



POSTAL CUSTOMER
LOCAL

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Colchester resident Eric Hollingsworth is shown here with his parents Karen and Greg at the family's home. Eric was diagnosed with Stage II Hodgkin's lymphoma Christmas Eve, and nearly 300 people are expected to attend a benefit dinner on his behalf this Saturday.

Benefit for Popular Colchester Resident

by Adam Benson

Eric Hollingsworth has been defying the odds his entire life.

When he was born, doctors said his severe autism would keep the 20-year-old Colchester resident out of regular classrooms and likely prevent him from ever talking.

Then, in 2008, the popular Eric graduated from Bacon Academy with high honors after spending his four years there in mainstreamed classrooms. That accomplishment came a year after he achieved the rank of Eagle Scout with Colchester Troop 109.

"All the things he's done, he's just tackled them," Eric's father Greg said. "He's always been part of the group and part of the team. He's just one of the guys."

He's also been active in Connecticut's Special Olympics program, competing in swimming, bowling, track and field and horseback riding.

So when Eric was diagnosed with Stage II Hodgkin's lymphoma on Christmas Eve Day, he went at it again with the same kind of resolve and matter-of-fact outlook that he's become known for.

"Eric has faced all his challenges with dignity and grace," his mother Karen said.

This Saturday, March 28, hundreds of people are expected to turn out for a benefit dinner at Colchester Federated Church at 60 Main St., Colchester, with the proceeds helping to defray medical and travel costs related to Eric's treatment.

The event will be held from 4-7 p.m., and dinner will include spaghetti, meatballs, salad, bread and dessert. Tickets are \$8 for adults, \$6 for senior citizens and free (but donations accepted) for children under 5.

The benefit was organized by a core group of family friends who said they were inspired by Eric's lifetime of perseverance and his parents' strength and devotion to him.

"I asked them if I could have carte blanche to tell their story, and so I did," friend Lisa Malone said. "A lot of people are being tapped for other fundraisers and they're still responding greatly."

She said dozens of area businesses have given in-kind donations, gift certificates and products for use at a raffle during the dinner after they heard Eric's story.

"There's nobody that doesn't know him. Everybody adores Eric," Lisa said. "It's promising to be a good dinner and fun night and we're hoping it's very successful."

Hand-knit scarves are also for sale at Twice as Nice, Wild Geese and Quality Consignment for \$12 each, with all proceeds going toward Eric's medical expenses.

Since January, Eric has traveled to Lawrence and Memorial Hospital in New London twice a month for chemotherapy and in July, doctors plan to start radiation treatments. They hope to have the tumor – which is located outside his lungs and pressing against his heart and

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Marlborough OKs RHAM Teacher Raises

by Adam Benson

Andover and Hebron leaders this week said they were taken aback by the Marlborough Board of Selectmen's decision last Thursday to accept an arbitration settlement giving RHAM middle and high school teachers pay raises in each of the next three years.

"We're very, very, very disappointed with the decision," Andover First Selectman Robert Burbank said. "I think they had a real lack of consideration of towns that are less affluent than them."

But Marlborough First Selectman Bill Black said sending the agreement back to a panel of arbitration judges would have cost more in the long run.

"Obviously, we had a very limited time frame but we looked at the differences between what was being offered by the administration and what was being sought by the union," Black said. "It looked like the decision was made responsibly in that both views were recognized and the dollar amounts were comparable to contracts that our local teachers and town staff received."

Under terms of the deal finalized Feb. 21 between the RHAM teachers' union and the RHAM Board of Education, educators at the Hebron-based schools will receive a 2 percent

pay increase in the upcoming fiscal year, followed by a 4.1 percent raise the next year and a 4 percent raise in 2011-12.

During that time, employee contributions for healthcare premiums will rise sharply, with teachers paying 17.5 percent, 19 percent and 19.5 percent respectively.

The contract covers about 170 teachers at the middle and high schools; teacher salaries account for about 54 percent of the RHAM Board of Education's proposed 2009-10 budget.

With current economic conditions forcing other area school boards and town leaders to look at furloughs, pay freezes and in some cases layoffs to make up for lagging revenues, some officials felt signing off on the agreement with the RHAM teachers was too much to ask of residents.

The Hebron Board of Selectmen unanimously voted against the arbitration package at its March 19 meeting. Under the rules of binding arbitration, it takes a two-thirds vote by selectmen in each of the three towns to reject a proposal.

"Our position was based on the fact that we have already gone back to not only our department heads but our town unions and Board of Education and asked them to consider zero per-

cent increases for their salary line," Hebron Board of Selectmen chair Jeffrey Watt said.

Burbank said the Andover Board of Education budget hasn't seen more than a 3 percent overall increase in several years. He added that town leaders are hoping to craft a budget with a zero percent increase to give to voters in the spring.

"Our residents can't really afford in this economy to pick up the tab for teachers getting a two and over four percent increase over the next two years," Burbank said.

Earlier this month, the Marlborough Board of Finance got its first look at a proposed 2009-10 budget that includes a 6.6 percent tax increase, but Burbank said that by greenlighting the RHAM deal, town leaders there placed a greater burden on residents in all three communities.

"It seems to me that either the Board of Selectmen in Marlborough don't have a handle on what their residents need or the residents are not concerned about how much in taxes they pay," he said.

Watt said Hebron Board of Selectman vice chair Mark Stuart attended last Thursday's Marlborough selectmen meeting, where he urged the body to stay in step with participat-

ing RHAM members.

Black this week defended Marlborough's decision, saying the arbitrated salaries are in line with what local town employees and teachers are earning.

He added that town leaders are cautious when it comes to their relations with regional partners and neighboring municipalities.

"When you challenge the system, you also impact those working relationships, and there's a cost there that's tangible," he said.

RHAM officials declined to comment on the politics surrounding the vote, but were quick to praise the process and the regional school district's educational track record.

"I think the arbitrated settlement is the wisdom of some neutral people, and it's the statutory process that's been put in place," RHAM Superintendent of Schools Robert Siminski said.

In February, Siminski suggested the agreement marked a balance between RHAM teachers and the district.

"Each side won some and lost some," he said then.

RHAM Board of Education chair Susan Griffiths said each town brings its own con-

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trachea – eradicated by September.

“It’s not a slam dunk, but the prognosis is good,” Greg said. Still, the rising costs of prolonged treatments have begun to take a financial toll. Since January, Karen has put 2,100 miles on her vehicle and the family spends about \$500 a month in co-pays for Eric’s medications and office visits.

They also had to pay a \$3,500 deductible at the beginning of the year, but Greg – who works at Pratt and Whitney – said insurance has covered most of the costs related to Eric’s treatment.

Since Eric’s autism prevents him from driving, Karen has not been able to work as a substitute teacher at Bacon Academy since Christmas. She was also recently laid off.

Despite the hardships, Greg and Karen said they’ve maintained a positive attitude thanks to a strong support group through their church and Eric’s popularity across town.

During his high school career, Eric was a fixture at cross country events, where he quickly became a fan favorite. He set a goal for himself not to finish last, which he achieved before graduating in June 2008.

“We have a lot of good friends, and they’ve really come through for us here,” Greg Hollingsworth said. “A lot of people have popped out of the woodwork to help us out.”

Over the winter, Karen launched a blog at

caringbridge.org, a service that provides free websites to anybody with a loved one going through a health crisis. Since its inception, more than 3,300 people have visited Eric’s page.

And Eric’s older brother Andrew – a student at Johnson & Wales University in Providence – started an “Eric Hollingsworth Support Group” on the social networking site Facebook.com that has more than 350 members so far, many former classmates and friends of Eric’s.

“Eric, you are the most caring, sensitive, kind and thoughtful person I have ever met!” a Bacon Academy student wrote March 21. “I hope you recover fully and quickly. Be strong, and be brave.”

Throughout the entire process, Eric has kept the sense of humor that he’s known for, cracking jokes about his coaches and teachers.

He’s also not shy about recognizing his own physical limitations.

Though he was able to complete three grueling 50-mile trips through the Boy Scouts’ venture crew program, Eric remembers one thing about them most clearly.

“I made a big mistake,” he said. “I hiked too much without a nap. My guinea pig can go faster than me.”

For more information about Saturday’s benefit dinner, call Colchester Federated Church at 537-5189.

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cerns to bear when voting on arbitration settlements.

“I’m respectful of each of the decisions that were made in each of the towns, and our officials are always very good in continuing to communicate with us in our budget cycles,” she said. “The economy is putting a strain on all of us now, and people do recognize that on the tail end of this, we want to come out with as strong a school system as we can, and keep that re-

spect in place.”

Despite any tensions that might exist on the heels of Marlborough’s vote, Black said he was confident the three towns will continue to work together on issues.

“I believe there’s enough respect between the town administrators and the communications are strong enough that there are times we’re not going to agree, and yet we’re still able to work for the good of the towns,” he said.

From the Editor’s Desk

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

Hello again.

As some of you may have noticed, I was on vacation last week, and reporter Sarah McCoy filled in as editor. Where did I go, you wonder? (Come on, come on, I’m sure at least one of you is wondering this.) I was in Alabama, visiting some family. And I had a grand time.

One of the key attractions of heading south this time of year is, of course, the weather. And Alabama did not disappoint. It rained a bit the day I arrived (which was two Saturdays ago, March 14), and poured down the following Monday, but the rest of the week was delightful, with sunny skies and temperatures in the 60s and low 70s. I loved it.

Apparently Connecticut decided a week of that was enough for me, at least for the time being, for this past Monday featured highs just in the upper 30s and a bone-chilling, gusty wind that made it feel more like Jan. 23 instead of March 23. The weather slowly started to warm up as the week went on. In fact, while driving into work Tuesday, I heard a radio DJ talk excitedly about this weekend, when temperatures were supposed to be in the 50s. It’s hard for me to jump up and down *too* much about the oh-so-balmy mid-50s when a week ago at this time I was basking in the warm glow of 70.

Another big draw of Alabama is the food. There’s nothing quite like southern cuisine. If you’ve never had it, Cracker Barrel offers a reasonable facsimile, what with their fried okra and turnip greens, but the taste isn’t quite the same as you get at an authentic Southern restaurant. I ate a meal last week at this place called “Sweet Bones Alabama.” As the name suggests, it specialized in barbecue (indeed, Alabama is rife with barbecue joints; there seems to be one every five blocks or so). However, since I was there on a Friday, I opted for the catfish instead. It had been a very long time since I’d had catfish, and this one was prepared just right. It was a rather large filet, coated with just the right amount of breading and then fried. The place also served fried green tomatoes, which of course I just had to have. If your only experience with fried green tomatoes is the book or movie of the same name, you’ve really missed out. I’m not a huge tomato fan (I can take them on sandwiches, but I don’t really enjoy them by themselves), but I make an exception for the fried green variety. Those are just amazing; a little sweet and a little salty at the same time.

And speaking of sweet, another item unique to the south is sweet tea. You can ask for a glass of sweet tea at any restaurant you go to down there. It’s what the name implies — iced tea pre-mixed with sugar — but the restaurants all seem to find just the right balance of tea to sugar, and the result is really a refreshing taste sensation. And you can’t really duplicate it up here; in fact, restaurants don’t even make it an option. You can get your tea unsweetened and then add the sugar yourself via the packets on the table, but the taste just doesn’t come out the same. And don’t even think about asking your waiter or waitress for sweetened iced tea; I’ve been burned

by that before. You’re likely to wind up with Nestea or Lipton Brisk. As I’ve written before, any resemblance between those syrupy concoctions and real iced tea is purely coincidental. In about the past year or so, they’ve started selling sweet iced tea at McDonald’s, and that probably comes the closest of any tea options up here. But if you want to go to a nice sit-down restaurant and have a refreshing glass of sweet tea...well, you’re in the wrong state.

There’s also a plethora of fast food options in Alabama, several of which you can’t get in Connecticut. Amid the usual suspects – like Burger King, KFC and the ever-ubiquitous Subway – there are also Sonic outlets (if you have cable TV, you’ve surely seen ads for these places; the food looks very tasty, but sadly I didn’t have time to get to one last week), Hardee’s stores (I did have time to get to one of these, and got probably the best fast-food hamburger I’ve gotten in a long time; it was a basic cheeseburger, but char-grilled and perfectly juicy) and a chain called Krystal, which serves tiny little hamburgers; it’s similar to White Castle (which Connecticut also doesn’t have). And while it’s not fast food exactly, while I was down there I did eat at a Waffle House, where I had a fine meal. I actually prefer waffles to pancakes, and while there are many places up here that serve pancakes, you can’t really get a waffle for breakfast when you eat out. If there is one on the menu, it’s a Belgian waffle, which are a little too thick and sweet for my tastes. I like a good, old-fashioned waffle, and fortunately that’s Waffle House’s specialty.

Lest anyone think I’m being too hard on the Nutmeg State and the eateries it doesn’t offer, there are a few chains up here that you just can’t find in Alabama. D’Angelo’s is one of them; it’s very much a regional chain, and I didn’t expect to find any down there. Still, it offers the best fast-food sub you can get. (Sadly, the only D’Angelo’s in Manchester recently closed.) Another regional chain not present down there is Friendly’s, which I admit I am a fan of. Yes, its menu offerings aren’t mind-blowing, but it’s quality, affordable food – and Friendly’s has fantastic ice cream sundaes.

But if you’ve never been to Alabama, you might be surprised at the lack of a particular fast-food chain that you seem to come across every time you turn around up here: Dunkin’ Donuts. I didn’t see a single one in Alabama.

Of course, there was much more to my trip to the Heart of Dixie than good food. It was wonderful to see family and friends that I hadn’t seen in a while, and I also got to partake of another time-honored aspect of vacation – sleeping in.

All in all, it was an excellent week. It’s nice to be back home, though. However, I do miss the weather. I was being fairly patient with spring’s arrival, but after spending a week in Alabama, well, now I’m itching for it to warm up. Seventy degrees in March; trust me, my friends: that’s a beautiful thing.

* * *

See you next week.

Colchester Selectmen Uphold Police Commission Removal

by Adam Benson

Embattled former police commissioner Jim Stavola lost his reinstatement bid Wednesday night after a split vote by the Board of Selectmen that followed more than two hours of emotional and sometimes confrontational deliberation and testimony from Colchester residents.

During a special meeting at Town Hall, selectmen voted 3-2 to uphold a February decision they made to remove Stavola from the five-member Police Commission after they said he violated town policy by issuing a statement to the media without first clearing it through the First Selectman's office.

Selectmen Rosemary Coyle and John Malsbenden voted to retain Stavola while Greg Cordova and Stan Soby moved to uphold his removal. First Selectman Linda Hodge cast the deciding vote against Stavola.

"It seems like nobody considered the things I did while I was on the commission. Everybody was focused on this one situation, and it was wrong," Stavola told reporters after the verdict. "The police officers are going to suffer because there's nobody there now to protect them and watch their back."

At the heart of the controversy is a Feb. 8 statement Stavola released to local media outlets purportedly on behalf of his colleagues expressing disappointment at an Ethics Commission decision days earlier to reinstate Police Commission chair William Otfinoski.

Otfinoski temporarily relinquished his seat Jan. 8, when the Ethics Commission launched an investigation on the heels of allegations by Stavola and fellow Police Commission member Glenn Morron that Otfinoski stalled talks between the police's union and town officials and then misrepresented the tenor of those ne-

gotiations at subsequent meetings.

Otfinoski was cleared of any wrongdoing Feb. 3, when he reclaimed the chairmanship of the Police Commission.

But according to First Selectman Linda Hodge and Otfinoski, Stavola's statement wasn't vetted by them first – in violation of the town's charter.

Hodge said the policy is in place not as a censoring tool but so Colchester leaders can make sure information released through their departments, boards and commissions to the public is "accurate."

And she said Wednesday that Stavola knew about the process. As the Police Commission's designated public information officer, Hodge said he drafted nearly a half dozen press releases in the past that made their way to her before being disseminated.

"The question about whether Mr. Stavola understood the town policy, Mr. Stavola made it very clear he did understand those as he sent those press releases directly to my office," she said. "We have had those discussions repeatedly."

Stavola and Morron said the statement had the full backing and knowledge of the rest of the police commission, and Stavola followed town protocol by presenting the draft to Art Standish, who was acting chairman during the Ethics Commission's probe.

Stavola said Wednesday it was Standish and not him who was responsible for getting the statement to Hodge's desk.

"He dropped the ball. My responsibility ended when I gave him the press release," Stavola said. "You can't hold me accountable

for people who don't do their job."

Standish was not present Wednesday night. Stavola said the Police Commission was not made aware that Otfinoski was again the chairman until Feb. 23 – two weeks after the statement made its way into the press.

"Our indication was that Art Standish was still in charge," Stavola said. "Nobody said anything."

Morron said during Stavola's 10 months as a police commissioner, he was a staunch advocate for the members of the department and worked hard to improve working conditions and infrastructure there.

He accused Hodge and others on the Board of Selectmen of carrying out a personal grudge against Stavola because of his battles with town leaders in the past over projects and programs he wanted to get in place.

"Basically what you're doing here tonight is asking Jim Stavola to give his final words and you're slipping a noose around his neck and yanking the cord," Morron said. "To remove Jim Stavola would be a disservice to this town ... he's not afraid to tell you what's right or wrong, and if that doesn't aspire to your political aspirations, that's too bad. We have a right to speak our opinion."

In voting to keep Stavola on board, Coyle blasted the town's communications policy and said the incident sent a bad message to residents who might be considering volunteering to serve on a board or commission. She also said she was unaware that statements had to first go through Hodge before being released to the public.

"I am so totally upset by this process," she

said. "We should have had a conversation first before any action was taken. Right away, we're removing a volunteer from one of our commissions. This makes absolutely no sense to me at all."

Though he voted to keep Stavola on the commission, Malsbenden chastised members of the police commission for authorizing a statement that publicly attacked the jurisdiction of another town board.

"You're really talking about the actions of another board in this town, and that really bothers me because very often, boards disagree. That's part of the built-in checks and balances of the system," he said. "To my knowledge, I have never seen boards put out press releases criticizing other boards in this town. I'm really bothered by this."

Stavola worried his removal sends the wrong message to would-be volunteers, though he didn't rule out another run at public service down the line.

"Look what they put me through," he said. "Instead of calling me in and saying 'what are you doing wrong here,' they automatically remove me. They gave me no opportunity to defend myself, and clearly the handwriting was on the wall."

Selectmen on March 19 voted to set up an April 7 meeting with the Police Commission to address the communication gaps that exist between the sides – an idea that met with scorn from Morron.

"Day late, dollar short," he told the selectmen. "Had you done that in the first place, the facts would have been out and none of us would be here."

East Hampton Police News

2/20 — Melissa A. Pistilli, 21, of 19 Sunset Dr., and Dylan Barthel, 20, of 13 Lakewood Rd., and a parked vehicle were involved in an accident on Middletown Ave., near Skinner Street, East Hampton Police said. Pistilli was arrested for unsafe passing, operating without insurance and evading responsibility, police added.

3/13 — Tammy L. Balch, 33, of 13 Oak Knoll Rd., was arrested for operating under suspension, police said.

3/13 — Jason R. Jackson, 26, of 19 Markham Rd., was arrested for interfering with an officer, carrying a dangerous weapon (a knife), drug paraphernalia, following too closely, operating an unregistered motor vehicle and operating without insurance, police said.

3/13 — Cherie L. Kelleher, 50, of 146 Chappell St., Chaplin, was arrested for operating under the influence of alcohol and failure to drive right, police said.

3/14 — Catherine Lynch, 45, of 13 Wildwood Ln., was arrested for operating under the influence of alcohol and failure to drive right, police said.

3/17 — Michael J. Latronica, 31, of 48 Old

West High St., was arrested for operating under suspension, operating an unregistered motor vehicle, operating without insurance and misuse of plates, police said.

3/17 — Kevin McCarthy, 21, of 111 Old Jewett City, Preston, was arrested for failure to drive right, operating under suspension, driving under the influence, possession of marijuana and possession of drug paraphernalia, police said.

3/18 — Paul Wisnewski, 24, of 391 Taylor Hill Rd., Griswold, was issued a ticket for traveling unreasonably fast, police said.

3/18 — Craig W. Odell, 51, of 59 Edgerton St., was arrested for interfering with a police officer, police said.

3/18 — Lisa A. Jay, 40, of 51 South St., Cromwell, was arrested for failure to drive right and operating under the influence of alcohol, police said.

3/19 — Amanda Violette, 20, of 202 Wall St., Hebron and Jonathan Morin, 25, of 41 East High St., were each arrested pursuant to a warrant on charges of third-degree larceny and conspiracy to commit third-degree larceny, police said.

Portland Police News

3/16 — Ricardo Diaz, 27, of 127 Grand St., Middletown, was charged with second-degree criminal mischief and breach of peace, Portland Police said.

East Hampton Resident Killed in Collision

A Barbara Road resident was killed early Thursday morning when his car struck a tree and caught fire, East Hampton Police said.

Robert Kochuk, 19, of 28 Barbara Rd., was traveling south on North Main Street at around 1:30 a.m. Thursday, March 26, when he lost control of his vehicle and veered off the east side of the road, police said. The vehicle, a 2002 Chevrolet S-10 pickup truck, struck garbage cans and a tree on the side of the road and burst into flames, police said.

East Hampton Police Chief Matthew Reimondo said that when the first officers arrived on scene, the truck was "fully engulfed."

Kochuk was pronounced dead at the scene and his body was "badly burned," Reimondo said.

It took "several minutes" for East Hampton Volunteer Fire Department members to put out the blaze, police said.

Reimondo said preliminary results of an autopsy were due Thursday afternoon, after press time. Toxicology results won't be available for several weeks.

The accident is still under investigation, but, police said, "excessive speed appears to be a contributing factor."

East Hampton

Kevin Joseph Bloom

Kevin Joseph Bloom, 39, of East Hampton, died unexpectedly on Monday, March 23. He was the beloved husband and best friend of Dawn (Bennison) Bloom. Born in Hartford, son of Edward B. and Annette (Dubay) Bloom, he was raised in Newington before residing in East Hampton.

Kevin was a member of St. Mary's Church, Newington and was employed by the City of Hartford for over 20 years. He was a member of the Hannon-Hatch V.F.W. Post Fife and Drum Corps. for 10 years. He was an avid Red Sox fan and would spend hours tinkering on his old Chevy truck. Kevin had an adventurous spirit and always enjoyed time spent on his last minute trips with Dawn, especially while lingering at the shore.

He was a loving and devoted father and leaves his cherished son, Kyle Bloom at home. He also leaves two brothers, Ralph Bloom, his wife Maureen, and sons Jeremy and Bret of Newington, Edward Bloom, wife Kathy and daughters Lisa and goddaughter Amy of Windsor Locks; a sister Nancy Galli and her husband Stephen of Newington; his mother-in-law Sandra Bennison and father-in-law Bruce Trombley, both in Rhode Island; sister-in-law Laura Bennison in California; and many aunts, uncles, cousins and dear friends, including Andrea Gallant of New Britain.

He was predeceased by two brothers Thomas and Timothy Bloom.

His funeral service will be held Saturday, March 28, at noon from the Fisette-Batzner Funeral Home, 20 Bonair Ave., Newington, followed by a Mass of Christian Burial at 1 p.m. at St. Mary's Church, Newington. Interment will be in West Meadow Cemetery, Newington. Relatives and friends are invited to call tonight, Friday evening, March 27, from 4-8 p.m. at Fisette-Batzner.

Memorial donations may be made to the Kyle Bloom Education Fund, C/O Bank of America, 9 East High Street, East Hampton, CT 06424, Attn. Laura.

Colchester

Ernest F. Granata

Ernest F. Granata, 94, of Colchester Commons, Colchester, died Wednesday, March 18, at Marlborough Health Center. He was born in Hartford, the son of the late Michael and Bessie (Rossi) Granata.

A veteran of World War II, he served with the U.S. Army; where he worked as editor of an Army Service newspaper *The Scope*, for which he won an award. Prior to his retirement, he owned and operated Middletown Typewriter and Office Supply Company. Ernest was a member of the USCG Auxiliary Power Squadron and secretary of the Exchange Club in Middletown. He enjoyed spending time with his family and his hobbies included, oil painting, fishing, cooking, boating and camping.

He is survived by a son, Robert Granata and his wife Cynthia of Middletown; and a daughter, Joan Biagioni of Wethersfield; a sister, Rita Shukis of Wallingford; five grandchildren, Amy and Amanda Granata, and Michael, Paul, and Lisa Biagioni; three great grandchildren, Michael, Ericka, and Olivia; and sister-in-law, Evelyn Granata and several nieces and nephews.

He was predeceased by his son, Ernest Granata; and his brother, James F. Granata.

Funeral services will be held Sunday, March 29, at 5:30 p.m. at Biega Funeral Home, 3 Silver St., Middletown. Friends may call at Biega Funeral Home Sunday from 4-5:30 p.m. Friends may also call at Biega Funeral Home Monday, March 30, from 10-11 a.m. A graveside service, with Military Honors, will follow in Rose Hill Memorial Park, Rocky Hill.

Memorial contributions may be made to Disabled American Veterans, 35 Cold Spring Road, Suite 315, Rocky Hill, CT 06067.

Obituaries

East Hampton

Grete Ellen Dainiak

Grete Ellen (Hansen) Dainiak, 81, of East Hampton, widow of John Dainiak, died Monday, March 23, at St. Francis Hospital in Hartford. Born Aug. 5, 1927, in Greenwich, she was the daughter of the late John Hansen and Lilly (Rassmusen) Hansen.

She had lived in Newtown for more than 60 years before moving to East Hampton five years ago. Grete was a retired school teacher, having taught in the Brookfield School System. She was a member of the Women's Auxiliary of the United Fire Company of Botsford, and had been a Cub Scout Den Mother when her sons were young and enjoyed local politics.

She is survived by her two sons and their wives, John and Michele Dainiak of Merriam, KR, and Greg and Darlene Dainiak of East Hampton; a niece, Lisa Goosman of Newtown; four grandchildren, Allyson, Kristin, Stephanie and Samantha; and many other nieces and nephews.

She was predeceased by her sister Lilly Goosman.

Funeral services were held Thursday, March 26, in the Congregational Church of East Hampton. Burial followed in Lakeview Cemetery in East Hampton. Friends called at the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, Wednesday, March 25.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to www.OurPromiseToNicholas.com, a charity to combat Batten Disease.

To leave online condolences, visit www.spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

East Hampton

Richard Charles Chadwick

Richard Charles Chadwick, 69, of East Hampton, passed away Tuesday, March 24, at the Veterans Hospital in West Haven, with his wife and daughter at his side. Richard was born Aug. 10, 1939, in Providence, RI, to the late Florence (Ware) and Howard Chadwick.

He was a proud member of the U.S. Marine Corps and had participated in the Lebanon conflict in the 1950s. He was a member of the Local 230 of Hartford for more than 30 years.

He is survived by his wife Janice; daughter Teresa; cherished granddaughter Alexis and her father Vincent. Richard also leaves loving sisters-in-law Nancy and Diane of Colchester, Barbara and Patty of Florida, Alice of Haddam; brothers-in-law Jimmy of East Hampton, Wayne and Ron of Florida and many nieces and nephews.

He was predeceased by his sister Beverly Brooks.

Richard was a hard-working man who took care of and loved his family very much. He loved to fish and would go with friends when he could. P.S. Love Ya Booka.

Friends may call at the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, today, Friday, March 27, from 5-7 p.m. There will be a brief Wake Service at 7 p.m. Burial will be in Waterhole Cemetery at the convenience of the family.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the American Cancer Society Franklin Commons, 106 Route 32, Franklin, CT 06254-1800.

To leave online condolences, visit www.spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Colchester

Lillian Mae Cormier

Lillian Mae (Robinson) Cormier, 93, of Colchester and formerly of Maine, widow of the late Gilbert Cormier, passed away peacefully Friday morning, March 20, at the Liberty Specialty Care Center in Colchester with her loving family by her side. Born Oct. 7, 1915, in Auburn, ME, she was a daughter of the late Harvey and Winnie (Campbell) Robinson.

She and Gilbert were married Nov. 27, 1938, in Portland, ME and shared 69 years of marriage before he predeceased her on Dec. 22, 2007. Together they moved to Hartford in 1940 to raise their family. Lillian worked for many years as a presser in the dry cleaning business. She was very active member of her church, the Abundant Life of the Assemblies of God in Colchester. Most importantly, she will be remembered by her family as being a loving and devoted wife, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother.

She is survived by two children, Robert Cormier and Cora and her husband, Eugene Wright, all of Colchester; seven grandchildren; 13 great grandchildren; a sister, Laura Searles of Bethany; and numerous extended family members and friends.

In addition to her husband, she was predeceased by two infant children, Gilbert "Sonny" Cormier and Arlene Cormier; and two siblings, Etta Searles and Harvey Robinson.

Friends called Monday, March 23, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. The funeral assembled Tuesday, March 24, starting at the Abundant Life of the Assemblies of God Church, 85 Skinner Rd., Colchester. The funeral service followed. Interment will follow in the Linwood Cemetery, Colchester. Donations in her memory may be made to her church.

For online condolences, visit www.auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Hebron

John M. Burnett Jr.

John Michael Burnett Jr., 28, of Hebron, passed away suddenly Thursday, March 19. Born March 11, 1981, in Hartford, he was a son of John M. Burnett Sr. of Storrs and Emma (DelRosso) Manning of Hebron.

John attended South Windsor High School and went on to work in carpentry with his brother, Frank, operating All Phase Construction in Hebron.

He was an avid fisherman, hunter and also enjoyed riding. Most of all, John will be remembered for his generous nature, heart of gold and the need to protect the ones he cared most about. He was loved by all who knew him and will be greatly missed by his family and many friends.

In addition to his parents, he is survived by his stepparents, Karen Burnett and Michael Manning; three brothers, Frank Burnett, Antonio Incontro and Joseph Burnett; his stepbrother, Chris Manning; his maternal grandparents, Antonio and Maria DelRosso of Italy; his nephews, Anthony and Michael Incontro and Antonio DelRosso; his dearest love, Lindsay Santos of Andover; and numerous aunts, uncles and extended family members and friends.

Friends called Sunday, March 22, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Road, Colchester. The Funeral Liturgy was celebrated Monday, March 23, directly at the Church of the Holy Family, 185 Church St., Hebron, with Fr. Michael S. Smith officiating. Interment followed in the Townsend Cemetery, Andover. There were no calling hours Monday morning.

For online condolences, visit www.auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.



Colchester

Laurie Lynn Pimentel

Laurie Lynn Pimentel, 50, of Colchester, passed away Wednesday, March 18, 2009 at Hartford Hospital and went home to Glory. She was born on Aug. 7, 1958, in Hartford to Donald Isleib of Newtown, PA, and Eleanor (Preston) Isleib of Shelburne, VT.

She was married to her loving husband Jeff Pimentel on Aug. 25, 1984. They shared 25 amazing years together. She worked for Middlesex Hospital for the past 27 years, most recently as a radiology appointment scheduler. She was gifted with a beautiful voice and a servant's heart. She was deeply involved in her church and dedicated to meeting the needs of others. Her smile and laugh brought joy to everyone who knew her.

In addition to her husband Jeff Pimentel of Colchester, she leaves behind two brothers: Jeffrey Isleib of Middletown and Timothy Isleib of Levittown, PA and by two sisters: Susan Walden of East Hampton and Debbie Kuritz of Bristol. She is also survived by numerous aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces and nephews, as well as by her beloved dog, Kayto.

Family and friends visited the Montville Funeral Home of Church and Allen, Route 32 Montville on Monday, March 23, before a funeral service held at Montville Union Baptist Church, Route 163, Montville. The funeral procession lined up at Connors Funeral Home on West Main Road, Portsmouth, RI, on Tuesday March 24. Burial also took place Tuesday, March 24, at Portsmouth Cemetery, Turnpike Avenue, Portsmouth, RI. All are invited to attend.

Colchester

Herbert F. Clark

Herbert Finley Clark, 83, of Colchester, widower of the late M. Patricia (Wakely) Clark, passed away Monday morning, March 23, at the Wm. W. Backus Hospital in Norwich. Born Dec. 2, 1925 in Colchester, he was a son of the late Harold and Ruby (Finley) Clark.

He was a 1944 graduate of Bacon Academy in Colchester and went on to be co-owner and President of the former Clark's Transportation Co. in Colchester in school bus operations for over 40 years before his retirement in 1988. Mr. Clark was a longtime member and Past Worshipful Master of the Wooster Lodge No. 10 A.F. & A.M. in Colchester; member of the Colchester Fish & Game Club, past director of the CT Quarter Horse Assn. and past member of the advisory board for the former Glastonbury Bank & Trust Co.

After 48 years of marriage, his beloved wife Pat predeceased him on Dec. 18, 2001.

He is survived by two sons, Thomas M. Clark of Amston and Michael Clark of Colchester; a sister, Barbara Ladd of Windsor; and numerous extended family members and friends.

In addition to his wife, he was predeceased by his brother, Roland "Bud" Clark.

Friends called Thursday, March 26, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. A Masonic Service was observed that evening. The funeral will assemble starting at 10:30 a.m. today, Friday, March 27, at the funeral home before an 11 a.m. Chapel Service with the Rev. Dr. Linda U. Barnes, officiating. Interment will follow in the New St. Andrew Cemetery, Colchester.

In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory may be made to the Colchester-Hayward Vol. Fire Co., 18-54 Old Hartford Road, Colchester 06415.

For online condolences, visit www.auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.



Andover

Emily W. Miller

Emily Wheeler Miller, 83, of Andover, passed away Sunday morning, March 22, at the Harrington Court GHC Center in Colchester. Born July 24, 1925 in Hartford, she was a daughter of the late Herman and Josephine (Wheeler) Miller.

She graduated for Wm. Hall High School in West Hartford with the Class of 1948 and went on to study education at St. Joseph's College in West Hartford. Early on, she worked at St. Patrick Church in Hartford with nursery school age children for two and a half years. Following that, she worked as a clerk for Sage Allen in Hartford for a short time before working for the Hartford Insurance Co. as a record keeper for 34 years before her retirement in 1985.

Emily met her best friend, Tess Meli, at a fellowship meeting at Center Church in Hartford. Together, they purchased their cottage on Andover Lake in 1950 and would live together for 52 years before Tess predeceased her on July 11, 2002. Together, they taught Sunday School at the Andover Congregational Church for 25 years.

She is survived by five nieces and nephews; numerous great nieces and nephews; as well as the entire Meli family, who loved her as their own and cared for her through the years, especially Carmel Meli, with whom she made her home for several years; many extended family members and friends, especially everyone at Dial-A-Ride.

She was predeceased by three sisters, Anna Gledhill, Marion Atkinson and Helen Miller.

Friends called Wednesday, March 25, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. A chapel service followed that evening.

Interment will be private in the Miller family plot in Fairview Cemetery, West Hartford.

In lieu of flowers, donations in her memory may be made to an animal rescue charity of one's choice.

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

Marlborough

Salvatore Leone

Salvatore Leone, 52, of Marlborough, beloved husband of Giuseppina "Pina" (Gionfriddo) Leone died Saturday, March 21, in Marlborough. He was born Dec. 17, 1956, in Caracas, Venezuela, the son of the late Paolo and Emanuella (Ciurcina) Leone and lived in Marlborough for 10 years.

Sal was a cadet in the military while living in Venezuela. He was employed as an electronic test engineer by IPC in Westbrook for 25 years. He loved to spend time with his son playing soccer, as well as on weekends with friends. He assisted in the Marlborough soccer league. He was a very hard worker who preferred spending time working on projects in and outside the home and gathering with family. He was a dedicated family man who always put his wife and children first. Sal also enjoyed building furniture, remodeling and landscaping. He was an avid NY Yankees fan.

Including "Pina," his wife of 19 years, he is survived by his three children; Alexandra, Daniela and Paul Leone; two sisters, Maria Francesca Tarantello and her husband Santo of Newington and Rosanna Leone of Newington; his mother-in-law, Lucia Gionfriddo and her husband Carlos Borja of Middletown; his sister-in-law, Patrizia Crete and her husband Paul of Higganum; two nieces, a nephew and many extended family member and friends.

Besides his parents he was predeceased by his father-in-law, Corrado Gionfriddo.

"Daddy could fix anything." - Alexandra; "Daddy called us potato heads when we did something silly." - Daniela; and "Daddy and I were in the middle of building a go-cart. He loved to build things." - Paul.

Funeral services left Thursday, March 26, from the D'Esopo Funeral Chapel, 277 Folly Brook Blvd., Wethersfield, for a Mass of Christian Burial that morning at Corpus Christi Church, 601 Silas Deane Highway, Wethersfield. Entombment will follow in Cedar Hill Cemetery, Hartford. Calling hours are Wednesday from 4-8 p.m. at the funeral home.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to The Leone Family Children's Fund, c/o Liberty Bank, P.O. Box 188, Marlborough, CT 06447.

For online expressions of sympathy, visit www.desopo.com.

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