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Colchester Lions Lori Dickenson, left, and Norm Dupuis pose with piles of handmade hats, scarves and booties. The items were created by local Lions, Leos (young Lions) and seniors and were given to needy Colchester families.

Colchester Lions Make Holiday Donations

by Katy Nally

For 54 years, Leo Glemboski has celebrated the holiday season the same way – by distributing dinners to Colchester residents in need.

The 87-year-old has organized the Lions Club holiday basket drive for over 50 years and he sat in Town Hall Monday to do it all over again.

“On Christmas Eve, I thank God Christmas is here and I only hope we didn’t overlook someone who’s in need and hurting,” Lion Glemboski said Monday at the 54th annual holiday dinner drive.

Residents filtered in and out of Town Hall from 8 a.m. until noon to collect a box filled with all the fixings for a holiday meal, sweets and even handmade hats and scarves.

Glemboski and fellow Lions Ginger Boughton and Sandy Gaetano greeted each resident and pointed them to their holiday basket. Boughton said most of the food was made possible through a “very sizable donation” from Stop & Shop and \$500 from an anonymous donor.

Other Lions braved the whipping winds and freezing temperatures to help residents load their holiday baskets. The 150 boxes of food sat amid nearly two feet of snow that had fallen just two days earlier.

This year, about 140 residents signed up for a basket through Colchester Social Services, and Lions Club members assembled 10 extra boxes just in case. Glemboski said there are always some residents who are too proud to come in and collect a box, so the Lions come to them through a home delivery. “We try to follow through on it,” Glemboski said.

The 150 is up by about 10 baskets from last

year’s drive. Both Glemboski and Boughton said it’s sad to see the number increase and cited the recession as a possible reason for the uptick. Glemboski was less concerned with the increase in needy residents and more preoccupied with reaching all those who can’t afford a holiday meal, registered or not.

Within a half hour of the program’s start, 13 residents had already showed up to take home turkey and side dishes to their families. Each box contained: sacks of onions, potatoes and apples, cans of green beans, corn, chicken broth, gravy and cranberries, a turkey, a box of stuffing, a loaf of bread, a tin of coffee, a bag of sugar, lettuce and celery. Residents could also help themselves to an array of cookies, pies, bagels, rolls and muffins. Families with two or fewer members received a smaller turkey than other families with more people.

Once residents collected food for a holiday feast, they were invited to take winter apparel to spread holiday warmth – a new addition to this year’s basket program.

Lions Club member Lori Dickenson said she noticed many residents who collected baskets last year were not properly outfitted for New England’s winter weather, especially kids, so she organized a crocheting and knitting club. “I said, ‘We gotta do something,’” she said, referring to last year. In 2008, there were donations of gloves and hats, but none that were made by Dickenson’s crafty club.

Dickenson, along with other Lions, Leos (who are 13- to 17-year old Lions) and seniors from Dublin Village all joined together to cre-

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All I Want for Christmas is....

It’s that time of year again.

Every December, Marlborough Girl Scout Troop 65220 collects letters from Santa, written by area boys and girls. The scouts then ship them up to the North Pole, so the big man himself can study them. But before heading north, one of the members of the troop always swings by the *RiverEast* office to let us take our own look at them.

We get a kick out of the letters every year, and this year was no different. So here are some of those letters, offered to give people a smile, as well as a taste of what area kids are asking for these days. And don’t worry, kids; we didn’t hold onto your letters. After typing them up for the paper, we sent them back on their merry way to the North Pole, and we’ve received word from inside sources that the letters indeed made safe passage. (Hey, it helps to have friends in high places.)

Enjoy the letters, and have a merry Christmas!

Dear Santa:

How are your elves doing in your workshop? How is Rudolph? Are you getting your sleigh ready for Xmas Eve and all those presents in that big brown bag?

I am almost ready for Xmas. I can’t wait for you to visit my house and I hope you bring lots of presents. I have been extra good this year.

I would like a new play computer, a Barbie, a new coloring book, and a new car for my Barbie.

I hope Mrs. Claus is well and that you are too. Have Merry Christmas and I love you!

Love, Gratiana

Dear Santa:

I want lot’s of stoff like Mario Super Slugers for Wii, a pokémon pokédex, pop up pokéballs, a Spongebob DVD first 100 episodes, Zero gravity laser car and much more. I might even give you a present for being the best, best, best, best person ever! You’re the most wonderful person in the universe!

Love, Cameron

Dear Santa,

I want a sword for a Wii and a Wii game. That’s it.

Santa, I really like stuff that you like. Nothing else, just that.

Thanks so much!

Love, Austin

Dear Santa.

Have you had a good year? I hope you did! For this jolly season, I would like American girl doll stuff! Like the Frosty Fun set & book \$28 number PA-GO310, or doll number PA-GO459eP! Two more things I want are the Sparkly Plum outfit & book \$36 number PA-GO277 and the ipod touch!

Love, Isabella

Dire Santa.

I would you ples. Bring me a prite dress. Piles.

Thac you.

Love, Jenna

See Santa Letters on Page 2



Donations cont. from Front Page

ate dozens of warm and fuzzy hats, scarves and even a few booties. All the materials were donated by Lions Club members.

Dickenson said the most popular item was the fleece scarf, which required no knitting or crocheting skills. In total, Dickenson said she and the club crafted 110 items, made by individuals ranging in age from 13 to 90.

Two young girls picked out knitted pink hats and a braided fleece scarf with a heart pattern. Another woman chose items for her four children, a 13-year-old, a 5-year-old, a 3-year-old and an infant of 6 months.

Several volunteers from Stop & Shop also came out to lend a hand. According to Boughton, the previous Stop & Shop manager, Dan Cramer, recently moved up to a district position, so this year Jon Reardon came by Town Hall to help unload food donated by the supermarket.

Cramer was "so touched" last year by the

basket delivery program that he said, "I will do anything I can to help this group," according to Boughton, adding that she hoped the relationship between business and club would continue.

The Lions Club holiday basket drive celebrated its 54th year Monday. Glemboski was the original organizer of the program and he recently passed the torch to Lion Jack McNichols. When the project began, Glemboski and fellow Lions delivered a mere five baskets, but since then, the capacity has grown and the methods have changed.

About 15 years ago, the program's outreach grew too large for the Lions to deliver the baskets, so Glemboski said he suggested setting up shop at Town Hall.

Since then, Glemboski, McNichols and other Lions have helped to feed thousands of families in Colchester, making the holiday season a bit more cheery and bright.



Jon Reardon of Stop & Shop and Lions Club members Jack Faski and Rob Prentiss assemble boxes filled with holiday dinner fixings that were distributed to Colchester residents.

Santa Letters cont. from Front Page

Dear Santa and Mrs. Claus,

For Christmas, I would like a picture of Rudolph and the elves. I would like 21 more American Girl dolls and I would also like American Girl stuff. Tons of Zhu Zhu pets and accessories would be fun to have but I know they are hard to find. I would love a huge bean-bag chair that I could sleep in and sit in. I would like anything else you would like to give me. I was really good this year so please don't give me coal but it really is your decision if I was naughty or nice.

Love, Janine

Dear Santa,

I love you. I have been a good listener this year. Please bring me some presents.

I am being extra specially good. I do some good writing and projects at school. I'm especially good at drawing and writing all my letters. You can come to my Christmas Party at school and hear some Christmas Songs and have some snacks. We have a really nice playground at our school so your reindeer could come too. Please tell the reindeer not to go on the swings (those are my favorite)! Maybe it will snow and be sunny. My favorite song is Jingle Bells – the reindeer would love it too!

Emma

Dear Santa,

I have been mostly good but I have been a little mean to my sister (but she's my sister and that's what I'm supposed to do right). There is only a few things that I would like for Christmas. I want a soccer ball just made for the world cup. It might be hard to get. Also I want a ipod or cell phone. But my mom won't let me get both. As I said I don't really have much I want for Christmas. Just be a little careful of our tree. It's a bit prikely. Don't mind the wood at the trunk the tree was crooked.

Merry Christmas

Sincerely, Malla

P.S. Sorry if words are spelt wrong I am a terrible speller.

Dear Santa:

How are you doing: Is it okay if I name some of the things that I want for Xmas? How is Mrs. Claus, Rudolph, and Jingle & Jangle? I can't wait until Xmas!

I would like drums, a dog, army men, and a guitar.

Love, Dante

Dear Mrs. & Mrs. Claus:

How is it up there? Well, right now it's very windy down here! Also, how's the reindeer? I hope you are all getting ready for the big night! Well just to help you I came up with a couple things that you could get me:

- Nintendo D.S. & Mariocart game
- Winter Crocs
- craft kits
- a webkinz
- winter p.j.s and slippers
- and many surprises!

I hope that you will be able to get me some of these and lots of surprises!

Say hi to the elves and reindeer for me!

Love, Natalie

Dear Santa Claus,

I hope you receive this letter! I have been good 15/16 of the year! (yeah me!) From good things at school to good things at home! At school I exceeded my goal to wear shorts throughout school continuesly! I was the last one to wear shorts on December 8, 2009! In school I was nice because I got all my work in, followed directions, and holding the door open for other people! At home I have been helping Mommy around the house! What I want for Christmas is put into a song!

All I want for Christmas is a DS Lite (gold), a trampoline (boing), the Homer Book (D'oh)

All I want for Christmas is a moo-oon bounce and then some Homer slippers!

But then there were some stuff that didn't fit in the song!

A flat screen TV, mindplex, Windows 7 with a wireless mouse, an envelope opener, and a Blackberry Curve!

Sincerely, Colin

P.S. We'll try to remember to not light a fire Christmas Eve night!

Dear Santa Claus,

My name is Gabriella. I am a girl and I am already 4 years old!! I live in the great city of Colchester. Of course, that's in Connecticut, United States, but I'll bet you knew that!! This year I've been so good that I should really be on the 'Nice' List!!

Santa Claus, some things I might like for Christmas this year are:

- dora twins save the mermaids;
- pink lipstick; and,
- pink finger nail polish.

Santa Claus, I almost forgot to say... We are making cookies for when you come to my house. I can't wait to see you and the reindeers. When can I visit you at the North Pole? I love you Santa.

Love, Gabriella

Dear Santa!

I would like a LAPTOP for CHRISTMASS, and I would like a lot of candy!

I love you SANTA!!!

Crissy

Dear Santa Claus,

I have been a good girl this year. I did all my chores and was helpful. How are your reindeers? This year for Christmas I would like:

The new ipod nano in the color purple, Six flags fun park for my D.S. or the Cooking Mama for my D.S., New white board markers. I would also like a case for the ipod.

Merry/Happy Early Christmas

Sincerely, Kylie

Dear Santa,

I have a question for you. How do you get all all over the world in one night. Also how do your rain deer fly so quickly. Please write back and answer those questions.

The things I want the most are a foot ball and a electric scooter and a real microscope. Not a toy microscope a real microscope. And a few more play sation games. I hope you have a merry Christmas Santa.

Connor

P.S. I put my Christmas tree up already and hung the Ornaments.

Dear Santa,

I hope you do not get stuck in chimneys. This is my crissmiss list. I want a American Girl Dool and a camra and a carrying case for my American Girl Dool. I want a Ipod and a set of head fons. It is the morning in CT and I am writing this letter right now. P.S write and righty are homeafoms. Is that funny I think it is. Can you write back to my please? My beruther is singing to a song it is funny. My beruther and my sister are talking about phone it is not funny.

A good girl, Sydney

P.S. I hope you have Crissmass!

Dear Santa,

How are the things going at the north pole? When it is Christmas Eve, I will leave cookies and milk for you, carrots and apples for the reindeer, and cheese for Santa mouse. I have been very good this year. Now, heres the list of things I want:

1. Zhu Zhu all the stuff Pets – want more than anything else on this list. Remember, I have a dog and two cats.
2. Indiana Jones Stuff.
3. Areeus and dialga and polkia giant pokémon cards.
4. One of those four year old ponys that actually move – walks.
5. Food for the needy.
6. A pet bird.
7. A quad.
8. And cloths for the needy.
9. Style Lab and Pokémon D.S. games.

From, Isabelle

Dear Santa,

I like your lovely gifts but all I want is an American Girl Doll and Animal Crossing for Wii.

Kristin

RHAM Band Director Remembered

by Sarah McCoy

Students and community members will have two opportunities to pay respects to a RHAM High School teacher who died suddenly last month.

Tim Ketterer came to RHAM seven years ago to serve as the school's band director. He passed away Friday, Nov. 20.

RHAM High School Principal Scott Leslie credited Ketterer for "dramatically" improving the quality of the school's band.

"Tim had the perfect balance between being an authoritarian who challenges students to perform and a kind and inspirational leader who truly cared for each of his students," Leslie said earlier this week.

Ketterer will be remembered at a memorial service to be held on Tuesday, Jan. 5, at 7 p.m. at the Church of the Holy Family. Additionally, RHAM High School will host a second tribute on Sunday, Jan. 10, at 3 p.m.

Ketterer was born in 1954 in Trenton, NJ. He went on to earn his bachelor's degree from Trenton State College before coming to Connecticut to teach.

Ketterer served as a music teacher and band director at Bolton High School for 21 years. He was then hired by RHAM in 2002.

Lesley Knaack, a senior at RHAM High School, has been a part of the band since she arrived as a freshman in 2006. In her time at RHAM, Lesley said band members have grown closer "like a family." The family aspect started with Ketterer, she said, as every student felt loved by him.

"He would often say that he had the best job in the world and you knew he meant it,"

East Hampton Police News

12/12 — Anita Ackerman, 20, of 80A Middletown Ave., was arrested for failure to obey a traffic signal, failure to maintain lane, failure to have license and failure to have insurance, East Hampton Police said.

12/12 — Krisstoffer G. Fowler, 32, of 158 Main St., was arrested for operating under the influence of alcohol, traveling unreasonably fast, signal device violation and failure to drive right, police said.

12/14 — Jordan A. Tyler, 19, of 63 Emily Rd., Marlborough, was issued a ticket for failure to obey a stop sign, police said.

12/15 — Robert C. Strickland, 32, of 30 Old Young St., was arrested pursuant to a warrant on charges of operating under the influence of alcohol, operating without a license, operating without insurance and second-degree failure to appear, police said.

12/15 — Marshall K. Allen, 21, of 30 Banner Rd., Moodus, was arrested pursuant to a

Lesley said.

She remembers fondly a time a couple years ago when Ketterer stayed late after school listening to her vent about a particularly bad day. "He didn't mind staying late or listening to the frustrations of a high schooler," Lesley said. "He was someone you could talk to."

Jim Mirakian, a fellow teacher in the music department at RHAM, called Ketterer a "dear friend and colleague whom I will miss every day I walk into the building."

Mirakian credited Ketterer with elevating the quality of the school's band program through his teaching, leadership and dedication to his students. Over the years the RHAM band program has gone from "average to outstanding," Mirakian said, which he called a direct reflection of Ketterer's work in the school.

Ketterer is survived by his two children, Timothy Jr. and Sarah; his ex-wife Denise; his parents, John and Jeanne; his brother John and his wife Margaret of Trenton; his nephews John and Joseph; and his niece Erin.

In lieu of flowers, the Ketterer family requests that memorial contributions be made to the Ketterer Children's Education Fund c/o New Alliance Bank, 31 Main St., Hebron, CT 06248. The John F. Tierney Funeral Home in Manchester has care of the arrangements. To leave online condolences, visit www.tierneyfuneralhome.com.

In addition to the two January services, Leslie said earlier this week that RHAM High School's annual Spring Pops concert would be dedicated to Ketterer.

warrant on charges of third-degree burglary, second-degree larceny and conspiracy to commit second-degree larceny, police said.

12/15 — Rebecca M. Basiel, 26, of 28 Stow Ave., Middletown, was issued a ticket for operating without a license, police said.

12/16 — Henry A. Orlich III, 27, of 31 Plymouth St., Middletown, was arrested for second-degree harassment, police said.

12/18 — Robert D. Saltus, 27, of 18 Middletown Ave., was arrested pursuant to a warrant on charges of third-degree burglary, fifth-degree larceny and conspiracy to commit fifth-degree larceny, police said.

12/18 — Jonathan R. Hauzeur, 18, of 130 East High St., was arrested for disorderly conduct and released, police said. A short time later, Hauzeur was arrested for violation of conditions of release, second-degree harassment and second-degree threatening, police said.

Hebron Police News

12/18: Chris Stratton, 20, of 706 East St., Andover, was traveling northbound on West St. at about 1:30 a.m. when he drove off the road and struck a tree. His 1995 Jeep Cherokee sustained heavy damage, State Police said, and he was transferred to Hartford Hospital via Hebron Volunteer Fire Department Ambulance for injuries. As of Wednesday, Dec. 23, Stratton was not listed at the hospital. According to the Hebron Volunteer Fire Department, Stratton's injuries were not major.

12/21: Lisa Pare, 44, 71 Chester St., East Hartford, was charged with operating a vehicle with a suspended license and operating a vehicle without insurance, State Police said.

12/22: James McAuliff, 52, of 20 Park St., P.O. Box 980, Rockville, was charged with DUI and failure to drive right, State Police said.

C

Colchester Police News

12/14: Joshua Giddings, 21, of 21 Goose Hill Rd., Chester, was charged with failure to pay a ticket or plead, State Police said.

12/15: Lizette Vargas, 22, of 851 Park St., Hartford, was charged with speeding, DUI, failure to drive in proper lane and risk of injury to a minor, State Police said.

12/16: Robert Fradette, 23, of 36 Mountain Rd., was charged with possession of less than four ounces of marijuana, possession of drug paraphernalia and no front plate, State Police said.

12/16: Christian Mock, 27, of 1164 Oakdale Rd., Branford, was charged with DUI, speeding, failure to maintain lane, operating a vehicle with a suspended license and interfering with an arrest, State Police said.

12/16: Jon Murray, 45, of 19 Main St., Windham, turned himself in for fifth-degree larceny and giving a false statement, State Police said.

12/17: Charlene Precourt, 20, of 215 Hillcrest Dr., Hebron, turned herself in for DWI,

Andover Police News

12/17: Ricky Plank, 36, of 270 Gilend Rd., was charged with sixth-degree larceny, State Police said.

S

Salem Police News

12/15: Ryan Fleming, 19, of 660 Old Colchester Rd., Salem, was charged with breach of peace and interfering with an officer, State Police said.

failure to carry insurance and failure to keep right, State Police said.

12/17: a 16-year-old was charged with breach of peace and threatening, State Police said.

12/18: Richard Miller, 49, of 280 Norwich Ave., was charged with harassment, State Police said.

12/18: Eric Hunter, 23, of 42 Bass Lake Rd., Amston, was charged with violation of probation, State Police said.

12/18 a 16-year-old was charged with two counts of third-degree assault and two counts of second-degree disorderly conduct, State Police said.

12/19: Kenneth Verrill, 34, of 77 Nelkin Ln., was charged with disobeying an officer, DUI and reckless driving, State Police said.

12/19: Marilyn Saltus, 42, of 35 Green Rd., Lebanon, was charged with second-degree harassment, State Police said.

12/21: A 17-year-old was charged with breach of peace and possession of alcohol by a minor, State Police said.

Portland Police News

12/7 — John Coleman, 43, of 52 Indian Hill Ave., was charged with operating an unregistered motor vehicle, insufficient insurance and following too close, Portland Police said.

12/16 — Robert Bombard, 45, of Hartford Correctional Center (177 Weston St., Hartford), was charged with third-degree burglary, third-degree criminal mischief and sixth-degree larceny, police said.

12/16 — Larry Hamilton, 42, also of Hartford Correctional Center, was charged with second-degree forgery, and fifth-degree criminal attempt to commit larceny, police said.

Colchester Selectmen, Public Works Discuss DEP Stream Regulations

by Katy Nally

At last Thursday's meeting of the Board of Selectmen, Public Works Director Mark Decker discussed the new state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) stream flow regulations and the potential affects they could have on the town's water supply.

Currently, Colchester has a 15-year permit for its water allocation that will expire in 2017. When that contract ends, the new DEP water regulations, which were published in October 2009, will kick in.

The new regulations, Decker warned, could "potentially affect what our allocation is, if it is determined [by the DEP] that we are depleting the water level in streams and rivers beyond a threshold that [the DEP] sets," he said Tuesday.

Currently, the town receives 100 percent of its water through wells, which are fed by various local streams. The town is part of the Salmon River Watershed, which feeds the *Jeremy* River, which feeds Meadow Brook in Colchester.

The DEP regulations categorize rivers and streams into four groups, ranging from totally natural to those that have a "significant deviation from the natural stream flow pattern."

Decker said Public Works can't exactly predict the impact of the regulations until Colchester's water sources have been categorized. When asked what he would change about the regulations, Decker said this past Tuesday he would want the rivers and streams to be ana-

lyzed and categorized before the regulations pass. This way, the town could prepare for the switch and make a cost-benefit analysis before the regulations take effect.

If the regulations pass as is, the "worst case scenario" would be for them to restrict the town's current water supply and its future water supply, Decker said at the Board of Selectmen (BOS) meeting. "It's my belief there will be less water available than there is today," if the regulations pass unchanged, he said Tuesday.

Decker listed two options Tuesday for increasing the town's water supply: creating new wells and connecting to Norwich, which uses a reservoir. However, he said since Colchester has no major aquifers it can tap into, making new wells an unlikely endeavor. Decker also said Norwich would be in the same situation of reducing its consumption, so providing water to Colchester would also not be likely.

According to Decker, both reducing the town's current and future water supply could potentially affect the economic growth of Colchester.

Decker said Tuesday the town's zoning regulations were recently changed to accommodate future businesses in several areas, including south of Route 2, Route 11, Route 85 and Lake Hayward Road. He said these sites were zoned for water and sewer infrastructure, preparing the areas for new businesses.

But, Decker said with the new DEP regula-

tions, the town might have to limit where its future water supply goes, including to new structures.

At the BOS meeting, Decker said additional development would require more water, so the new regulations could hamper the town's economic growth.

Decker cited another potential financial impact Tuesday, saying the relationship between water quantity and cost could change. He said if the DEP regulations restrict Colchester's allocation of water, and the town still pays the same for its water supply, the price per volume will increase.

Lastly, Decker said Tuesday, when the town agreed to its 15-year water allocation permit, it also agreed to a "relatively simple renewal process." If the DEP regulations pass, Colchester will have to provide additional information to the organization about its consumption, Decker said.

During the BOS meeting, Decker likened the potential situation, should the DEP regulations pass, to Colchester's water moratorium that occurred in the late 1980s. He noted, "This is not a moratorium," but "taken to its extreme case, this is the same thing that could happen."

Decker explained Tuesday that Colchester faced a water moratorium, or a hold on its additional water connections, because of a ground water contamination. About 10,000 gallons of fuel leaked from an underground container, so the town's volume of available water was re-

stricted for a few years, he said.

At the BOS meeting, Decker asked selectmen, the Board of Finance, the Colchester Business Association and state representatives to provide testimony at a public hearing where the regulations will be discussed.

Decker said since it's too late to make changes to the regulations, he wants to halt the adoption process so they won't be approved.

At the BOS meeting, First Selectman Gregg Schuster said he would do what he could to help out. He said this week that, although the board has been expressing concerns, it has not yet collectively taken a stance on the issue.

"It's obviously something to be very concerned about," Schuster said Monday. "The environment is an important thing, but we have to make sure to balance it with people."

According to a DEP press release, the regulations will "establish new guidelines for activities that alter the flow of rivers and streams, such as the withdrawals of groundwater and surface water or the operation of dams or other impoundments." The organization said the new rules will "better protect Connecticut's rivers and streams by striking the right balance between human and ecological needs."

The DEP's public hearing will be Jan. 21 at 9 a.m. in the Phoenix Auditorium on 79 Elm St., Hartford.

The next BOS meeting will be Thursday, Jan. 7, at Town Hall, 127 Norwich Ave.

Future of Route 6 Discussed at Forum in Andover

by Sarah McCoy

Dozens of residents filled the Community Room at Town Hall last Thursday, Dec. 17, to discuss the possible development of Route 6.

Last year Andover, Bolton and Columbia each received a \$65,000 Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) grant to research and plan for possible developments along the 13-mile corridor through the three towns.

One of the first steps the towns have taken was the hiring of Simsbury-based LADA Land Planners to develop a master plan.

Last Thursday, LADA officials were in Andover for the second of a two-part discussion series to gather public input on the throughway. The first discussion took place in Bolton earlier this month.

To kick off last Thursday's discussion, attendees were given stickers and asked to walk around the room and place them on posters. One poster was for where residents wanted to see development. Another was for where they didn't want to see development and a third was a survey as to what type of development residents were interested in.

The results of the sticker survey were mixed

though many voiced concerns that they didn't want to see some of the farms and more scenic parts of Route 6 disturbed. First Selectman Bob Burbank summed up sentiments when he stated that he's looking for "a blend of land and aesthetically pleasing development that has buildings consistent with the character of the town."

He continued by saying that he'd like to see professional offices and businesses that aren't already represented on Route 6. Examples residents gave include banks, drug stores, restaurants and possibly a grocery store.

Residents in attendance last Thursday were adamantly against any big box stores such as Home Depot.

Terri-Ann Hahn, vice president of LADA, has led the public forums. She said the input they've received has been "a consistent vision." As to the possibility of "big box" options, Hahn said that this was unlikely due to the fact that there's no sewer line along the corridor.

One of the next steps, she said, would be working with town officials to develop a "unified zoning" plan throughout the corridor. This, Hahn said, would help to ensure the towns de-

velop with continuity.

This was certainly on the minds of residents as more than one called the current Route 6 corridor a "mish mash" of uses and looks.

When asked to describe the present state of the road residents chimed in with "unattractive," "outdated," and "dangerous."

A little over six years ago the state Department of Transportation widened the roadway and made other adjustments to help with the safety of the road. LADA also announced on Wednesday that they've renamed the corridor to further separate Route 6 from any past monikers.

The Route 6 Hop River Corridor, as it is now known as, begins at the junction of Route 44 in Bolton and stretches down into Columbia along Route 66 to the Windham town line.

Columbia Town Planner Jana Butts was in attendance on Thursday. She stated that she's looking for LADA to present a development plan that would distinguish each town's identity as if drivers were going through small villages. "I'd like to see drivers know when they've left one town and entered another," she said.

It wasn't all hopes and dreams that attendees of Thursday's meeting shared. Some had strong concerns about going forth with any development. "We've got to address the balance between individual landowners and the community as a whole," said Jay Stewart, a Bolton resident who's lived on Route 6 for the past 25 years.

Without the support of individual landowners, he said, any plans might be in vain.

Andover resident Ed Shapiro agreed. He said that he'd like to see the towns hire an individual to act as a liaison between the landowners. The liaison, he continued, could also work to solicit potential development plans from businesses. "We have to be proactive about this," he said.

LADA will continue to gather input from residents through the website it has set up for the project: www.theroute6hoprivercorridor.com. The land planners will also continue to work with traffic consultants, landscape architects and other experts to develop a master plan.

Zeuschner Named Assistant Principal of the Year in Andover

by Sarah McCoy

Board of Education Chair Jay Linddy likes to tout that his school district has the best staff around. Now one of those staff members has an award to go alongside Linddy's glowing praises.

Andover Elementary School Assistant Principal Michelle Zeuschner has been named the 2010 Elementary Assistant Principal of the Year by the Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS).

For Zeuschner, the love of education goes back as far as she can remember.

She can still remember having her sister sit at a desk, pretending to be her teacher. A strong desire to help kids learn carried through high school and when it came time to pick a major in college, Zeuschner had no trouble deciding.

She graduated from the University of Hartford with bachelor's degrees in elementary and special education. From there, Zeuschner headed west to Ohio University where she earned her master's degree in curriculum and instruction.

She soon returned to attend Central Connecticut State University where Zeuschner earned a doctorate in education leadership.

In addition to being a student, Zeuschner has had plenty of experience working with students.

For 14 years, she worked at the Ben Bronz Academy in West Hartford, initially as a spe-

cial education teacher and later as the assistant educational director.

In 2006, she was the unanimous selection of both the search committee and Superintendent of Schools Andy Maneggia to be the next Assistant Principal/Director of Special Education at Andover Elementary School (AES). It was the dual roles that attracted Zeuschner to Andover.

"I liked that I could grow as a special education administrator and still be able to work directly with the kids," she said earlier this week.

Everything about AES felt right to Zeuschner. The feeling was, and continues to be, mutual.

"We are lucky to have her," Linddy said this week. "She is so professional and yet human and approachable for students and staff members."

Zeuschner said she was "shocked" when she heard earlier this month that she had won the CAS award. "I figure I'm just doing my job," she said. "I'm just one part of a great staff that make it all work for our students."

AES Principal Dave Griffin nominated Zeuschner for the award. "I just had a feeling that she would get it," he said earlier this week. "She has all the qualifications and qualities that are important to be successful in her role."

He added that Zeuschner's ability to communicate is one of her best traits, as is her dili-

gence to make sure everything is in place for students. "She does a little bit extra and prepares just a little bit more all for the benefit of students," Griffin said.

Maneggia agreed. "Her efforts are always outstanding," he said this week.

He added that her work in the areas of the pre-kindergarten program and Scientific Research-Based Interventions (SRBI) have been particularly notable. "She is a positive person," Maneggia said. "When there's a challenge or issue that comes up she can get people to approach the situation in the same positive manner."

Once her nomination was received by CAS, Zeuschner needed to gather four letters of reference and answer three essay questions as part of her application for the award. Questions dealt with collaborative leadership, curriculum, instruction and assessment and personalizing the educational environment for students.

Griffin, Maneggia, fifth grade teacher Dave Caron and Dot Carso, a parent of an AES student, all wrote letters on Zeuschner's behalf.

In its return letter to Zeuschner earlier this month, CAS commended her for her "extraordinary leadership and unrivaled commitment to her students, school, and community."

CAS will honor Zeuschner at recognition dinner in October.



Michelle Zeuschner

Portland PZC, Selectmen Disagree Over Town Exemption

by Michael McCoy

Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC) Chair Don Bascom this week criticized the Board of Selectmen's recent decision to retain the town's exemption from zoning regulations concerning town-owned properties.

During a Dec. 2 meeting, the Board of Selectmen (BOS) voted 4-2 to keep the exemption. (Selectmen John Anderson and Carl Chudzik dissented, while Mark Finkelstein was absent.) In a letter to the editor, Bascom alleged that the only two reasons for such action were "to cover up existing zoning violations or to go unchallenged in any future violations."

For the past year, the PZC has repeatedly asked the BOS to reconsider the exemption, and the board eventually agreed to discuss it, at the behest of Anderson.

Bascom and First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield both said the issue surfaced almost a decade ago when the town was planning the major high school renovation. Reportedly, there was controversy concerning the average height of the planned building, which led a neighborhood resident to file a lawsuit.

In November 2002, as Public Act 63-133,

the BOS voted to exempt town property, as Bascom explained it, "to avoid a legal battle."

"There was certainly a good reason at the time," said Bransfield, adding, "I think it was the only thing they could do and still be able to build the school." Bransfield, said at the time the town attorney deemed it "the best step to take."

"It takes the public hearing away from the public," Bascom said.

Bascom said a current example of a town-owned property not adhering to zoning regulations is the Brownstone Exploration & Discovery Park, though, once again, it legally does not have to.

Bransfield also mentioned the park, and noted that if not for the exemption, the park could not even have been built, because the property was zoned industrial at the time. In addition to complementing the park, she mentioned the \$126,000 in tax revenue it has brought the town.

Bringing it back to the issue that started it all, she worried that if the exemption were repealed, the town might not be able to legally

make improvements to the high/middle school complex in the future.

But, Bransfield admitted, the exemption "hasn't been something that we really studied a lot," and said she'd be willing to revisit it again. However, she seemed to feel that if it were ever repealed, it should be for good, and not something that was repeatedly switched for a single purpose.

But Chudzik, who voted to delete the exemption, seemed to disagree. Though he didn't promote repeatedly enacting and repealing an exemption, he said such cases should be investigated case by case, with the BOS potentially providing isolated variances. Speaking about the 2002 decision, he said, "If they needed to do it that one time, that's fine," but said it should not have been a permanent exemption. (However, Chudzik noted he was not on the BOS at the time. Indeed, none of the current selectmen – including Bransfield – were on the board when the 2002 decision was made.)

"I feel that the town should operate under the same auspices as anyone," Chudzik said.

Ultimately, Bascom said he worried that the

exemption opens the town up to potential litigation by private developers, in case they propose a project similar to a town-developed one. But Bransfield seemed confident the town would win such a contest, and said the state statute is very clear about what's allowed for a private owner, as opposed to a municipality. Bransfield said, for instance, "The function of a school is very different from a private residence," adding that the former concerns the best interest of the entire town.

Prior to the Dec. 2 meeting, Bransfield said Planning and Land Use administrator Deanna Rhodes provided the BOS with a list of other towns that have similarly exempted themselves from zoning regulations. These included Berlin, Trumbull, Coventry, Seymour, Bolton, Vernon and East Granby.

Bascom summed up his position by wondering, "If the town doesn't have to abide by zoning regulations, why does anybody else?"

However, Bransfield said, "At this point, I think it's wise to not rescind what a former board has done."

Camp Ingersoll Fields Ravaged by Vehicles in Portland

by Michael McCoy

A holiday joyride could cost the town \$5,000. According to Parks and Recreation Director Sean Dwyer, on the morning of Friday, Dec. 18, the town's grounds crew discovered excessive damage to Camp Ingersoll's two soccer fields.

Portland Police Sgt. Scott Cunningham said the incident most likely happened between Monday evening, Dec. 14, and Tuesday evening, Dec. 15. Cunningham explained that it couldn't have been later, as Wednesday morning brought a frost and head of grounds and maintenance Carl Johnson said the tracks preceded that frost.

Cunningham said at least two full-sized vehicles were involved, though he was not sure if they were trucks or cars. However, he said the sheer weight revealed by the tracks ruled out ATVs.

According to Cunningham, Officer Fran Ahlquist is heading the investigation and has been in contact with youths who were in the area during the time in question. Cunningham said it's not rare for young people to congregate in the area.

"They did hit the soccer fields very hard," said Dwyer, who lamented that the fields' seclusion makes such escapades fairly easy.

"They basically tore up the grass and made some good-sized doughnuts," said Dwyer.

Cunningham said the damage ran the gamut between the aforementioned doughnuts and wide turns. "It's rather extensive," he said, and added, "It's certainly not gonna recover anytime soon." Though Cunningham was uncertain whether this was intentional vandalism, he

figured it was obvious "they knew that damage would occur."

The soccer fields, which abut Jobs Pond, are used by the camp in the summer, but also by the Portland Youth Soccer Club, which provides soccer for kids ages 3-10. The town leases the property from the camp, for the club to use. Dwyer estimated between 200 and 300 kids use the fields.

Cunningham said similar incidents have occurred at the field in the past, but "nothing this extensive."

Dwyer said the vandalism resulted in "a ton of damage" and estimated that repairing the fields would run about \$5,000. But, he cautioned, that number "could be on the light side."

"It's kind of a shame," Dwyer said of the incident, deeming the fields completely unusable in their current state.

An uncharacteristically ill-tempered First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield said Wednesday, "This kind of damage, vandalism, and nonsense needs to stop."

She promised, "Our police department is investigating this vigorously." She added, "We will catch the people who did this to the park," and vowed to "prosecute them to the fullest extent of the law."

"They will not do this again," she asserted.

Bransfield explained that the property is actually known as Camp Phelps-Ingersoll, and that the property was donated decades ago, for recreational use in town. According to Bransfield, the town's lease with the camp is merely a charge for "care and upkeep."

Bransfield called the perpetrators "yahoos" and the act "senseless."



The town's grounds crew recently discovered excessive damage to two soccer fields at Camp Ingersoll. According to Portland Police, the tracks show at least two full-size vehicles were behind the vandalism.

However, youth soccer doesn't resume until March, which gives the town some time to come up with the money, though this week Dwyer was unsure just where it would come from. Bransfield hoped the town's insurance will cover it, but admitted, "I have no assurance that it'll be done by March."

When asked if any preemptive measures

might be put in place to stop future vandalism, Bransfield said adding fencing was explored in the past. However, she said that fencing in space for outdoor recreation is "counterintuitive."

Anyone with information is encouraged to contact the Portland Police Department at 860-342-6780.

Marlborough School Board Updated on C&E

by Katy Nally

Superintendent of Schools David Sklarz gave an update of the Challenge and Enrichment (C&E) program at a meeting of the Board of Education held last Thursday, Dec. 17.

According to the meeting's minutes, the superintendent touched on all aspects of the new C&E program, but discussed the math portion in depth. Board of Education (BOE) Chair Betty O'Brien said Tuesday that, although math was included in last year's C&E curriculum, this year there are math specialists who only focus on the one subject. This allows for deeper instruction for students who excel at math.

At the BOE meeting, Sklarz said one problem that has been identified with the math program is students who receive both C&E homework and regular homework are not completing the work from class, according to the minutes. O'Brien said Tuesday assigning C&E students additional math homework would be up to the teacher. "This is one of those issues that has been around forever," she said.

According to the minutes, BOE member John O'Toole said those students in C&E math should receive a lighter load of regular math homework.

Sklarz also discussed how students are selected for C&E math. At the BOE meeting he said students are evaluated based on their Connecticut Mastery Test and Tomag test scores. (Tomag, O'Brien said Tuesday, tests the math ability for gifted students.)

Other than the homework issue, Sklarz and O'Brien said the math program is off to a good start. O'Brien said C&E has a quality curriculum, especially when considering how little time there was to plan the program. She said Tuesday the board was preoccupied with budget cuts this summer, which left little time to hash out C&E changes.

"Typically, if you're going to change a program, you're going to plan ahead," she said Tuesday.

O'Brien said if the BOE had more time to

prepare this year's C&E, then certain aspects would be a little different, including scenario writing, which was cut from the program because a teacher was not found in time. At the BOE meeting, board member Karen McKinney said she did not want to see another year pass without scenario writing, according to the minutes. Sklarz said Tuesday scenario writing would definitely come back for next year, but a qualified figurehead must be selected first. He said it would be ideal to have a parent-teacher combination teach the course.

Lastly, O'Brien said the invention convention and future problem solving have remained intact, but there are new volunteers who run them. Sklarz said at the meeting, future problem solving is organized by reading specialists and the invention convention has been taken over by teachers who will receive a stipend.

Overall, Sklarz said the goal of the new C&E program is to still provide enrichment classes in a fiscally responsible way.

O'Brien said some parents who were present asked to be updated on C&E more frequently. According to the minutes, Brandie McNally said she likes the transparency the updates provide and would like to know more about future problem solving. O'Brien said it's not likely the BOE will provide monthly updates because it will soon be occupied with budget negotiations.

However, others were not happy with the new C&E program. Elaine Arruda said she thought C&E was moving backward and the math curriculum was not challenging enough.

Sklarz said Tuesday C&E is certainly not going backward, but that this needs to be communicated better to some parents. "[C&E] is not perfect, but nothing is in its first year of implementation, but we've retained some great programs," he said Tuesday.

The next BOE meeting will be Thursday, Jan. 21.

Dogs Get Personal Treatment at Paws Inn Play in Marlborough

by Katy Nally

Dogs with separation anxiety can pant a sigh of relief because Paws Inn Play, a home away from home for man's best friend, recently opened.

Last week, Sam the Yorkie played ball with Hannah the English pointer, both inside the facility and outside in a fenced-in area. But on any given day the inn can accommodate up to eight dogs at a time, said owner Dave O'Brien.

Dave, who opened the doggie daycare Dec. 7, has trained dogs for about 30 years. He breeds English Pointers and used to be a judge at dog competitions. For two years his pointer, named Slingshot Gracie, retained second-place status in a U.S. complete competition. "I've always had dogs, and I thought I could offer something a little bit different," Dave said.

Paws Inn Play is indeed different from other kennels and doggie daycares because of the dog-to-person ratio. Dave's daughter Heather, who also works at the business, said many kennels will take in up to 40 dogs at a time, while Paws Inn Play holds the limit at eight and has three to five employees on hand.

With a fewer number of pups, each one can receive more attention and human interaction, Dave said. At the inn, each dog has its own eating and resting area complete with outdoor access. The facility is a large renovated barn, with more than half the room devoted to a play area.

Heather said the individual dog space is important for those dogs who do not share well with others. In fact, each dog who comes to Paws Inn Play is evaluated based on their sociability, eating etiquette and schedule, and sharing abilities. Dave said the guest dogs are

compared to his English pointers, who are generally very docile.

Each dog owner is also asked about their pet's vaccinations and medical conditions.

In the weeks Paws Inn Play has been opened, a boarder collie, a mini poodle, a Jack Russell, a yellow lab and an English setter have stopped by, to name a few. Like Sam the Yorkie, who visited the inn last week, many dogs will play with Dave's English Pointers.

He said being at doggie daycare gives isolated dogs the chance to socialize with others, which can improve their temperament.

Of the dog guests who have stayed at Paws Inn Play, Heather said she already has a favorite: a small, white poodle named Delilah, whom Heather spoils. She said Delilah is even a favorite among the other dogs because she plays with each of them.

If dogs come to Paws Inn Play for a full day, which is from 7 a.m.-6:30 p.m., they will enjoy three meals and plenty of playtime, both inside and out. But Dave said he likes to keep the dogs outside as much as possible, adding, "I think that's something they need."

But playtime isn't the only part of Paws Inn Play's curriculum. Dave said Judy Folger was recently employed to "hike" with the dogs in the neighboring 1,000-acre state forest.

Heather said she and her father are also considering offering dog-training classes.

But no matter what brings a dog to Paws Inn Play, Dave said his doggie daycare is a good solution for pets that would otherwise be left home alone.

For more information about Paws Inn Play, call Dave at 860-295-1494.



Heather O'Brien entertains Sam the Yorkie, left, and Hannah the English pointer at Paws Inn Play, a new doggie daycare.



Students at Elmer Theines-Mary Hall Elementary School recently honored local veterans, as well as those currently enlisted. Shown here are Special Agent Richard Cannon, left, and Lieutenant Commander Jimmy Wise, both parents of sixth-graders at the school. The two met each other for the first time at a Subway restaurant in the American Embassy in Iraq.



Sixth-graders told the elementary-school audience at a Veterans Day assembly which members of their families served or currently serve in the U.S. military.

Students Salute Military at School Assembly in Marlborough

by Katy Nally

As students filed out of the community room at Elmer Theines-Mary Hall Elementary School after a belated Veterans Day assembly last week, sixth-grader Alex Wise weaved her way through hundreds of kids to find her dad and tell him, "I think you were a big hit."

Alex's dad, Lieutenant Commander Jimmy Wise of the Navy, received a standing ovation from Elmer Theines-Mary Hall Elementary School students and faculty Friday, Dec. 18, for his service in Iraq.

Alex and her friend Mary Kate Cannon, both in Kim Kelley's sixth-grade class, told students how their fathers had met up at the American Embassy in Iraq in November. The two girls spoke beneath a large photo of Special Agent Richard Cannon and Jimmy Wise at a Subway restaurant in Iraq. The photo was near the end of a long PowerPoint slideshow and the young audience grew audibly excited at the recognizable logo.

Alex and Mary Kate told the story of how they informed their fathers that they were not the only Marlborough Elementary School parent in that part of Iraq. Wise said after the assembly he received a notice from Cannon in November saying the two were stationed only

a few miles apart.

The two girls closed out the address by saying they would both be with their dads for the holidays. Mary Kate said she would spend two weeks visiting her father in Germany, and Alex said hers had returned on Dec. 9 and was seated on the bleacher in the back of the room.

Enraptured students, who were mostly clad in red, white and blue, turned around to see the veteran who had recently returned home. Slowly the youngsters stood up and their applause soon echoed throughout the large room.

"It was very touching," sixth-grade teacher Julie Weiss said. "We had to include the story."

After Wise's standing ovation, he and the handful of other veterans present received a "Taps" salute performed by a local trumpet player. The veterans solemnly faced the projected PowerPoint slide that read "All gave some, some gave all."

After the assembly, Wise said he was a "little teary-eyed" from the students' appreciation. Many parents in attendance, who were unknowingly sitting beside the veteran, shook Wise's hand and thanked him for his service.

The entire celebration, including the PowerPoint slideshow, was organized by the sixth-grade. Alex said she and Mary Kate even

had rehearsals a few days before Friday.

The assembly was postponed from its originally scheduled date of Nov. 10, due to H1N1 fears at the time. (School staff felt it would not be a good idea to have the entire student body assembled in one room.)

During the middle of the presentation, sixth-grade students lined up and spoke one-by-one, telling the audience which of their family members had served or currently serve in the U.S. military. Everyone from papas to aunts to cousins to godfathers, who served in every branch imaginable from the Army to the Navy to the Marines to the National Guard, was recognized by the students.

Before the roll call, sixth-grader Michael La Bella stood alone in front of the hundreds of students and sang "Battle Hymn of the Republic." He wore a blue hat from Gettysburg, PA and the sound of his young voice swelled in the community room.

The sixth-graders also, collectively, sang "The Caissons," "Anchor Aweigh" and "The Marines' Hymn."

Then students took turns reading "Who am I?" essays, which detailed a veteran and his or her military sector. One sixth-grader said, "Our motto is to always be ready...Who am I? A

member of the U.S. Coast Guard." Another student said, "My personal mission is to live my life with my uniform on and off...I'm a marine." Another described the efforts of a National Guard soldier who helped Hurricane Katrina victims.

The PowerPoint slideshow closed out the assembly. It featured photographs of various soldiers, veterans' memorials and wars that were projected onto a large screen. The show opened with the song "Military Medley" by Massachusetts state trooper Daniel Clark – a.k.a. "The Singing Trooper" – and then "God Bless the U.S.A." was played.

After the photograph slides, sixth-grader Sarah Cameron's poem appeared on the screen. She stood before the crowd and described her version of a veteran. "Heroes/People we rely on to defend our country ... The blood of the soldier/Is the sacrifice they have given to their country," she read aloud.

The assembly ended when all the veterans were asked to stand and the hundreds of students showed their appreciation with a round of applause.

Just in time for the holiday season, the veterans had received their thanks.

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

This is the last *Rivereast* for 2009. And it's also the last *Rivereast* for reporter Sarah McCoy.

Sarah's leaving the paper, and in January will start a new job in the guidance department at Manchester High School.

Sarah's been with the paper since early 2005. Her beat initially was Hebron and Marlborough, but at the start of 2008, I made Marlborough and Colchester into its own beat, and Sarah was given Andover. Throughout her more than four and a half years here, Hebron has remained a constant for Sarah, and she's done a good job with the town.

I covered Hebron as a reporter from 2001-04, until I moved over to the *Glastonbury Citizen* and began covering that town. During those three years, I spent a lot of time in Hebron, writing about a lot of issues, meeting a lot of people and sitting through a lot of board meetings. I developed a certain connection with the town, and continued to follow its goings-on even when I no longer "had" to, and had started in Glastonbury.

Since I had maintained that interest in the town, I was glad to see that, with Sarah, it had fallen into good hands. She had her share of controversial issues to deal with during her time in Hebron – the Peters House is one such issue that immediately springs to mind – but she handled them well, and always with a fair and balanced perspective.

Sarah's also an accomplished photographer (check out her site at www.sarahmccoyphoto.com), and often took the photos that accompanied her stories. The pictures were usually winners; whether it was a quiet portrait at someone's home, a scene of kids laughing it up at the Hebron Harvest Fair or an action shot from a RHAM High School sports game, Sarah did a good job with all of them.

It will be a little strange not editing Sarah's stories each week or flipping through the paper and not seeing her byline or her stand-out photographs. We'll miss her at the *Rivereast* and I wish her well in her new endeavor in Manchester. Good luck, Sarah.

* * *

There are few things on Earth more mobbed than a grocery store the night before a winter storm. I was reminded of this last Saturday. I had spent a delightful – if chilly – day up in Northampton, MA, with some friends and, after returning home Saturday evening, I decided to stop by the Stop & Shop in Manchester to pick up some snack foods. It was about 6:30 p.m. or so. The place was jam-packed.

Now, I've been to the store before on a Saturday evening. The crowds are generally pretty small in size as, well, it's Saturday evening. The parking spaces are plentiful, and I'm able to run, pick up what I want, glide

through the self-checkout lane, and be on my way. Such was not the case this time.

I was initially shocked to see the glut of cars in the parking lot, but then I remembered that, since Thursday night, the weather forecasters had been bracing us for what they said would be a massive winter storm. WFSB Channel 3 even gave it a name – Winter Storm Albert – making the whole thing seem very dramatic indeed. (Note to readers: Do not be taken in by Channel 3's theatrics. They – and they alone – name these winter storms. In fact, the station notes on its website that every time it snows six inches, it will name the storm. This is unnecessary. I'm no fan of snow, but this is Connecticut, after all, and six inches of snow should not be considered a name-able storm. All it does is inspire panic. The other stations may hype the snow like crazy, but at least they don't give it a name. Hurricanes should have names. Routine snowfall events should not.)

Once inside the store, I saw the checkout lanes were jammed with people, who had filled their carts with bread, canned goods, milk and various other commodities, acting as if they might be snowed in for days. They weren't snowed in, of course, but this won't stop those same people from packing the supermarket aisles the next time a storm is predicted. This is such a common occurrence, in fact, that you can't help but wonder if grocery store owners see dollar signs in their eyes every time Brad Field or Bruce DePrest take to the airwaves to warn of impending snow.

Like I said, we weren't snowed in. Certainly not in Manchester, which got about five inches of snow. This was truly an odd winter storm. While it's common for parts of the state to receive more snow than others, rarely do you see such extremes as what we saw last weekend. For example, New London was socked with 22 inches, while in Windsor Locks, just three and a half inches fell. Connecticut's a pretty small state; you wouldn't think the snowfall totals would be that varied. And for a change, you got *less* snow the further north you went, not more. A friend who lives up in Northampton said he received "the dustiest dusting ever."

I will say this: snow at this time of year is not so bad. There's something about driving around in your car in the snow, listening to Christmas music on the radio, that feels rather nice. Once the calendar turns to January, though, snow will become a most unwelcome visitor.

* * *

And with that, another year of observing and ruminating is in the books. I hope you all have a happy and safe holiday, and I'll see you in 2010.

Obituaries

Andover

Dolores (Andrea) Amenta Goulet

Dolores (Andrea) Amenta Goulet, 78, of Suffield, peacefully entered into eternal life on Thursday, Dec. 17, at The Suffield House. Dolores was the loving wife to the late Wallace M. Goulet. Born in Hartford on Feb. 16, 1931, a daughter of the late Anthony and Linda (Chiarizio) DeAndrea, she had resided in the Andover/Tolland area for over 25 years, prior to moving to Suffield over two years ago.

Dolores was a graduate of Hartford Public High School-Class of 1949. Prior to her retirement, Dolores was an Accounting Assistant for many years, retiring from O'Neil and Walsh, CPA in Manchester. Dolores was a longtime volunteer at My Father's House Christian Retreat Home in Moodus where she was a kitchen administrator. Dolores was very artistic and creative and enjoyed dancing, cooking, and spending quality time with her family. Dolores was "Family Focused" and took great pride in being a mother and grandmother.

Dolores is survived by her seven beloved children, Cheryl Russell and her husband, Michael, of Cape Neddick, ME, Lynne Amenta of East Hampton, Pat Moreau and her husband, John, of Suffield, Gail Daniels and her husband, Andy, of Dumfries, VA, Laurie Wood and her husband, Robert, of Plantsville, Paul Amenta and his fiancée, Gigi Cote, of East Hartford, Tony Amenta of East Hartford; a brother, Ronald Andrea and his wife, Renie, of Rocky Hill; nine special grandchildren, Lisa Russell Burgos and her husband, Jose Burgos, Jason Russell and his wife, Kimberly, Brian Irizarry, Michael Moreau and his wife, Nicole, Jeffrey Moreau and his girlfriend, Danielle Megan, Christopher Daniels, Jennifer Wood, Stephanie Wood, and Kristi Wood; seven adored great-grandchildren, Dameon, Devin, Rylee, Taylor, Jordyn, Emma, and Dillon; several nieces and nephews.

Funeral services were Tuesday, Dec. 22, from the D'esopo-East Hartford Memorial Chapel, 30 Carter St., East Hartford, with a Mass of Christian Burial celebrated at Our Lady of Peace Church, 370 May Rd., East Hartford. Burial followed at Hillside Cemetery, East Hartford. Relatives and friends called at the funeral home chapel on Monday, Dec. 21, from 5-7 p.m.

Memorial contributions in memory of Dolores may be made to the American Cancer Society, 538 Preston Ave., P.O. Box 1004, Meriden, CT 06450-1004.

The family of Dolores would like to extend their sincere gratitude and appreciation to the entire staffs and volunteers at The Suffield House and the Hospice of Home & Community Health Services, Inc. of Enfield for their professionalism, care, love, and compassion given to Dolores and her entire family.

For any online expressions of sympathy to the family, visit www.desopo.com.

Hebron

Johanna H. Frantzen

Johanna H. Frantzen, 83, of Hebron and formerly of Stamford, widow of the late August H. Frantzen, passed away Thursday morning, Dec. 17, at the Apple Rehab/Liberty Specialty Care Center in Colchester. Born Aug. 16, 1926, in Ter Aar, South Holland, Netherlands, she was a daughter of the late Johanes and Johanna (Hoek) Verlaan.

On June 3, 1955, she and August were married in Amsterdam and shared 44 years of marriage before he predeceased her on Aug. 8, 1999.

Mrs. Frantzen had worked in sales for Zantow Ferguson in Stamford for many years before her retirement in 1986. In later years, she was active with the Hebron Seniors. She is survived by her son and daughter-in-law, Michael and Carola Frantzen of Hebron; two grandchildren, Stephen and Amanda; and numerous extended family members and friends.

In addition to her husband, she was predeceased by three siblings, Dick, Cornelia and Connie Verlaan.

The funeral liturgy was celebrated Saturday, Dec. 19, at the Church of the Holy Family, 185 Church St., Hebron, with Fr. Michael S. Smith officiating. There were no calling hours and burial was private in St. Peter's Cemetery, Hebron.

In lieu of flowers, donations in her memory may be made to VNA Community Health Care of ECT, P.O. Box 716, Mansfield Center 06250, the Society for Progressive Supranuclear Palsy, Executive Plaza III, 11350 McCormick Rd., Ste. 906, Hunt Valley, MD 21031 or to Give2The Troops, P.O. Box 445, Canton, CT 06019.

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

East Hampton

James H. Cook Jr.

James H. Cook Jr., 72, of Dogwood Drive, East Hampton, and formerly of Blackstone, MA, died Thursday, Dec. 17, in Middlesex Hospital, Middletown. He was the husband of the late Shirley A. (Boisvert) Cook. Born in Woonsocket, RI, he was the son of the late James H., Sr. and Alice (Todd) Cook.

Mr. Cook worked 20 years as an import/export expediter for the former Polymer Systems Inc., now Hosokawa Micron International, retiring in 2002. He was a member of St. Mark Lutheran Church, Woonsocket, where he taught Sunday School years ago and was a member of both the Uxbridge Rod and Gun Club and the NRA. He enjoyed gardening and is remembered by his family as a good father.

He is survived by a son, Gary J. Cook of East Hampton; two daughters, Janice L. Lavoie of Douglas, MA and Cynthia McDonald of Blackstone, MA; and five grandchildren, Katelyn Cook, Alex and Erika Lavoie and Erin and Ella McDonald.

His funeral was held Tuesday, Dec. 22, in St. Mark Lutheran Church, 871 Harris Ave., Woonsocket, RI. Burial will follow in Cook Cemetery, Woonsocket. Calling hours were Monday, Dec. 21, in the Holt Funeral Home, 510 South Main St., Woonsocket. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the American Cancer Society, 931 Jefferson Blvd., Suite 3004, Warwick, RI 02886-2213.

www.holtfuneralhome.com

East Hampton

Varney D. Fellows

Varney D. Fellows, 71, formerly of East Hampton, died Nov. 7. Mr. Fellows was the husband of the late Joyce Lenny Fellows, and was the son of the late Douglas Merritt Fellows and Catherine Fontaine Fellows of Hebron.

He passed away in Nevada, where he had been living for the past 24 years. He had previously been living in East Hampton. He was a former sailor in the United States Navy Seabees. Upon retirement from the Seabees, he worked as head construction manager in the senior citizens complex in East Hampton.

He leaves behind six grandchildren; his daughters, Deborah Pothier and Robin Laws of Colchester; and a son, Douglas Fellows of East Hampton. He also leaves behind a sister, Lura Fellows Butt of Hebron.

A funeral was in Nevada in Pahrump. Memorial contributions if made should be sent to the East Hampton Senior Citizens complex.