

RIVEREAST

# News Bulletin

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## Arrest Made in Murder of East Hampton Woman

by Joshua Anusewicz

East Hampton Police Monday made an arrest in last summer's murder of resident Jini Barnum, charging her then-boyfriend, Anthony Garofalo, with the crime.

Garofalo, 38, formerly of 23 Main St., Apt. 3, was charged with murder, first-degree strangulation, and tampering with physical evidence. Garofalo, who was being held for a parole violation he allegedly committed last fall, had his bail set at \$1 million, was not released, and is expected to appear in court to enter his plea on Wednesday, March 13, at 10 a.m. at Middletown Superior Court.

Garofalo is a convicted felon and registered sex offender, stemming from a 2001 incident where he kidnapped and sexually assaulted a deaf woman in Hartford. He spent eight years in prison and was released on parole in 2010.

Barnum, 30, was last seen July 28. She was reported missing by Garofalo the following day; he told police Barnum left the apartment the two shared after an argument between the couple and never returned home.

Searches for Barnum began in earnest, with local and state police combing the area along with volunteer groups, including members of the Middletown Eagles, a group that Barnum was associated with. After three weeks, East Hampton Police announced Barnum's disappearance had become a criminal case, and proceeded with a criminal investigation.

Barnum's remains were eventually located



Anthony Garofalo

in early September, when a woman walking her dog came across a partially-buried body on Windham Road in Glastonbury, a remote area located near Meshomasic State Forest. The state medical examiner determined that the body was that of Barnum, and that the cause of death was traumatic asphyxiation, or strangulation.

Barnum left behind an infant daughter, who is in the custody of Garofalo's family (Garofalo is the father), and a 7-year-old son with her ex-husband.

Sgt. Garritt Kelly, who was tabbed as the lead investigator in the case, stated Wednesday that, from the time she went missing, Garofalo's involvement in Barnum's disappearance was a major focus of the investigation.

According to an affidavit obtained from Middletown Superior Court, the investigation first focused on what occurred during the "argument" the night of Barnum's disappearance. The affidavit states that multiple residents in the apartment building that Garofalo and Barnum lived in reported "loud and unusual noises" coming from the couple's second floor apartment just before midnight. Though none of the residents called the police to report the noises, at least one resident reached out to his landlord to report what sounded like "some one bashing someones head against floor [sic]."

That same resident, the affidavit states, also told police that he heard what sounded like "thumping down the stairs" after the distur-

bance in the second-floor apartment.

The affidavit states that several calls had been made from Barnum's cell phone after midnight on July 29, including one to Garofalo and one to her ex-husband. Police stated that all of these calls went unanswered and they were unable to determine who made the calls from the phone.

Through Garofalo's parole officer, James Thurlow, Kelly was able to meet with Garofalo and search the apartment and his belongings. During that search, Kelly stated that a metal shovel and iron rake were found in the back of Garofalo's pickup truck and were caked with dirt.

According to the affidavit, Garofalo told Kelly that on the day of July 28, he had given Barnum some money to go meet with friends and she did not return home until 10:30 p.m. When she returned to the couple's Main Street residence, Garofalo told Kelly, she was drunk, and the two verbally argued until Barnum left the apartment with her phone and wallet at roughly 11 p.m.

Kelly stated that during the interview, he felt as though Garofalo was being "deceptive with his answers" about what had happened in the apartment. Garofalo eventually admitted that the two had been slamming doors and arguing in the apartment and that he had then dragged a "tote" containing dirty laundry down the stairs, accounting for the noises the neighbors had



Jini Barnum

heard.

Police then accused Garofalo of killing Barnum and placing her inside the tote, which he denied by stating, reportedly while tearing up, "The girl's not dead. I hope she's not dead. If she is, it's not by my hands or it didn't happen in my house."

Following the interview, Garofalo was placed in the custody of the Department of Corrections for "technical violations" related to the Barnum investigation.

Moderate progress was made in the investigation until Barnum's body was discovered on an area of Windham Road in

Glastonbury that is usually closed to traffic and locked with a padlock.

According to police, a friend of Garofalo's placed a phone call to Kelly the day after Barnum's body was discovered. The friend allegedly stated that he was "sick to [his] stomach" when he heard where the body was found, as he knew that Garofalo was familiar with the area from deer hunting, and that Garofalo had a key to the padlock on the gate.

The friend also alleged that Garofalo had sent him a letter last August from jail, which asked the friend if he could have someone "see her [Barnum] somewhere w/out cameras in a couple of days. Somebody who will swear they talked her + she said 'I'm Not Going Home' [sic]."

The affidavit also states that police interviewed a female that was friends with Barnum

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## Pair of RHAM Soccer Stars Make D1 Dreams

by Geeta Schrayter

The chilly weather and the fact that the calendar just flipped over to February makes the sunny days of June and that oh-so-important date for high school seniors – graduation – seem far off.

But two seniors at RHAM High School already have autumn on their minds, as they will soon be signing letters of intent to play Division I soccer at their respective colleges.

For both Brianna Byrne and Sydney Aldrich of Hebron, soccer is something they've played since they were little. Byrne said she started when she was 4, and while she also played softball, she found it boring compared to the competitiveness and teamwork of soccer.

Aldrich also began playing in "Kindersoccer," and her interest was heightened due to the fact her father played as well.

"It was something for him and me to do together," she said.

Like Byrne, Aldrich said she's played different sports over the years, but soccer always took the main stage.

And as Aldrich heads to the University of

Hartford and Byrne journeys to George Washington University in Washington D.C. to play on their Division I teams, that will only continue to hold true.

"I was very excited when I got accepted," said Byrne. "Honestly I didn't think I could get into that school."

In addition to GW, Byrne had thought about schools like Boston University and Northeastern. But the environment at GW, coupled with a positive meeting with the coaches and the team during a visit, set her heart on heading to the country's capital.

Similarly, Aldrich had thought about Bryant University, but when her uncle told her about UHart and the quality of their soccer program, her focus switched.

"I spent the day at the school with the team before a game against Yale [University] and I loved the team and the school and the coach," she said.

So with her sights on UHart, she waited for an acceptance, anxiously wondering if her grades would be sufficient.

"I was worried if my grades were good

enough," she said. "So once I finally got my acceptance it was a big relief."

With that worry out of the way, the girls can now focus on the remainder of their high school career, cherish their accomplishments, contemplate the things they'll miss and all they're looking forward to.

For both girls, the state championship game they played – and won – their sophomore year was mentioned as memorable, along with making All-State this year.

And as far as what they'll miss most about RHAM, Byrne and Aldrich both said it was their team.

"I'm going to miss the fact that I've known [my teammates] for so long," said Byrne. "We started playing together when we were about 9."

"I'll definitely miss high school soccer and the friends I've made through it," Aldrich said.

But a new team means the opportunity to forge new friendships – a fact both girls are well aware of.

"I'm looking forward to meeting new people

See Soccer Stars Page 2



Brianna Byrne and Sydney Aldrich

Health & Fitness Section Inside



**Jini Barnum's body was discovered in early September off of Windham Road, a remote area of Glastonbury located near the Meshomasic State Forest. The remains were found partially buried in a shallow grave by a local woman walking her dog.**

**Arrest Made cont. from Front Page**

and Garofalo. According to the female, she met with Garofalo two days after Barnum's disappearance at the Burger King in Portland. She reported that Garofalo was "frustrated and stressed" about Barnum being missing, and she accompanied him back to his apartment. When they returned to the apartment, the female alleged that Garofalo's attitude changed, and that he began drinking heavily and "hitting on her in a sexual way."

While in the apartment, the woman stated that she saw a black square woman's wallet on the counter in the kitchen, which she found out later from a search party that Barnum was supposed to be carrying with her when she went missing.

On Oct. 1, that wallet was reported found by a Department of Energy and Environment Protection (DEEP) park attendant at the Salmon River State Boat Launch in East Haddam. The woman who had reported seeing the wallet in Garofalo's apartment confirmed on Nov. 11 that this wallet was the same one she had seen in July, the affidavit states.

The affidavit also alleges that "extensive cell tower-testing and record-analyzing" determined that Garofalo's cell phone was used in close proximity to where Barnum's body was recovered shortly after the time the argument occurred at the couple's apartment.

Kelly said Wednesday that one of the biggest challenges of the investigation was placing together all of the information as it came in "piecemeal" and the case shifted from a missing person to a homicide.

"We had to make sure that we touched upon every aspect of his and her life, shore up all of

the information and tie up any loose ends," said Kelly. "It was a daunting task."

Kelly said police were immediately drawn to the details of the disagreement between Garofalo and Barnum on July 28, which Kelly called "a classic domestic violence homicide." "It was an argument gone bad," he added.

According to Kelly, more information is expected to come out in the case prior to the Garofalo's probable cause hearing, which Kelly said is generally waived to prevent evidence from the hearing from being used during a criminal case. Kelly added that in cases like this, it's more common for the two sides to "reach an agreement" than to proceed with a criminal trial.

"We'll see," Kelly said about the future of the case.

Glenn Delinsky, a trustee with the Middletown Eagles, said Thursday that Barnum was "a good friend" of his, and of many others with the organization. He said Monday's announcement of the arrest brought some "closure" to many in the group.

"When we did finally hear about Tony's [Garofalo] arrest, we were happy in the sense that it didn't turn into a cold case and the police really stuck with it," Delinsky said. "It's going to bring closure for us soon, we hope."

Delinsky said that members of the Eagles were declining to comment on any matters involving the case or their opinions, but he did share that Barnum's family is "very happy" that an arrest has been made in the case.

Members of Barnum's family did not respond to requests for comment this week.

**Soccer Stars cont. from Front Page**

and spending time with the team," added Aldrich. Byrne agreed, saying she was excited about "bonding" with her new teammates.

As the girls make the transition from high school seniors to college freshman, they said their goal will be to maintain their academics along with their athletics.

"I just want to be able to keep my grades up

in college and be able to balance that with soccer," Aldrich said. "I hope my hard work pays off and I'll be able to earn a starting position."

"I want to achieve on the field but also be able to keep my grades up," Byrne added.

And if the girls' success and dedication to soccer all these years is any indication, it's a safe bet they'll be able to do just that.

*From the Editor's Desk*

# Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

I saw this story on Monday and was, frankly, appalled.

There was a hearing that day in Hartford on gun control in the aftermath of December's horrific shooting in Newtown. The father of one of the victims spoke at the hearing and was heckled by gun-rights supporters.

Seriously. Gun advocates interrupted the father of a Newtown victim as he was speaking, to shout "Second Amendment!"

Neil Heslin, whose 6-year-old son Jesse was killed in the massacre, gave tearful testimony about losing his son, whom he called "my best friend," and then wondered aloud why anyone needs an assault-style weapon or high-capacity clips. Heslin said "Not one person can answer that question, or give —"

At that point he was interrupted by several of the gun supporters in attendance — about 1,500 people were at Monday's hearing, both for and against more gun control — who shouted "Second Amendment!" Heslin was visibly flustered — and the lawmakers running the meeting chastised the crowd for commenting during Heslin's remarks, and threatened to clear the room. But he continued with his comments, and said in response to the interrupters, "We're all entitled to our own opinion, and I respect their opinions and their thoughts, but I wish they'd respect mine, and give it a little thought, and realize it could've been their child that was in that school that day."

Heslin handled his interrupters well, even though they knew they were speaking out of turn. Heslin clearly wasn't done speaking. At least they didn't boo him, or throw things at him, but it was still incredibly rude, and I can't fathom of treating the poor man that way.

A friend of mine said it best after reading the story: "I think if we can agree on any terms of public discussion, 'Let the guy who just buried his 6-year-old finish speaking' should be among the first."

\* \* \*

On the lighter side, it looks like Twinkies will live on. *The Wall Street Journal* reported Tuesday that Hostess is in talks to sell the Twinkie brand and several of its other cake offerings — the paper, sadly, did not specify which other ones; I hope Sno Balls are included — to buyout firm Apollo Global Man-

agement LLC and C. Dean Metropoulos & Co., the makers of Pabst Blue Ribbon beer.

Yes; Pabst's and Twinkies. Together at last. Meanwhile, *WSJ* also reported McKee Food Corp., the Tennessee-based manufacturer of Little Debbie snack cakes, has submitted a bid to buy the Drake's line, which Hostess produced. In addition to its signature coffee cakes, Drake's also produced Funny Bones, Devil Dogs, Ring Dings and more. To be honest, while I'm glad Twinkies will live on, because frankly it's odd not being able to buy a Twinkie, I'm more excited to see the Drake's line continue, as their snacks simply tasted better.

And speaking of Little Debbie, when Hostess announced it was going under and I went on a massive "must buy all the Hostess products!" shopping spree (a spree I soon came to regret, as I realized the super-sweet Hostess products don't hold up quite as well to adult palettes as they do to kids'; plus, a lot of them kind of taste the same), I took note of the Little Debbie section of the grocery aisle (as Hostess and Little Debbie were always featured next to each other). And Little Debbie just had so much more variety: not only did it have its own variations of the Hostess offerings, but it had oatmeal cream pies (which you can kinda sorta convince yourself are good for you; hey, there's oatmeal, right?), peanut butter wafers, glazed doughnut sticks to dip in your coffee, and more.

Little Debbie also always takes note of the changing seasons, something Hostess never seemed to master; when I went on my snack cake-buying frenzy, it was late November, and I noticed Little Debbie had boxes of Christmas tree-shaped cakes it was selling. I was in the store last weekend, and took note of special Valentine's Day-themed cakes being offered.

I know striking workers and labor expenses were among the chief factors to Hostess going under, but I have to think the relative lack of variety played a role too. People want choices — and not just slightly-modified renditions of the "cream filling in between tiny little chocolate sponge cakes" theme. Little Debbie brings variety to the table — and now, it looks like it will be bringing Drake's too.

\* \* \*

See you next week.

# Fire Destroys Colchester Home

by Melissa Roberto

A house on Old Hebron Road in Colchester went up in flames last Sunday afternoon, Jan. 27, leaving the home uninhabitable.

The two occupants of the home and firefighters on scene did not suffer any injuries, Colchester Fire Chief Walter Cox said. The "middle-aged" couple living at the raised ranch at 139 Old Hebron Road made it out of the home safely before the fire department arrived, Cox added.

One of the residents, who was believed to have a "previous medical condition," was carried from the back porch to the front of the house by two unidentified civilians, Sergeant James Powers of the State Police said. On Tuesday, Deputy Fire Chief Don Lee said the local fire department was still trying to identify the civilians to give thanks for their help.

Cox said the local fire department received the call at 12:23 p.m. and the first engine made

it to the scene within six minutes. An additional presence of Hebron, Salem and Bozrah fire departments helped put out the blaze, which took approximately 50 minutes, he said.

Firefighters then conducted an "extensive overhaul search" to make sure everything was extinguished properly, Cox added. They remained on the scene for a total of three hours.

The East Haddam and East Hampton fire departments assisted in Colchester's dispatch services while the local fire department battled the blaze.

Three state troopers and two Colchester police officers also were on scene, Cox said.

Colchester Fire Marshal Reed Gustafson is currently investigating the cause of the fire, which firefighters believe started in the garage, and then spread to the rest of the house.

The American Red Cross in Norwich is currently assisting the occupants of the home.

# Marlborough School Board Discusses Foreign Language Possibilities

by Melissa Roberto

The newly-formed World Languages and Cultures subcommittee of the Board of Education held its first meeting last week to discuss ways to bring back foreign language learning at Marlborough Elementary School, following last year's elimination of the school's Spanish program.

Last year's cut sparked controversy, as during school board budget meetings several parents argued that foreign language is a critical component to a child's education. And a showing of nearly a dozen residents at last Thursday's meeting – some who demanded foreign language be placed back into the school day – proved that those feelings have not subsided.

But, Superintendent of Schools Dr. David Sklarz said the intent of the subcommittee was to “look at options during this transition period,” before a full in-school foreign language program is reinstated.

Sklarz added he would like to see an afterschool program that offers a variety of foreign languages to students with a cultural aspect.

“I don't want to lose sight of the word ‘multicultural,’” Sklarz said.

The former Spanish program consisted of two Spanish lessons a week, one 40-minute session and one 20-minute session, totaling one hour per week.

While Sklarz admitted he too has a “dream” of reinstating a foreign language program into the school day that “should be done well” and start in kindergarten, he stressed that, because of the current economy, a program outside of the school day would be fitting during the interim stage.

“This happens to be where we are at this place and time in this economy,” said Sklarz.

Ten different options were explored at last week's meeting, as Sklarz handed out a sheet consisting of ideas he came up with in the last few weeks.

The options are ones that Sklarz said do not follow a “one-size-fits-all” concept. Instead, he described them as “outside of the box,” including different learning styles and teaching methods for students.

A majority of the options included partnerships with organizations in the community, what Sklarz described as “community commitment.”

One option discussed was working with the Marlborough Education Foundation and the Parent Teacher Organization to fund a “state-of-the-art language lab” at MES, where students who wish to participate would be able to work independently with qualified instructors. Sklarz said the school could then use that lab in the future when an in-school program is reinstated.

Another option was to include a section of the MES library containing foreign language computer programs that students could take out and use outside of school.

Subcommittee member Robert Clarke said he researched several foreign language computer programs, and while he said some have advantages, he believes a “human component” is necessary for children to learn a language effectively.

Another idea discussed was to seek help from the Parks and Recreation Department to offer a variety of languages after school or during school vacations.

Marlborough Elementary Principal Scott Nierendorf said he has recently been in talks with coordinators of the current Chinese after school program in Hebron. He said he is looking to partner with Hebron to offer a similar program in Marlborough. The programs would be offered to students of both towns. Marlborough's program would offer a language other than Chinese, said Nierendorf.

Sklarz said he was pleased with the number of options tossed around at the subcommittee's first meeting.

“I think what we've become is the facilitator to reviewing the many options for students because we're committed to them,” he said.

However, subcommittee member Mimi LaPoint said she would rather see an in-school language program. “Maybe we should talk about the dream and not just talk about the Band-Aids,” she said.

Clarke said he would like to know the costs of the “ideal” in-school program and the after school program options, so the subcommittee can “discuss it, get input and the community would know exactly what these costs would be.”

Other members agreed knowing the costs would be helpful.

On Tuesday, Sklarz said the conversation in the meeting changed “from what the

subcommittee's original mission was to a discussion of what direction the subcommittee would like to go in.”

He added that based on the differing opinions of subcommittee members, the board will need to review the intent of the subcommittee.

Resident David Porteous said he wasn't sure if parents would be committed to enrichment programs without knowing what the future of the in-school language program would be.

“The idea that you cut out a program and say it's just going to happen here and there and everywhere...it doesn't happen that way,” he said. “Things get lost and they are getting lost.”

In the meeting, Sklarz informed the committee he is willing to help them as long as the board of education as a whole determines “what direction you want to go.”

The next World Languages and Cultures subcommittee meeting is tentatively scheduled for Feb. 21, 6 p.m. in the MES STEAM Room.

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Following the subcommittee meeting, the Board of Education held its regular meeting, which featured a discussion on the proposed 2013-14 budget. It was the board's first thorough review of the spending plan presented by Sklarz last month. Board members went line-by-line through the proposed budget, although no reductions were made.

The proposed \$7.37 million budget is a 2.33 percent increase over the current year's \$7.20 million spending package.

Sklarz told the board members they will see a decrease in the personnel certified staff account due to two teachers that are retiring at the end of the current school year. One teacher's position will not be replaced, Sklarz explained, which will save approximately \$80,000 in the budget. The other position that will be filled will save an approximate \$15,000 because the new teacher would be coming in at a lesser salary, Sklarz explained.

As for the non-certified personnel account, Sklarz highlighted the addition of a new custodial supervisor position, at a salary of \$53,703. The new position would be responsible for overseeing the school custodians.

Board of Education vice chairwoman Betty O'Brien said the new position is a “really good thing to have,” as the person's responsibility

would be solely within the school. Currently, the town's buildings and grounds public works supervisor has been responsible for overseeing maintenance in the school and all other town buildings.

In addition, Sklarz said an increase in the proposed budget that the board has the “least control” over is the employee benefits account. Also, Sklarz said, there have been “very unusual” workers' compensation claims this year with two employees currently on long-term medical leave. As a result, the workers' compensation line item has increased from \$16,920 in 2012-13 to \$32,681 for the proposed budget, a 93.15 percent jump.

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Also at the meeting, the board adopted a revised “Gifts to School Personnel” policy, which has been in the works for nearly eight months, Louise Concodello, chairwoman of the board's policy subcommittee, said.

The former policy stated that no gifts should be given to school staff, and the subcommittee revisited the policy because it was not being followed.

The revised policy gives students and parents the ability to express their appreciation to school teachers and administrators by giving a card, handmade gift, letter of appreciation, or a donation to the school, the Marlborough Education Foundation, the PTO or a charitable organization.

Lastly, the board expressed their appreciation for two teachers that will retire at the end of the year: third-grade teacher Linda Garrett and preschool teacher Betty Metzler. Garrett has worked at MES for 30 years, while Metzler has been at the school for 15 years.

O'Brien expressed the board's appreciation for the two longtime staffers. “We're really going to miss them,” she said. “They're valuable and they really are critical to our school.”

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The Board of Education had planned to meet Feb. 14 to continue its line-by-line analysis of the proposed budget. However, board members wrapped up the review at last week's meeting, so they opted to scrap the Valentine's Day meeting. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Thursday, Feb. 28, at 7 p.m., in the Marlborough Elementary School library.

## Andover Selectmen Appoint Engineer for Rec Complex

by Geeta Schrayter

At a special meeting held Jan. 22, the Board of Selectmen unanimously appointed CLA Engineers, Inc. as the engineer for the future Long Hill Road Recreation Complex for \$22,500.

On Monday, First Selectman Bob Burbank said CLA was the low-bidder out of eight engineering firms and offered the same amount of services.

“They did all the duties that even the higher bidders did and they've had prior experience and they're fairly local, being out of Norwich,” he said.

CLA will perform the engineering and design work for the complex, “basically all the work that will be necessary for the job to go out to bid,” Burbank added.

Selectman Jay Lindy said Tuesday he expects the complex to have something for everyone.

“What I expect out of it is for it to be a multi-use facility,” he said. “From a field to a walking track for the seniors and for everybody in town that walks around and a pavilion that will let people have birthday parties and stuff like that.”

Burbank reiterated the complex will include a track for walking, but the overall design will be dependent on the CLA and funding.

“The design is going to all come down to

dollars and cents and trying to get the most bang for our buck,” he said.

Conversation surrounding the creation of a recreation complex began around four years ago, explained Burbank. But the first couple of times the town applied for a Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) grant to pay for its construction the money was not awarded. Persistence paid off, though, when, two years ago, the town was awarded \$450,000. Burbank said efforts would be made to ensure the amount will cover the entire cost of the complex.

“We're going to make it be enough,” he said. “We're going to do whatever we have to do to adjust to make sure. It's not going to involve town tax dollars – it will all be done with the grant.”

As far as a timeframe for CLA, Burbank added the engineers have to wait until the ground thaws to conduct some wetland studies, but he “certainly hoped” their work would be completed by summer.

The motion to approve CLA Engineers, Inc. passed 3-0, with Burbank, Lindy and selectwoman Elaine Buchardt in favor. Selectwoman Julia Haverl arrived after the motion was made, while selectwoman Cathleen Desrosiers was absent.

## Wood Stove Ashes Blamed for Marlborough House Fire

by Melissa Roberto

A single-family residential home on Lakeridge Drive sustained minor damage last Friday, Jan. 25, after ashes inside of a plastic barrel outside of the home caught on fire.

Marlborough Fire Marshal Joe Asklar confirmed that residents of the 34 Lakeridge Dr. home did not suffer any injuries.

The residents, who were eating dinner at the time, learned of the fire by a passerby.

Marlborough Fire Department received a call at 5:27 p.m. and reported to the scene within four minutes.

Mutual aid was also received by the Colchester Hayward Fire Department.

According to Asklar, the fire was put out “within minutes.”

Asklar said the fire started at the exterior of the garage and did not spread to the rest of

the house. The garage door and outside siding of the house will need to be replaced, he added.

The homeowner placed wood stove ashes inside of a plastic bin located outside of the home two days prior to the fire, Asklar said. He said it is “very, very possible” for ashes even multiple days old to lead to a fire.

“We don't know how to get this point across to people,” Asklar said. “No matter how new or old they are ashes should not be placed within plastic or paper.”

Asklar added that “hot embers can stay confined in ashes for almost a week before they go out.”

Asklar said he encourages individuals to place ashes into a metal can, “not even mixed in with the trash.”

## East Hampton Police News

1/18: Nicholas Joseph Ray, 18, of 24 Summit St., was arrested for disorderly conduct and interfering with police, East Hampton Police said.

1/20: Joshua Lawrence Hurley, 23, of 7 Navajo Trail, was arrested for second-degree failure to appear, stemming from a 2012 incident with Middletown Police, and first-degree failure to appear, stemming from a 2012 incident in East Hampton, police said.

1/24: Gino L. Rizzo, 18, of 774 Millbrook Rd., Middletown, was arrested for sixth-degree larceny after it was determined he was involved in a shoplifting incident which occurred Nov. 25, 2012, police said.

## Marlborough Police News

1/23: State Police said a residential burglary was reported on Jones Hollow Road where jewelry and cash were taken. Entry was gained through the front door. Anyone with more information is asked to contact Trooper Randy Ransom at 860-537-7500.

# East Hampton Village Center Welcoming New Flower Shop

by Joshua Anusewicz

In the ever-growing Village Center of East Hampton, it's only fitting that a business come along that is also focused on growing – flowers, that is.

Opening this weekend, Old Bank Flowers will be the latest business to pop up in the 66 Main Marketplace, located in what is known as the “Old Bank Building” on Main Street. Old Bank Flowers is the brainchild of Todd Schragar, the owner of the building, and Lori Swanton, who will provide the green thumb.

“It's been a passion of mine, for a long time,” said Swanton of flowers and gardening.

Swanton has spent most of her career in the sales of makeup and jewelry, but the idea of running her own flower business has always been in the back of her mind. According to Swanton, the idea came to her years ago, when she was traveling through the small, Pacific Coast town of Half Moon Bay, Calif. Half Moon Bay had “a great little center of town,” she recalled, much like East Hampton, with small shops and restaurants bustling with activity.

But what stood out most for Swanton was a small flower shop, bursting with color and the aromas of fresh-cut flowers. From that point on, Swanton wanted her own flower shop.

“I fell in love,” she said with a smile.

The path to her own flower shop has led her to East Hampton, where Old Bank Flowers will be one of the few – if not the only – businesses in the area that specializes in fresh-cut flowers. Swanton said the shop will have the standard bouquets of roses and seasonal flowers, but will also be able to customize a bouquet of flowers to fit your needs. The shop will also feature handmade vases from local artisans, as well as potted plants like orchids, which Swanton said are “really popular right now.”

In the coming months, and as the weather gets warmer, Swanton said she also expects to extend the business outside into a “greenery” area next to the building that will feature plants people can purchase for their home or garden like annuals and perennials, as well as patio and lawn furniture.

“I want it to be welcoming, with all of these colors,” Swanton said, envisioning what the greenery area would look like.

The flower business will be a welcome addition to the building, Schragar said, which has already flourished in its new configuration as a marketplace. The marketplace already features various artwork, crafts, wares, clothing and jewelry. Schragar added that one of its more popular draws has been its Friday night art shows, which have attracted up to a few hundred people.

“It's been pretty good, and it's only growing,” said Schragar. “And it's still our first year.”

And Swanton said she could see how gardening and maintaining flowers, which could be considered an art form, will fit seamlessly into the surroundings. “[Gardening] is relaxing,” Swanton said. “It allows you to express yourself. It's a passion.”

The passion Swanton has for flowers will be on full display this weekend, as shoppers who come by the marketplace will be presented with a free, fresh-cut rose on their way in. And for those looking to make plans for Valentine's Day – and it's no coincidence the shop is opening just before the biggest flower day of the year, Swanton admitted – Old Bank Flowers is already offering a special: for \$89.99, you can get 12 long-stem red roses, chocolate-covered cherries and a 5-by-7-inch photo of the couple, professionally done by Christine Gauthier of Studio 66 Photography.



**At 66 Main Marketplace in the Village Center, shoppers will now be able to find an array of flowers at Old Bank Flowers. Offering indoor plants and bouquets for now, the business is expected to expand into a greenery as the weather warms up, offering outdoor flowers, plants, and furniture.**

“I think it'll be a good start,” said Schragar of Valentine's Day being right around the corner.

With flowers inside – and soon to be outside – the marketplace, expect the Village Center to become even more welcoming in the coming months, just as Swanton had hoped. For inspiration, a small painting of that flower shop at

the open-air market in Half Moon Bay hangs proudly behind the cash register of Old Bank Flowers, in hopes that her flower shop will turn into the place that she had dreamed of.

*Old Bank Flowers is located in the 66 Main Marketplace, 66 Main St. Hours are Tuesday through Sunday, 11 a.m.-5 p.m., and Thursdays from 11 a.m.-7 p.m.*

## EH Budget, Possible Superintendent Appointment Postponed

by Joshua Anusewicz

The presentation of the Board of Education's 2013-14 proposed budget was expected at the board's Monday night meeting, but was pushed back after the meeting was canceled due to wintry weather that swept through the area.

The meeting was rescheduled for last night, Jan. 31, at 6 p.m., after press time.

At the meeting, Interim Superintendent of Schools Mark Winzler was expected to present the school board with the budget, which the board would then discuss. Traditionally, the school board deliberates on the figures before agreeing upon a budget at a subsequent meeting, and then sends the budget to the Board of Finance for further deliberation.

The district did not release the proposed figures for the 2013-14 school budget this week. The 2012-13 school budget totaled \$26.71 mil-

lion, a \$498,838, or 1.90 percent, increase from the 2011-12 fiscal year; that number was approved by voters after a failed referendum and several substantial cuts by the Board of Finance and Town Council.

Also at Thursday's meeting, the board was expected to discuss recent interviews of candidates for the superintendent of schools position, as well as possible approving one of the candidates for the job.

“We're getting close,” Board of Education Chairman Mark Laraja stated at the Jan. 14 board meeting, adding that the “goal” of the board was to make a decision on the position this week.

Check next week's *Rivereast* for information on Thursday's meeting.

## Former EHMS Teacher Sentenced to Over 10 Years

by Joshua Anusewicz

Former East Hampton Middle School teacher Richard Hendricks was sentenced on Monday in federal court in New Haven to 121 months in prison for “child sexual exploitation offenses,” according to a release from David B. Fein, the U.S. attorney for the District of Connecticut.

Hendricks, 32, of Ashford, pled guilty to one count of receipt of child pornography in January 2012 after he was arrested in the summer of 2011, when federal agents found him to be in possession of pornography featuring underage girls. These images included “voyeuristic photos and videos of female students” in his classroom.

“This solemn but important prosecution revealed that the defendant, a middle school teacher, paid for and viewed live webcasts showing the sexual abuse of children overseas, and voyeuristically photographed and videotaped female students in his classroom,” said Fein in a release issued by U.S. Department of Justice. “His criminal behavior represents an extreme violation of trust, which we at the U.S. Attorney's Office, along with our law enforcement investigative partners, are committed to combating.”

Hendricks was a computer instructor at East Hampton Middle School for six years, as well as director of the school's yearbook. Hendricks is a graduate of E.O. Smith High School in Mansfield and has a master's degree in education technology from Eastern Connecticut State University.

According to court documents and statements made in court, an investigation by the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Homeland Security Investigations (ICE HSI) identified that Hendricks had used his credit card to purchase access to the live online viewing of minors in the Philippines performing sexual acts in 2009-10, the news release said.

On June 6, 2011, the news release stated, ICE HSI agents seized two laptop computers, one desktop computer and two external hard drives from Hendricks' residence. Further investigation revealed that Hendricks used these computers to receive more than 600 images

and 50 movie files of child pornography, including images of children under the age of 12, and images portraying sadistic or masochistic conduct or other depictions of violence.



**Richard Hendricks**

“The receipt and possession of child pornography by a teacher is one of the most heartbreaking violations of trust imaginable,” said Homeland Security Investigations Special Agent in Charge Bruce M. Foucart, who is based in Boston. “We have an obligation to ensure that individuals who hold positions of trust in our community are held accountable for their actions. Today's sentence is a stern reminder about the consequences awaiting those who use the Internet to sexually exploit innocent children.”

According to the U.S. Department of Justice, the investigation into Hendricks' computers also revealed numerous images and videos of his students. Though many of these files were related to Hendricks' duty as the school's yearbook advisor, investigators discovered that Hendricks “secretly took voyeuristic photos and videos of female students in his classroom,” according to the news release. The release also stated that Hendricks took these files home and “manipulated some of these images to enhance their visibility, and used a software program to attempt to visualize the private areas of clothed girls.”

During the investigation, the parents of children that were identified in the photos and videos were notified and, with parental consent, agents conducted interviews with the children.

Connecticut State Police and the East Hampton Police Department assisted in the investigation, and the case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Ray Miller and Deborah Slater. This prosecution is part of the U.S. Department of Justice's Project Safe Childhood Initiative, which is aimed at protecting children from sexual abuse and exploitation.

## Reimondo to Stay on as Interim Chief in East Hampton

by Joshua Anusewicz

Police Chief Matthew Reimondo was due to retire this past Wednesday, but there's no need for him to hand in his badge quite yet.

With no new police chief in sight, the town announced yesterday that Reimondo would remain with the police department on an interim basis.

“After significant review of the state statutes which dictate the appointment of a police chief, it has been determined that an external interim candidate is close to impossible with Chief Reimondo's Jan. 30 retirement,” the town stated in a release. “While many of the candidates would be good for the permanent chief's position, the timeline presented for the interim makes the recruitment of an external candidate impractical.”

According to the release, Reimondo will enter into a three-month contract with the town and will receive \$36.92 an hour and a stipend for health insurance at the end of his contract.

Reimondo announced in early January that he would be accepting a retirement offer from the town after 28 years at the department, the last 15 years as police chief. Sgt. Garritt Kelly also accepted a retirement offer from the town, which offered the package in hopes of saving money.

The release stated that the search for a permanent chief would commence immediately with an announcement being released today, Feb. 1.

# Author Discusses Book in Hebron on Casinos

by Geeta Schrayter

During the 1970s, Robert H. Steele was a congressman representing eastern Connecticut. When he came to Hebron Wednesday night, however, it was not as a former politician but as an author, excited to discuss his new book *The Curse* to an audience at the Douglas Library.

Steele's prior political experience, however, didn't go unmentioned. He said it was his time in Congress that allowed him to become "intimately familiar" with the towns, history and people of the region. Combine that with two decades living on the edge of the Mashantucket Pequot Reservation and some meticulous research and the result is an individual with enough information to pen a book about gambling in Connecticut.

And Steele did exactly that. *The Curse*, which was released last September, takes place during two time periods. It begins 350 years ago with the massacre of the Pequot Indians, then jumps to present day as a Connecticut family tries to prevent an Indian tribe from building a casino that threatens their town.

In the synopsis on the back of the book, it's explained "the lure of easy money drives everyone from the tribe's chief to a shadowy Miami billionaire, venal politicians, and Providence mobsters, while a small, quintessential New England town must choose between preserving its character or accepting an extraordinary proposal that will change it forever."

Library Directory Mary Ellen Beck said the book had her "almost convinced" there was a third casino in Connecticut.

"The blending of fiction and non-fiction is masterful," she said. While Steele appreciated the compliment, he stressed that the book contains historical details and firsthand knowledge of the gambling expansion that took place in the state during the 1990s, but *The Curse* is in

fact, a fiction novel.

Even so, during Wednesday's discussion it was the facts he'd researched, and the actual events – which Steele said he had a "front row seat" to – which led him to writing his novel, that he focused on.

Steele talked about the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act of 1988 which was meant to help Indian tribes raise revenue. That act, he said, "opened the door to Indian casinos in the United States and spurred non-Indian commercial casinos."

Before then, casinos were only allowed in New Jersey and Nevada, but since that time there has been a "dramatic expansion" in both casinos and gambling.

In Connecticut, Steele said the two casinos came to be only after they were "basically imposed by the state and congress." Prior to the formation of Mohegan Sun Casino and Foxwoods Resort Casino, gambling was prohibited in the state except for "Las Vegas nights," which were casino-style fundraisers held by charities.

The Indian tribes said the exemption for Las Vegas nights meant they could offer gambling, and the state and federal government agreed. In response, then-Gov. Lowell Weicker tried to repeal the exemption, but the House of Representatives and the Senate were split on the issue, and the exemption remained intact. Then, the Mashantuckets opened Foxwoods in 1992, and the Mohegans opened Mohegan Sun four years later.

"It's truly one of the most amazing stories in the history of Connecticut," he added. "These were two tribes who were mortal enemies 300 years ago, gradually fading away as tribes, and then miraculously reemerging hundreds of years later to build two of the world's largest casinos."

With the advent of Foxwoods and Mohegan

Sun, Steele explained there came some attractive attributes. They provided 20,000 casino jobs and at their peak in 2006, sent \$430 million to the state.

But there are also downsides. Steele said there are supposed to be periodic studies on the effects of the casinos, but to date there has only been one.

That 2009 study showed the casinos caused a spike in pathological gamblers, skewed the economy in the area of the casinos to low-paying service jobs, and caused a 400 percent increase in the number of arrests for embezzlement since Foxwoods' 1992 opening – including the tax collector in Steele's hometown of Ledyard, who he said embezzled \$302,000 in tax receipts to play the slots.

It was also found in a 1999 report by Congress that there were some six million problem gamblers in the country, and gambling addiction doubles within 50 miles of a casino.

Steele said opponents will point to these issues, saying the casinos are dependent on problem gamblers, and the addiction leads to bankruptcy, broken families, crime and even death.

But the gambling industry is easily "one of the most powerful," Steele stated, and added that casinos provide economic growth, jobs, state revenue and entertainment. The casinos also back many of the studies that are conducted, meaning it becomes difficult to weed out unbiased information.

At Wednesday's discussion, Steele's knowledge of the area was apparent. And it's that knowledge, combined with a bit of fiction, which has allowed him to create his tale "of greed, politics and town and tribal conflict" that's received 4.6 stars out of five on Amazon.

One of Wednesday's audience members said she'd read the book on her Kindle and when it came time to provide a rating on the [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com) website, she gave it five stars –



Author Robert H. Steele was present at the Douglas Library Wednesday night to discuss his book *The Curse*, about gambling in Connecticut.

but felt that wasn't sufficient.

"I said it's too bad there's not more [stars], that's not enough," she said. "It was absolutely amazing."

In addition to Amazon, Steele's book is available via Barnes & Noble and through the Levelers Press website. More information on Steele and *The Curse* can be found on [rhsteele.com](http://rhsteele.com).

## Colchester Resident Charged with Sexual Assault

by Melissa Roberto

A 21-year-old Colchester man was charged Jan. 18 in connection with an alleged sexual assault that occurred in town last fall.

Orion Huse, of 4 Tavern Ln., was charged with first-degree sexual assault, third-degree strangulation and two counts of reckless endangerment, State Police said.

The investigation followed a sexual assault complaint made on Nov. 1 by the alleged victim, an 18-year-old female resident of Colchester. The victim reported she had been sexually assaulted by Huse, in her Colchester apartment in September of last year.

Two detectives from the Eastern District Major Crime Squad interviewed the alleged victim at the State Police Troop K barracks in Colchester on Nov. 1.

The detectives then interviewed Huse on Nov. 7 at Troop K.

According to a document from the New London Superior Court, Huse and the alleged victim said they started dating in December 2010 and the relationship lasted approximately two years.

The court document then explained an incident that took place in December 2010 when Huse pushed the victim up against a fence outside of her apartment complex and held a knife

up to the victim moving it in a "reckless and threatening manner" over the victim's chest and arms.

Although Huse did not cut the victim, she began to vomit during the knife encounter, the affidavit said.

The accused confirmed the knife incident outside of the victim's apartment complex but did not recall her becoming physically sick during the incident. Rather, he told the detectives that the two were role-playing. "He was playing the role of the attacker and she was playing the role of the victim," the affidavit states.

According to the file, Huse confirmed the victim became physically sick during a "handful" of other incidents in which he used a knife.

The document also explained another knife encounter that took place in late April or the beginning of May while both individuals were seated in a 1999 green Honda Civic Accord at the Linwood Cemetery in Colchester. Huse "shoved" a hunting knife into the victim's mouth and "instructed the victim to keep the blade in her mouth," the file stated.

The alleged victim then dropped the knife which cut Huse's hand, which led him to choke the victim until she passed out. Huse "felt this was role playing," the document stated.

In addition to confirming the second knife incident, Huse told the detectives that the two used "monopoly" as a safe word "if the incidents became too intense" for the victim, the file stated.

In a phone call on Dec. 13 between one of the detectives and the victim, the victim said she and the accused never developed a safe word. The affidavit then said the victim "said the word stop to the accused numerous times during the sexual encounters."

The file also stated that Huse apologized to the victim after both of the knife incidents.

According to the affidavit, the two ended their relationship in early summer of 2012. The victim then entered into a new relationship with another male shortly after but ended that relationship before September.

However, the victim stated she was sexually assaulted by Huse inside of her Colchester residence last September. The affidavit said the two were "hanging in the apartment" when the accused "mounted the victim from behind" and continued to sodomize her while avoiding the victim's requests to stop.

The file also said Huse "demanded" that the victim call him by her ex-boyfriend's name.

Huse confirmed in his interview with detec-

tives that the victim asked Huse to stop, but he "thought they were role-playing," the affidavit said.

The last contact the accused made with the victim was in the form of an apology in an email sent Oct. 4.

The victim told the detectives that Huse also made statements while they dated saying he wanted to drug and rape her biological mother, and also rape her 1-year-old niece. According to the court document, Huse confirmed making the statements.

After the incident in September the victim moved to Florida to live with other family members "because of issues with her mother and to get away from the accused," the affidavit said.

On Oct. 31, she returned to Connecticut.

According to the court document, probable cause led the detectives to believe the accused committed criminal acts to the alleged victim.

Huse has been asked to not contact the victim during the investigation. According to the affidavit, Huse stated he would "cooperate" with the State Police during the investigation.

Bond for Huse was set at \$75,000. Huse is scheduled to appear in the New London Superior Court on Feb. 13 at 10 a.m.

## Former Portland Town Official to Head SEEC

by Joshua Anusewicz

The Connecticut State Elections Enforcement Commission (SEEC) announced last week that former Portland official Anthony Castagno was appointed by the commission as its newest chairman.

Castagno, who now lives in North Stonington, will succeed Stephen Cashman, who resigned in November after serving as chairman since 2004.

A former Portland resident, Castagno served on the Portland Democratic Town Committee, the Economic Development Commission and the Charter Revision Commission. In 1990, he had an unsuccessful run for state representative in the 33rd District.

Castagno was appointed to the SEEC in August 2010 by then-Speaker of the House Chris Donovan; the appointment was approved by the state legislature in 2011. He is currently an adjunct faculty member at the University of Connecticut, Avery Point and president of The

Rowe Group in North Stonington, which specializes in strategic business development and public relations. His prior experience includes more than 16 years with Northeast Utilities, including 11 years as manager of communications for the company's nuclear operations.

First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield said Wednesday that she recalls Castagno as being "very active in town" during the time he was a resident in Portland; she also stated that she once served on the Board of Education with Castagno's wife, Karen, who was also involved in town organizations.

"I know that a lot of people around here think very highly of him," Bransfield said of Castagno. "I look forward to his service to the state."



Anthony Castagno

## Colchester Police News

1/17: Colchester Police said they are investigating a burglary into a motor vehicle on Day Pond Road where numerous items were stolen. The case is still under investigation.

1/23: Colchester Police said Tina Rainville, 53, of 104 Patash Rd., Hanover, turned herself in on an outstanding arrest warrant and was charged with third-degree larceny.

1/24: Colchester Police issued infractions to Matthew Kelly, 18, of 51 Settlers Ln., and Victoria Boyden, 18, of 9 Deer Run Dr., after they were found to be in possession of less than one-half ounce of marijuana while parked in a visitor parking area on Cobble Way in Colchester.

1/25: State Police said Joseph Parsons, 20,

of 55 Lucas Park Rd., Norwich, was traveling on Route 2 east in the area of exit 21 in Colchester when he lost control of his vehicle and went off the left side of the road, striking a tree, causing heavy damage to the front end of the vehicle. Parsons had a bloody nose from the airbag and was transported to Backus Hospital for precautionary reasons, police said. He was issued an infraction in violation of traveling too fast for conditions.

1/25: Richard Beganski, 67, of 128 Witter Rd., Salem, turned himself into Troop K on two counts of fourth-degree sexual assault and two counts of risk of injury to a minor, State Police said.

# Wrestling is Back at RHAM for Area Kids

by Geeta Schrayter

With two kids of his own keen on learning the sport, Hebron resident Brent Petroff decided it was high time to restart Coyotes Wrestling, a youth wrestling organization for Hebron, Andover and Marlborough kids in kindergarten through eighth grade.

Petroff relaunched Coyotes Wrestling during the 2011-12 season. But being involved with wrestling is nothing new to Petroff.

"I come from a wrestling family," he said last week. "My father was a wrestler, I wrestled all the way through school, and I was a Division I wrestler at the University of Pennsylvania. So I just did it my whole life."

Now, Petroff has two sons – Kurt, 10 and Cael, 6 - who expressed an interest in learning the sport like their father and grandfather. That's how Petroff discovered the previous program had folded in 2009, and decided to get it restarted.

"I got a few like-minded parents together and we started the program," he said, adding the process was a little bit of "trial and error," but getting in touch with some of the people who ran the program before – like RHAM High School wrestling Coach Ryan Fitch - helped.

"There were things already in place that we were able to take advantage of," Petroff said. "There was a lot of volunteer help from parents, we were able to put together a board of

trustees; a lot of folks gave their time and talent to it and it's gone really well."

On Wednesday, Fitch, who has been the high school coach for 17 years, explained the former Coyotes Wrestling program had been in place since the 1990s. The program was run by different coaches and parents over the years, including Fitch.

But by 2009, there were only four or five wrestlers in the program, and Fitch – who was one of the two coaches handling the program at the time – already had his hands full with the high school team and newborns at home.

"It just wasn't happening" he said, and Coyotes Wrestling was put into mothballs.

Now, however, it's a different story.

There are currently 43 kids enrolled with Coyotes Wrestling, which is almost double what there was in the first year – and much more than the meager number at the end of the original program's days.

"It's great," Fitch said. "It's a blessing and we're going to hopefully build it even more."

Petroff said during the first season the Coyotes had four state qualifiers and "great participation" at local tournaments.

"We have some really talented kids in the RHAM area that have joined the club," he said. "We also have folks coming in from other towns

who support it."

In addition, Petroff said several of the program's 14 coaches were former Division I wrestlers and high school state champions.

"It's a pretty experienced group of folks that have been helping out," he said, and, like Fitch, he hopes the program will continue to grow.

"We'd just like to continue to keep growing the program. We'd like to be able to offer more practices and support more kids," he said.

Currently, practice is offered three nights a week: Tuesday and Wednesday nights for the entire team and an advanced wrestler night on Friday.

"But we'd like to be able to offer multiple practices for multiple skill and age levels," Petroff said.

Boys and girls in kindergarten through eighth grade can participate. Although Coyotes Wrestling is a non-profit organization, the costs for use of the middle school for practice and the program's affiliation with USA Wrestling, a national organization that coordinates amateur wrestling programs across the country, translates to a \$100 fee for each wrestler.

The wrestling season runs from the end of November through the beginning of March, and although the 2012-13 season is currently in full swing, Petroff said the program is currently

looking for wrestlers to join a spring club. This program, starting in May, will include Olympic, freestyle and Greco-Roman style wrestling. More information can be found on the Coyotes' website or by contacting Petroff at 860-729-3449.

Petroff also encourages interested kids and their parents to come to an upcoming practice.

"Check out a practice and talk to any of our athletes," he said. "The discipline and self-reliance that it teaches... although it may look rough to an inexperienced person, it's really a great opportunity for our kids to learn and grow."

And Fitch felt similarly.

Wrestling provides "huge life lessons," he said. "The harder you work the more you get out of it. After college not everyone gets a trophy. [Wrestling] helps kids realize in the real world you need to work hard or you're going to fall behind."

"I just really enjoy seeing the kids have success, learn to love the sport of wrestling and just have fun," Petroff added.

And now that Coyotes Wrestling is back in town, area kids will have the opportunity to do just that.

For more information about Coyotes Wrestling, visit [coyotes-wrestling.webstarts.com](http://coyotes-wrestling.webstarts.com).

## Colchester Superintendent Pitches \$40.62 Million School Budget

by Melissa Roberto

Superintendent of Schools Jeffry Mathieu presented a proposed \$40.62 million education budget to board members Wednesday, a spending package that represents an 8.25 percent increase, or \$3,095,304 over the current year.

While Mathieu was pleased to announce the opportunity to implement three new school programs – including all-day kindergarten – without any additional cost to next year's budget, he said there were two "major impacts" that drove the budget to that 8.25 percent increase – about \$1.3 million in the capital outlay account to repair schools, and "extremely expensive" health care at \$796,483.

Mathieu added that roughly \$1.2 million of repairs is for the middle school alone, however, the town's Building Committee is currently proposing a WJMS building project that would repair all of the damages and thus remove the costs from the budget. Mathieu said there still needs to be a "placeholder" for WJMS capital improvements in case the building project does not move forward.

The boards of selectmen, finance and education are to discuss the project further with the Building Committee at a special tri-board meeting next Wednesday, Feb. 6, at 6 p.m., at WJMS.

The capital account also includes \$83,700 repairs to Bacon Academy and \$14,200 repairs to Jack Jackter Intermediate School (JJIS).

A "high" number of health insurance claims has caused the health insurance account to increase to \$5,573,488, from the current year's \$4,777,005, a 16.67 percent increase, Mathieu said.

In addition, Mathieu said health care is currently being funded at 91 percent but next year's goal is to fund health care at 94 percent. An additional two percent increase would be added each year "until we get to the recommended 112 percent," he said.

The largest chunk of Mathieu's budget, at 59.42 percent, is salaries, with benefits, at 17.06 percent, coming in second.

Salaries for the 2013-14 package total about \$24.1 million. Mathieu said many changes were made to the teacher contracts. In the teacher contract, Mathieu noted, there are no general

wage increases for teachers who are at steps one through 11. For five consecutive years, he said, steps one through 11 have been frozen at 2009 levels.

For example, a first year teacher in 2013-14 will earn the same salary as a first year teacher did in 2009-10, a salary of \$41,764.

While the teacher contract has included twelve steps, an additional step will be added next year, totaling 13 steps. The additional step was added to "break the bubble" of wage increases at the end of the contract, Mathieu said.

Additionally, all benefit features will increase for employees to pay, which is "less straining on the district," Mathieu said, and a high-deductible health care savings account has also been added as an option in the contract.

The superintendent also highlighted three programs he was able to include in next year's budget with no additional costs: all-day kindergarten, implementing a new algebra program at Bacon Academy and bringing back teacher leaders for the English and science departments at Bacon Academy – all programs he said are "aligned" with the state's goals.

A "unique" situation of next year's projected declining enrollment – which is estimated at 131 students less than the current year – and retirements have made the three programs possible without any additional money added to the budget, Mathieu said.

Accordingly, with the three programs, the proposal only eliminates 2.6 FTE of teachers in the district.

Mathieu said he felt it was "extremely important" to present all-day kindergarten "completely" at CES.

Mathieu's all-day kindergarten announcement resulted in smiles across the room Wednesday night, as four parents stood up prior to the budget presentation to state they'd like to see all-day kindergarten for all.

In the current year, there are six half-day and two all-day kindergarten classes with an average class size of 21 students. In order to implement the proposed all-day kindergarten, three full-time kindergarten teachers would need to be hired which would create eight all-day classes, with the projected class size to decrease

to 20 students.

At CES, an additional four teachers will be reduced; one in first grade, two in second grade and one in special education, with three reallocations totaling a net of one teacher reduction at CES.

The special education teacher reduction stays in line with the 12 percent reduction in special education enrollment, Director of Pupil Services Katherine Shaughnessy said. The number of special education students will drop from the current year's 52 students to 39 students next year, while still maintaining the same 13:1 student to teacher ratio.

At JJIS, two teachers in third grade will be reduced, while one will be added to the fourth grade. One reallocation totals a net reduction of one teacher at JJIS.

The number of teachers at WJMS will stay the same.

At Bacon, a reduction of 1.2 FTE teachers has been proposed, with the reallocation of .2 for algebra and .4 for the teacher leaders, resulting in a net FTE decrease of .6 at the high school.

The .2 FTE increase in ninth grade will allow the implementation of the algebra 1A program – a program that Mathieu said has been the board's goal for several years.

With the new program, algebra will be taught to ninth grade students every day for 88 minutes. Currently, students are taught algebra every other day. Mathieu said this will help improve 10th-grade students' CAPT test scores.

"This item was so important to the board," Mathieu said.

An additional .4 FTE at Bacon Academy will provide the opportunity to bring back "teacher leaders" or teacher department heads for English and science at Bacon Academy, said Mathieu. The high school currently only has a department head for math.

Mathieu said he felt "proud" to implement three new programs with no additional cost to the district.

Mathieu added that the operational budget retains all academic classes, athletics, co-curriculum clubs while also implementing wireless technology at Bacon Academy – which was

Principal Mark Ambruso's "first priority," Mathieu said.

"It's critical to have access to the internet," said Director of Curriculum Barbara Gilbert of the wireless installation at Bacon.

Mathieu also pointed out Colchester's per pupil expenditure of 2011-12 is \$12,057, which placed 21 out of 24 towns in the district reference group.

Despite the low ranking, Mathieu said, students are performing "very well" on testing.

Colchester's curriculum implementation also will increase by approximately \$90,000 next year to a total of \$100,000. In the current year the curriculum implementation is \$10,000 while there was no money in the account in 2011-12.

Mathieu said part of the curriculum implementation increase is due to the new Common Core standards and the new teacher evaluations – both state mandates the district is expected to align with. Although dispersed throughout different line items, Mathieu showed the board the approximate total of Common Core and teacher evaluations: \$114,560.

Another increase in the district's budget is the implementation of library books, which Director of Curriculum Barbara Gilbert said studies have shown that newer library sections reflect higher grades. Currently, each school has \$1,000 for library books, and next year's library books will increase by \$13,000, or a 325 percent increase.

"The library has been underfunded year after year to the point where this year we just had 1,000 dollars to buy new titles to keep the students interested," said Mathieu.

One account that will decrease in Mathieu's budget is pupil transportation, by .79 percent, or a \$16,409 decrease.

Regardless of the all-day kindergarten implementation, Mathieu told the board that a decrease in the kindergarten population will reduce one bus no matter what. Also, if all-day kindergarten does move forward, Mathieu said the mid-level kindergarten buses will be eliminated.

The next budget discussion will take place at the town's budget forum next Wednesday, Feb. 6, at 7 p.m. at WJMS.

# Obituaries

## Colchester

### Joyce Ann Venti

Joyce Ann Venti, 69, of Colchester and formerly of Maine, passed away unexpectedly at home Thursday, Jan. 24. Born in Hartford Sept. 29, 1943, she was the daughter of the late Erando and Sarah (Thibedeau) Omicoli.

Joyce was retired after having worked for several years at Mobil on the Run in Colchester. She loved being with her family and friends, socializing and enjoying their company.

She is survived by her former husband, James Venti of Colchester; a daughter, Denise and her husband Larry Cusson of South Windsor; a son, Kenneth and his wife Connie Medeiros of Columbia; and three grandchildren.

She will also be sadly missed by her many friends and caregivers at Dublin Village, where she resided in Colchester.

Funeral services will be private. Burial will be in the New Lebanon cemetery in the springtime.

The Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester has been entrusted with arrangements.

## Portland

### Yvette Stella Michaud

Yvette Stella (Bouchard) Michaud, 93, passed peacefully Wednesday, Jan. 16, at Portland Care and Rehab Center in Portland.

Yvette was born Oct. 15, 1919, at St. Agatha, Maine, one of 16 children of Simeon and Annie (Albert) Bouchard. At 18, she moved to Waterville, Maine and there married Vallier M. Michaud on May 1, 1941. They both worked at the Hathaway Shirt Company in Waterville, and Yvette retired from Keyes Fiber Co.

She was an accomplished seamstress, enjoyed making clothes, curtains and rugs for family and friends. She and Val enjoyed music and ballroom dancing, and Saturday night dinner-and-cards with friends. On summer afternoons, she loved collecting daisies and wild flowers for the house, sometimes while walking the golf course with her husband. Her positive outlook affected all those around her. She attended Saint Francis de Sales Church and later, Notre Dame Church, and was for years a Daughter of Isabella.

She and her husband lived at Park Residences in Waterville for 4 years until his death, and she continued there until 2010 when she left Maine to be nearer her daughter in Connecticut.

Yvette is survived by her daughter, Roberta (Robie) Kreger and son-in-law, Lewis Kreger; by two granddaughters, Cathy Berlinghoff of Long Island, N.Y., and Michelle Berlinghoff of Portland; and by her only living sibling, Marie Dineen and husband, James Dineen of East Hartford; and of course by many cousins, nieces and nephews.

A private burial will be arranged in the spring in Waterville, Maine.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Mid-Maine Shelter Building Fund, P.O. Box 2584 Waterville, ME 04901-2584.

The family would like to thank all the caregivers and staff at Portland Care and Rehab Center in Portland for the special and compassionate attention and care they provided Yvette.

To send an online expression of sympathy, visit [portlandmemorialfh.net](http://portlandmemorialfh.net).

## Portland

### Sandra E. Winicki

Sandra E. (Sweet) Winicki, 74, of Portland, went home to God Monday, Jan. 21.

Born March 6, 1938, to the late Chester and Helen (McLaughlin) Sweet, she was a graduate of Griswold High School. She touched the lives of many people and will forever be in their hearts.

She will be remembered as a wonderful wife, mother and grandmother who will be deeply missed by those she leaves behind, her husband, Carl A. Winicki; sister, Suzanne Nordorff; brother, William Sweet; daughters, Debra Bridgman, Maria Sforza and Ellen Zehren; sons, Mark Gagliardo, Michael and John Sforza; nephews, Chris and Bryan Sweet; grandchildren, Ricky Lantz, Justine Johnson, Jenna, Nicholas and Hannah Sforza, Corey Dufurat, Brandon Gifford and Hailey Johnson, Noah and Ethan Lantz, also Emily and Aiden Graham.

A son, Robert Gagliardo Jr., and a daughter, Carol Gagliardo, predeceased her.

Private services will be held at a later date.

## Marlborough

### John Gradwell Hudson

John Gradwell Hudson, 91, of Marlborough, passed away peacefully Monday, Jan. 28. Born in Meriden July 9, 1921, he was the son of Otis Hudson and Margaret Gradwell Hudson.

His wife, Harriet Wheeler, predeceased him.

He is survived by his four children, Margaret Greenberg and her husband Neal of Andover, Richard Hudson and his wife Jane of Berlin, Jay Hudson and his wife Meg of Gaysville, Vt., and Jean Hudson of Ypsilanti, Mich. He was known as "Bumpy John" by his nine grandchildren – Jonathan Hudson, Maegan and Carolyn Greenberg, Sarah Wolfram, Richard Belisle, Margaret Hudson, and Jeremy, Patrick and CJ Hudson; and five great-grandchildren – Landon, Grace and Mason Wolfram, Elliott Belisle, and Ellie Hudson.

John was a veteran of World War II. He worked for New Departure-Hyatt, for over 35 years, first in Meriden, then relocating to Bristol in 1952. Upon retiring in 1977, he relocated to Randolph, Vt., where he built a log cabin on a picturesque mountainside.

In 2003, he returned to Connecticut to be closer to his daughter and son. In his younger years, John was an avid outdoorsman and loved to spend time at their lake house in the Adirondacks. In his later years, John enjoyed the companionship of his cocker spaniels, Friday lunch dates and "supervising" the preparation of Sunday family dinners and holidays.

The family would like to thank the administration and staff at Buckingham Estates in Glastonbury, Masonicare Hospice, and in particular his kind and loving team of nurses and aides at Marlborough Health Care Center especially Luzmilla, Abby, Elaine, Jessica, Christine, Chris, Karn, Sophy, Pauline, Bev, Rebbeka, Johnson, and Lorna.

Funeral arrangements are under the direction of Carlson's Funeral Home, New Britain. Burial will be at the convenience of the family.

Donations can be made in John's memory to the Alzheimer's Foundation, the National Parkinson Foundation, Masonicare Hospice, Cocker Spaniel Rescue of New England, or a charity of the donor's choice.

## Andover

### Rev. Gregory George Kendall

Reverend Gregory George Kendall, 79, went peacefully to be with God on Wednesday, Jan. 16, at Manchester Memorial Hospital in Manchester. He was born on Sept. 7, 1933, in Buenos Aires, Argentina to Agop Kondakdjian and Adela Aleppjian Kondakdjian.

Greg was an ordained United Church of Christ (UCC) minister for 50 years. He served in several congregational churches, including churches in: Jericho, Vt.; Broad Brook; Bradford, Mass.; and Andover. After retiring in 2000, he served two parishes as interim minister in West Stafford and Stafford Springs. In 2002, he was bestowed the honor of becoming pastor emeritus of the First Congregational Church, UCC, of Andover.

Greg lived in Buenos Aires, Argentina, until 1961 when he immigrated to the United States. After attending college in Argentina, he received a Master of Theology at Claremont School of Theology in Claremont, Calif., and a Master of Arts in Religious Education from Hartford Seminary in Hartford.

Greg married Janet Larson Kendall in 1975 in Broad Brook. They were happily married for 37 years. Greg was a member of the First Congregational Church, UCC, of Andover. Greg's greatest joy was spending time with his family, particularly his two grandchildren. Many lives were forever changed by Greg's caring spirit and welcoming heart.

Greg was preceded in death by his parents, his sister, Clara Kondakdjian and his nephew, Daniel Kondakdjian.

Greg is survived by his wife, Janet of Hebron; his daughters, Amy (Daniel) Hughes of Mechanicsburg, Pa., and Lisa (Brian) Dunn of Coventry; his brother, Edward (Belinda) Kondakdjian of St. Albans, W.V.; his sister, Victoria Kondakdjian of Buenos Aires, Argentina; his nephew David (Melissa) Kondakdjian of St. Albans, W.V.; and his grandchildren Brayden and Addison Dunn.

A memorial service to celebrate Greg's life will be held on Saturday, April 20, at 11 a.m., at the First Congregational Church, UCC, 359 Route 6, Andover, CT.

In lieu of flowers the family requests memorial donations be made to any of the churches where Greg served, or the Michael J. Fox Foundation, P.O. Box 780, New York, NY 10008 ([michaeljfox.org](http://michaeljfox.org)).

## Portland

### Francis J. Lentini

Francis J. Lentini, 95, of Middletown, husband of Phyllis (Barone) Lentini, passed away peacefully surrounded by his loving family on Friday, Jan. 25. He was born in Portland on Nov. 2, 1917, to the late Carrado and Mary Lentini and was a lifelong resident of the Middletown area.

Frank was proud to be a decorated U.S. Army veteran of World War II, fighting for and serving our country overseas in Belgium, France, England and Germany. He loved to regale his family with his many "war stories." He worked for over 50 years in the retail business at many stores throughout the New England area including Caldor's and Sears in Middletown. He worked at Pratt and Whitney's Middletown plant until his retirement in 1984.

In addition to his devoted wife of over 70 years, Frank leaves behind a son, Francis and his wife Michele of Middletown and a daughter-in-law, Ruth Lentini of Vero Beach, Fla.; three grandsons, Ian Collins, Matthew Lentini, and Michael Lentini of Middletown and a granddaughter, Amanda Collins of Middletown. Frank also leaves his sister, Genevieve Reale, of Bradenton, Fla., and many nieces and nephews.

He was predeceased by his three brothers, Alfred, Charlie and Ned. He was also predeceased by his two grown children, Linda Lentini Collins and Thomas Lentini.

Frank was a jack-of-all-trades and a master at fixing almost anything. He and Phyllis have been active members of St. John Church in Middletown for decades. He served as an usher for years and was always involved in completing creative projects for the church from signs to displays to altar decorations, many of which the parishioners still enjoy today. He always had that beautiful smile on his face and a kind word or a helping hand for everyone. He often left strangers on the street smiling at his jokes and keen sense of humor.

Frank loved his family above all else and greatly enjoyed our family dinners and celebrations. He was a member of the Elks Club for years and remains a member of the Sons of Italy and the Knights of Columbus. In recent years, he enjoyed meeting up with his old pals at "The Club" at the South Main Street McDonald's restaurant on weekday mornings.

The family would like to extend our sincere thanks to the wonderful staff at Middlesex Memorial Hospital, especially the loving and devoted caregivers of the Hospice Center.

Funeral services were held Thursday, Jan. 31, at St. John Church in Middletown. Family and friends called at the D'Angelo Funeral Home, 22 South Main St., Middletown, on Wednesday, Jan. 30. Burial will be at the convenience of the family.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations in Frank's name can be made to the St. John Church Renovation Fund.

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

## Portland

### Frank S. Russo Jr.

Frank S. Russo Jr., of Higganum, formerly of Portland, passed away peacefully Saturday, Jan. 26, at his home surrounded by his loving family and friends. Frank fought a courageous battle against mesothelioma cancer for over a year.

He was born in Middletown on Feb. 12, 1943, and grew up in Portland. He is the son of the late Frank S. Russo Sr., and Josephine (Milardo) Russo.

Frank is survived by his wife of 49 years, Katherine (Roccapriore) Russo, and two daughters, Kelly Russo of Middletown and Jody Russo of Milford. He also leaves behind his grandson Andrew Lymm; a sister, Beverly (Russo) Skinnon of Southington; a brother, Robert Russo of Portland; and several nieces, nephews, aunts and uncles.

Frank retired from Connecticut Valley Hospital after 34 years of service. This enabled him to spend time to pursue the things he loved most. An avid outdoorsman and outgoing individual, Frank enjoyed hunting, fly and saltwater fishing and spending time in his vegetable garden and tending to his fruit trees. One of Frank's biggest joys in life was being on his boat saltwater fishing with family and friends. He will be missed by all, including his loyal Springer spaniel, Morgan.

Funeral services were held Thursday, Jan. 31, from the Biega Funeral Home, 3 Silver St., Middletown, followed by a funeral liturgy in St. Peter Church, Higganum. Burial will be in Swedish Cemetery at a later date. Friends called at the Biega Funeral Home Wednesday, Jan. 30.

In lieu of flowers, Frank's favorite charity was "Special Wishes," a Connecticut non-profit organization which grants wishes to children stricken with life-threatening illnesses. Donations in his memory can be sent to Special Wishes, Inc. P.O. Box 391, Oakville, CT 06779, [specialwishes.org](http://specialwishes.org).

To share memories or express condolences online, visit [biegafuneralhome.com](http://biegafuneralhome.com).

## Portland

### Ina Shapiro

Ina Shapiro, 74, of Portland, passed away Wednesday, Jan. 23, at the Middlesex Hospice and Palliative Care Center. Ina Shapiro was born May 27, 1938 in New York City, the daughter of Philip and Polly Nussenbaum.

She was united in marriage to Leonard M. Shapiro on April 7, 1963. He preceded her in death on Aug. 7, 2012. They were married for almost 50 blissful years.

Ina received her bachelor's degree from the State University of New York at Oswego and worked as a first grade teacher in Pearl River, N.Y. She stopped working for 12 years to raise her children and then returned to work at Rockland Community College in Suffern, N.Y. She enjoyed working in the financial aid office and retired after 20 years there.

Mrs. Shapiro had an amazing sense of humor and was always quick with a comment to evoke laughter. She was truly a sweet woman who was loved by all who knew her. She was there to support her son when he pitched in his baseball games and could always be found sitting in her chair on the third base line at all of her daughter's softball games.

She leaves a daughter and son-in-law, Melissa and Robert Shortell of Portland, a daughter-in-law, Louann Shapiro and 4 wonderful grandchildren: Jordan and Drew Shortell and Daniel and Kevin Shapiro.

She was predeceased by a son, Philip Shapiro. Funeral services will be held Tuesday, Jan. 29, at Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., with Rabbi Craig Marantz officiating. Burial will be in Swedish Cemetery, Portland.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Connecticut Humane Society, 701 Russell Rd., Newington, CT 06111.

To send an online expression of sympathy, visit [portlandmemorialfh.net](http://portlandmemorialfh.net).

## Portland

### William F. Wunsch

William F. Wunsch (Bill), 80, of Portland, passed away peacefully Tuesday, Jan. 22, at Middlesex Memorial Hospital Hospice. He was born and raised in Brooklyn, N.Y., on May 13, 1932, the son of the late William and Marie (Wunsch) Wunsch.

Bill attended and graduated from Brooklyn Tech High School and New York State Maritime College with a bachelor's degree in marine engineering, and graduated with a Master of Science degree from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. Bill served in the U.S. Navy after graduating college serving on the ships of the Juno and the Boston. He retired from the Naval Reserves in 1976, where he had proudly achieved the rank of captain.

He married the love of his life, Janet (Laubscher) Wunsch, on Nov. 13, 1954, and was happily married for 58 years. Bill started his career at GE in upstate New York and then settled in Portland, where he was employed at UTC in Middletown and East Hartford for 35 years, retiring in 1992. Upon retiring he was a consultant for an outplacement group and briefly worked with his daughter in her profession.

He will be greatly missed by his wife Janet and his daughter, Karen W. Ferranti and son-in-law Al Ferranti, of South Glastonbury.

In addition to his parents, he was pre-deceased by his brother, George Wunsch and his twin brother, Frank Wunsch.

He will forever be remembered as a man of integrity and his spirit throughout his illness was an inspiration to all those around him.

In honor of Bill's wishes, there will be no wake or funeral. The family received family and friends at Max Amore Ristorante, 140 Glastonbury Blvd., Glastonbury, on Saturday, Jan. 26.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to Middlesex Memorial Hospital Hospice, 55 Crescent Street, Middletown CT 06457, or the National Parkinson Foundation or in Bill's memory simply help to inspire people by practicing a random act of kindness.

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

## *Hebron*

### **Michael J. Newhouse**

Michael J. Newhouse, 41, of Glastonbury, beloved husband of Kimberly (Barber) Newhouse, died Wednesday, Jan. 30, at home. Born May 14, 1971, in Hartford he was raised in Hebron and had lived in Glastonbury for the past 15 years. He graduated from RHAM High School and Eastern Connecticut State University and managed Primary Residential Mortgage in Glastonbury.

Michael was a great athlete as a young person, playing baseball and basketball in school and became very involved and enjoyed coaching his children in the Glastonbury Youth Soccer, basketball and baseball programs. He and his family especially loved summers at the Rhode Island shore, going to the beach, saltwater fishing on his boat and socializing with his friends. He will be greatly appreciated and missed by his immediate family, extended family, numerous friends and acquaintances.

Besides his wife he is survived by his three children, Hayley, Lyndsey and Austin; his parents Stephen and Valerie (Moore) Newhouse of Old Lyme and Naples, Fla.; his sister, Deborah Newhouse of West Hartford; his grandmothers, Angeline Newhouse and Irene Moore, both of Rocky Hill; his father-in-law and mother-in-law, Robert and Sally Barber of Hebron; and several aunts, uncles and cousins.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated Saturday, Feb. 2, at 11 a.m., in St. Paul Church, 2577 Main St., Glastonbury (everyone please go directly to church). Private burial will be in Holy Cross Cemetery, Glastonbury. Friends may call at the Mulryan Funeral Home, 725 Hebron Ave., Glastonbury, today, Feb. 1, from 4-8 p.m.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the Newhouse Children's Education Fund, c/o Robert Zanlungo, Jr., Primary Residential Mortgage, 730 Hebron Ave., Glastonbury, CT 06033.

To share a memory, visit [mulryanfh.com](http://mulryanfh.com).

## *East Hampton*

### **Marilyn A. Aarrestad**

Marilyn A. Aarrestad, 60, wife of Calvin Innes, passed away Tuesday, Jan. 29, at a Bangor, Maine, hospital. She was born April 19, 1952, in Hartford, the daughter of Tonnes and Ina (Berntsen) Aarrestad. She grew up in East Hampton, but lived in Stafford Springs for most of her working career.

In 2008, she retired to Passadumkeag, Maine, and made her home there. Marilyn worked for 30 years for the State of Connecticut as manager of state parks and forests. She had a reverence for the out of doors, enjoyed hunting, fishing, hiking, camping and especially skiing. She took an active interest in all of her family.

In addition to her husband, Calvin, she is survived by a son, Erik Innes; a sister, Ingrid Aarrestad and her husband Narain Scott; a brother, Peter Aarrestad and his wife, Lisa; nieces, Kelsey and Siri; and a nephew, Ansel.

Friends may call from 1-4 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 3, at Clay Funeral Home, 7 Lee Road, Lincoln, ME. A graveside service will be held in the spring at Gould's Ridge Cemetery.

Those who wish may donate in her memory to Casting for Recovery, P O Box 1123, Manchester, VT 05254.

To sign an online guest register, and to leave written condolences, visit [clayfuneralhome.com](http://clayfuneralhome.com).