

RIVEREAST

News Bulletin

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

Volume 37, Number 33

Published by The Glastonbury Citizen

November 23, 2012



As a result of the Liberty Bank/Rotary Club Thanksgiving Dinner Drive, more than 100 Colchester families had food on their table yesterday. The funds raised from the drive were used to purchase all the fixings for a traditional holiday feast, which were delivered to families Monday night.

Thanksgiving Meals Assembled for Needy

by Geeta Schrayter

It's not uncommon for the vehicles pulling out of the parking lot at 52 Old Hartford Rd. in Colchester to be focused on helping. After all, as the location of the Colchester Hayward Volunteer Firehouse, the vehicles pulling out of the large bays are usually fire trucks or ambulances, rushing off to aid someone in need.

But on Monday evening it was various cars – not emergency vehicles – that pulled out of the firehouse, and yet their goal was the same: to help people.

And help they did. Thanks to the efforts of the Colchester Rotary Club, Liberty Bank and the funds raised by the ninth annual Liberty Bank/Rotary Club Thanksgiving Dinner Drive, more than 100 local families had a table laden with traditional holiday fare yesterday.

The Colchester Rotary Club has been providing Thanksgiving meals to those in need for over 30 years. Since the fundraiser's inception, the number of families has grown significantly from a couple dozen to 160 this year, but these days the club has some extra help to go with it. In 2003, Liberty Bank teamed up with the Colchester Rotary and clubs from around the state to help raise the money for the meals. For every dollar raised by the Rotary, the bank

matches 25 cents and this year, that amounted to \$1,492.24.

Through the Liberty Bank contribution and other donations, the total amount raised this year was \$8,733.83 – which prompted Gretchen Marvin, who's been chairing the fundraiser since she started with Colchester Rotary 23 years ago, to exclaim, "Holy moly – that's fabulous!"

The number is a significant increase over the previous year, when \$5,604 was raised.

"This is one of our best fundraisers," said Marvin. "Just knowing that we're feeding people that need it – it's absolutely my favorite thing to do with Rotary... people are just so appreciative of the fact that we do this."

Sandi Churchill, the manager of Liberty Bank's Colchester branch, has been helping out with the fundraiser for the past seven years. On Monday she was loading the boxed meals into vehicles when they pulled up along with her son, Matt.

"I think it's really nice to give back," she said, noting overall, Liberty Bank had donated \$25,000 in matching funds this year to the 27 Rotary Clubs that participated.

See Thanksgiving Meals Page 2

Art Show Remembers Work of Kathy Berlin

by Joshua Anusewicz

When East Hampton resident Kathy Berlin passed away this past summer after a long battle with cancer, it saddened many, but also gave the community a chance to reflect on how much Berlin, a renowned artist and art instructor, gave back to those around her.

That's why, last Friday night, it was no surprise when over 300 people turned out for the Katherine Berlin Memorial Art Show at The Art Alcove in the Village Center.

"It show's what kind of human being she was," said Bob Berlin, Kathy's husband, on Tuesday of the turnout. "It showed that people have a great appreciation for what she did for many local artists. She's going to be missed."

Kathy Berlin died July 20 at the age 57, leaving behind her son Jason and her two daughters, Jennifer and Jeanne Rose, as well as Bob, with whom she owned and operated Thatcher's Pharmacy in Marlborough for many years. Through the local pharmacy and the formation of The Art Alcove, Kathy had an opportunity to reach many aspiring artists in the area, providing them with the materials and, more importantly, instruction that only she could give.

According to Bob, the art show was a chance to not only show off many of Kathy's works, but those of her close contemporaries and students from a long career of art; Bob said that almost 40 artists were included in the show. The

art was available for purchase, with 10 percent of each artwork purchased going to the American Cancer Society; Bob said that \$450 was donated by the end of the night through purchases and personal donations.

"It was a pretty good night," he added.

Front and center at the show was the work of Kathy, a longtime member of both the Marlborough Arts Center and the East Hampton Art Association. Like many of her works throughout her life, the pieces on display were mainly watercolors and pastels featuring landscapes and scenes with aesthetic and historical value to the local communities. This included paintings of Lake Pocotopaug, the East Hampton Village Center, Bevin Bell factory and prominent former businesses located throughout the town.

The crowd of people milled around the space, filled with various pieces of art, as they munched on hors d'oeuvres, sipped wine and enjoyed live music. Many walked through The Art Alcove's nooks and crannies, taking a quick look at the various paintings and drawings that adorned the walls. Most took a little longer to admire Kathy's work, quietly reminiscing about her passion for art and possibly recalling memories of years past.

What stood out starkly at the event was the diversity of the crowd; teenagers from the lo-

See Art Show Page 2



Many works by late East Hampton resident Kathy Berlin, such as this one of a train that once ran along the Air Line Trail, were available for purchase at a special art show held last Friday. Ten percent of the proceeds from all sales were donated to the American Cancer Society.

Holiday Shopping Guide Inside



Boxes filled with Thanksgiving goodies – such as bread, stuffing, pies and, of course, turkeys – were loaded into the backs of cars by members of Colchester Rotary and Liberty Bank. The food was then delivered to 160 needy families in town, so they could enjoy a full-fledged Turkey Day meal yesterday.

Thanksgiving Meals cont. from Front Page

In Colchester, that money was then used to purchase turkeys, gravy, stuffing, corn, green beans, potatoes, squash, cranberry sauce, bread, butter, apple juice and a pie from both Noel's Market and Westchester Marketplace.

Any remaining funds will be used by the Rotary to help keep the pantries at Ponemah and Dublin, the town's two affordable housing villages, stocked.

"This is the coolest thing we do," said Rotary member and past president Linda Hodge, who was all business as she handed out instructions.

Her husband Bob was on delivery duty, and as he waited for his vehicle to be filled, he said his involvement was all about doing something extra.

"Most people think of the holiday season as traditionally a time where everyone should do

extra – this is our extra," he said.

Deanna Bouchard and her daughter Lena were ready and willing to personally deliver as many boxes – taking as many trips – as necessary to get the job done.

"I just think it's important to give back," Bouchard said while she waited for her car to be filled for their second trip. "We'll keep going until all the boxes are delivered."

The deliveries started around 4 p.m., and while originally Marvin said it would take until about 7:30-8 p.m. for them to finish, she revised that number to 8:30-9 p.m., after some Rotary members failed to show up. On Wednesday, she confirmed that while a few more members ended up joining, the rounds were completed about 8:45 p.m.



"It's a lot of work and ends up being challenging at the time," Marvin said Wednesday. She'd admitted the presence of fewer members was "discouraging."

"But when you're done, you end up having such a good feeling about what you've done," she added.

"It's the instant satisfaction from helping – the gratitude," Rotarian Nancy Riella said Monday. "People respond so positively... it's humbling to do something like this," she said.

Liberty Bank employee Liz Wolcott was helping along with her boyfriend Seth Finley and felt similarly.

"It's nice to give back to people," she stated. "Not everyone can do it on their own. It takes a lot of time and money."

As they waited for cars to arrive, Monday's volunteers hung around and socialized. But as soon as the lights of the next vehicle shone through the windows of the firehouse bay, alerting someone to open the door and let them in, they immediately got to work; loading the boxes and handing out the addresses for families waiting on their goods. In the next instant, the car was pulling out the front door and heading off to deliver the warm Thanksgiving meal that many take for granted.

In a way, their actions were like a preemptive visit from Santa Claus, and the work of the Rotary Club and Liberty Bank to ensure local families had reason to celebrate yesterday, could be seen as an official start to the season of giving.

Art Show cont. from Front Page

cal high school with a passion for art rubbed elbows with people four times their senior, though with something in common: Kathy Berlin had taught many of them and developed their passion for art. Being able to teach aspiring artists of various ages, Bob said, was a talent that few possess – but Kathy did.

"When she passed, if you read her obituary online, you saw everyone talk about patience that she had," Bob said with pride. "It's a virtue she had and it showed with the kindness and care she showed to everyone."

The night was an emotional one for Bob Berlin, who knew he wanted to host an art show in memory of his wife but wasn't sure when. While looking at dates to hold it at The Art Alcove, which regularly hosts art-related events on Fridays, he saw something that he saw as "an omen."

Friday, Nov. 16, would have been Bob and Kathy's anniversary. "I'm thinking, 'what are the chances?'" Bob said with a laugh. "But [the event] was really nice. It meant a lot to me to be able to do this."

And it's clear, by the turnout and generosity of those in attendance, that Kathy Berlin meant a lot to her community, as well.



The late Kathy Berlin

Portland Tax Assessor Headed to Glastonbury

by Joshua Anusewicz

First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield confirmed this week that tax assessor Nicole Lintereur will be stepping down from her position to take over the same position – currently vacant – in Glastonbury.

"We're very proud of her," said Bransfield Tuesday of Lintereur's departure. "She'll be going to a much bigger town and I know she'll do a great job."

Lintereur's first day in Glastonbury is Monday, Nov. 26. She replaces David Valente, who retired from the position this summer.

Lintereur was the Portland's first full-time tax assessor, Bransfield said, when she was hired in 2007. Prior to working in Portland, Lintereur served as the tax assessor for the towns of Willington and Sprague. She is a graduate of Bryant University and is a certified Connecticut Municipal Assessor.

Lintereur was unavailable for comment this week.

Bransfield said that, prior to Lintereur's hiring, the position of tax assessor was a part-time position with "less responsibility" and not as much of a supervisory role. Since coming on

board, though, Bransfield said Lintereur has run a "well-managed office" and "done a great deal for the town," overseeing the town's annual Grand List and leading the community through its revaluation last year.

"It's not an easy job, but she always had a very good approach towards it," Bransfield said, adding that Lintereur took the job "seriously" but always had a good sense of humor when interacting with other Town Hall employees.

Having just gone through a revaluation with Portland, Lintereur will have no rest at her new position, as Glastonbury is currently undergoing its 2012 property revaluation.

The tax assessor role "is a challenging position to fill," Glastonbury Town Manager Richard Johnson said at a recent meeting of the Glastonbury Town Council. "I'm sure she will do very well."

Bransfield said that the town has already begun the search for a new tax assessor and has received several inquiries about the position, but no hiring date has been set as of now.

Glastonbury Citizen reporter Shawn R. Dagle contributed to this story.

New Hebron Ambulance Equipment to Be Easier on the Back

by Geeta Schrayter

As a result of the Nov. 15 Board of Selectmen meeting, the hope is that members of the Hebron Fire Department will suffer fewer back injuries – and patients will be easier to transport.

At the beginning of the meeting, those present witnessed a demonstration by Michigan-based Stryker EMS on its Power-LOAD cot fastener system. With Town Manager Andy Tierney playing the role of patient, it was shown how fire department personnel traditionally transport patients: by lifting the stretcher they're laying on up and onto the ambulance with their own strength. It was shared that can pose a problem when patients surpass a certain weight, and, as a result, there are instances where patients are dropped or emergency medical technicians (EMTs) are injured themselves – particularly in the back.

But with the Stryker Power-LOAD, which is outfitted to the town's ambulances and is compatible with the stretchers the fire department already uses, the stretchers hook on and are hydraulically lifted for easier loading. During the second part of the demonstration, the ease of use the equipment provided was shown with Tierney as patient again, as it easily lifted what he laughingly called "350 pounds of prime stock" onto the ambulance.

"The purpose of these units is to promote safe transport of patients and for the safety of our members," Fire Chief Fred Speno wrote in a memo.

The cost of outfitting the town's two ambulances with the Power-LOAD system was negotiated to \$40,503.71, plus a \$3,000 fee to install the two systems, Speno said.

Selectman Mark Stuart said it was important to note this was "an anticipated purchase," as the Power-LOAD systems were set to be in-

cluded in the fire department's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) list for 2015-16. Speno said purchasing the equipment now, as opposed to waiting, would allow for a "substantial savings." The negotiated price is a \$13,878 savings over the system's list price of \$27,191 each.

Finance Director Elaine Griffin explained there was money to cover the cost of the equipment in a fund that had been set up and used for two years, from 2006-2008. In a recent memo she explained a special EMS fund (023) had been established due to an issue regarding the ambulance expense and revenue collection. Griffin said that while the EMS department expense has been "continuously overspent," there has been argument that the ambulance revenue collection has exceeded that overall expense.

"This is, in fact, true," she said of the argument. "However, as you are aware, the desired end result in municipal budgeting is that revenue and expense should equal at the end of the day."

Griffin furthered the decision was made to establish the new fund, and the department's expense and expected revenue were removed from the General Fund budget and placed into the new 023 fund. This went on for two years, until the expense and revenue process returned to the General Fund in the 2008-2009 fiscal year.

However, Griffin noted since the ambulance revenue collection "does indeed exceed" the departmental expense, there was a surplus of funds in the 023 fund from its two years of operation amounting to \$47,281.28.

Griffin stated the fund has been reported and audited each year, and "this is by no means, 'found money,'" she said. "I must reiterate that

it is simply the surplus between the ambulance revenue collected and the expense of the EMS department for the two fiscal years in this separate fund."

Griffin went on to note that most departments in town, such as the town clerk's office and the transfer station, collect "some sort of departmental revenue that offsets some of their department expense."

Tierney said at the meeting that since Griffin felt the purchase of the Power-LOAD lifts would be "a great use of the money" in that account, the thought was "this was an initiative that should be entertained."

"Just out of the safety of our volunteers and EMS I think that's a great device, and a great device for the people that have to be lifted as well," said Board of Selectmen Chairman Jeff Watt.

The other selectmen apparently agreed, as they voted unanimously to waive the bid requirements and award to Stryker EMS, for the purchase of two Power-LOAD cot fastener systems, \$43,503.71 including the cost of installation. Stryker representative Michael Ruppert said "conservatively" the new equipment is expected to be operational in three months.

* * *

In addition, Tierney shared at the meeting that the permit application by Salvatore Capital Partners LLC to build a CVS/pharmacy at 110 Main St. had been approved. The CVS will be located on the corner of Main Street and John Horton Boulevard, and will be the first business erected as part of the town's Village Green District.

Prior to the construction of any businesses, the town needed to install a traffic light at the intersection of the two roads. The installation

was approved by the state Department of Transportation last spring, and Tierney said at the meeting work could finally begin. It was "no easy feat," he stated.

Tierney said Tuesday installation had already begun – "they're out there installing it as we speak," he said – and weather permitting, they'll "hopefully" be done by the end of January.

As far as the CVS, Tierney said the construction company can start "any time now," with the anticipation that the drug store should wrap up construction "hopefully sometime in spring."

The CVS won't be totally new to Hebron; since March, the store has been located in the former Hebron Pharmacy next to Ted's IGA – across the street from the location of the future CVS. This location is expected to close once the new one opens.

* * *

On Monday, the town switched over to Willimantic Waste Paper Company, INC. to haul the town's municipal waste and recyclables. Tierney explained at the selectmen's meeting that the switch was set to happen. As part of the new contract which was approved last December, he added the town would start receiving rebates on a regular basis for each ton of recyclables received. The rebate amount is \$15 per ton.

Tierney said the Green Committee in town was making a push to increase the amount of recycling residents participated in, highlighting if residents "help us recycle more and get that rate up it will benefit [the town's] tax dollars."

* * *

The next Board of Selectmen meeting is scheduled for Thursday, Dec. 6, at 7:30 p.m., in the Hebron Town Office Building.

RHAM School Climate Survey Results 'Overwhelmingly Positive'

by Geeta Schrayter

While there are areas to improve, the results of a survey about the climate at RHAM Middle School were "overwhelmingly positive," Middle School Assistant Principal Carri-Ann Bell told the Board of Education at its meeting Monday.

The surveys were completed anonymously in October by the majority of students at the school.

According to the survey, 95.3 percent of students said they feel like they belong at RHAM Middle School, while 88.2 percent said they considered school fun. In terms of their dealings with their classmates, 85.8 percent of survey responders said they felt other students were friendly, and 91.8 percent said they felt their peers treated them fairly. Ninety-four percent of students said they feel physically safe at the school, while 94.1 percent said they feel successful.

The students also gave high marks to the adults at RHAM, with 89.6 percent saying they feel adults at the school treat them fairly, 93.5 percent saying they feel adults at the school care about them, and 98.3 percent indicating Bell and Principal Mike Seroussi treat them with respect. Lastly, 89.8 percent of students said they feel teachers are understanding when they have a personal problem.

As far as areas for improvement, Bell explained 37 percent of students said they'd seen their peers "treated unfairly, picked on, teased, harassed or verbally abused in the past month," and another 13.6 percent indicated they'd been treated in the same manner more than once in the last month.

As for why their peers had been treated unfairly by their schoolmates, 158 students felt physical appearance was the main cause, followed by 91 students who felt academic achievement was the cause, 75 students who went with disability, 55 students who went with "other" (a category that included things such as not wearing makeup, being unpopular and a student's height or weight), 54 who selected sexual orientation, and 44 who went with race.

Meanwhile, 53 students who said *they'd* been treated unfairly said it was due to physical appearance, followed by 40 who chose "other," 25 who went with academic achievement and four who went with race.

Although the majority of students said that the school is safe, there were those who felt otherwise, and they said hallways, the bus and locker rooms were the areas where most of the "mean-spirited behavior" occurs.

Moving forward, Bell said the next step is to review the survey results with staff and members of RHAM's School Climate Committee – which is composed of faculty, administration and at least one parent – and discuss how to address some of the areas that need improvement.

"I think we've done pretty good," she said. "Overall, kids enjoy coming to school."

Bell also said the school was looking to garner insight from parents in the community. Currently, a link to the Parent School Climate Assessment Survey, which was developed by the state, is available on the school website, which is accessible by clicking on "schools" at hamms.reg8.k12.ct.us. Forty-eight parents had

participated as of Monday night, but Bell said "we would like more."

In addition to the survey results, presentations were also given at the meeting on the "One Book, One School" Initiative that's in place at the middle school, as well as the "Power of Words" program.

In a handout distributed during the meeting, it was explained "One Book, One School" is a program that focuses on creating a positive school climate "through a common denominator within the school and the community" in the form of a book.

As part of this year's English curriculum, students in both seventh and eighth grade read *Schooled* by Gordon Korman. The story, set during the 1960s, is of a young boy who is tossed into public middle school after being home-schooled by his grandmother in an isolated community. Using the book to set the stage, the school focused on the idea of positivity and acceptance and held a variety of events surrounding the book to help foster community. These events included trivia contests, word games and puzzles at the library during Teen Read Week, the creation of Andy Warhol self-portraits in art classes and learning songs from the '60s during music classes. In addition, there will be school-wide activities and a culminating event – such as a '60s-themed dance – in the spring.

Over at the high school, Principal Scott Leslie explained there was also a program in place to help with school climate, called the "Power of Words." The program is an offshoot of the broader "Names Can Really Hurt Us" program

conducted by the Anti-Defamation League that allows students "open, honest and relevant exploration about diversity and bias in their school communities."

After two years of the original program, Leslie said it became so popular that the league could no longer guarantee dates for the assembly. But they were so impressed with how the school had implemented the program that they gave them permission to create their own version. Hence, the "Power of Words" was born.

AHM Youth and Family Services School Social Worker Bevin Perry said the "Power of Words" has grown into "an incredible program" that's near and dear to her heart. It includes videos made by RHAM students, and a panel of juniors and seniors who go through seven hours of mandatory training to then lead discussions, provide support and help eliminate bullying at the school, with the "real goal," said Perry, of stopping "all mean-spirited behavior."

Students on the panel – of which there are around 70 – also share stories of their personal encounters with bullying at a presentation to the sophomore class. At Monday's meeting, two student participants shared their stories to the board. One was about the bullying her best friend's younger sister experienced and the angst that caused her – including transferring to three different schools – while the other talked about the guilt he felt due to his past actions as a bully.

"I'm proud of these kids," said Perry, adding the program was coming "full-circle," with both those who have been bullied and the bullies coming forward.

Growing ‘Something Out of Nothing’ in Portland

by Joshua Anusewicz

The formation of a new and very unique business venture is underway in Portland, one that will repair a blighted property, create more commerce on the ever-expanding Main Street area, use renewable energy and create organic goods – all in one fell swoop!

If that sounds like the work of a superhero, Chris Cusack is certainly doing his part to fit the role.

“It’s almost too big,” said Cusack sheepishly, looking upon the property he purchased. “A lot of work needs to be done.”

When that work is done, the former Geato’s Greenhouse and Flower Shop on Middlesex Avenue, behind Brownstone Intermediate School, will be converted into *Alchemy Greenhouses*, a unique business that will specialize in “aquaponics” – a process that combines *aquaculture* to raise fish and other aquatic animals with *hydroponics*, the process of cultivating plants in water.

Cusack, a graduate of Central Connecticut State University, is a budding entrepreneur who developed an interest in sustainable plant growing from his first business venture, *Alchemy Grow Systems*, a website that sells a variety of equipment used for hydroponic plant growth. Looking for a way to supplement the business, Cusack purchased the greenhouses from the previous owner, Pamela Geato, in May of this year.

With an interest in studying aquaponics, Cusack, a native of Sherman, traveled to the University of the Virgin Islands, where he got to see firsthand how the systems work. Cusack explained that the Caribbean nations have been at the forefront of this technology, due to the lack of fresh water; aquaponics uses 90 percent less water than traditional farming, Cusack said.

Despite what seems like a complicated process, the science behind aquaponics is actually quite easy to grasp. The aquaponics system works on a large, cycling system of water. In one large tank that is elevated, fish live and develop, giving off waste and ammonia that is cycled into a lower tank; in the lower tank, plants float on Styrofoam with their roots in the water. The fish products that are cycled into the lower tank are filtered through the plants,

which break down the ammonia and use the nutrients through a process called “nitrification.”

With the water now filtered of its waste, the fresh water is then pumped back into the tank containing the fish, giving them clean water to live.

“Eventually, the system begins to run itself,” Cusack said. “It’s an organic and really natural process.” Cusack said he also plans to have chickens on the premises, with plans to use their waste as compost to provide energy to heat the water during colder months.

The result of the aquaponics system, Cusack said, will be a business that provides both fish – mostly white fish, like tilapia – and vegetables and herbs to local restaurants and stores, as well as interested locals. He added that, down the road, he hopes to provide educational opportunities for local students, as well.

The name of his business, *Alchemy*, fits what the business is attempting to do, Cusack said: creating “something out of nothing.” In ancient times, people would attempt to create gold and silver by combining mostly worthless metals, hoping to become rich or find the secret to eternal life. With aquaponics, the process is similar: life seemingly springing out of water, with nature doing all of the work.

What has taken some work, however, is renovating the nearly-blighted property, which itself fits the “alchemy” name quite nicely. The greenhouses, which were built in the 1930s, have been mostly neglected since the business shut down in 2010. Though most of the structural parts of the greenhouses and attached buildings are in fair shape, many of the windows and doors need to be replaced or repaired.

That work has kept Cusack busy, as he’s already torn down the storefront of Geato’s and begun restoring the front of the greenhouse to its original state, using old floorboards from an attic as siding and cleaning windows that haven’t been touched in years. Cusack has done almost all of the work on his own, with a few family and friends helping out here and there.

To show how committed he is to his business and engraining it in the community, Cusack has also received a special permit from the town to renovate one of the buildings on the property into an apartment, where he plans to live



The revitalization of the former Geato’s Greenhouse and Flower Shop is the feverish work of Chris Cusack, who plans to turn the property into *Alchemy Greenhouses*. The new business will specialize in aquaponics, a system that raises marine animals and plants and herbs. Cusack has already revamped the former storefront of the greenhouse, which is located at 12 Middlesex Ave.

to grow his business. The apartment will be attached to a new retail shop, where he plans to sell the items that he raises and grows.

Cusack said the opening of the business is still a ways off, however, as a lot more work needs to be done on the greenhouses. He said he expects to begin work on the greenhouses this winter, with hopes that he will be open for business next fall.

For now, those interested in stopping by or learning more about the business will have another reason to check out the property: starting today, Nov. 23, Cusack is also selling Christmas trees.

“It gives me a chance to make some money, but also a chance to get to know people in the

community and get the word out there,” Cusack said. Over 200 trees were delivered this Wednesday, he added. (An ad for the tree sales appears in the holiday section of this week’s issue, with coupons for \$5 off any tree six feet or taller and \$1 off any wreath.)

The Christmas tree sale should be a good start for Cusack, who has big plans and high hopes for his greenhouses, which should add a unique feature to Portland’s downtown area. And as a young entrepreneur, the idea of creating something out of nothing – whether it be a plant, a fish, or an entire business – appeals to him, as he explained in the way only a young guy could.

“It’s going to be pretty cool,” he said, smiling.

Anchor Lodge in East Hampton Pitches In for Victims of Sandy

by Joshua Anusewicz

With the effects of last year’s Tropical Storm Irene still fresh in our minds, many in Connecticut feared the worst as Hurricane Sandy bore down on the East Coast last month. And while some of the state’s coastal communities took another hard hit, the interior of the state got off mostly unscathed, with moderate power outages that were, fortunately, dealt with in a relatively timely fashion.

Our neighbors in the nearby states of New Jersey and New York, however, weren’t so fortunate, suffering catastrophic damage that will take months or years to repair and rebuild. As you read this today, families are still displaced from their homes, schools are closed, and, for many, the power remains out. Suffice to say, the situation is dire.

The situation has struck a chord with many who have reached out to help, including Anchor Lodge No. 112 in East Hampton. And though the Masons of the lodge were more than willing to help out those in need, their involvement, according to member Michael Allstadt, came about rather “accidentally.”

It all started with Allstadt, who has lived in East Hampton since 2006 but is a native of Amityville, N.Y., on Long Island, a community that was hit hard by Hurricane Sandy. In speaking with friends and family still in Amityville, Allstadt found out just how bad the damage was and began gathering goods to donate to those he knew.

“They couldn’t even get gas to drive up here,” Allstadt recalled. While preparing the goods, Allstadt reached out to fellow Mason Richard Denno to see if the Anchor Lodge planned to help out. No, Denno thought, but it might be a good idea.

So within 48 hours, Allstadt said the Masons mobilized, reaching out to the community

on Facebook and through email to organize a collection for anything – food, clothes, cleaning supplies – that would benefit those in need. The collection was set for Sunday, Nov. 11, with nobody knowing just how well it would go.

A full 10-foot U-Haul trailer later, it’s safe to say it went pretty well.

“It was a big effort,” said Allstadt.

With the help of their Masonic brothers of Amityville Lodge No. 997, the trailer was driven down by Allstadt and fellow Anchor Lodge member Pete Proto the following day, where the local Masons were prepared to help unload. The items were then picked up by Toys of Hope, a local volunteer organization that assists needy and homeless children, which went door to door to deliver the goods to those affected by the storm.

“We are extremely grateful for the assistance of Anchor Lodge,” said Eleuterio “Junior” Rolon, the Worshipful Master of the Amityville Lodge, “as well as proud of the Masonic efforts of both lodges.”

Allstadt said the Amityville Masons “were very appreciative [of the donations] and quite a few came to help out.”

He added, however, that “one truckload only goes so far.” Seeing all of the damage and devastation in a place he calls home was difficult to see, and he realized that there is still much more work to do and more that everyone – anyone – could do to help.

“It’s pretty bad still,” Allstadt said of the situation of many on Long Island. “People have been focused on New Jersey and New York City, and they did sustain a lot of damage. But Long Island seems left out, and they’ve suffered tremendous damage.”

Allstadt said FEMA and the Red Cross have made efforts to aid in the recovery, but that it’s currently “not enough.” He emphasized the



With the help of Anchor Lodge members, from left, Peter Proto, Michael Allstadt, Jean Maheu and David Mosher, an entire 10-foot U-Haul trailer was filled with goods that were donated to victims of Hurricane Sandy in Amityville, N.Y.

need for cleaning supplies to help remove dirt, grime, and mold from homes, as well as the need for physical help in the form of laborers – electricians, plumbers, carpenters – that would help remove debris and rebuild homes and buildings.

“I know that any help is appreciated,” he added.

With the success of a small collection in the

heart of Connecticut, it’s certainly possible to imagine other communities and local organizations reaching out in a similar way to those in need. Allstadt said he hopes that other Masonic lodges will follow suit and that other towns that escaped the storm mostly unscathed will join the efforts, because all it takes is an idea, an email and a few hours of collecting to make a difference.

Concerns Expressed About WJJMS/Senior Center Project

by Melissa Roberto

The building committee behind the William J. Johnston Middle School/Community Center/Colchester Senior Center project provided details about the plan and answered questions in a public information session held last Thursday, Nov. 15.

And while previous feedback on the project has been mostly positive, last week's meeting featured concerns voiced by a handful of residents.

Thursday's presentation, which was attended by about two dozen residents, followed a pattern of presentations made by the building committee to inform Colchester citizens about the project. The board has held five open houses within the four Colchester public schools, informed attendees of the 57 Fest and Pumpkin 'n Pooches, and more recently, spoke to senior citizens at the senior center about the project last Tuesday.

The project would combine the middle school, senior center and youth center in one building, which would allow for expanded programs. Currently the youth center is located across from Town Hall on Norwich Avenue while the senior center is housed in a rented building elsewhere on Norwich Avenue.

During the presentation, building committee chairman Thomas Tyler said the town can expect construction on the middle school regardless of whether this project is approved or not. He referred to WJJMS as the town's "crown jewel," as it is the only Colchester school that has not yet undergone renovations.

Tyler also communicated that the senior center and youth center both do not fully meet the needs of seniors and youth of the town.

The project plan includes a renovation of the existing middle school and new additions. The existing building would house the sixth grade in the western wing and the new senior center would be located in the former cafeteria wing. The senior center would include a variety of services: a bistro/café, gift shop, lounge, counseling space, library, health room, hair salon, fitness room, offices, restroom and storage. It would also take advantage of the existing kitchen, cafeteria, classrooms and loading dock.

The existing building would also house a community center, which would include the Parks and Recreation, Social Services, and Youth Services Departments. The Parks and Recreation Department would use the existing gym and the Youth Services Department would include a game room, counseling room, technology room, lounge and library.

The new three-story addition would include both seventh- and eighth-grades on the second and third floor. General facilities including offices, conference rooms and a dining/workroom will take place on the first floor of the addition as well as a new kitchen and cafeteria.

Construction for the project includes the removal of the 1954 eighth-grade wing and new parking lots for WJJMS and the senior center will be added. The senior center and middle school would also have separate entrances.

Colchester resident Alphonse Letendre said he was concerned about the school's traffic interfering with senior citizen drivers.

"I don't think it's a good place to have our older drivers come to during the mass chaos that happens in the morning and in the afternoon," he said. He said he felt the traffic could potentially turn senior citizens away from going to the senior center.

Building committee member Irene Malsbenden, a senior citizen and a retired WJJMS teacher of 27 and a half years, said she is familiar with the school's traffic patterns. Malsbenden explained that the school is busiest in the morning at 7 a.m., which is before the morning activities at the senior center begin. She also said a "significant number" of seniors leave the senior center between 1-2 p.m., and also mentioned that the school buses do not return to WJJMS until 2:15 p.m., "so by the time the buses are rolling again the vast majority of the seniors are away."

Malsbenden added that the seniors "are being given a private entrance and they will be able to have their own private parking."

Another concerned resident, Jim Kelly, was not impressed by the parking plans.

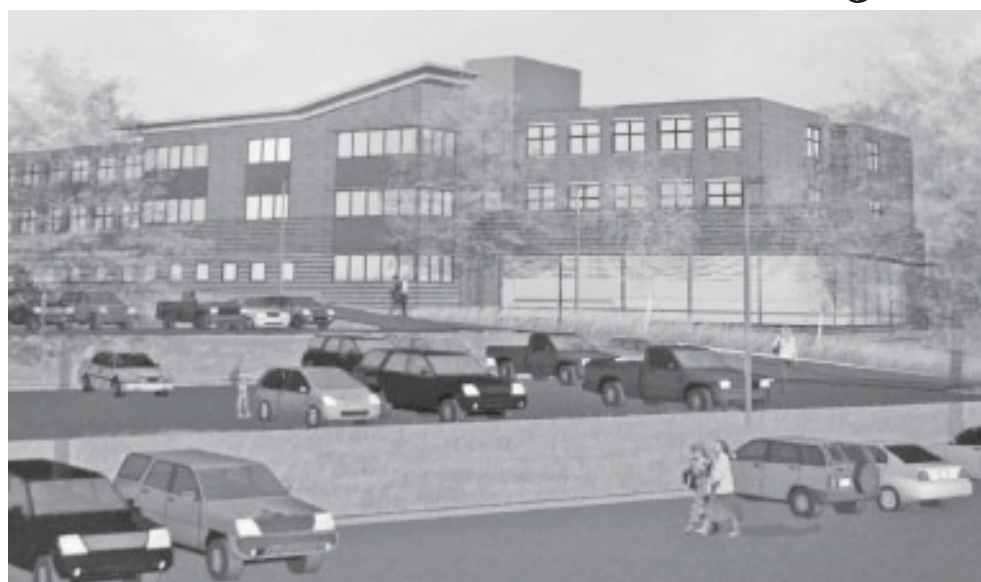
"The bulk of the parking spaces are a fairly decent walk to get to the senior center," he said. "I was surprised to see that."

The building committee ensured the public that the senior parking lot will be level, a concern that was previously brought to the committee.

In addition, Tyler explained that the locations for the bus and student drop-offs are currently in the same location. "This design will facilitate a separate entrance for student drop-off and bus drop-off, creating a much better safety atmosphere," he said.

While Kelly is not a senior yet – he added he will be in the future, though – he said that if he were, and were going to the town senior center, "I would just assume that [it would be] free-standing and someplace else."

Malsbenden told the public that at the info



This architectural drawing shows the proposed three-story addition of WJJMS.

session held at the senior center last Tuesday, seniors offered "generally favorable responses" to the project.

"Even those seniors who have preferred a standalone senior center are beginning to become aware of the fact that this is very, very close to the concept and it also provides us with enormous amounts of space that we probably wouldn't be able to duplicate most anywhere else," she stated.

The proposed senior center is about 12,000 square feet, compared to the current 3,500-square-foot facility.

Malsbenden added that the proposed senior center, with the exception of one hall, is a standalone building.

Still, though, not everyone was pleased. Letendre called the projected senior center as a "hand-me down structure," where senior citizens are being put "out of sight."

But Board of Education Chairman Ron Goldstein said he viewed this project as the opposite, "because what we're developing here is a school and community where the seniors are with other members all in one community center, as opposed to being off in a separate building somewhere else."

Building committee member Paul Picard stressed how much time the committee took to come up with the site plan and details. "I don't want anybody sitting here to think that we haven't put a lot of thought into what you see up there, because we have," he said.

Following the information session was a tour of the school, led by WJJMS Principal Chris Bennett, Assistant Principal Jennifer Olsen and building committee member Joe Ruiz. The tour presented attendees with a variety of building deficiencies: uncontrolled heating, leaks in roof, carpeting/flooring in need of replacement, few working clocks, hallways and classrooms in need of new paint, inadequate lighting, cracks in masonry, corroded and rusted doors, a broken furnace and rusted and broken windows.

The tour also showed residents where the community center and senior center would be located.

After the information session, building committee member Joe Ruiz was pleased with the turnout.

"I think people shared a lot of good information with us, things that we were able to answer and other things we will talk about further," he said. "I think overall it was pretty good. I was glad to see more people show up than we expected."

Tyler explained that the next steps in the planning process are to take resident concerns into account, and then go to the Board of Selectmen for approval. If the selectmen okay the project, it would then go to town referendum. No cost estimates have been added to the project thus far.

The next building committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, Nov. 29, at 7 p.m. at the WJJMS Media Center.

Marlborough School Board Gets Update on Common Core Standards

by Melissa Roberto

Marlborough Elementary School staff members updated the Board of Education at its meeting last Thursday, Nov. 15, on steps the school has taken to comply with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in Connecticut.

In July 2010, the state Board of Education voted to adopt CCSS, which are new national academic standards in language arts and mathematics that establish the content that should be taught in Connecticut public schools for Grades K-12. The goal of CCSS is intended to provide a more rigorous curriculum to better prepare students for higher learning.

Marlborough, like all of the Connecticut public school systems, has three years to adjust the curriculum at each grade level to match the standards that the national group has put together. The new curriculums for language arts and mathematics are expected to be fully implemented for the 2013-14 school year.

Lead curriculum specialists Kris Friend and Patti Hahn of MES discussed the progress of

teachers that have started to align their curriculums with the national standards. The two supplied a PowerPoint presentation to show a variety of components for the new language arts curriculum: a balance of literature and informational texts, emphasis on argument and informative/explanatory writing, inclusion of formal and informal talk and academic and domain-specific vocabulary. It further explained that MES teachers are completing the components with detailed lesson plans with the help of "multiple resources" while also applying increased rigor and assessments. The presentation also included an aim for the mathematics portion of the curriculum: the mastery of computation of whole numbers, fractions and decimals expected by the end of the fifth grade.

According to Principal Scott Nierendorf, MES teachers have spent over 35 hours since last year working on the new curriculum units and some of that time took place last summer.

"Our urgency and our concern with this, along with every public school district in Connecticut, is finding the time for teachers to work on this development and to make sure teachers are confident in the new subjects they will teach," said Nierendorf.

The CCSS also include a change in standardized testing in Connecticut. The new standardized test for elementary students, the Smarter Balanced Assessment, will replace the Connecticut Mastery Test.

* * *

The board also recognized two students that each received a CT Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS) award. The awards went to students Erin Bowen and Julian Prieto. Each year the award is given to two sixth-grade students. The criteria used to identify the recipients is based on the students' roles in community service, service to others, academic performance and leadership in the school and community.

The meeting also included an election of officers, which resulted in the top two positions on the board switching seats. Betty O'Brien, who has been chairwoman for the past three years, was elected vice chair, while Ruth Kelly, who has been vice chair for two years, was elected to succeed O'Brien as chair.

"I am very appreciative that she is willing to be chair of the Board of Education and know she will do an excellent job," O'Brien said of Kelly.

O'Brien said she and Kelly will make a "very good" team. Kelly said she is "looking forward to what the year will bring."

Louise Concodello was re-elected Board of Education secretary, marking her 15th consecutive year in the role.

The elected positions go into effect immediately and last for one year.

The next Board of Education meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, Dec. 20, at 7 p.m. at MES, located at 25 School Dr.

Marlborough Resident Opens New Hair Salon

by Melissa Roberto

Marlborough resident Kim Reale has opened her own hair salon, the aptly-named Reale Hair. The salon, located at 31B N. Main St., aims to offer a wide spectrum of hair services, from subtle looks to edgy, modern styles.

Reale said she wanted to provide her clients with a relaxing experience while getting their hair done. When customers walk into Reale Hair, they are welcomed with soothing music, coffee or tea, and what Reale described as a place “where clients can say ‘ah’” when sitting in her chair. The warm brown and blue accents in her facility offer a calm atmosphere that Reale explained she designed to look like a person’s living room.

Reale opened the salon on Oct. 9 and is currently the only hairdresser at the facility.

Prior to entering the hairdressing world, Reale worked at Traveler’s Insurance in Hartford for 10 years before deciding that she wanted a career change to something more flexible. Reale had heard suggestions her entire life about becoming a hairdresser. She said she’s always been known by her friends and family for changing her hairstyles. Whether it is the color or cut, she is always experimenting on herself.

Still, entering the hairdressing world wasn’t something she truly considered for herself until 2004, at the age of 32, as she was sitting at her desk at Traveler’s.

“I thought, why not?” said Reale. “I didn’t feel fulfilled and was exhausted when I came home at night.”

In November 2004, Reale began hairdressing school at Nirvana Salon Academy in Wethersfield. It took her 11 and a half months to earn her hairdresser/cosmetician license. For six years, Reale worked at Sundance Salon in Glastonbury until she realized she wanted to branch out on her own. She rented out a chair at the Tré Lynn Salon on the Silas Deane Highway in Wethersfield, serving her own clients within that facility for a year and three months.

Opening her own salon was another goal she wanted to accomplish.

“I knew what I wanted to provide my clients,” she said. “I just needed the space to provide it in.”

Reale said she chose Marlborough because

she lives in town, and also because it’s not a place that has a salon “every 10 feet.”

“I feel like its very quiet and peaceful in here and that’s how I feel about Marlborough so I feel like it fits good here,” said Reale. The flexibility of her hours also gives her time to spend with her husband Jim and 6-year-old daughter Sophie.

As a first-time business owner, Reale said she enjoys being able to make her own decisions. “It’s me running it, it’s me providing the customer service and I know it’s going to be a relaxing environment,” she said.

Reale added that the most important part of her business is establishing a “great” relationship with her clients and listening to them. “I always try to find that balance between accommodating a client and what they want but then offering my professional opinion,” she said.

As a self-proclaimed “people person,” Reale said the relationship between herself and her clients is “intimate.” “I get to know them and be friends with them,” she said.

Reale currently has between 90 and 100 clients, most of which stem from her Sundance and Tre Lynn days. The majority of the clients are from Marlborough and surrounding towns such as Glastonbury, East Hartford, East Hampton and Hebron, so she believes locating her new salon in Marlborough was convenient for her clients too.

Since her opening in early October, Reale said she has already received 10 new clients; she said she’s averaging “two to three new clients” per week.

Reale explained that doing a person’s hair is similar to “painting a canvas.” She provides a range of hair services including haircuts, styling, coloring for grey coverage, coloring for artistic expression, and razor cuts. She services children, women and men but a majority of her clients are women. Reale said she believes she is best at coloring and soft subtle dimension. Additional services include deep conditioning treatments, keratin protein replenishments and facial waxing.

There is also a room in her facility for an additional hairdresser or manicurist if Reale wishes to hire in the future but she said that is dependent on how busy she becomes.

Reale explained that as a hairdresser she



Whether you’re looking for a standard haircut, some styling or a whole new look, you can find it at Reale Hair, a new salon owned by Marlborough resident Kim Reale, who has been a hairdresser for the last eight years.

views her work as a passion. She said her career change has given her an opportunity to be creative, work different hours and leaves her with energy to spend time with her family. “I feel like I’m home and that I’m in the right spot and did the right thing,” she said.

While Reale Hair has been open since last month, it didn’t have its official “grand opening” until last Saturday, Nov. 18, as part of a larger celebration of the openings of the salon’s neighboring businesses, A Therapeutic Touch, Ancient Whispers, The Facial Corner and Associates in Hypnosis. The entire facility of 31 and 33 N. Main St. is full of health, beauty and wellness businesses.

During the grand opening, Reale provided customers with free consultations about their hair. She is also currently offering a 20 percent discount to all new clients.

Reale said she is “hopeful for what the future is going to bring” to her new business in Marlborough.

“I’m definitely thrilled to be out here in Marlborough,” she said, “and servicing a community where I think there’s a need, and I love the people here.”

Readers that would like to find out more information about Reale Hair can call 860-365-5463 or check out realehair.com.

Marlborough Info Session Slated for Sewer Expansion Project

by Melissa Roberto

The Board of Selectmen Tuesday briefly discussed the next steps in the process of the Stage Harbor Healthcare Center/Town Sewer Expansion Project.

The project includes the town extending its sewer lines to meet the new Healthcare Center sewer pump at the corner of Park and Cheney roads, which will continue up Cheney Road, Beverly Lane and North Main Street.

Town Planner Peter Hughes attended the meeting and said there will be a “dual-purpose meeting” on Wednesday, Dec. 12; it will be a public hearing for the 22 people whose properties are impacted by the project’s construction, as well as an information session for the gen-

eral public, which will include a PowerPoint presentation and an explanation of the design by engineering firm Weston and Samson.

The selectmen hope to put the project to bid in mid- to late-January, at which point the town should know “the real number,” Hughes said..

He added that bids are currently coming in 25-35 percent under the estimate of the engineer.

“It’s the right time to bid,” Hughes said. “You’re going to get the best price you can.”

Also at the meeting, the selectmen pointed out three grants awarded to Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) by the Of-

fice of Policy and Management, which the board members expressed their support of. One grant Gaudinski said would be “very beneficial” was the Human Resources Online Clearinghouse and Templates grant, which is estimated at \$50,000. This would establish an online clearinghouse to post human resources documents and templates.

“I think that would be very beneficial to a town of our size,” stated Gaudinski, adding that the town does not have an HR department.

The second grant the board was interested in was the Call Handling and Response Triage grant estimated at \$150,000 which would be similar to a web-based emergency operations center. It would include a logging management system for local needs. For example, the town could more easily report downed trees during the time of an emergency.

The selectmen also agreed that the Regional Mutual Disaster Recovery grant estimated at \$80,000 would help the town in the state of an emergency because it enables towns to recover from a disaster with back-up functions at another town or regional center. Gaudinski said thought this was important for the town because

during Hurricane Sandy there was only one operating computer at the town’s EOC.

The Board of Selectmen also announced that the state Department of Public Health received approval concerning the Town Center Public Water System Expansion Project, which allows for testing of an adequate water source. The approval allows the Connecticut Water Company to draw up wells to see if there are adequate water sources in the town center. The project is a partnership between the town, the Connecticut Water Company and the town center property owners.

In addition, the selectmen authorized Gaudinski to award the lowest bid for the North Main Street Sidewalk project. However, before Gaudinski can approve the bid, she will first need to send the three lowest bids to the Department of Economic and Community Development. The three lowest bids are Saltmarsh Industries, Inc. with a base bid of \$116,000, GEG Construction, Inc. of \$133,994.50 and T & S Caminito Concrete, LLC of \$139,461.50.

The next Board of Selectmen meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, Dec. 4, at 7 p.m., at Town Hall, 25 N. Main St.

Local Business Sells Winning \$3 Million Lottery Ticket

by Melissa Roberto

Some may now refer to Kahn’s Dairy, located at 394 N. Main St., as a source of good luck after the convenience store sold the first top prize winning ticket in the “\$3,000,000 Riches” lottery game.

The \$30 instant game launched Sept. 17, and the winning ticket – which was claimed Nov. 15 by a Colchester resident who declined to be identified – was the first top prize awarded. There are now three remaining top \$3 million prizes left in the game.

Customers that buy a \$30 ticket will win if the numbers they reveal match the eight “winning numbers” initially stated on the ticket. If a winner reveals a “10X Win” symbol, they will win ten times the prize shown for that symbol and the same concept applies to the “30X Win” symbol.

Winners of the grand prize can select a \$3 million annuity, giving the winner a choice

of being paid \$150,000 annually over 20 years, or a cash lump sum value of \$2,307,300, which comes to \$1,575,896 after taxes. The game also has a total of 28 prizes of \$30,000 and only three have been claimed.

Connecticut Lottery announced that the odds of winning the top prize in this game are 1 in 875,000.

Any retailer that sells a top prize winning ticket in the “\$3,000,000 Riches” game receives a bonus check of \$30,000.

“I am very happy for the person that won,” Kahn’s Dairy owner Abdul Kahn said. “He is a regular customer and he is very happy.”

Kahn said he has previously sold winning tickets of \$10,000 but never one of such a high value. He has been a Connecticut Lottery retailer since 2001, and plans to continue selling lottery tickets.

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

I hope you all had a nice Thanksgiving. Sure, maybe you ate too much, and maybe you're still dealing with a turkey hangover and the only thing you've had the strength to do today is crawl to your mailbox to fetch this week's *Rivereast* ("So full," you say to yourself, "but... I need to know what that delightful Mike Thompson is writing about this week"), but hey, it only comes once a year.

In keeping with the theme of the week, here are some "Thanksgiving by the Numbers" facts I recently came across on the U.S. Census webpage:

- 4: Number of places in the United States named after the holiday's traditional main course. Turkey Creek, La., was the most populous in 2011, with 440 residents, followed by Turkey, Texas (424). With 295 residents, Turkey, N.C., just barely edges Turkey Creek, Ariz., which has 294 (though it should be noted the number for Turkey Creek comes from the 2010 census). There are also 11 townships around the country with Turkey in their names, including three in Kansas.

- 9: Number of places in the United States that are named Cranberry – or some spelling variation thereof (such as Cranbury, N.J.). Cranberry Township in Butler County, Pa., was the most populous of these places in 2010, with 28,251 residents. Interestingly, the next most-populous was another Cranberry Township in Pennsylvania, but this one was in Venango County. Its population was 6,647.

- 37: Number of places in the United States named Plymouth, as in Plymouth Rock, the landing site of the first Pilgrims. Of course, everyone around here knows of Plymouth, Mass., and it's actually the second-most-populous Plymouth. The first is Plymouth, Minn., which boasted 71,561 residents in 2011 (compared to the Bay State one's 56,767).

- 64,380: The number of grocery stores in the United States in 2010, which were no doubt hopping this week as Turkey Day approached. There were also 4,030 baked goods stores in the United States in 2010, and they too were likely busy, as lazy folks like me opted to just buy a pie to contribute to the Thanksgiving table rather than make one.

- \$12.1 million: The value of U.S. imports of live turkeys from January through July of 2012, with 99.8 percent of them coming from Canada. (Yes, your turkey may have been a Canadian; I hope it was good anyway.)

- 254 million: The number of turkeys expected to be raised in the United States in 2012, up 2 percent from the number raised during 2011. (So maybe your turkey wasn't Canadian after all; still, if you want to have a Molson while you feast on the leftovers, be my guest.)

- 768 million pounds: The forecast for U.S. cranberry production in 2012. Wisconsin is estimated to lead all states in the production of cranberries, with 450 million pounds, followed by Massachusetts (estimated at 210 million).

- 2.7 billion pounds: The total weight of sweet potatoes produced by major sweet potato-making states in 2011. North Carolina churned out the most sweet potatoes – 1.3 billion.

- 1.1 billion pounds: Total production of pumpkins in the major pumpkin-producing states in 2011. (And yet, the pumpkin pie's got nothing on apple pie. This is a truth.) Illinois led the country with an estimated 520 million pounds of pumpkins.

- 672,370 tons: The 2012 contracted production of green beans in the United States (with nearly half, 309,010 tons, contributed by Wisconsin alone. Green bean casserole is

a favorite Thanksgiving side dish of mine, so I'm pleased to see the bean crop is doing so well.

* * *

The news last Friday of the Hostess company's imminent liquidation sent lots of folks – myself included – scrambling to their closest supermarket to stock up on Ho-Hos, Ding-Dongs, Yodels and, of course, Twinkies.

And while I can't speak for every last-minute Hostess-buyer out there, I know that most of the stuff I hadn't bought in years. (In fact, I didn't even come away with my favorite Hostess item – the beloved Twinkie. Oh, sure, the store had plenty of the unfortunate spinoff Chocolate Twinkies, but those things are just subpar. They're *Joanie Loves Chachi* to the original Twinkie's *Happy Days*; the less said about them the better.) At the end of the day, not only are a lot of the Hostess products really kinda bad for you – really, they're loaded with calories and fat – they're not even all that great. I mean, how many variations of "cream filling inside chocolate cake" can you have?

But the idea of them not existing just didn't seem right. Why? Nostalgia, really. The Hostess line is, obviously, geared toward children, and it's a line that myself, and I imagine a lot of others, grew up with. Not all the time; these were definitely more once-in-a-while purchases than a daily staple at the Thompson household. As calorie-laden as they are, this is a good thing – and it also probably reinforced the appeal of them. They were allowed to stay special treats. The fact that I largely stopped eating them after I grew up and my tastes changed and I started looking more at nutritional labels probably reinforced the kid-colored memories I have of them.

So, in that respect, I'll miss Hostess if it goes away. (And yes, that's an 'if.' As I write this Monday night, it appears the company and its workers are negotiating again.) Sure, Little Debbie will carry on its staid deliverance of rather ho-hum, cream-filled sugary snacks to the masses. And who knows, Twinkie brand and some of the more popular Hostess products might get sold to different companies (my prediction: The Hostess mini-muffins won't be one of them. I was in a couple different stores over the weekend, and even though the other items had been about cleaned out, plenty of boxes of mini-muffins remained. Simply put, they're not sweet enough to appeal to kids and they're kind of too, well, gross to appeal to adults), but it wouldn't be the same. There's a certain childhood-tinged appeal to the Hostess brand for me, and I'd be sad to see it go.

* * *

Considering how long folks were standing in line at my polling place in Manchester – there was actually an article about it a few days after Election Day; sounds like I'd have had a two-hour wait no matter when I went – I wouldn't be surprised if a few people lost some items. It seems like it's happened in Hebron, anyway. I got a notice from the Hebron town clerk's office Monday stating that a pair of prescription sunglasses and a lady's ring were found at Hebron Elementary School on Election Day.

Items may be claimed at the town clerk's office at Town Hall, 15 Gilead St., Hebron, during regular business hours, which are Monday-Wednesday, 8 a.m.-4 p.m.; Thursday, 8 a.m.-6 p.m.; and Friday, 8 a.m.-1 p.m. You will be asked to provide identification and a description of the item in order to get them. For more information, call Town Hall at 860-228-5971, ext. 124.

* * *

See you next week.

Hebron Police News

11/14: State Police said Edward Hodge, 29, of 485 King St., South Windsor, was traveling south on Route 85 when Ross Dapsis, 41, of 219 Jagger Ln., crossed the double yellow center line and struck Hodge. Dapsis was transported to Hartford Hospital due to possible ankle injury and lacerations to the head. The accident is still under investigation, State Police said.

11/15: James Lomba, 40, of 162 Wall St., was charged with violation of a protective order, second-degree failure to appear and disorderly conduct, State Police said.

Marlborough Police News

11/13: State Police said James Reed, 51, of 142 Flood Rd. was stopped at a red light on Route 66 east in the left turn lane for the exit 13 on-ramp to Route 2 west when William Grant, 48, of 94 Jerry Daniels Rd. struck Reed from behind. Reed reported minor neck pain but denied medical attention, State Police said.

11/13: Piper Goehring, 48, of 8 Hockanum Rd. was charged with DUI and operating under a suspended license, State Police said.

11/13: State Police recovered a stolen vehicle that was parked on South Main Street. Police said the vehicle had been reported stolen out of Springfield, Mass. earlier in the day. No suspects were located with the vehicle and a thorough search of the area was conducted. Anyone with more information is asked to call State Police at 860-537-7500.

11/17: Francisco Falcon, 33, of 28 Andrew St., New Britain, was charged with DUI and speeding, State Police said.

East Hampton Police News

11/9: James C. Shaw, 28, of 16 Barbara Ave., was arrested for failure to appear, East Hampton Police said.

11/9: Michael Eric Gioielli, 25, of 4 Summit St., second floor, was arrested for carrying a firearm while under the influence, possession of narcotics, possession of narcotics within 1500 feet of a school zone, police said, Mitchell David Anderson, 22, of 24 So. Main St., was arrested for possession of drug paraphernalia within 1500 feet of a school zone in the same incident, police added.

11/9: Alexa Marie Jerjies, 18, of 3 Curry Ln., was arrested for using a motor vehicle without the vehicle owner's permission, police said.

11/9: Mark G. Recor, 69, of 10 Sears Pl., was issued a summons for disobeying the signal of an officer, interfering with an officer and failure to renew registration, police said.

11/10: Melanie Talbot, 43, of 207 George St., Middletown was arrested for violating a protective order, police said.

Portland Police News

11/16: Robert Pimentel, 52, of 13 Williams Dr., Prospect, was charged with DUI and failure to drive in proper lane, Portland Police said.

11/17: Nicholas Dionne, 21, of 28 Paley Farm Rd., was charged with DUI and operating an unregistered motor vehicle, police said.

Obituaries

Colchester

William Murray Williams Sr.

William Murray Williams Sr., "Bill," 75, of Colchester, beloved husband of JoAnne (Gallerie) Williams of 48 years, passed away suddenly Monday, Nov. 19. Born June 16, 1937, in Ghent, N.Y., he was a son of the late James and Mary (Hamilton) Williams.

He served proudly with the U.S. Army between 1956 and 1959 in Okinawa, Japan. Bill worked as a construction manager for URS Greiner for over 35 years before his retirement in 2001. In his spare time, he was an avid golfer, fisherman, reader, carpenter and student of genealogy and history. His greatest joy was found in his family, to whom he was ever devoted.

Including his wife, he is survived by three children, James Williams and wife, Karen Schroeder of Syracuse, N.Y., Jennifer Williams and fiancé Joseph Fahy of Saratoga Springs, N.Y. and William Williams Jr. and wife Margot Heiligman of Santa Fe, N.M.; two grandchildren, Alexander and Elias; two siblings, Barbara Evans of No. Carolina and John Williams of Cohoes, N.Y.; and numerous extended family members and friends.

In addition to his parents, he was predeceased by three siblings, Floyd, Reba and Cora.

Friends may call 5-7 p.m. today, Nov. 23, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. A chapel service will be observed at 6:30 p.m. that evening. Graveside services with military honors will be observed at noon Saturday, Nov. 24, at Elmwood Hill Cemetery, 51 Belle Ave., Troy, N.Y.

The family requests that in lieu of flowers, donations in his memory be made to the Wounded Warrior Project, 4899 Belford Rd., Ste. 300, Jacksonville, FL 32256.

Portland

Anna M. Russo

Anna M. (St. Paul) Russo, 97, widow of Sebastian (Mickey) Russo passed away peacefully with surrounded by her loving family and staff of Laurel View Convalescent Home Sunday, Nov. 18. Anna was born in Middletown and grew up in Portland, married Sebastian Russo and moved to Middletown.

Most of her working life she was employed by Jerome Coats, where she met and made lifelong friends. She was a great cook, especially her famous pizza and Italian brown cookies which she proudly made for family gatherings. Among her favorite activities she and her sister enjoyed going to bingo and crocheting Afghans. Many baby blankets were donated to Connecting Children and Families of Middletown.

Anna leaves behind her son, Salvatore, and his wife Rose Russo; a daughter, Angela Russo; grandsons Carl and his wife Pam Russo, Gary Russo, granddaughter Debra and her husband Abel Picard and Anna's beloved great-grandsons Austin and Nevin Picard; also her friends Lucille and Barbara.

She is predeceased by her brothers Joseph, Louis, Mike, Angelo and James St. Paul and her sister Minnie (St. Paul) DiMauro.

Funeral services were held Wednesday, Nov. 21, from the D' Angelo Funeral Home, 22 S. Main St., followed by a Mass of Christian Burial that morning at St. Sebastian Church. Burial was in the family plot in Calvary Cemetery. Relatives and friends called at the funeral home Wednesday morning.

The family would like to thank the staff of Laurel View at Pilgrim Manor for their excellent and loving care of Anna as well as for their loving patience and care of her son Sal and daughter Angela.

Contributions to honor Anna's life may be made to Coven and Village of Cromwell (CVOC), Attn: Staff Christmas Fund, 52 Missionary Rd., Cromwell, CT 06416, or the Renovation Fund of St. Sebastian Church, 155 Washington St., Middletown, CT 06457.

Obituaries

Portland

Robert William Scully Sr.

Robert William Scully Sr., 86, of Portland, husband of Gertrude (Leonard) Scully of 62 years passed away peacefully Wednesday, Nov. 14.

He was born and raised in Middletown, where he played for the Staddle Hill and Middletown Giants baseball teams. He was a proud member of the United States Navy where he served on the U.S.S. Lubbock in the South Pacific during World War II. He raised his family in Portland where he resided for over 50 years and worked at Standard Knapp until his retirement. He was an avid golfer and sports fan. He especially enjoyed watching his children and grandchildren play. He enjoyed yard work and working around the home he built.

Besides his wife, he is survived by his four children, Karen (Scully) Boscarino and her husband Daniel of East Granby, William Patrick Scully of Rocky Hill, Robert William Scully Jr. and his wife Pamela of Higganum and Kathleen (Scully) Sundberg and her husband Jack of Mansfield; 12 grandchildren, Heather, Timothy and Alyssa Boscarino, Ellen, Leah, Cassandra, Ashley and Robert Scully, Lindsay, Kelley, Margaret, and Jack Sundberg.

He was predeceased by his sisters, Margaret Daly and Patricia Anderson, and by a brother, Richard Scully.

Funeral services were held Monday, Nov. 19, with a Mass at 11 a.m. at the Church of St. Mary, 51 Freestone Ave., Portland. Burial was in St. Mary Cemetery, Portland. Relatives and friends called Sunday, Nov. 18, at Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland.

Memorial donations may be made to the charity of the donor's choice. To send an online expression of sympathy, visit portlandmemorialfh.net.

Colchester

Edward Joseph Soltis

Edward Joseph Soltis, 87, of Colchester, died Friday, Nov. 16. He leaves his wife of 58 years, Agnes B. (Kosak) Soltis. Born Sept. 20, 1925, to Maria Marcella (Nadolski) and Michael Soltowski in Zloczow Tarnopole, Poland, he emigrated to Canada at the age of 12 and, later, to Elizabeth, NJ and finally settled in Connecticut.

Mr. Soltis became a U.S. citizen, served in the New Jersey National Guard, 119th Fighter Squadron, was an auxiliary police officer in New Britain, Hartford and Colchester for 22 years and obtained his high school diploma at the age of 51 from Hartford Adult High School in 1976.

He worked for 37 years at Pratt & Whitney Aircraft in East Hartford in machine repair, specializing in large, high precision machinery. Following retirement, he returned to work at Mohegan Sun Casino as a security guard for 10 years. He enjoyed sitting quietly on his deck observing nature, deer hunting and traveling to visit his children and grandchildren in Florida, Montana and Colorado.

Besides his parents, he is predeceased by his brother, Tadeusz Soltowski, who was killed in WWII in the Canadian Service (The Royal Canadian Regiment).

He is survived by his five children, Theresa Levesque of Canterbury, Diane Stowe and husband, Thomas of Hebron, Tedmond J. Soltis and wife, Susan of Kremmling, Colo., Linda Cloutier and husband Daniel of Venice, Fla., and Peter J. Soltis and partner Lisa Sallee of Englewood, Fla.; 10 grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

The memorial liturgy was celebrated Tuesday, Nov. 20, directly at St. Andrew Church, 128 Norwich Ave. Interment with military honors followed in the New St. Andrew Cemetery. There were no calling hours.

The family requests that in lieu of flowers, donations in his memory may be made to the Missionaries of the Poor, P.O. Box 29893, Atlanta, GA 30359, or to the Catholic charity of one's choice.

Care of arrangements has been entrusted to the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester.



East Hampton

Albert Flemke

Albert Flemke, 97, passed away Sunday, Nov. 18, at Cobalt Lodge, with his family at his side. He was predeceased by his wife of 61 years, Mary (Rankl) Flemke in December 2002.

Al was a self-taught mechanic and had worked at Jack's Garage in Colchester before operating his own garage in Westchester. He later became a local area builder. He built over 80 houses in the East Hampton, Hebron and Colchester area.

Albert was the fifth child born to Gustav and Mary (Schattle) Flemke on July 18, 1915, in Marlborough. He resided in Hebron until 1957, when he moved his family to a home he built in East Hampton.

He leaves behind his three daughters, Judith Flemke of East Hartford, Patricia Kissinger and her husband John of East Hampton and Jeanne Lantman of Arroyo Grande, Calif. He leaves his grandchildren John Kissinger of Madison, Wis., and Angela Booth and her husband Jeremiah of Nipomo, Calif., and their three children Ella, Benjamin and Kinsley, and many nieces and nephews.

He was the last surviving member of his family being predeceased by his five sisters, Lena, May, Emma, Louise, and Bertha and his four brothers, Fred, Ernest, Gus Jr. and Charles.

Together, Al's family provided him the help and comforts necessary to enable him to stay in his home until the last 10 days of his life.

The family will receive friends Sunday, Nov. 25, from 2-4 p.m., in the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton. Funeral services and burial will be private at the convenience of the family.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the East Hampton Ambulance Association, P.O. Box 144, East Hampton, CT 06424.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Andover

Kenneth Omar Carpenter

Kenneth Omar Carpenter, 70, of 22 Birch Dr., Andover, died peacefully Sunday, Nov. 18, under the loving care of his family. He was born in Rockville Sept. 15, 1942, to the late Omar Carpenter and is survived by his mother Doris (Tellier) Carpenter of Douglas Manor, Windham

He graduated Windham High School in 1960 and became a member of the United States Navy's SMC-8 "A" Company, where he deployed to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and honorably discharged Feb. 28, 1966.

Ken was a factory worker most of his life, including Brand Rex, Kendalls and Lightolier. Ken was an avid bass fisherman and was a lifetime member of B.A.S.S. (Bass Anglers Sportsman Society). He also had a passion with birds and was a member of the R.I.B.S. (Rhode Island Budgerigar Society).

He enjoyed countless hours sharing his passion with his beloved grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

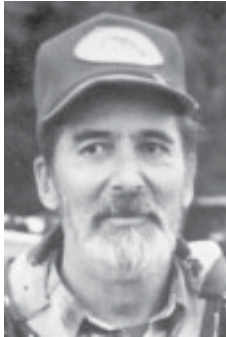
A graveside military service will be at St. Joseph's Cemetery on Cemetery Road in Willimantic today, Nov. 23, at 1 p.m.

He leaves behind two daughters, Julie Nolan and her husband Sergeant Major John Nolan of Pawtucket, R.I., and Karen Madore and her husband Patrick (Pat) Madore, Jr. of Andover.

He is also survived by eight grandchildren; Adam Durocher Sr., Brian, Jordan and Michelle Wheeler, Loree-El Carpenter, Patrick Madore III, Jessica Armand and Justin Nolan and five great-grandchildren; Adam Jr, Alex, Emma, Christian and Kenny

Kenneth leaves behind six brothers and sisters, Richard Carpenter of Mesa Arizona; Marie Ogazolek of Wakefield, R.I.; Gloria Carpenter of Danielson, Phillip Carpenter of Coventry, Robert Carpenter of Hahira, Ga., and Ronald Carpenter of London, Ohio, and several nieces and nephews.

In lieu of flowers, the family is requesting that donations be made to the Wounded Warrior Project, woundedwarriorproject.org.



East Hampton

Robert Spencer Wilcox

Robert Spencer Wilcox, 65, of East Hampton, beloved husband of Johanna (Carroll) Wilcox, died Saturday, Nov. 17, at Middlesex Hospital. Born May 15, 1947, in Putnam, he was the son of the late Stephen J. and Yvette (Dion) Wilcox.

Robert proudly served his country in the U.S. Army 1st Special Forces based in Okinawa during the Vietnam War. He had recently retired from United Technologies and Pratt & Whitney in East Hartford where he had worked as a draftsman since 1983. He volunteered to help out the East Hampton Little League as an umpire and grill master for the concession stand.

As Robert gave in life, he gave in death as a tissue donor. He will always be remembered for his devotion to family, his sunny disposition and his unique sense of humor. He was loved by all those who knew him and will be sorely missed.

Besides his wife Johanna he is survived by his three sons, Adam S. Wilcox of Glastonbury, Ian Wilcox and Andrew Wilcox of East Hampton; a brother, John Wilcox and his wife Lorraine of Old Lyme; a sister, Mary Sumner of Plainfield; and many nieces and nephews.

A memorial service will be held Saturday, Nov. 24, at noon in the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to either the American Diabetes Association, 2080 Silas Deane Highway, Rocky Hill, CT 06067 (donations.diabetes.org) or the Diabetes Action Research and Education Foundation (diabetesaction.org).

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Andover

Laura D. Freeman

Laura D. Freeman, 93, of Andover, formerly of Manchester, beloved wife of the late George C. Ecabert and the late Eugene W. Freeman, passed away Saturday, Nov. 17, at Manchester Memorial Hospital. Laura was born June 6, 1919, in Braintree, Vt., daughter of the late George and Delia (Thresher) Farrington. She had resided in Manchester for more than 60 years before moving to Andover in 2004.

Laura was employed by U & R Construction Company, Manchester for 49 years retiring as secretary in 2003. Laura was dedicated to serving the veterans and her country. While residing in Manchester, Laura was a 60-year member of South United Methodist Church, a life member of the VFW Auxiliary and a life member of the American Legion Auxiliary.

She was also past president of the VFW Auxiliary Manchester; past president of the State of Connecticut American Legion Auxiliary and served in many chairmanships in both organizations. She was also national hospital chairman for the VFW Eastern Division, a member of O.E.S. Temple Chapter 53 and volunteered for 10 years for the American Cancer Society in Manchester.

Mrs. Freeman is survived by a daughter, Priscilla Bronke of Andover, with whom she made her home; a stepson, Earle Ecabert and his wife, Nancy of Manchester; 10 grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren; and many nieces and nephews. Laura was also predeceased by two sons, Francis Hill and his wife, Betty and Randall Hill and his wife, Carol, a godson, Larry Pilver, a son-in-law, Victor Bronke, a sister, Mary LeDuc and a brother, Hugh Farrington.

Funeral services were Wednesday, Nov. 21, at Watkins Funeral Home, 142 East Center St., Manchester, with burial that day in East Cemetery, Manchester. Family and friends called Wednesday, Nov. 21, before the service, at the funeral home.

Memorial contributions may be made to: American Legion Auxiliary National Headquarters, Attn: Development Dept., 8945 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46260.

To leave a condolence message, visit holmes-watkinsfuneralhomes.com.

Colchester

Leo Francis Drag

Leo Francis Drag, formerly of Uncasville, died Sunday, Nov. 18, at Apple Rehab in Colchester. He was born July 28, 1915, in Norwich, the son of Casper Drag and Mary Gresiak Drag.

He served in the Civilian Conservation Corps, helping to develop the country's natural resources, and subsequently enlisted in the United States Navy in 1940. Mr. Drag proudly served his country during World War II and participated in the allied offensive of Iceland in 1941, and North Africa and Sicily in 1943. He served as a boatswain's mate aboard both a minesweeper, and a destroyer, the USS MacLeish, before receiving an honorable discharge in 1945.

Upon his discharge from the U.S. Navy, he pursued a career in retail food service as a manager for Safeway Stores in New York City. He later relocated his family to his hometown of Norwich where he worked in the meat department for Beit Brothers and the Yantic Grain before ultimately accepting a position with the First National Stores where he remained for 30 years.

He was a member of Saint John's Parish in Uncasville and the Montville Senior Citizens Center. He was also a lifetime member of the Benevolent Protective Order of Elks of the USA, Lodge 430 in Norwich, and the Montville Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Mr. Drag leaves behind a daughter, Regina Gray, three grandchildren, David Gray, Michael Gray and wife Courtney, and Christine Green and husband Richard; two great-granddaughters, Savannah and Lyndsey Gray; one great-grandson, Michael Gray, Jr.; one brother, Joseph Drag and wife Helen; three nieces, Karen Lysik, Carole Drong, Joanne Drag, and one nephew, Chester Drong.

He was predeceased by his wife of 52 years, Maria Drag; three brothers, Chester Drong, Charles Drag and Thaddeus Drag; and three sisters, Sister Mary Lucidia, Antoinette Russell and Helen Drong.

Calling hours were Wednesday, Nov. 21, at the Woyasz Funeral Home, 11 Jerome Rd., Uncasville, followed by a Mass of Christian Burial that morning at St. John Church, 22 Maple Ave., Montville. Burial, with military honors, was at Maplewood Cemetery in Norwich.

Memorial donations in his memory may be made to either St. John's Church or Apple Rehab - Colchester.

Portland

Estelle Arsenault

Estelle (Maher) Arsenault, 86, of Portland, beloved wife of the late Armand Arsenault, died Friday, Nov. 16, at home, after a short illness. Born in Portland, she was the daughter of the late Estelle (Guzewicz) Maher and William Maher of Portland.

She was a graduate of Portland High School (1943), St. Francis Hospital School of Nursing (1947), Holy Apostles College (1974), and the University of Hartford (1982). She was formerly employed by St. Francis Hospital (Hartford), The House of the Good Shepherd (Hartford), Cromwell Crest (Cromwell), Elmcrest Psychiatric Institute (Portland), and Connecticut Valley Hospital (Middletown), retiring from there in 1983 after 25 years of state service.

Estelle was an active and devoted member of the Church of St. Mary, Portland; she served as a Eucharistic minister, reader, past president of the Altar Guild, and was the foundress of the Bereavement Committee, from which many grieving parishioners benefited. She also served on the Ladies Guild at Holy Apostles College in Cromwell.

She is survived by two daughters, Suzanne Arsenault of Middletown, and Mary Arsenault of Portland and Ormond Beach, Fla., as well as her friend whom she viewed as her fourth daughter, Donna Brautigam, also of Ormond Beach, Fla. She also leaves to mourn her passing five siblings, Anna Bajorek of Cromwell, Katherine Jarzabek of Portland, Alice Cram and Evelyn Maher, both of Middletown, and William Maher Jr. of North Carolina; as well as two sisters-in-law, Hildegard Maher of North Carolina, Marilyn Arsenault of Enfield, and a brother-in-law, Raymond Arsenault of Texas, along with many nieces and nephews as well as her special friends of the Bereavement Committee.

Along with her husband, she was predeceased by her daughter Kathleen Proulx, her former son-in-law Jackie Durbin, and, most recently, her wonderful dog, Jamie.

Funeral services were held Wednesday, Nov. 21, from Biega Funeral Home, 3 Silver St., Middletown followed by a funeral liturgy that morning in St. Mary Church, Portland. Burial was in the State Veterans Cemetery. Friends called at the Biega Funeral Home Tuesday, Nov. 20.

In lieu of flowers, contributions in her name may be made to The Church of St. Mary, Portland; Holy Apostles College, Cromwell; or the Meriden Humane Society, Meriden.

To share memories or express condolences online, visit biegafuneralhome.com.