendance, he said, "I can't explain why people don't show up." (Peszynski and Dostaler were both present at that session.)

Promoting the fertilizer ban, Dostaler said, "From my standpoint, if you know there's an issue...you act upon it if you can. The ban is an action that can affect the lake in a positive manner."

Dostaler said there were several reasons for the lake's phosphorous problem, and fertilizer was among these.

Noting Peszynski's comments, Dostaler said, "He stepped forward, and I'm stepping forward."

The Chatham Party has collected more than 200 signatures and hopes to realize 1,000 by the end of the month.

Belltown Police Now Truly Are Boys in Blue

by Michael McCoy

Belltown residents should be on the lookout for their local police sporting some new summertime duds.

On Monday, July 28, the East Hampton Police Department unveiled new summer uniforms that should prove more practical than the previous ones.

"It's just more functional for police work," Chief Matthew Reimondo said of the new uniforms, which are made from a lighter and more flexible material.

"The job that we do has evolved over the last 20 years. We're more of a service agency," Reimondo said, mentioning police responsibilities such as CPR administration, or climbing through cars during a motor vehicle stop. "We handle calls now that years ago we never would have handled."

Perhaps the most notable difference is that the uniform, composed of slacks and a short-sleeved shirt is now navy blue instead of gray. However, they are also water repellent and contain more pockets. In addition, instead of displaying a metal badge, the new uniforms come with an embroidered badge.

As for the pockets, Reimondo commented that these are necessary, given all the equipment they carry these days: a firearm, pepper spray, latex gloves, taser, field notebook, knife, asp (retractable baton) and two sets of handcuffs.

Believe it or not, these more conducive uniforms are also about 20 percent less expensive than the older line.

Reimondo said there were not many different manufacturers of the new uniforms for the department to choose from. A few options were

brought in to consider, and the force came to a consensus on their favorite.

"We were hoping to have them in June," Reimondo said, who added that the department began looking into this at the beginning of the year. However, the uniforms simply took quite a while to arrive.

In addition to allowing more maneuverability, Reimondo added, "These are much more durable," and pointed out some of the wear and tear sustained to his older uniform.

"It comes down to practicality," Reimondo said. "That's the thing about police work. You don't know what you're going to get into on a given day."

The new garb will be funded through the uniform allowance that each officer receives. Reimondo estimated this comes to about \$650 per officer per year. Reimondo further estimated that each officer received three shirts and three pairs of pants. (The force currently has 15 officers and two vacant spots.)

"When you wear them every day, you're amazed how fast you go through them," Reimondo commented.

Reimondo also pointed to weather-related issues, such as the recent string of violent thunderstorms. "You're yankin' branches off the road... You're hoppin' from call to call."

The uniforms used during the rest of the year are still gray, with long sleeves and include a tie. In the coldest months, officers are allowed to substitute a turtleneck for the tie. However, Reimondo said that he expected the department to switch their long sleeve uniforms to ones similar to the summer uniforms before too long.



Officer Kevin Wilcox models the force's new outfits on its first day of use.

Obituaries

Hebron

Florence E. Meli

Florence E. Meli, “Flo,” 47, of Hebron, passed away Monday, Aug. 4, at Hartford Hospital after a lengthy illness. Born March 13, 1961 in Hartford, she was a daughter of the late Charles “Jet” and Pasqualina “Pat” (Zappulla) Meli, Sr. She grew up in Hartford and Newington and was a graduate of Newington High School and a member of Center Church in Hartford. Flo owned and operated her own hair salon in Hebron for many years.

She leaves her beloved daughter, Angela Meli, and future son-in-law, Tito Negron, who both gave her unconditional love, compassion and care during her long illness; five siblings, Patricia Mancini of Columbia, Thomas Meli and his wife, Teresa of Scotland, Joaneen Soucy and her husband, Gilbert of Andover, Carmel Meli of Andover and Dorothy Normand and her husband, Richard of Goffstown, NH; and numerous extended family members and friends.

In addition to her parents, she was predeceased by a brother, Charles Meli, Jr.

Friends may call 5-8 p.m. today, Friday, Aug. 8, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. The funeral will assemble starting at 10 a.m. Saturday, Aug. 9, at the funeral home before a 10:30 a.m. Chapel Service. Interment will follow in St. Peter’s Cemetery, Hebron.

The family asks that in lieu of flowers, contributions to help defray final expenses be made to the Florence “Flo” Meli Memorial Fund, c/o The Savings Institute Bank & Trust, 115 Main St., Hebron, CT 06248. Visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com for online condolences.

East Hampton

Helen B. Lynch

Helen B. (Wilczewski) Lynch, 90, of Cromwell and formerly of East Hampton, widow of the late Robert Lynch died Thursday, July 31, at Avon Health Center. Born Feb. 18, 1918 in Mattapan, MA, she was the daughter of the late William and Julia (Senaski) Wilczewski. She had worked as an administrative assistant for the Factory Insurance Association until her retirement.

Helen was a loving grandmother and enjoyed spending time with her grandchildren and great grandchildren. Nana was truly the perfect grandmother, loving, honest, talented, supportive, wise and progressive. She always appreciated the small things in life. One of her greatest memories included packing a lunch and driving her six grandchildren down to Hammonasset Beach for the day. She was a woman with incredible talent. Helen was a gifted crafter and talented cook, she never failed to show up for the holidays with bags full of her creations; cookies, desserts, stuffed animals, afghans, and beautiful handmade clothing.

Conversations with her ranged from reflecting on her life growing up to sharing her opinions about the upcoming election. Her family meant everything to her. She was so proud of each of her six grandchildren and her nine great grandchildren. Nothing made her smile more than being surrounded by family. Helen loved her family dearly and will be sorely missed by all who knew her.

She leaves to mourn her passing her son Robert P. Lynch Jr. with whom she made her home in Cromwell; her daughter-in-law, Judi Lynch of West Simsbury; six grandchildren, Nicole and her husband Rob, Dan and his wife Tara, Kara, Rick, Kaitlyn and her husband Rob, and Megan, nine great-grandchildren and several nieces and nephews. She was recently predeceased by her son, Kenneth R. Lynch.

A Funeral Liturgy was celebrated Monday, Aug. 4, in St. Patrick Church in East Hampton. Burial will be at the convenience of the family in St. Patrick Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Middlesex Memorial Hospital Emergency Department, 55 Crescent St., Middletown, CT 06457. The Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton has care of the arrangements.

To leave online condolences or for directions, visit www.spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Hebron

James V. Edgar

James V. Edgar, 49, of Hebron, beloved husband of Patricia (Turley) Edgar, died Wednesday, July 30. Born July 16, 1959, in Hartford, son of Judy Bard of Portland and the late Vincent Edgar, he had lived most of his life in Glastonbury moving to Hebron 10 years ago.

Jim was a carpenter and owned James Edgar Carpentry. He had previously worked for Monaco Ford in Glastonbury. Jim attended Glastonbury High School and was a member of the Moose Club Lodge No. 1477 in East Hartford. He enjoyed music, riding his quad and cherished his nephew Max and soccer.

Besides his wife and mother, he is survived by a daughter, Victoria Edgar of East Hartford; his beloved nephew Max Turley who made his home with Jim and Pat for the past seven years; two brothers, Vincent Edgar, Jr. of Glastonbury, Bruce Stewart and his wife Suzanne of Glastonbury; a sister, Janice Luckhardt and her husband Mark of Portland; two special nieces, Sarah and Michelle; two nephews, Benjamin and Matthew; and several aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, cousins and many special friends.

A Mass of Christian Burial was held Monday, Aug. 4, in the Church of the Holy Family, Church St., Hebron. Private burial will be in Holy Cross Cemetery, Glastonbury. Friends called at the Mulryan Funeral Home, 725 Hebron Ave., Glastonbury, on Sunday, Aug. 3. In lieu of flowers memorial donations may be made to the Moose Club, 404 Prospect St., East Hartford, CT 06108.

Colchester

Dr. Rubin Jaffe

Dr. Rubin Jaffe, 85, of Pawlet, VT, formerly of Colchester, died Thursday, July 31, in Naples, FL. Born in Willimantic, he was the son of the late Rose and Abraham Jaffe. A graduate of the University of Connecticut and Illinois College of Optometry, he was also a U.S. Army Air Corps veteran of World War II. Dr. Jaffe was a local and regional tennis competitor and was elected to the New England Division of the Tennis Hall of Fame, and was past president of New England Lawn Tennis Association. He was a former school board member in Portsmouth, NH.

He leaves his wife, Carol; a son, Dr. Andrew Jaffe and his wife Nancy of Bow, NH; two daughters, Elizabeth Jaffe and her husband Roy Cutler of Jericho, VT, and Anne Murray and her husband Brian of Mechanicsville, VA; and six grandchildren.

Funeral services were held Sunday, Aug. 3, in the Sanctuary of Congregation Ahavath Achim, 84 Lebanon Ave., Colchester with Rabbi Kenneth Alter officiating. Interment will follow in the Ahavath Achim Cemetery, Colchester. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to a charity of the donor’s choice. Arrangements entrusted to Weinstein Mortuary, Hartford.

For more information, directions or to share memories of Rubin with his family, visit online at www.weinsteinmortuary.com.