

News Bulletin

Serving Amston, Andover, Cobalt, East Hampton, Hebron, Marlborough, Middle Haddam, Portland, Colchester and Salem

Volume 34, Number 28

Published by The Glastonbury Citizen

October 2, 2009



Testimonies of a Quiet New England Town, a short film on the capture and rescue of Cesar and Lowis Peters, premiered at RHAM High School last Sunday. Hebron resident Matt Troy directed the film, and he is shown here introducing the film.

Hebron Native Debuts Short Film

by Sarah McCoy

This past Sunday was cold and wet—the perfect sort of day to go watch a movie.

Fortunately, there was a short film making its premiere right in Hebron.

Hundreds of eager moviegoers packed the RHAM High School auditorium for the premiere of *Testimonies of a Quiet New England Town*. The 18-minute movie tells the story of the capture and rescue of former Hebron residents Cesar and Lowis Peters.

In the late 1700s the African-American couple had been living free. That all changed in 1787 when they were captured and attempted to be sold into slavery. Hebron residents came to the Peters' rescue claiming that the Peters couldn't be sold as they were wanted on (bogus) theft charges back in Hebron.

The plan worked and the Peters returned to Hebron where they remained for the rest of their lives.

The Peters' story has become a pretty well-known one in Hebron; in 2004, the town took ownership of a house at 150 East St. that may or may not have been the one-time residence of the couple, and debate over what to do with the dwelling has swirled in town ever since.

It was around 2006 that one Hebron resident heard the Peters story and wanted to share it with others. Matt Troy, then a student at New York University, decided to make a movie.

For the last two and a half years he has been writing, directing, casting and chasing down potential grants all to support the film. On Sun-

day, that work paid off as the initial showing of *Testimonies* brought 800 viewers and a standing ovation for Troy's directorial debut.

"It was incredible," Troy said of the experience. "I expected to see only the people and families directly connected with the film. I was just so blown away by the support of the whole community."

Hebron resident Chris Ambrose, who played Elihu Marvin, the town's Justice of the Peace in the film, said he was overwhelmed by the response to the film on Sunday. Ambrose has acted in a number of stage productions over the years but never on film. His journey to being cast began more than two years ago after he heard the story of Cesar and Lowis Peters and approached the Hebron Historical Society (HHS) about doing a presentation for the town's elementary schools.

Ambrose, a retired elementary school teacher, has spent the last few years as a substitute and paraprofessional at Hebron Elementary School. In 2007, with the help of HHS, he presented the Peters' story to students. "It's such a fabulous story historically speaking but also deals with true character," he explained. "I just wanted to be a part of spreading part of Hebron's history."

From there, Ambrose got involved with *Quest for Home*, a play put on by the HHS that featured 20 vignettes of Hebron's past. Two of those vignettes involved the Peters family.

See Film on Page 2

Former Colchester Resident Seeks Senate Seat

by Katy Nally

Merrick Alpert, a Democrat challenging Chris Dodd for his seat in the U.S. Senate, is not even a politician. But the absence of this title, the former Colchester resident said this week, is precisely his advantage.

"If you're not a career politician, if you come from humble origins, if you do the right thing even when no one is watching; imagine what you'll do when people *are* watching," Alpert said.

Alpert's campaign focuses on what distinguishes him from other politicians, like the incumbent, who has held office in Washington since 1974. Unlike Dodd, Alpert has never held public office, but he has worked with former president Bill Clinton, former Vice-president Al Gore and former governor of Oklahoma David Walters.

His political experience consists of serving as a delegate for Clinton to the Democratic National Convention and the Presidential Inaugural Committee, working as an advance for Gore and working on the National Health Care Campaign in Oklahoma. From there, Alpert became the policy adviser to Walters.

Throughout his campaign, Alpert has played up his roots in Colchester, where he was raised by a single mother on Bruce Circle. He said he

was inspired by the dedication and hard work his mother put forth to provide for her three children. He said he had to work his way up, gaining scholarships to Kingswood Oxford in West Hartford, then going to UConn and finally graduating with an undergraduate degree in political science from Trinity College. Alpert also stressed his ownership of the small software business called exceptionist, and his military stint in Bosnia.

All this, he said, is enough experience in itself to run for office. "I bring the truth," he said. "I can run *on* my record not *from* my record."

One of the stark differences between Alpert and Dodd is their methods for campaign financing, specifically, accepting contributions from political action committees (PAC). According to reports from the Federal Election Commission (FEC), from Jan. 1 to June 30, Alpert received no funds from PACs, while 39.45 percent of Dodd's campaign money came from PACs.

In the same timeframe, Alpert has raised just over 5 percent of what Dodd has raised for the 2010 race, although Alpert does not see his lesser funds as a disadvantage. He said as long as he doesn't get involved with PACs, he is already a step ahead of the incumbent. (Of the

six other candidates running for Senate in 2010, only Robert Simmons has accepted PAC money, according to the FEC report from Jan. 1 to June 30.)

Alpert also said not being a "career politician" would be beneficial in the long run. "I don't want that experience — the experience of a career politician," he said. "It's time to bring in a new breed of candidate."

When asked how he would legislate without any public office experience, Alpert said he would draw on his business expertise. "It's all business," he said. Like any operation "you have to have more money coming in than going out."

He said, ultimately, money would have to be cut from the defense budget. Regarding the "quagmire" in Iraq and Afghanistan, Alpert said deploying more troops and spending more money is not the answer. Instead, he proposed taking out some defense money and using it for programs like prenatal care and making higher education more affordable. "I'm more interested in rebuilding Connecticut than Kabul," he said.

Alpert added that the nation's debt should not increase with each passing year. "We can't keep running up debt," he said. "Over there [in Washington] we're just spending money." Furthermore, this spending spree, he said, was done

on credit and "guess what, the bills are due."

Alpert said Dodd could be blamed in part for this federal financial crisis because "it happened under Dodd's watch," as he is currently the Chairman of the Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee. "He was the lifeguard in the lifeguard stand when everybody drowned," Alpert said about the incumbent.

To rectify this financial crisis, Alpert said every federal program should be reviewed to weed out necessities from extras. He said he recently visited a children's center in Groton and wondered why the organization couldn't afford blankets and books, while billions of dollars were spent to bail out insurance corporations. "Our priority system is so wacked," he said. "It's great local people like teachers and social workers, versus the mediocrity of career politicians."

Speaking locally, Alpert said the most imperative issue facing Connecticut is the "brain drain" (when college students who study locally leave the state to find jobs). He said high-wage and high-tech jobs need to be created in Connecticut and cited stimulus money as one way to accomplish this.

Alpert said young people should "journey"

See Senate on Page 2

INDEX

REGIONAL

Obituaries.....Section II, Page 1

RHAM

Staff Surprised After Contract Rejection..... Page 8

MARLBOROUGH

CMT Results Discussed..... Page 13

COLCHESTER

Solar Homes on Display..... Page 26

EAST HAMPTON

Child Left on Bus..... Page 28

EAST HAMPTON

Library Celebrates 100 Years..... Page 32

Film cont. from Front Page

At that point, Ambrose had heard about a possible film on Cesar and Lowis Peters. He inquired about getting involved and, a few readings later, he was cast as one of the main roles in the film.

Ambrose and much of his family were in attendance on Sunday. He praised Troy for his ability to "tell a story." With his background in education, Ambrose is now working with the Historical Consultant to the film Gregory Farmer to develop curriculum material for distributing the film to schools across the state.

In order to fund the project the Historical Society applied for and received a \$60,000 grant from the CT Commission on Culture and Tourism. This money went to the production costs and future distribution of the film. Each town in the state will receive three free copies of the film along with curriculum guides that match state standards for teaching the material to students in grades three through twelve.

"As much as this is Hebron's history, this story is also a Connecticut story," Historical Society President and Testimonies Producer Donna McCalla said earlier this week. "It's wonderful to be able to support the spread of an incredible Connecticut story in a way that is accessible to both teachers and students."

Former Marlborough resident Jeff Jacques was also making his film debut in *Testimonies*. Jacques, who currently serves as assistant director in the AHM Summer Youth Theatre productions, played the film's villain Nathaniel Mann.

It was through AHM's annual production that Jacques met Troy, who has done the lighting

for the show in year's past. When Troy needed to cast someone as Mann he asked Jacques if he'd be interested in the role.

"I've tried not to take it too personally that Matt thought of me when he needed a villain," Jacques said at the premiere on Sunday. "Honestly, I'm just grateful to have been involved. It's been so much fun."

Jacques said the final piece is much different than what he envisioned even when reading the script. "There's so much dramatic tension that I didn't expect," he said on Sunday. "I think that Matt did a great job building suspense in an interesting way."

In addition to local residents, over 40 descendants of Cesar and Lowis Peters were in attendance to watch the film. They stood to give Troy and his cast and crew a standing ovation at the culmination of *Testimonies*.

With the premiere behind him, Troy said he's working on finalizing the movie's soundtrack and sound for distribution. In addition to making a DVD available to schools, he also hopes to be able to make copies available for purchase in Hebron. No details on that possibility have been finalized, though.

Troy continues to bounce between Connecticut and New York as he tries to find jobs on the production crew for other projects. He will be back filming in the Hebron area next month as he completes his senior thesis for New York University. For this, Troy is making a short film that tells the story of a paramedic, which draws on many of his own experiences as an emergency medical technician in Hebron, a position he's held for the last four years.



Merrick Alpert sits with his wife Alex and his three children. Pictured from left are Wyatt Mateo, 3 months, Emilia, 3, and Jaxon 5. Alpert grew up in Colchester and now lives in Mystic.

Senate cont. from Front Page

around the country and the world, but should want to return to Connecticut, as he has done. Alpert grew up in Colchester and now lives in Mystic with his wife Alex and his three young children.

Even though Alpert is a small-town guy with capitol-city ambitions, he said he is not intimidated by the candidates who may have more public office experience and have larger campaign funds. "I think one man can and will make a difference," he said, "because that's the American way."

And despite his inexperience, Alpert has been campaigning across the state like a classic, baby-kissing politician. He said he enjoys going to the farmers' markets in Madison and Coventry, not only for the produce, but to speak with local farmers. "I'm the guy who spends 16 hours a day driving around in my pickup going to county fairs, town hall meetings and Democratic town committees," he said.

For more information about Alpert, visit www.merrickforchange.com.

Local Solar-Powered Homes on Display in Colchester

by Katy Nally

Imagine cutting your electric bill by 70 to 80 percent and paying a flat rate even as the price of electricity soars. It's a reality for the many Connecticut residents who lease or own solar panels.

More and more people across the state are taking their homes off the grid and switching to solar energy. Travis and Michelle Cohen of 91 Cirillo Dr. made the switch one month ago. Cohen said her family leased 36 panels for 15 years, with payments that will total \$17,000. She said she realized the price of electricity was never going to go down, so solar panels were a clear choice. She said, ultimately, they made the decision based on financial reasons.

The Cohens will host an open house tomorrow, Saturday, Oct. 3, for anyone who wants to see their solar panels, as part of the third annual Solar Tour presented by Solar Connecticut Inc.

"It's a wonderful thing that the Cohens have decided to let people come to their house to see the panels – it's very admirable," said Michael Trahan, executive director of Solar Connecticut Inc.

During the Solar Tour, about 25 homes across the state will open their doors for neighbors who are interested in learning more about solar energy. From 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. people can talk with the homeowners and the installers. "The tour gives people a chance to talk with someone who has made that leap to solar energy," Trahan said.

Two of the homes on display tomorrow are in Colchester. In addition to the Cohens, Tim and Corinna Forget will also take part in the Solar Tour. Their home, at 510 Parum Rd., was recently outfitted with two Solarheats and 52 solar arrays, which Forget said, are similar to panels. A Solarheat, heats the house and supplements the heat created by burning oil. Forget said the two Solarheats cost \$3,000, which includes installation. He said his family decided to partake in the tour to "raise more awareness for the public about alternative en-

ergies."

The Solar Tour is part of a nationwide tour sponsored by the American Solar Energy Society (ASES). Both Solar Connecticut Inc. and ASES are nonprofits that seek to inform people about solar energy. Since October is National Energy Awareness month, tomorrow is a fitting time for ASES to hold its 14th annual tour tomorrow. According to the ASES website, www.ases.org, this year "more than 150,000 participants will visit some 5,000 buildings in 3,000 communities across the U.S."

Last year, about 50 houses were on display during the Solar Tour in Connecticut, which is only about 5 percent of the buildings that use solar energy in the state, Trahan said. He said the more than 1,000 homeowners decided to switch to solar because of green reasons and obvious financial incentives. "For some people it's a badge of honor; they want to do the right thing," Trahan said. "They're looking at clean energy issues from a national perspective, but they're thinking locally."

According to Trahan, there are several state and federal tax rebates and incentives for switching to solar energy, which vary depending on whether homeowners lease or own the panels. "Connecticut is one of a handful of states in the country that leases panels," Trahan said.

In Connecticut, the Clean Energy Fund was started to create incentives for renewable sources of energy. Trahan said it's funded by people who buy electricity from the local electric companies like Connecticut Light and Power. He said each person who is charged for traditional electricity from the grid also pays a small fee that feeds into the fund.

The Clean Energy Fund subsidizes the leasing of panels, so homeowners make payments that are less than or the same as their old electric bills. However, this is a fixed rate, unlike the price of electricity. "You should see the smiles on people's faces when they see their electric bills after installation," Trahan said.

For those who decide to buy solar panels,



Pictured above is Travis and Michelle Cohen's home at 91 Cirillo Dr. with its new addition of 36 solar panels. The Cohens will host an open house tomorrow from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. for neighbors to come and view their panels as part of the third annual Solar Tour. The Cohens' home is one of two Colchester residences participating in the tour.

the Clean Energy Fund will rebate half the cost of installation, Trahan said. There is also a federal rebate, where panel owners claim only 30 percent of the cost of the system on their income taxes, he said. Forget said he was approved for this tax rebate.

As solar panels become more affordable, more homes across the state are tapping in to this renewable resource. Even though Connecticut has relatively severe winters, Trahan said the panels will work all year long, although they will produce less energy with less direct sunlight. He said it's a misconception that solar panels are useless in colder climates. "It's been

proven time and time again that it works," he said.

The ideal place for solar panels is on a large roof facing south, but panels can also be placed free-standing in the backyard, he said.

Trahan said there will be homes on display tomorrow within a half hour drive from any where in the state. He said that, so far, the Solar Tour has been "very, very successful because it has created a fair amount of awareness" about renewable energy.

For more information about the Solar Tour, and locations of other homes on display, visit www.solarconnecticut.org.

Middle Haddam Library Celebrates 100 Years

by Michael McCoy

Unbeknownst to many, there are two libraries in East Hampton open to the public, and one of them is celebrating its centennial this year.

This Sunday, at Angelico's Lakehouse, the Middle Haddam Library will host its centennial gala, celebrating its rich history.

Twenty years ago, former Middle Haddam resident Mary Anna Tien wrote a quite exhaustive history about the library, including a record of its July 16, 1909, dedication ceremony "as a center and home for the social and intellectual life of this community..."

Apparently a library in Middle Haddam can be traced back to the early 19th century, but it was short lived. The library as it exists today was the result of a group of citizens, led by Christ Church rector Reverend Herbert L. Mitchell, starting in 1892.

(Incidentally, Mitchell died no more than a month later; he drowned while trying to save two boys from the same fate during a church function. Only one of the boys survived.)

Then, quoting a 1959 account, Tien said, "The possibility of a library building was brightened with the disposition of the estate of Cyrus and Belinda Hurd in 1908." The heir of the lion's share of that money was Russell Dart (a family name persists in Middle Haddam today) who allowed the future building to be restored with that money. Though other Hurd family members contributed, it was Dart who donated \$1,000 to the project. That's approximately the equivalent of \$24,000 in 2009 dollars.

The centennial of the library is impressive enough, but the building actually dates back to 1799, when Daniel Tracy and Cyrus Bill leased a "piece of land...on the highway leading from Chatham to East Haddam..." from Hezekiah Smith. Before the year was out, they built a store, located at what is now known as 2 Knowles Rd. It served as various businesses until 1834, when it became a residence, albeit one often simultaneously maintained as a store. At some point thereafter, Tien said, "it fell into sad disrepair." When the restoration project commenced, Charles Edward Hooper, who summered in Middle Haddam, donated his architectural expertise.

The first librarian was Ellen Whitmore, who was paid 50 cents a week from November to April and 25 cents from May to October. That's about \$12 and \$6 a week, respectively, adjusted for inflation.

Of course, librarian pay is not the only thing that has changed in 100 years. For instance, "In 1955, the furnace was installed releasing the librarian from the drudgery of hauling fuel oil from the cellar," Tien wrote in her history.

Another evolution is the usage and fee. When the library was founded, it was exclusively for

Middle Haddam and Cobalt use. In 1933, the rest of East Hampton was allowed to use it for a dollar a year.

But today, the library is available to anyone from any town at no cost.

In 1964-65, solely through donations, a children's wing was added. Though children's storytime is still held there, the wing is now a reading room, while the children's department has been relocated to the basement.

During the wing's dedication, Professor George Creeger poignantly remarked, "I sometimes think that libraries belong most properly to children, for it is they who experience in its most intense form the joy of which I intend to speak." He continued, "Surely no function of the library fills us with a warmer sense of an obligation well met than that of opening to our children the delight that books can afford."

Bobette Reed Kahn is president of the library's board of directors, and counted the library as "one of the few standing private libraries in Connecticut."

Remember the opening scene in Disney's *Beauty and the Beast* when Belle visits the jovial bookseller who lets her just keep the book she has borrowed countless times? The Middle Haddam Library is something like that. It's a quiet little building in a quiet little corner in a quiet little village of the *sometimes* quiet East Hampton.

The library's forte is not an overwhelming amount of cutting edge media, though the DVD selection is impressive for its size. There are no computer stations. In fact there is only one computer, the librarian's, though that is not even used as the card catalog. Some may call the system antiquated, but most will find it charming.

Someone checking a book out would simply sign their name on a card. When the past due date comes around, they will not be fined, and perhaps would not even be questioned about the book until another patron requests it.

"It's very relaxed; it's very friendly," Kahn said, and added that the honor system of check-out has worked quite well. "We'll track you down if we need to," she chuckled.

She even illustrated the point first hand: "My daughter found a book the other day that had been out for six months. Now, I was not happy, but nobody came after us."

Libraries were once known as a haven for contemplation, serenity, and good old-fashioned quiet. Now, quiet is hard to come by even in libraries. But the Middle Haddam Library still provides just that.

Emily Given, a library board member, said people often leave the library with a sought-after book "or something else you didn't even know you were looking for."

In addition to the main collection, and the



The austere yet elegant Middle Haddam Library is located at the corner of Knowles Road and Route 151. The library will hold a 100th anniversary celebration gala this Sunday, Oct. 4.

forementioned reading room and children's department, the upstairs hosts the nonfiction section. This is also where one can see the ship building remnants with which the building was constructed from. Other architectural features include the front entrance's "swordfish hinges" and Dutch doors.

Kahn also said the library is quite animal-friendly, remembering one time she walked in "and saw a rabbit hopping around."

Like other libraries, Middle Haddam Library holds many programs. Recent events include University of Connecticut professor Ronald Mallett's talk on time travel. His book, *Time Traveler*, is currently being adapted for the screen by Spike Lee. Other speakers have included Susan Campbell, author of *Dating Jesus*, and Portland's Nancy D'Oench author of *Gardens Private & Personal*.

On July 16, the library held their centennial picnic.

Every Tuesday at 10:30 a.m., the library hosts a children's story hour, lead by Pina Michalowski. Each second Saturday, from June to October they hold an artists' market which Kahn said, "has been fabulous these last couple years." The last one of the year is coming up on Oct. 10.

At Christmastime they always host a holiday party, which includes a pot luck style array of snacks, as well as a silent auction, their single

biggest fundraiser of the year." This year's party is scheduled for Dec. 6.

The library has a 12-member board, and only three paid employees, librarian Janet McDonald, Saturday librarian Gail Scranton, and one substitute librarian. (McDonald has been at the library since 2003, after racking up 29 years working at Middletown's Russell Library.)

Given said one draw for many people (especially children) is that "they are known and loved by Janet."

McDonald said that because people often forget the library is there, harder-to-find materials may sometimes be available. For instance, the library has acquired two copies of Dan Brown's blockbuster *The Lost Symbol*. One flew off the shelf, while the other remained for days until a patron's eyes bugged out when they saw it on the shelf.

The library has been celebrating the centennial throughout the year, but their gala celebration is coming up this Sunday, Oct. 4. The event will be a cocktail party with heavy gourmet hors d'oeuvres held from 4-7 p.m. at Angelico's Lake House Restaurant, and it's open to anyone. The cost is \$50 and those interested in attending can make checks out to the Middle Haddam Library and bring them to the gala, as well as call the library at 267-9093 to let someone know you plan to attend.

East Hampton Police News

9/18 — Phillip J. Carroll, 60, of 3 Markham Ln., was arrested for operating under the influence of alcohol and failure to drive right, East Hampton Police said.

9/19 — Laura Saunders, 54, of 91 Hog Hill Rd., and Nicholas Hallas, 49, of 220 Halls Hill Rd., Colchester, were involved in a car vs. motorcycle accident on North Maple Street, police said. Saunders was issued a ticket for failure of driver making a left turn to grant the right of way to oncoming traffic, police said, while Hallas was arrested for operating under suspension.

9/22 — Kimberly J. Jinks, 32, of 93 North Main St., Marlborough, was arrested for oper-

ating under the influence of alcohol and failure to drive right, police said.

9/23 — Michael Latronica, 32, of 48 Old West High St., was arrested for failure to appear, police said.

9/23 — Robert Tanguary, 28, of 351 Hartford Rd., Salem, was arrested for color of lamps, operating an unregistered vehicle and operating under suspension, police said.

9/24 — Patrick Burbank, 19, of 4 Wangonk Tr., was arrested for failure to stop at a stop sign, misuse of plates, operating an unregistered motor vehicle and operating without insurance, police said.

Longtime Bacon Coach Inducted in HOF

by Katy Nally

Dave Shea, who devoted a lifetime to basketball, coaching and Bacon Academy, will be inducted into the New England Basketball Hall of Fame next Friday, Oct. 9.

Shea's accomplishments are ever-present throughout Bacon Academy, where the gymnasium was named after him in 2000. He is one of a handful of coaches across the state to coach a boys' and a girls' basketball team to state championships, spokesman for the hall of fame, Malcolm MacKenzie said. Last March, the girls' basketball team won the Class M championship – an achievement that came 28 years after Shea coached the boys' team to the Class S championship.

Shea has a combined overall record of 592-265, which spans 39 years of coaching. For 24 years Shea coached the boys' basketball team, and then switched over to coach the girls in 1993, where he has continued for most of the past 15 years. He said coaching the girls was only supposed to last one year, but he just couldn't say no to the game. "I've always enjoyed the game of basketball," he said. "I guess you could say I loved it."

Shea's ties to Bacon Academy go back to even before he began coaching. He graduated from the school in 1952 where he played soccer, baseball and basketball and became the first 1,000 point scorer in Bacon history. After graduation, he focused on baseball and went on to play for the Philadelphia Athletics and the Kansas City Athletics for five years. Later on, he received a degree in administration and supervision from the University of Connecticut and came back to Bacon to teach.

Shea was a science teacher, a guidance counselor and an athletic director at Bacon until 1999, when he retired from teaching after 37 years. But even after retirement, Shea continued to coach both baseball and basketball. During his 39 years of coaching, Shea taught his son, John, and his granddaughter, Katie Mahoney, in basketball, as well as his grandson, David Mahoney, in baseball.

Shea's son went on to play basketball for UConn during his freshman and sophomore year.

Despite Shea's impressive track record, he said he could not have obtained this recogni-



Dave Shea

tion without the help of his players, his assistant coaches and the administration. "First and foremost, I would like to share this honor with my players who wore that blue and gold and gave 100 percent effort," Shea said in a statement. "I was very fortunate to have many outstanding players. ... Thank you!"

He also thanked his past and present assistant coaches, Vic Battaglioli and his son, as well as his volunteer coaches Richard Zalusky and Izzy Chisem. He added, "No program is successful without the support of the administration. ... I was fortunate enough to have this kind of support from Bob Warren for over 20 years." He also thanked current Bacon Academy Principal Jeff Mathieu.

Shea said the recognition is "very rewarding" and he views it as "another milestone" in his career. "I'm satisfied to be recognized by my peers for a lot of hard work and dedication," he said. "But it was a team effort to get recognized like this."

The induction ceremony will be held at Mohegan Sun in Uncasville next Friday, Oct. 9, from 7-9:30 p.m. Tickets for the event are sold out.

RHAM Staff Surprised by Board's Rejection of Contract

by Sarah McCoy

Members of the non-certified personnel union at the RHAM middle and high schools said they were "surprised" when the district's Board of Education (BOE) voted last week against their employee contract.

"Certainly we were caught off-guard that the board chose not to approve a contract that they, essentially, introduced," Matt O'Connor, a spokesperson for the Connecticut State Employees Association local 2001 Chapter, said earlier this week.

The contract failed by a 6-4 vote at the meeting last Monday, Sept. 21, of the regional school board. Board members Thomas Tremont, Danny Holtsclaw, Joe Farrell, T.J. Morelli-Wolfe, Ken Lee and Michael Turner voted against it, while BOE chair Sue Griffiths, James Cherry, Dieter Zimmer and Maryanne Leichter voted for the contract agreement.

The contract, which would service the 75 custodians, paraprofessionals and administrative assistants working in the two schools, called for a raise of 2 percent in 2009-10, 4 percent in 2010-11 and 4.1 percent in 2011-12. The contract also includes a 3.75 percent raise applied retroactively to the 2008-09 school year.

The last contract for this union expired in June 2008.

The unapproved contract also called for an increase in employee contributions to health care from the current rate of 14 percent to 15 percent in 2009-10, 17 percent in 2010-11 and 17.5 percent in 2011-12, as well as a step freeze for the duration of the contract. Steps are reached when an employee reaches experience markers or obtains additional education.

For Lee, it was the fourth year that made him vote against the contract. "We're in a recession and these people want raises?" he said earlier this week. "We cut everywhere we can and I just thought 4.1 percent is too much."

O'Connor reported that union officials approached the district in the spring of 2008, prior to the past contract's expiration, to begin negotiations on a new contract. At the time, he said, the school board was in the process of negotiating with the teachers' union so the non-certified personnel contract negotiations didn't begin, in earnest, until later that fall.

O'Connor added that while initial negotiations were slow, he believed, earlier this summer both sides had come to an agreement. "The last agreement was based on the arbitrated teacher's union settlement [from last February]," he said.

Farrell, also a member of the school board's negotiations committee, said there wasn't any agreement in place going into last Monday's meeting. "The negotiations com-

mittee never voted on a contract," he said. "Earlier in the year the board authorized [Superintendent of Schools Bob Siminski] to make an attempt at negotiating a contract. What we voted on at the last meeting wasn't anything I had agreed to. I hadn't seen the terms of the contract until recently."

Farrell voted against the agreement because, he said, "Given the conduct of negotiations and resources available to the district, this was not an offer that was in the best interest of the district and its taxpayers."

Farrell added that he specifically disagreed with the fact that the employees were not expected to increase their health insurance contributions in the 2008-09 fiscal year.

As a member of the negotiations committee, Farrell said he hopes an agreement can be reached prior to arbitration.

Currently, the two sides are set to meet for arbitration in December, which could cost each side up to \$50,000.

Mike Schlehofer, who has worked in the maintenance department for the school district for nearly 10 years, currently serves as the union chapter president. He said he was "shocked" at the outcome at last week's BOE meeting. "I was very disappointed," he said earlier this week. "It was [the school board's] proposal, we accepted it and, yet, we still don't have a contract."

Schlehofer said he's eager to get the matter settled and focus on the job at hand—taking care of the school district.

Siminski said he plans to sit down with Griffiths in the near future to determine the next course of action. O'Connor hopes the board will reconsider its decision but, even if it doesn't, "we're here and ready to talk," he said.

Last year, the regional school district went to arbitration with the teachers' union. The final decision called for a 2 percent raise for teachers this year, 4.1 percent in 2010-11 and 4 percent in 2011-12 – a near mirror to the latest contract proposal for the non-certified staff.

Arbitration decisions are binding.

One issue that may be a factor in arbitration is the discrepancy between what RHAM and neighboring districts pay their non-certified personnel. Presently, at RHAM, paraprofessionals can earn a maximum of \$13.20 per hour. In Colchester, the top step employees earn \$15.48 per hour. In East Hampton, the top wage is \$17.89 per hour and, in Bolton, paraprofessionals earn up to \$18.03 per hour.

Unless a special meeting is called, the BOE will next meet on Monday, Oct. 19, for its regularly scheduled meeting. O'Connor reported that many union members are planning to attend that meeting to urge the board to reconsider their vote.

East Hampton BOE Sends Land Purchase Recommendation to Council

by Michael McCoy

Earlier this week, the Board of Education (BOE) recommended the Town Council consider purchasing a piece of property for athletic space off of Route 66 for athletic space.

However, not every board member was thrilled with the idea.

At its Monday, Sept. 28, the BOE voted 7-1 (with Don Coolican opposed) to direct the council consider purchasing 3.3 acres adjacent to the East Hampton Middle School soccer field.

Superintendent of Schools Judy Golden said she received a letter in late August from an attorney representing an unidentified LLC. In the letter, the attorney said the client owned the land next to the soccer field and suggested the town might be interested in it.

However, Golden said the BOE does not purchase property, explaining why the matter is being forwarded to the council.

When asked if she endorsed the potential purchase, Golden said, "I think it would show foresight in that there is always a need for [athletic] fields."

Finance Director Jeff Jylkka said the property was appraised at \$180,000.

Coolican, a frequent dissenter, was the only one to vote against the decision. "We

can't adequately fund middle school sports...and we're going to double [the space for] it?" he said after the meeting. He also alluded to the fact that the BOE decided to enact pay-to-play during the last budget season.

Coolican also said he was "suspicious of the procedure," wondering why the letter didn't go directly to Town Council instead.

Like Golden, Coolican noted that the BOE could not purchase land, but he also said, "I don't have enough faith that the Town Council will negotiate to get the best price and walk the land to see that it's appropriate."

Should a negotiation go forward, he added, "we should drive the bargain as hard as we can."

As for the land's suitability, Coolican admitted he had no idea. However, he guessed that if the land was purchased for somewhere around the appraisal price, the clearing of the land and preparation of the fields would cost just as much as the land purchase itself.

Further criticizing the decision, Coolican said school population was declining and would for the next decade.

The Town Council is expected to discuss the purchase at its next meeting, Oct. 13.

Andover Police News

9/22: Zachary Bisson, 18, of 129 Bear Swamp Rd., was charged with reckless driving, stop sign violation, failure to obey control signal, disobeying signal of an officer, State Police said.

Hebron Police News

9/23: Dean Pritchard, 54, of 50 Sassacus Dr., Milford, was charged with failure to drive right and DUI, State Police said.

Marlborough Police News

9/25: Steven Hahn, 47, of 103 Saner Rd., was charged with disorderly conduct and interfering with emergency calls, State Police said.

9/26: Michelle Valencic, 22, of 92 Shailor Hill Rd., Colchester, was charged with operating an unregistered vehicle and DUI, State Police said.

Colchester Police News

9/22: Jose Alvarado, 20, of 23 Ward St. Apt. 1, Hartford, was charged with failure to appear at a court date, State Police said.

9/23: Brent Duncan, 29, of 7 Southwinds Rd., Moodus, was charged with third-degree larceny, State Police said.

9/25: Anthony Marciano, 23, of 40 Joiners Rd., Rocky Hill, was charged with DUI and driving to endanger, State Police said.

9/24: Michael Robichaud, 51, of 15 Hillside Ln., was charged with disorderly conduct and third-degree assault, State Police said.

9/26: David Hipler, 35, of 14 Hamilton Ave., Groton, was charged with DUI and failure to drive right, State Police said.

Portland Police News

9/21 — Craig Outland, 23, of 140 Berlin St., Middletown, was charged with operating under suspension, improper use of market plate, speeding and failure to renew registration, Portland Police said.

9/21 — Jessica Monarca, 19, of 883 Long Hill Rd., Middletown, was charged with possession of drug paraphernalia, police said.

Police Say Arrest Possible After Child Left on East Hampton Bus

by Michael McCoy

An arrest may be imminent in the case of a Memorial School kindergartener who was allegedly left on a school bus for an entire day during the first week of school.

On Sept. 4, East Hampton Police Sgt. Garritt Kelly said, a 5-year-old kindergartener remained on his school bus when it delivered students to Memorial School around 8:45 a.m. (Kelly said the reason why he did not exit the bus at that time has not yet been determined, as the student's trauma has prevented police from conducting a proper interview with him.)

The boy remained on the bus all day, while it sat in the yard, from about 9 a.m.-2:15 p.m., Kelly said. Then the driver picked up students at the middle and high schools.

Kelly said that, at the end of the high school route, a student told the driver a young child was on the bus. "At that point the driver was surprised," Kelly reported, adding that after the students were dropped off, he picked up students at Memorial School and dropped the student in question off with everyone else, never alerting school staff of the situation.

Kelly said police were not notified of the incident until the parents of the child did so on Sept. 18. Kelly said that, to this day, the school district has not filed any sort of report with the police, though he said staff has been cooperative with them.

Kelly said police will apply for an arrest warrant next week for the driver of the bus. Kelly would not identify the driver.

What seemed to trouble Kelly was that, according to him, school administration called the parents' home number once, did not leave a message, and stopped there. But Kelly said the school had on file for the student, in addition to that home number, a cell phone number for each parent and two emergency contact people, each with a home and cell phone number.

Golden said police were not called immediately because "we had no reason to think the child was missing," counting it as natural to assume the child was with their parent(s) somewhere when he did not turn up in school. Golden said, "Of course we would call them" if anyone thought the child was missing. She said police were not notified after the fact because both the BOE and Connecticut Association of Board of Education (CABE) attorneys deemed there was no criminal intent and that police action should not be sought.

Also, Golden said, staff called the home not once but twice, and the answering machine is on "a long delay," which led staff to believe there was no answering machine at all.

On Sept. 18, Golden sent a letter to 650 Memorial School parents, alerting them that a student was left on the bus. In the letter, she said staff will now check the bus when it arrives at Memorial School, making sure no children have remained. Golden said this measure alone

should ensure a similar incident never happens again.

She also said that if parents do not call the school, alerting staff of a child's absence by 9 a.m., the staff will not only call home as before, but also call every number on file for the student until someone is reached. Finally, she said the district "made appropriate recommendations" to Charlie Nichols to resolve the situation. Golden later explained that this included getting Nichols' word that the driver in questions will never drive East Hampton students again.

Golden said she was unaware of the police criticism of how administration handled the situation, and said, "Our staff did exactly what was in place for them to do," while noting that the policy, as mentioned above, has changed since the incident. "Hindsight is 20/20," she said.

Golden also said that potential arrests are not the administration's concern, remarking, "Our concern is the children and the bus drivers who should be keeping them safe."

"It was a real shame that that child was probably traumatized for the whole day on that bus," said BOE member Don Coolican.

Interestingly, Coolican said he experienced something similar, albeit more swiftly resolved, many years ago. When his daughter was a first-grader in East Hampton, she fell asleep on the bus, and the bus driver did not notice until he returned to the bus yard.

"We were frantic," Coolican said. However, the driver took her directly home, and she was only about a half-hour late.

Despite admitting that the current situation was not handled as well as this one, Coolican did not criticize the administration at all. "That's Charlie Nichols' problem," he said. "Until he delivers [the children] to us, they're his responsibility."

Coolican did not see it was the administration's responsibility to notify police when the child did not arrive at school. "That's asking a lot, I think," he said, adding, similarly to Golden's sentiments, that most people would assume the child is simply away with his parents somewhere.

As for his thoughts on Nichols Bus Service, Coolican kept his remarks neutral, saying, "He's as good as anybody else is."

"The driver made a mistake," said Coolican who said he was content with the Nichols' promise concerning the driver.

Nichols was unavailable for comment.

Kelly called the matter an "active investigation," but promised, "There will be arrests sought."

Golden, as well as East Hampton Police Chief Matthew Reimondo, said they were not aware of other recent instances where a child was left on a bus, and Golden called it a "one-time incident."

Andover Deciding What to Do With Grant Money

by Sarah McCoy

The town of Andover has received a \$250,000 state grant, but officials are still undecided about what to do with the money.

In 2008, town officials applied for a \$500,000 Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) grant with the intention of also applying for another \$500,000 from a federally-funded Small Cities grant. Between these two sources, town officials hoped to build a new senior center. The current senior center is housed in the Old Firehouse on Center Street.

However, the town opted not to pursue the Small Cities grant as the restrictions for using the money for a senior center were more than Andover could comply with. For instance, if the town was to use Small Cities grant money to build a senior center, that center must be open the same times as the Town Hall and could only serve the town's 65-and-older population.

"We have many people who use our current senior center who aren't 65 yet," Municipal Agent Cathy Palazzi said. "And, the town can't afford a full-time senior center director and for the building to be opened all day."

With these things in mind, the town only applied for STEAP funding, foregoing the Small Cities grant.

Earlier this month, Governor M. Jodi Rell announced that Andover would receive \$250,000 in a STEAP grant to go towards a new senior center. However, that amount is far from enough to construct a new building, so First Selectman Bob Burbank is considering his options to use this money.

One possibility would be for the town to renovate the Old Firehouse. Palazzi said she'd like to see the town pave the parking lot and possibly add a commercial kitchen. The kitchen would then qualify Andover for state-funded meals for senior lunches.

Currently local restaurant Hop River Café

provides low cost meals to Andover seniors once a week. Palazzi has to raise money on her own to pay for the difference in what seniors pay for the meals and what they actually cost.

"A commercial kitchen would mean we could do more on our own," she said.

Another option for using the STEAP grant money would, again, involve Small Cities funding. Since Andover initially opted not to pursue this grant, the guidelines for spending the money have changed. "It got to the point that so many towns weren't applying for the grants because of restrictions," Burbank said earlier this week. "Since then the rules have changed."

Burbank added that it's his intention to apply for a \$500,000 Small Cities grant and, if the town receives funding, use that \$750,000 for construction of a new senior center.

STEAP funding must be used within three years of receipt. Although Burbank did state an extension is possible if the town needs it.

Small Cities grant applications are due in the spring and the town would be notified in the fall if they received funding.

Burbank said a new senior center location could be in between the Town Hall and Andover Elementary School. The town owns 70 acres around that area and Burbank feels a senior center would not only fit but would create a town center for many of Andover residents' needs.

"The important thing for people to know is that nothing is going to be happening immediately," he said. "But, we are working to find the best possible use of this money."

Burbank added that, while he sees a need for a senior center in town, asking residents to support this project through local taxes isn't something he'd "be comfortable with."



The Cumberland Farms on Marlborough Street was the subject of an apparent robbery earlier this week, Portland Police said.

Portland Police Investigating Convenience Store Robbery

by Michael McCoy

Portland Police are investigating an apparent late-night robbery at a Route 66 convenience store this week.

According to Lieutenant Ron Milardo, the Cumberland Farms at 204 Marlborough St. was robbed just after midnight on Sept. 29.

Milardo said the incident happened at 12:06 a.m. He said the store clerk told police a black male entered the store "demanding money from the register," just as the clerk, who was alone at the time, was closing up.

According to Milardo, the clerk reported the robber was in his 30s or 40s and wearing a "dark blue-colored hooded puffy-type jacket." In addition to having his hood up, the offender also apparently donned a baseball cap underneath the hood, Milardo said. He was also wearing a

white bandana across his face, underneath his eyes, Milardo added.

Milardo said the criminal tried to hurry the clerk, promising, "If you don't hurry, I'll shoot you." However, Milardo made clear that the robber in no way physically displayed his having a gun.

Milardo said the clerk complied, and the suspect fled the store, heading north up High Street, making off with less than \$100.

Milardo said police conducted a K-9 track, but did not find the robber. Milardo said he believed the suspect got away with a vehicle parked somewhere behind the store.

As of press time Thursday, Milardo said, the suspect had not yet been apprehended.

Obituaries

Portland

Mary Zawadski

Mary Tarnowski Schultz Zawadski, 99, of Portland, passed away Saturday, Sept. 26, at the Portland Care and Rehabilitation Center. She was the wife of the late Stanley Zawadski and Sigmund Schultz.

Born in Salem, MA, April 11, 1910, a daughter of the late Walter and Catherine Gorczyca Tarnowski, she was a Portland resident for most of her life. She was a parishioner of the Church of Saint Mary and was a member of the Ladies Guild. She also was a member of St. Theresa of P.R.C.U., the Brownstone Chapter of AARP, and the Portland Senior Center.

She is survived by her grandchildren, Brian Schultz, David Schultz, Linnae Gould, Piper Tober and Robert Schultz; her great-grandchildren, Michael Gomola, Dana Schultz, Connor Schultz, Cory Tobler and Bryant Tobler; her sister, Helen (Mrs. Michael) Pasquarelli; her daughters-in-law, Elizabeth Schultz and Shirley Schultz; and several nieces and nephews.

She was predeceased by her sons, Arthur R. Schultz and Robert J. Schltz, and her brothers, Joseph Tarnowski and John Tarnowski.

Her family received relatives and friends in the Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland, Thursday morning, Oct. 1, and then proceeded to the Church of Saint Mary for a Mass of Christian Burial. Interment followed at Pine Grove Cemetery in Middletown.

In Lieu of flowers, the family asks that gifts in her memory be sent to the Church of Saint Mary, 51 Freestone Ave., Portland, CT 06480.

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

Marlborough

Julie Patterson

Julie Mary (Adams) Patterson, 98, of Marlborough and formerly of East Hampton, widow of Wilbur Patterson, died Thursday, Sept. 24, at Marlborough Health Care. Born Sept. 18, 1911, in New Britain, she was the daughter of the late Joseph and Mary (Miller) Adams.

Julie had worked for many years for Sage Allen Department Store before her retirement. She was an active communicant of St. Patrick Church in East Hampton and was a member of both the Women's Guild and the Prayer Line of the church.

She is survived by her three daughters, Patricia DeFranzo and her husband Michael of East Hampton, Carol Tracy and her husband Joseph of East Hampton, and Sharon Patterson of Santa Fe, NM; three grandchildren, Debra Cuisimano, Michael DeFranzo Jr. and Patrick Tracy; and a great-granddaughter, Kaelyn Curtis.

A funeral liturgy was celebrated Tuesday, Sept. 29, at St. Patrick Church, East Hampton. Burial followed in the family plot in Rose Hill Memorial Park in Rocky Hill. There were no calling hours.

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

Portland

Robert V. Mahoney

Robert V. Mahoney of South Windsor, husband for 54 years of Jane (McCarthy) Mahoney, died Tuesday, Sept. 29, at a local convalescent home. Born in Middletown, on April 5, 1921, son of the late Patrick and Henrietta (English) Mahoney, he had lived in Portland before moving to South Windsor 50 years ago.

Before retiring he was employed by the Hartford Insurance Group for 42 years. Bob served in the United States Army during World War II in The European Theater and fought in four major campaigns, Normandy, Northern France, Rhineland and Central Europe.

Besides his wife, Jane, he is survived by his children, sons, Jon Mahoney of Ellington and Gregory Mahoney and his wife Brenda of Vernon; a daughter, Nancy Florio and her husband Edward of Bloomfield, NJ; two grandchildren, Lawrence Florio and Christine Florio; and a brother-in-law, Dominic Colavecchio of Winsted. He was predeceased by a brother, William Mahoney; and two sisters, Margaret Mahoney and Dewey Daley.

Family and friends gathered today, Friday, Oct. 2, at 9 a.m., at the Samsel & Carmon Funeral Home, 419 Buckland Rd., South Windsor, followed by a Funeral Mass at 10 a.m. at St. Margaret Mary Church, South Windsor. Burial with military honors followed in Wapping Cemetery, South Windsor. His family received friends Thursday, Oct. 1, at the funeral home.

The family would like to extend a special thanks to the nurses and staff at Crestfield Rehabilitation Center and at North Central Hospice and Palliative Care for all of their care and support during this difficult time.

For online condolences please visit, www.carmonfuneralhome.com.

Colchester

Robert Vincent Appell

Robert Vincent Appell, 23, of Colchester and Oakdale, passed away suddenly due to heart disease on Thursday, Sept. 24, at work in Colchester. Born in Farmington on March 23, 1986, he was a son of Michele Savalle of Amston and Robert Appell of Lake City, FL.

He attended Colchester schools and graduated from Bacon Academy with the Class of 2004. Rob worked as a machinist for Alpha Q in Colchester. He was an avid fisherman, loved riding his dirt bike, playing pool and being outdoors. Rob was fun-loving and he enjoyed entertaining his family and friends with his longtime girlfriend and soulmate, Colleen Fairbanks, in their new home in Oakdale. Most importantly, he will be remembered and greatly missed for his laugh, warm smile and good nature. Rob loved and was loved by everyone. He touched the lives of all that crossed his path. He truly loved life and will be deeply missed.

In addition to his parents and his girlfriend, Colleen, he is survived by a sister, Marissa Sousa of Amston; a brother, Tyler Casey of Colchester; maternal grandparents, Josephine Guarnaccia of Mystic and Vincent Savalle and Teri Verrill Davis of Colchester; paternal grandmother, Sharon Appell of Florida; and numerous aunts, uncles, extended family members and friends.

He was predeceased by his grandfather, Benjamin Appell.

Friends called Monday, Sept. 28, at Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. The funeral assembled Tuesday, Sept. 29, at the funeral home, before a chapel service. Interment followed in the Linwood Cemetery, Colchester.

In lieu of flowers, his family requests that donations in his memory be made to the UConn Medical Center Neonatal Unit, 263 Farmington Ave., Farmington, CT 06030.

For online condolences, visit www.auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Hebron

David Frank German

David Frank German, 75, formerly of Hebron and Andover died Tuesday, Sept. 22, at Grand Strand Regional Medical Center. Dave was born Feb. 21, 1934, in Middletown, a son of the late Spence and Elizabeth German.

He married his loving wife, Josephine Cranford on July 9, 1956, in Decatur, GA. They were married for 49 years before Jo's death in 2006. Dave grew up in Portland and was a member of the Portland High School Class of 1952 where he was captain of the swim team and a member of the Radical Valve Timers Hot Rod Club. He was a veteran of the US Navy and served during the Korean Conflict.

Dave was employed by Pratt & Whitney Aircraft in East Hartford for 36 years. Upon retirement in 1992, he and Jo resided in Myrtle Beach where he enjoyed playing golf and later in life enjoyed riding his bike. He was a member of First Presbyterian Church and a member of the Elks Club. Dave also was a lifelong New York Yankees and UConn basketball fan.

He was preceded in death by a brother, Robert German of Cromwell.

Dave's family would like to express their heartfelt thanks to Incare Home Health Hospice Care and the staff at Brightwater Assisted Living where Dave had recently called home for their care and compassion, and a special thank you to all of Dave's neighbors and friends at Southcreek who helped in so many ways, we are truly grateful. Dave will always be remembered for his funny wit and determination to live life at its fullest regardless of his limitations. May his strength and courage be an inspiration to us all.

Dave leaves his loving children, Michael German and his wife, Lisa of Coventry, Elizabeth Kempf and her fiancé, Dean Isabella of Windsor. Dave was especially proud of his five grandchildren, Amberlee, Jesse, Stephen, Austin and Jacqueline; and a brother, Stephen German of Missoula, MT.

A memorial service was held Wednesday, Sept. 30, at the First Presbyterian Church of Myrtle Beach with the Rev. Bobby Wilkes officiating. The family received friends before the service in the church parlor.

Memorials may be sent to the First Presbyterian Church of Myrtle Beach, 1300 N. Kings Hwy., Myrtle Beach, SC 29577 or to The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research, Attn: Tribute Gifts, Church Street Station, PO Box 780, New York, NY 10008-0780.

Sign a guestbook at www.goldfinchfuneralhome.com.

Marlborough

Donna L. LeBel

Donna L. (Brezzo) LeBel, 53, of East Hartford and formerly of Marlborough, best friend and beloved wife for 22 years of David A. LeBel, died Monday, Sept. 28, at Manchester Memorial Hospital with her loving family at her side.

She was born April 22, 1956, in Hartford, daughter of the late Raymond and Enes (Scagliotti) Brezzo, she was raised in Glastonbury and had lived in Marlborough for many years before moving to East Hartford in 2003. Donna had been a cashier at the Manchester Shop Rite for over five years.

In addition to her husband, she is survived by and was the loving mother of three daughters, Andrea LeBel of East Hartford, Tiffany (LeBel) Barrea and her husband Jeff of Manchester, Brenda Brezzo of East Hartford; two granddaughters, Ashley Brezzo also of East Hartford and Juliet Barrea. Other survivors include her brother, Christopher Brezzo and his wife Jane of Glastonbury; a nephew Anthony Brezzo of New Hampshire; a niece Carrie Brezzo of Massachusetts; a special cousin Barbara Casavant and her husband Douglas of Granby, several other cousins.

The family would like to make a special thanks to Donna's best friend Mary Thompson of Manchester and all of her co-workers at Shop Rite for all of the help during Donna's illness.

Funeral services will be held today, Friday, Oct. 2, at 11 a.m., at the Holmes Funeral Home, 400 Main St., Manchester. Burial will be held in the Holy Cross Cemetery in Glastonbury. Calling hours were Thursday, Oct. 1, from 5-8 p.m., at the funeral home.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the Manchester Memorial Hospital, 71 Haynes St., Manchester, CT. 06040.

Colchester

Joseph M. Donahue

Joseph M. Donahue, 88, formerly of Colchester, passed away peacefully Wednesday, Sept. 23, at South Windsor Rehab & Nursing Center. He was the husband of the late Mary (Klapatch) Donahue. Joseph was born on June 1, 1921, in Hartford. He was the son of the late Deliah (Cronin) Donahue and Joseph M. Donahue.

He served in the U.S. Navy, submarine division, during World War II. After returning from war, Joe settled in Manchester where he and Mary raised their family. He worked for many years in the print shop of the Traveler's Insurance Company. After retirement, Joe and Mary moved to Lake Hayward in Colchester, where they spent their summers. They also enjoyed a winter home in Barefoot Bay, FL, where Joe was active in the senior softball league.

He leaves behind two daughters and sons-in-law, Susan Donahue and Gerry Guay of Manchester and Joan and Lou Caparaso of Florida. He also leaves two grandsons, Daniel and Timothy Guay.

Joseph was predeceased by his sister, Marie Hale and by his son, Stephen Donahue.

The family wishes to thank the caring staff at South Windsor Rehab & Nursing Center, where Joe was a resident. The special people who worked and lived there became family to Joe, and were much appreciated for making his last years comfortable and happy.

There were no calling hours. A private burial will be held at the convenience of the family.

The John F. Tierney Funeral Home, Manchester, has care of the arrangements.

Colchester

Robert Francis Pohlman

Robert Francis Pohlman, 77 of Colchester, beloved husband of Barbara (Kelly) Pohlman, passed away Tuesday morning, Sept. 29, at the St. Francis Hospital in Hartford, surrounded by his loving family. Born June 13, 1932, in Manchester, he was the son of the late Joseph and Mary Pohlman.

Bob was proud of his service to our country with the U.S. Air Force in the Strategic Air Command from 1951 till 1962 and during the Korean War. He retired several years ago after having worked as an electrical engineer for Pratt & Whitney Aircraft. He loved to care for his lawn and garden. He loved the outdoors, camping and fishing. Most importantly, he will be remembered by his family for his wonderful sense of humor, laughter, thoughtful manner and kindness to others.

In addition to his wife of 56 years, survivors include three children and their partners, Gary Pohlman and Bernard Clavette of Old Saybrook, Sherry DiBella and Bill Hickey of East Hampton and Cynthia Sledjeski of Manchester; a stepson, Lee Lanterman and his wife, Amy of Union; five grandchildren; three great-grandchildren; and numerous extended family and friends.

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



Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

Like everybody else, I sometimes get amusing e-mail forwarded from friends. Granted, they're not always laugh riots, but generally good for a chuckle. Recently, I received one that I enjoyed, and figured I'd share some of it.

The e-mail is really just a collection of random thoughts, which supposedly came from various 25-35-year-olds. It was funny – and a little eerie – how many of these thoughts struck a chord with me. If you're in that same demographic, they might hit home with you too. And if you're not, find someone who is; they might enjoy it.

* * *

So, here are some of the highlights from that e-mail. And yes, these thoughts are really quite random but, whether you care to admit or not, many of them are thoughts you've probably had at least once or twice.

— Nothing sucks more than that moment during an argument when you realize you're wrong.

— I totally take back all those times I didn't want to nap when I was younger.

— Do you remember when you were a kid, playing Nintendo and it wouldn't work? You take the cartridge out, blow in it and that would magically fix the problem. Every kid in America did that, but how did we all know how to fix the problem? There was no Internet or message boards or FAQs. We just figured it out. Today's kids are soft.

— There is a great need for a sarcasm font.

— How the hell are you supposed to fold a fitted sheet?

— I would rather try to carry 10 plastic grocery bags in each hand than take two trips to bring my groceries in.

— “LOL” has gone from meaning “laugh out loud” to “I have nothing else to say.”

— I have a hard time deciphering the fine line between boredom and hunger.

— Answering the same letter three times or more in a row on a Scantron test is absolutely petrifying.

— Whenever someone says “I'm not

book smart, but I'm street smart”, all I hear is “I'm not real smart, but I'm imaginary smart.”

— MapQuest really needs to start their directions on No. 5. Pretty sure I know how to get out of my neighborhood.

— Bad decisions make good stories.

— You never know when it will strike, but there comes a moment at work when you've made up your mind that you just aren't doing anything productive for the rest of the day.

— There's no worse feeling than that millisecond you're sure you are going to die after leaning your chair back a little too far.

— I hate being the one with the remote in a room full of people watching TV. There's so much pressure. ‘I love this show, but will they judge me if I keep it on? I bet everyone is wishing we weren't watching this. It's only a matter of time before they all get up and leave the room. Will we still be friends after this?’

— I hate when I just miss a call by the last ring (Hello? Hello? Dammit!), but when I immediately call back, it rings nine times and goes to voicemail. What'd you do after I didn't answer? Drop the phone and run away?

— I hate leaving my house confident and looking good and then not seeing anyone of importance the entire day. What a waste.

— It really bugs me when I want to read a story on CNN.com and the link takes me to a video instead of text.

— Even under ideal conditions people have trouble locating their car keys in a pocket or Pinning the Tail on the Donkey, but I bet everyone can find and push the snooze button from three feet away, in about 1.7 seconds, eyes closed, first time every time.

— I wonder if cops ever get pissed off at the fact that everyone they drive behind obeys the speed limit.

— I think the freezer deserves a light as well.

* * *

See you next week.