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Tuesday marked Portland schools' first day of full-day kindergarten. Eighty-eight kindergarteners enjoyed a tear-free day of meeting their teachers, administrators and each other. The kindergarteners shown here are practicing walking quietly down the hallways of Valley View Elementary School.

Successful Launch For Full-Day Kindergarten

by Elizabeth Bowling

Portland schools kicked off their academic year Tuesday, and debuted full-day kindergarten classes at Valley View Elementary School.

"The [kindergarteners] did a wonderful job. It was amazing," Superintendent of Schools Sally Doyen raved about the first day. "They were just phenomenal."

Valley View Principal Debby Graner explained that last year, the school had three half-day kindergarten classes in the morning, and three half-day classes in the afternoon. This is the first year that Portland has six full-day kindergarten teachers, each with a class size of about 15 students – there are 88 students total, according to Graner.

A full day runs from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., and kindergarten team leader Corrine Scrivano quipped, "I was surprised nobody asked to nap [on the first day]."

More seriously, she added, "It was great to have the kids all day and have a less hurried atmosphere."

Graner said having full-day kindergarten will be a tremendous help in keeping the kids up with the national standards of the new curriculum based on the Common Core.

The kindergarten teachers agree.

Scrivano said she's optimistic about teaching the kindergarteners all they need to know over the course of this academic year because now the teachers no longer need to fit a full-day curriculum into a half-day class, she said.

The full days will benefit the students be-

cause "they get to learn at a less hurried pace," she said.

Laurie DiMauro said she and her fellow kindergarten teachers are "so excited" to start full-day kindergarten because it will allot "more time to explore and more time to teach." She said she looks forward to not feeling so rushed.

"We're looking forward to a great year and lots of time for learning, exploring, playing, having fun, reading, writing – all those things kids are supposed to do in kindergarten," DiMauro said.

DiMauro and her class were full of excitement on the first day. Her kids were eager to participate in her lesson about the importance of learning how to write.

To answer DiMauro's question, "Why do we write?" students said things like, "To get strong fingers," "It's fun," "So we can learn to read" and "To send a message." Their answers elicited positive and encouraging responses from the veteran teacher and former team leader.

DiMauro's class then released some energy by singing their "Welcome to School" song. The kids sang along with their teacher, "Rise and shine and welcome to school today. We're so glad you're here."

After their song, the kids went outside for what will be their 15-minute daily "brain break," when they'll get a chance to play with each other on the playground.

Another class of youngsters – Scrivano's class – practiced doing "hips and lips," which is when

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World War II Veteran Receives Replacement Medals

by Elizabeth Bowling

A local World War II Air Force veteran, who was recently presented with replacement medals for the ones he earned during his time in the service but had since misplaced, said he is no extraordinary man.

"I'm just lucky – lucky to come home. Think of all the ones that didn't come home," said Willard Kemp, an East Hampton resident.

Kemp, 89, said he probably misplaced his World War II medals during one of his many moves, and only noticed that they had gone missing within the past year.

Kemp's son, Thomas Kemp, contacted Congressman Joe Courtney months ago, seeking the replacement of his father's wartime medals. He said "it took months" of going over his father's documents and comparing them to Courtney's staff's records, as well as the national archives.

But the months of research and hard work paid off last Thursday, Aug. 29, when Kemp was awarded his replacement medals at a special ceremony in Marlborough.

"It was very special," Thomas said. "It was just the congressman, his staff and our family."

Both Thomas and his father were impressed with the ceremony, noting that Courtney didn't rush through it.

"He was sincerely interested in every word Dad had to say," Thomas said about Courtney.

"Mr. Kemp and his family – which includes other veterans – are an inspiring group of American patriots," Courtney said.

Regarding his replacement medals, Kemp said, "It's nice. It's nice to look at them, but I don't go staring at them every day. You know, you get older, there's children growing up, there's other things you have to accomplish and that's about all I can tell you."

"I'm just a regular guy," Kemp added. "I don't go bragging about this stuff."

In fact, according to Thomas, Kemp never

talked about his time in the war until recently.

"These are stories that would have been lost to the family so I'm really happy [we had the medals replaced]," Thomas said.

Courtney presented Kemp with the Air Medal with three Bronze Clusters (for completing a certain number of missions), the European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal with two Bronze Stars and one Silver Star (for Kemp's work in Europe), the Presidential Unit Citation (awarded to each member of the 450th Bomb Group because they "did their job," Kemp said), the World War II Victory Medal (a participation medal for serving in the war), the Honorable Service Lapel Button, and the Distinguished Flying Cross.

"Mr. Kemp and I had a great conversation in which he recounted the harrowing events on his B24 Liberator that earned him the Distinguished Flying Cross, which is only conferred for 'heroism and extraordinary achievement,'" Courtney said in a press release, adding that the cross "has a distinguished list of honorees, including former President George Herbert Walker Bush."

Kemp recalled the mission that earned him the Flying Cross. He said he was leading a mission in Italy when he noticed the targeted bridge had already been bombed out. But then he saw a pontoon bridge about 100 feet beyond the bombed one.

So he figured, "I have to drop the bomb somewhere" and that spot was as good as any.

When Kemp and the other planes under his leadership dropped their bombs on that makeshift bridge, they had a "high percentage hit," he said, which earned him the Distinct Flying Cross.

"It was nothing special," he said about the hit.

To him it was just a lucky hit.

Kemp was a bombardier. He worked his way



World War II Air Force veteran Willard Kemp of East Hampton sits with his newly-replaced medals. Kemp lost the original medals that he earned almost 70 years ago, but is shown here with the replacement medals that were presented to him by Congressman Joe Courtney last week.

up to lead bombardier for the latter part of his time in service; his rank was first lieutenant.

The job of the lead bombardier was to figure out where and how to drop not only his plane's bombs, but also the bombs from the five other planes under his leadership.

Continuing to sort through his memories, Kemp recalled more stories from when he was in the 15th Air Force based in Italy.

"We were shot out of formation twice," he recalled. "Both times this happened, we got low, and you scooted for the coast while everything

was going on. And the first time, we made it to a fighter airfield. They had short runways – bombers need a longer runway so what happened was, we landed okay and everything was fine but we ran off the end of the runway and what they did, they cut the trees at the end but left stumps."

The stumps slowed the plane until it stopped, and once it stopped, "we ran as fast as we could in case the plane caught fire or something," Kemp said. But, he added, "It didn't burn."

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Kindergarten teacher Laurie DiMauro sings the “Welcome to School” song with her students on Tuesday, their first day of school. The children had a successful first day of full-day kindergarten at Valley View Elementary School.

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they place one hand on their hip and they extend the pointer finger on their other hand and hold it over their lips. This posture teaches the kids to keep their hands to themselves and to keep quiet when walking through the hallways.

When Graner asked the same group of kindergarteners, “Who’s happy? Raise your hands,” each student threw an arm high up into the air.

The kids did a practice run of lunchtime, where they learned the cafeteria rules and at which tables to sit. They also learned where the nurse’s office is located, as well as the bathrooms that are outside of their classrooms.

The kindergarteners also practiced a fire drill. While they were outside, they were taught playground safety. They learned the rules of recess, like the importance of waiting in line and standing out of the swing zone for the tire swing and regular swings, for example.

Valley View’s only new kindergarten teacher, Ashley Callender, taught her kids on the first day to use their “walking feet” to throw away their garbage after snack time, as well as to push in their chairs.

Callender interned at Valley View prior to taking on the full-time job and said she chose to work at Valley View Elementary because “the community is so inviting and it’s a great school.”

Callender said she is happy with her timing because she’s new to the job, but the job is also new to everyone else.

She said, “Everyone on our team has to adjust [to teaching full-day kindergarten]. So it’s a great time to join the team.”

One team member, Rozanne Gorley, was a first-grade teacher, but this year is returning to teaching kindergarten.

Gorely said she’s excited about “getting in on the ground floor of education.”

One of her students said her favorite part of kindergarten so far has been “playing.” Another student said her favorite part of the day was when Gorley taught a lesson.

Gorely’s lesson revolved around teaching the students “how to say ‘good morning’ to our friends,” she said.

Another teacher who transferred from first grade to kindergarten is Maureen Garcia. The sixth and final kindergarten teacher is Kathy Tomlinson.

The six kindergarten classes means Valley

View now has six classrooms that include a kids’ bathroom. This summer, one classroom was renovated to include the bathroom, making all six of the rooms “self-sufficient,” Graner said.

Hopefully these kid-friendly classrooms will see great social and academic results over the course of the year.

But as for the first day, “it’s been great,” Graner said, noting that there were no tears among the new kindergarteners when their parents dropped them off to school for the first time, an impressive feat.

The lack of tears may be the result of last week’s open house for kindergarteners and their parents. The open house was intended to make the transition to school a little easier and to “get rid of first day anxiety,” Graner said.

And having happy students made the first day of school that much better for teachers, too.

“The teachers are just thrilled,” Graner said.

Scrivano is the “team leader” for the kindergarten teachers, which means she is responsible for developing and facilitating the agendas for all the kindergarten teachers, as well as meeting daily with the other kindergarten teachers to do common team planning and lesson design to support the learning needs of all their students.

According to Graner, “The team leader at every grade level works closely with the principal and the other grade level team leaders to set whole school wide agendas concerning curriculum writing, budget development and supply request to support the curriculum.”

Team leaders also must attend and communicate at all Parent Teacher Organization meetings, which occur monthly, Graner said.

Also regarding parents, DiMauro explained that for the first hour of the day, for three days each week, every kindergarten teacher gets help from a teaching assistant. The assistant may also come in for a little while in the afternoon, she said. However, after the first open house of the school year, which is set for Sept. 19, the kindergarten teachers rely on parents to volunteer to help out in the classrooms.

Scrivano added that the open house will be an opportunity for teachers to meet with all the parents at once and explain to parents the “classroom rules, procedures, curriculum and what kindergarteners are expected to know by the end of the year.”



Congressman Joe Courtney, far left, presented Kemp, seated, with his service medals at an Aug. 22 ceremony. Also shown are Kemp’s son, Thomas, daughter-in-law Vi and granddaughter Sarah.

Medals cont. from Front Page

He would say he got lucky.

“The second time,” Kemp recalled, “we had two engines knocked out again and I looked at my bomb rack and...I had let all the bombs go but somebody said, ‘There’s a bomb hanging in the bomb bay.’ It didn’t drop. Well, I came out from the front. I walked past the pilot into the walkway.”

Kemp spread his hands about a foot apart to illustrate the size of the “walkway.”

He walked out and, sure enough, “the bomb was hanging,” he said.

He explained that each bomb had a front fuse and a back fuse. Both fuses were protected by a spinner. He said there’s a thin wire that comes down to the spinners. That wire stays there until the bomb drops, then when the bomb is dropping the spinners start spinning.

“So the bomb is hanging there, and the spinners are still connected,” he explained. “When the spinners come off it exposes the end of the fuse and when the bomb hits, it pushes that end and also [the other end] into where the explosive is, and it goes off.”

Kemp knew he had to remove both fuses from the hanging bomb to render it useless. He took the fuses off and threw them in the ocean below him, but the bomb still had potential to go off because, despite his efforts, he came up short when he literally took a hammer to the shackle but was unable to detach the bomb from the plane.

“We landed. The bomb came off – it’s fumbling along behind us,” he said. “It didn’t go off.”

Lucky man.

On another mission in Polesty, Hungary, the location of the German’s main refineries for oil and gasoline, the targets were blocked by strategically placed smoke pots.

He recalled his conundrum: “How am I going to bomb a certain section of that?”

It turns out Polesty has a river that has a little turn in it, and Kemp was told the distance and the angle from the turn of the river to his target.

“You figure out, mathematically, the rest of that angle,” Kemp said.

“The Germans figured that had us – that we couldn’t do it. Well that’s how we did it,” he said. “And guns are going off.”

In another all-too-common scenario, Kemp explained just how close to death he truly was as a bombardier.

“When you’re flying sometimes, in formation, and you look way out, you see German planes and they’re not doing anything; they’re just sitting out there,” Kemp said. “They’re sitting at our altitude so they are radioing down to the gunners on the ground, ‘They’re flying at 28,000 feet.’ So the gunners on the ground set their flat gun timers at 28,000 feet. So the reason the planes are out there and not doing anything to us – they’re checking our altitude and radioing down.

“So now that they have our altitude we’re dead ducks,” he continued. “So they start firing. We’re flying through black puffs of smoke – well that’s good because the bombs have already gone off.

“But it’s the one that you don’t see that gets you,” he added.

“I’ve seen friends get hit and go,” Kemp said, using his hands to illustrate a downward spiral.

“It’s a good thing I was young, because when you’re young you don’t worry as much as you do when you’re older. When you’re older, you seem to be more afraid. I was only about 19 or 20 and we had some gunners on there that was 35 years old and they were always talking about ‘if something happened.’”

“And luckily,” Kemp said, “nothing did.”

Kemp ultimately went on 50 missions “and then they sent me home,” he said, recalling his honorable discharge.

“I was very happy [to come home] but the war was still going on,” he said.

Kemp was born in Stamford, where he spent his childhood. He only left when he attended the University of New Hampshire, where he met his wife, the love of his life – on a football scholarship. It was during his sophomore year that he put school on hold and joined the war effort.

“I was a sophomore at New Hampshire when they declared war. The very next day, some planes in formation flew over the campus, showed off, so I said, ‘Gee, maybe I’ll join the Air Force,’” Kemp recalled. “So I joined the Air Force when the recruiters came around the next two or three days.”

Kemp was on active duty from March 19, 1944, to Sept. 30, 1945. He served with the 732nd Bombardment Squadron and the 450th Bombardment Group during the battles of Northern France and Northern Apennines. He also served with the 219th Carlsbad Army Air Field of Carlsbad, New Mexico, during the battle of Northern France, the Rhineland, North Apennine, Southern France, Normandy, Air Combat Balkans and Rome-Arno.

Upon returning from the war, Kemp returned to the University of New Hampshire, graduated and got a job as a teacher in his hometown of Stamford. He worked as teacher for 30 years before retiring and moving to Florida with his wife, Eleanor, with whom he had three sons and seven grandchildren.

“We’d been married 68 years. That’s a long time,” Kemp said fondly about his relationship with Eleanor.

Kemp recalled when he and Eleanor met in college. “There was a boys’ entrance and girls’ entrance to the freshman dining hall,” he said. “It was Thanksgiving. I came in with my buddy and we sat and the girls sat across the table. And there she was. We had a nice little chit-chat and that was the end of that.”

Then a couple months later at the college’s Christmas party, the same thing happened.

Kemp said, “I’d be darned if she wasn’t sitting there, too. So I says, ‘Gee, I’ve met her twice. I think I’ll start asking her out.’ That was it.”

“We were engaged before I left [for the war] and I told her if I got back I would marry her. So she just waited and that’s it,” Kemp said, and, of course, he kept his promise.

After Eleanor’s death four months ago, Kemp moved to East Hampton to live with his son, Thomas.

Only two months away from his 90th birthday, Kemp said he knows he’s a lucky man – and just hopes he’ll never need to step foot on a plane again.

“I don’t really like to fly anymore. I’ve flown enough,” Kemp said. “I kind of dread it.”

Taekwondo Business to in Colchester Celebrate 25 Years, New Location

by Melissa Roberto

Exciting transformations have recently occurred within a business that's been thriving in Colchester since it opened in 1987.

The taekwondo studio CT Chung Do Kwan has two things to celebrate: the 25th year since its opening as well as the grand opening of its recent relocation to a larger space in town. The business' owner, David Turgeon, has marked next Saturday, Sept. 14, as a day of celebration at the new site on Parum Road, with a host of activities and even some discounts for interested newcomers.

Grand Master Turgeon has been practicing taekwondo since the age of 10 and is just two belts away from becoming a ninth-degree black belt. He said he opened his own studio in Colchester because he felt taekwondo was "a very unique thing for kids to be able to do" in town at the time. The recent move into a larger – and according to Turgeon, "state of the art" – facility proves it's been successful over the years.

"We've finally grown to a point where we're able to get a new facility," he said. "It's one of the top facilities around for it."

The original location of CT Chung Do Kwan was within the Homestead Shoppes plaza on Main Street across from McDonald's. Now, CT Chung Do Kwan stands in a stand-alone building at 50 Parum Rd. – and is almost double the size of the old location.

To Turgeon, the new building allows more space and a better layout for running classes. It features about 6,000 square feet of training area space. Turgeon added the floor is "completely open" with high ceilings that can also be divided into three sections if different classes are running at the same time.

"It gives us a lot more flexibility," the owner said.

Another likeable aspect of the new building is that it has enough space to host small tournaments and competitions on site. Turgeon said he's excited to host the first one this November instead of having to travel to another location.

Turgeon explained just what he and other instructors teach in his studio. He explained taekwondo is primarily a kicking martial art,

which emphasizes movement of the legs and feet more than any other martial art does. It's also recognized as an Olympic sport and "one of the largest martial arts in the world," Turgeon said.

Aside from the athletic benefits, Turgeon pointed out what the "primary focus" of his studio is.

"Number one – that the kids are having fun learning and getting better at what they're doing," he said.

Additionally, the experienced master said the skills also teach discipline, coordination, focus and control – skills that can help his clients "achieve more in life."

Additionally, Turgeon pointed out taekwondo teaches trainees how to set goals for themselves since each new belt is achieved by dedication and hard work.

"On their journey up through the belts they learn at each step they have to be more dedicated and more precise with movements," the owner explained. "They learn that in order to get higher and higher they have to try harder and harder to achieve more."

Prior to opening in Colchester in the 1980s, Turgeon spent his early training years in East Hartford with instructor Anthony Magnotta at CT Chung Do Kwan. When Magnotta passed away, Turgeon took over the business and has since carried on the name.

Turgeon opened a second CT Chung Do Kwan in Tolland in the 1990s, and said he alternates his time in both of the studios. Earlier this week, Turgeon looked back on the last 25 years of his business in Colchester with awe.

"It's funny 'cause you look back and it doesn't seem like 25 years," he said. "It goes by pretty quick."

One of the greatest enjoyments Turgeon said he's witnessed in the last quarter of a century is watching the children of his former students walk into his studio for lessons.

"Students that I had when I first opened up in Colchester are now starting to come to me with their children," he said excitedly. "It makes me really proud to know that I have affected a lot of students' lives in Colchester."

Another highlight has been watching some



Taekwondo studio CT Chung Do Kwan in Colchester recently relocated to a new and significantly larger location at 50 Parum Rd. The business is hosting a grand opening for the new location next Saturday, Sept. 14. The celebration also marks the studio's 25th year of business.

of his students excel at both the state and national level. Turgeon himself was once on the U.S. National Taekwondo Team and represented the country five times in the world championships.

Asked if he sees another bright 25 years in Colchester, Turgeon said, with a laugh, "If I'm still able to kick by then."

"I think we're planning on being around for a long time in Colchester," he furthered.

Next Saturday's celebration marks the grand opening of the business's new Parum Road home. The event will run from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. and is open to the public free of charge. At 11:15 a.m., First Selectman Gregg Schuster will con-

duct an official ribbon-cutting. Following that, Turgeon said, the day will be filled with exciting demonstrations including sword-cutting, where he will actually use a sword to cut a watermelon off of someone's stomach.

A bounce house and raffles will also take place throughout the day. In honor of the 25-year anniversary, Turgeon will also offer a special one-month trial for \$25, which he said is over 50 percent of a discount off of the initial price.

CT Chung Do Kwan's regular hours are Monday-Thursday, 4-9 p.m., and Saturdays from 9 a.m.-noon. Anyone with further inquiries can call the business at 860-537-6333.

Marlborough School Board Gets Preliminary CMT Results

by Melissa Roberto

The Board of Education had its first meeting of the new school year last Thursday, Aug. 29, and spent the meeting reviewing the results of last year's Connecticut Mastery Tests, as well as the Marlborough Elementary School climate survey, which parents conducted last spring.

Principal Scott Nierendorf – in one of his final acts as head of MES, as his last day at the school was Aug. 30 – led the board through a quick review of the mastery test results. The former principal explained the results came in later than usual this summer and defined the results he showed as preliminary. The school's administrative team expects to report full results at a future board meeting, Superintendent of Schools David Sklarz confirmed this week.

From a general standpoint, Nierendorf said the scores were "very good." In particular, he directed the board to the third- through sixth-grade performances in math. The percentages of students that met or were above the math goal ranged from 69.7 to 93.2 percent.

While Nierendorf explained "that's where we start our look at student performance," he added that what was "really nice" were the math percentages in the "proficient" column – the mid-level of CMT scores (from lowest to highest, scores are ranked as below basic, basic, proficient, goal and advanced). The percentage of students in grades three through six who performed proficiently in math ranged from 86.9 to 100 percent.

Additionally, Nierendorf said he was "exceptionally pleased" to see the percentages of third-grade students who had proficient scores in all three content areas – math, reading and English. Of the 76 third-grade test-takers, 97.4 percent were at or above the proficient level in math, 94.7 met the proficient level in reading and 94.7 also tested proficient in writing.

"Those are very high scores for third grade," said Nierendorf.

The principal then looked at the scores of the sixth-graders, who graduated from the school in June. In each of the categories, per-

centages ranged from 86.5-93.2 percent of students who performed at or above the goal.

"[Those scores] reflect very strong performance scores for our students who have left," Nierendorf added.

And, as MES assistant principal Maureen Ryan noted, this may be the CMTs' last hurrah at the school. Starting with the 2014-15 school year, all districts in the state will replace the CMTs with the new Smarter Balanced test. Ryan informed the board, however, that the state Department of Education may allow districts to begin that change during the 2013-14 school year.

"There's a chance," Ryan said, and rattled off some of the advantages of starting it this year, if it's indeed possible to do so.

"We will get more practice, get feedback on how we do and what areas we have to work on," she said. "It would give us a lot of information."

Also at the meeting, the board reviewed feedback obtained from MES' school climate surveys. A majority were taken online last spring by MES parents. Sklarz explained this week the climate surveys are an annual state requirement that began last year.

Ryan walked the board through the survey process. She explained MES has 426 "family units" and that one-third, or 142 families, took the survey, which the assistant principal coined "a very good response rate."

Interim Principal Kathryn Veronesi explained the parent feedback. She reviewed a graph that recorded parents' responses to 24 items on the survey. The items were given an average ranking on a five-point rubric, from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." Veronesi explained all responses fell between the "agree" to "strongly agree" range.

The interim principal also explained the survey included open-ended questions where parents were able to define the strengths and areas in need of improvement at MES. Veronesi said one response made "loud and clear" by mul-

iple parents was "that they see our teachers are kind, caring, dedicated and committed." Other strengths included the school's welcoming atmosphere, she said.

As for areas in need of improvement, Veronesi highlighted the common areas of concern. She explained many responses pertained to the world language topic as well as the implementation of all-day kindergarten, which are two topics of feasibility studies MES administration is currently conducting.

Additionally, Veronesi said some parents were concerned with the school's efforts of addressing behavioral and learning needs while others communicated concerns of the atmosphere in the front office. Another concern was that parents feel they are asked "too frequently" for money donations from the school, Parent Teacher Organization and the Marlborough Education Foundation.

In response to these concerns, Veronesi said she will work with the staff, PTO and MEF in terms of the money requests. Also, the interim principal said the office atmosphere was one area that was of "utmost importance" to her and will receive her attention. Similarly, Veronesi said the school is currently in the implementation phase of becoming a PBIS – or Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports – school. The principal explained what this meant.

"It's something that's embedded throughout the course of the day," she said. "What you're focusing on is to teach students the expectations of our school and then the students are acknowledged to reinforce that. I'm excited that's going to be a part of this school. I've seen positive beneficial results in other schools."

But what seemed to be the most important – and talked about – area of concern from parents was the "home-to-school communication," Veronesi explained.

"This is something we see as quite serious in terms of a focus area," said Veronesi. "The staff will begin to brainstorm ways and that has become a school-wide goal."

This week Sklarz stressed the same thing.

"It's pretty clear that one of the most important things is to improve home to school communication," he said, "and that's an easy and important fix. It's really a concern of ours now and we're going to address that."

Lastly, the meeting featured discussion of hellos and goodbyes that took place the first week of school. Sklarz recalled Nierendorf's success in what the superintendent described as the "Herculean" task of moving the school forward – in the school's curriculum, security measures, and new policies and implementations.

Additionally, Sklarz informed the board that last Wednesday was his "45th first day of school" since he first started in the education field. Of those 45 years, Sklarz said he's "never seen as smooth of a transition" as Nierendorf's leaving and Veronesi's arrival.

The superintendent added Veronesi had – literally – already gotten her feet wet as MES' interim principal, noting that the first day ended with "monsoon-like" weather, and Veronesi kicked off her heels and ran kids out to the buses with umbrellas barefoot so they wouldn't get soaked. According to Sklarz, Veronesi has already begun "winning over hearts" of faculty, too.

Nierendorf also thanked the board and administrators present at the meeting and said his goodbyes. He said he believes "so many good things" are coming to MES this year and though he'll be watching from afar, he still plans to keep a close eye.

Lastly, Nierendorf highlighted one thing that made MES stand out: "the maturity of the students."

"They are so heartwarming," he said, "and I was so happy to be here earlier this week."

The next Board of Education meeting is scheduled for Thursday, Sept. 26, at 7 p.m. at the MES Library/Media Center, 25 School Dr.

Marlborough Residents Rankled by Grocery Store Proposal

by **Melissa Roberto**

Many residents expressed concerns Tuesday with a grocery store proposed for the Marlborough Tavern Green.

Residents filled the community room at Marlborough Elementary School for a Zoning Commission hearing on the proposal, which was presented as part of a master plan within the Marlborough Tavern Green – the plaza at the corner of East Hampton Road (Route 66) and South Main Street. The applicants, Elliot Enterprises LLC and GSD LLC who own the land in question, as well as the project designers of BL Companies, have met with the zoning, planning and conservation commissions over the last few months to tweak the proposal and assure it meets all town regulations.

The name of the grocery store and cost of the project have not been communicated. The applicants have applied for two zoning map amendments and a site permit that stand before the zoning commission that would allow for site development. A wetlands permit is also pending with the conservation commission.

Attorney Kari Olson of Murtha Cullina out of Hartford spoke for the applicants by giving a general overview of the overall plan for the plaza. It calls for an up-to-40,000 square-foot grocery store, to be built equipped with a pharmacy and drive-thru. As part of the overall plan, two additions to the Marlborough Tavern were also highlighted, even though they've already been approved and the building is currently undergoing renovations by new management, who anticipate an opening in December.

The overall proposal is “designed to revitalize the existing Marlborough Tavern and the adjacent shopping center,” Olson said, as well as “to encourage retail growth throughout your town’s village district.”

In order to make room for the grocery store, the project calls for the demolition of an existing building that currently houses the gift shop Taylor’d Touch. The gift shop would then move to another open location in the plaza, Olson said. Additionally, the entire parking area would be reconfigured for “safer traffic flow and more pedestrian use,” the attorney announced.

Also, two residential properties – 20 and 22 South Main St. – owned by GSD LLC, are included in the plan. 22 South Main St. is slated for demolition while 20 South Main St. would be “revitalized and converted to a conforming commercial or retail use,” Olson said.

Project manager and civil engineer from BL Companies Ray Gradwell discussed the project

in depth. He said the parking lot is anticipated to include approximately 280 parking spaces, including handicapped parking. The design also calls for changes to the existing full-access driveways present on East Hampton Road and South Main Street. The project calls for the driveway on East Hampton Road to change into an entrance and right turn only exit. Gradwell said this change would prohibit the current “problematic” left turn onto East Hampton Road. Also, the existing entrance on South Main Street would move 150 feet south. A third entrance is proposed to be placed further down South Main.

A “pocket park” is also included in the site plan, Gradwell said. He described this as a small, circular concrete area that would provide a seating area for pedestrians.

A total of 400 deciduous and evergreen trees would be planted within and around the plaza, Gradwell said. Per the planning commission’s request, existing stone walls would be reused.

Gradwell also discussed the use of public utilities. He said a sewer from East Hampton Road would be used. Though the plan currently calls for a well to be drilled for water, the applicants understand the town’s future public water system – that just received a STEAP grant – would be used if it is in place. Additionally, a propane tank would be installed for heating and cooling of the supermarket, as well as a fire suppression system. Electrical communications would be served underground from South Main Street, Gradwell said.

Gradwell also concluded the draining system would be “significantly improved in accordance to Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) regulations.”

Appearance of the plaza was also touched upon. Gradwell said “identical” lighting fixtures would be installed to match ones currently standing adjacent to Town Hall today.

“It’s a very, very attractive fixture,” he said. “That will complement what’s already in the town center. We worked with the planning commission to do that.”

Additionally, trash receptacles, bicycle racks, tables and benches are a part of the design to “create a pedestrian friendly site,” the project manager explained.

The architect, Ray Muhlbauer, also of BL Companies, coined the overall appearance “rural and colonial” to maintain Marlborough’s current characteristics.

“The idea was to keep the context the same

as what you’d expect to see in the neighborhood,” he said.

The presentation followed with room for public comments. About 20 residents came forward – and an overwhelming number of concerns were communicated, along with a handful of positive remarks.

Main concerns repeated throughout the night were the location and size of the building, and the traffic associated with it. Resident Lauren Cragg questioned what the increase in traffic flow would be. Fred Greenberg, director of Traffic Services at BL Companies who completed a traffic study on the area, estimated traffic flow in the area would triple.

“I’m concerned about how valid the traffic increase will be during the rush hour and school commutes,” Cragg said.

Others in the crowd balked at the supposed 300 percent increase in traffic. A majority of concerns related to the changes in driveways, as well as the proximity to School Drive, where MES, Richmond Memorial Library and Marlborough Senior Center stand.

Resident Debbie Bourbeau said she walks in that area often and had difficulty envisioning the additional traffic.

“I just can’t visualize how all that traffic is going to move in Marlborough,” she said. “I just worry about all the congestion in that small section both for pedestrians and drivers.”

Sandy MacDonald had a different perspective. She lives on School Drive. MacDonald was concerned not only with the commute but the safety around the school and adjoining streets. The homeowner also imagined “noisy” tractor trailers and a “dangerous situation” as a result of traffic among others.

“It’s going to bring down my property value because people come to Marlborough [to live] in a rural, quiet area,” she said.

Concerns also shifted to the actual appearance of the proposed grocery store. Betty O’Brien was concerned Marlborough’s small town feel would be eliminated.

“I look at this and I say ‘we’re asking ourselves and the commission to change who we are,’” said O’Brien.

Amy Traversa also firmly stated her opinion.

“It’s the wrong project on the wrong site and it’s the wrong size,” she said. “Forty thousand square feet for a town of about 2,300 households. Seriously there is just a major disconnect here.”

However, those who communicated concerns weren’t entirely opposed to the idea of having a grocery store in Marlborough. Some said they’d like to see it in Marlborough Commons on Route 16, where a grocery store had been located in the past.

Resident Joe LaBella stated he wasn’t sure what his position was but left the commission with the advice to “proceed cautiously.” He told members to look into the increase of police presence in the area, and the impact it would have on crime and traffic accidents.

Selectman Dick Shea – who stressed he was speaking “as an individual” – also said he did not have a stance on the project at hand. He said he felt the commission members have a “long, hard deliberation” before them. Shea touched upon the tax revenue the project would reel in, as well as what a high-profile business like a grocery store possibly being in the plaza could do to attract others to the Marlborough Tavern. He added that the project is “the only reasonable approach we have for a grocery store and pharmacy in the near future.”

“It isn’t an easy site,” Shea admitted. “I think the professionals who put the site plan together have done an exceptional job.”

It’s So Ranunculus owner Craig Robinson also left a positive note. He admitted he was speaking “selfishly” because he owns a business in town, but felt the proposal would bring more consumers into Marlborough.

“The area I think is pretty prime and I’d like to see the development happen sooner rather than later,” Robinson said.

Resident Rich Storrs stood before the commission with a piece of advice.

“Your charge as every elected official is to make a decision in the best interest of the town,” he said.

In response to questions raised, Gradwell said the project in its entirety – including The New Marlborough Tavern which is already under construction – would take about 18 months to complete. He added it would be done in phases to relieve traffic and noise concerns.

Olson concluded the hearing with advantages of the project to consider. These included providing a location of “basic necessities” for citizens, in addition to a significant amount of job openings, and an increase in property values and tax revenue.

The public hearing was continued to Thursday, Oct. 3, at 7 p.m., at Town Hall.

Marlborough Health and Safety Fair Coming Up Next Weekend

by **Melissa Roberto**

Each day firefighters and emergency medical technicians from the Marlborough Volunteer Fire Department and Roy B. Pettengill Ambulance Association demonstrate health and safety measures to keep citizens out of harm’s way.

But next Sunday, Sept. 15, those volunteers and others from surrounding organizations will be dedicated to sharing all the health and safety procedures they know with the general public at the fire department’s sixth bi-annual Marlborough Fire Department and EMS Health and Safety Fair.

Better yet, there’s no price tag to attend the fair, which the fire department’s rescue captain Mark Merritt said centers on the “health, safety and well-being” of citizens.

“It’s just a learning experience,” Merritt explained.

The fair will be held from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. outside of the fire department at 7 Hebron Rd. and the abutting Middlesex Medical Center. An array of activities will be available that are all educational but also feature an element of curiosity, as several give an inside – and quite realistic – look into just what fire and police response crews do on an everyday basis.

For example, a LifeStar helicopter will be on site so attendees can go inside of the air-

craft and view it, as well as take pictures and learn about LifeStar rescues.

“That’s a big hit,” Merritt said of LifeStar.

Another exciting aspect of the event is always the vehicles brought into town for viewing by the State Police from the Troop K police barracks in Colchester, Merritt said. The rescue captain anticipates a SWAT truck to be on site, but said a DARE vehicle or bomb squad vehicle may be there, too.

What also makes the fair just as enjoyable for children as it is informative for adults is the hands-on demonstrations that exist throughout the day. Activities include extrication and Jaws of Life demonstrations, and even fire extinguisher training.

Two fire trailers will also be present at the fair; one will be filled with smoke.

“It’s training smoke for kids to actually go in,” said Merritt. “The children have fire gear on and put out a simulated fire.”

K9 unit demonstrations with Homeland Security bomb-sniffing dogs will also be present, as will members of the Connecticut Poison Center.

While emergency responders and large vehicles are always an occurrence at the health and safety fair, Merritt highlighted one activity that

is a first this year: on-site mammograms, conducted by the Hartford Hospital Mobile Mammography bus. The mammograms will be offered to women over the age of 40 who have not had a mammogram in the past 12 months. They will be scheduled every 15 minutes with the first one at 10 a.m. and the last one at 2 p.m.

Merritt explained insurance companies will be billed for individuals with insurance; funds are also available for people who are not covered by insurance.

VNA East will also be at the fair, conducting free blood pressure screenings.

Parents might also be interested in taking home child identity packets from the Connecticut Freemasons’ Child Identification Program (CHIP). The program provides parents with packages to be taken home that aid in recovery and identification in the event their child becomes missing. The packages come with a video and materials needed for taking a child’s fingerprints, dental impression and dental swab.

Other local businesses and organizations will be on site next Sunday. A local Pilates studio will promote backpack safety, while Oneida Holistic Health Center, located in Marlborough, is coming with “a whole bunch of stuff,” according to Merritt.

Additionally, AHM Youth and Family Services from Hebron is planning to showcase all of their programs they offer in the area.

Lunch and snacks will also be provided throughout the event, free of charge.

Though its activities will offer much interaction and interesting demonstrations, Merritt stressed the purpose of the fair is the educational aspect.

“It’s just an educational day through and through,” he said. “If you teach one kid something that’s going to save their life some day then it was worth it.”

The event has welcomed 500-600 visitors in the past. The captain concluded it’s “always a hit.”

Whether it’s the local businesses, fire or police crews, or just the large vehicles and helicopter that attracts the crowd, next Sunday’s attendees will most likely bring tangible necessities and a great deal of knowledge home with them.

Any additional organizations or businesses interested in participating in the fair can call Merritt at 860-917-9577. For more information on the mammograms that will be offered, and to schedule an appointment, people are asked to call Melanie Merritt at 860-916-3409.

Pumpkintown in East Hampton to Make Debut at Big E

by Elizabeth Bowling

Autumn is just around the corner and this fall East Hampton's own Pumpkintown is going big – Big E, that is.

Pumpkintown USA is going to have a nine pumpkin-person showing at this year's Big E, which runs from Sept. 13 to Sept. 29.

Paul's and Sandy's Too is home of Pumpkintown USA, the only East Hampton business that will be represented at the Big E this year.

Steven Kelley, the tourism and special events coordinator for Pumpkintown, spearheaded its expansion into New England's biggest fair this month. He said he's been working in coordination with the state Department of Economy and Community Development to plan the Pumpkintown display in the Connecticut building at the Big E.

The Connecticut building will hold the same slogan as last year, "Still Revolutionary," Kelley affirmed.

"By joining the Big E, we're now involved in the 'Still Revolutionary' campaign," he said, adding that the opportunity will give Pumpkintown some name recognition outside of Connecticut's borders.

Kelley has planned for nine pumpkin-headed people to be displayed throughout the Connecticut building every day of the 17-day fair.

"The pumpkin-heads will represent different things," he said.

There will be two pumpkin-heads – one at each entrance into the building – welcoming people. Two additional pumpkin-heads will represent Connecticut's governor and lieutenant governor.

Kelley said the pumpkin-headed people look like Gov. Dannel P. Malloy and Lt. Gov. Nancy Wyman – or, he added with a laugh, "as much as they can look like the real people."

Four more pumpkin-heads inside the Connecticut building will be displayed in a camping scene, Kelley said. He said this scene is in conjunction with the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection and will "promote state camping and outdoor activities" as a part of DEEP's outdoors campaign.

The last pumpkin-headed person will represent a child, Kelley said, and it will be standing at the state's Rotary Club booth to promote a free Amber Alert service.

The entire nine-pumpkin-person display is "geared toward a family-feel," Kelley said.

He went on to talk about the Connecticut Day Parade on Wednesday, Sept. 18.

"The pumpkin mobile and pumpkin convertible will be leading off the Connecticut Day Parade," he said.

Additionally, Pumpkintown will have its own booth every Saturday and Sunday of the Big E,

as well as on Connecticut Day, according to Kelley.

As of Tuesday of this week, the pumpkin-people displays were not completed – the heads still had to be attached – but Kelley assured they would be ready in time.

"We're delivering everything [to the Big E location in West Springfield, Mass.] on Monday," he said.

Paul Peszynski, the former owner of Paul's and Sandy's, as well as the founder of Pumpkintown, said, "It's an honor for us [to be a part of the Big E]. It's what we feel has been happening all along – that is, we are being recognized as a destination."

In recent years, Pumpkintown's spectacle has been attracting attention from East Hampton residents, of course, but also from other Connecticut residents and even people who live outside of Connecticut, Peszynski explained. Though, he said, he didn't foresee so much success when he first came up with the idea.

"I never thought it would turn into what it is," he said. "It just gets bigger and bigger every year."

Pumpkintown has existed at Paul's and Sandy's Too in East Hampton for 20 years, growing in popularity each year.

Peszynski said he came up with the idea of Pumpkintown about 22 years ago when he and his late wife, Sandy, were on a trip in Vermont.

Peszynski recalled driving by a farm stand where "a fellow had out these characters that had pumpkins for heads; it stopped us in the road."

He said that upon a closer inspection, he saw that the pumpkin people were "built very simply with two by fours and wires. I said to my wife, 'That's a dynamite idea.'"

For the following fall season, Peszynski built 13 pumpkin people and tested the artistic ability of each of his employees by having them paint faces on the pumpkins to determine who would be the best face-painter.

"The one I painted wasn't very good," he said.

Luckily, someone else did a better paint job, and Peszynski was able to display the 13 pumpkin people on the side of the road. They got a lot of attention, though they weren't the full embodiment of Pumpkintown quite yet.

"People would drive by [and decide] they'd just have to come in," he said about the boost in business.

But that same year, Peszynski recalled, some kids took the pumpkin people in the middle of the night and threw them into the road. The result "looked like bodies," he said.

So Peszynski found a way to keep his pumpkin people safe from harm – he kept them fenced in on his property where some build-



Paul's and Sandy's Too, located on Route 66, is preparing for Pumpkintown and its upcoming venture into the Big E. Though the pumpkin people displays aren't quite camera-ready yet, they will be soon.

ings already existed. He turned those buildings into part of the attraction – for example, one became a church for the pumpkin couple that was getting married, and another became a barn for the farmer pumpkin.

Peszynski said he never imagined that his idea would turn into such a phenomenon, but his pumpkin people had quickly become a full-blown Pumpkintown, which even included a mayor.

The first year of Pumpkintown's existence was an actual election year. Peszynski took out a full-page advertisement in the *Rivereast*, in which he created an election for Pumpkintown; Mayor Leroy Butternut ran against Bill Clintumpkin.

People were able to cast their votes when they visited Pumpkintown.

"That's how we started Pumpkintown," Peszynski said.

Peszynski no longer owns Paul's and Sandy's Too. He handed down the business eight years ago to his son, Dan – as well as Dan's sisters, Karen Clark and Jill Peszynski Kelley – who has tweaked the Pumpkintown attraction only slightly.

But even under new ownership, Peszynski said, "We try to stay away from frightening kids."

Kelley, Peszynski's grandson, said, "There

are three sectors of Pumpkintown. There's the shopping element, there's the ride and there's the village."

Now the Pumpkintown village has more than 70 pumpkin people, as well as other forms of entertainment and activities, like a slingshot, moon bounce and a "tube-e-doo."

Last year, Pumpkintown attracted approximately 20,000 people. This year, Pumpkintown will open at 93 East High St. on Sept. 21 and will run through Halloween. On Oct. 31, there will be a trick-or-treating parade, in which children will march through the Pumpkintown village and get free popcorn and hot dogs, Kelley said.

The Pumpkintown village, open everyday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., will cost \$4 per person on Saturdays, Sundays and Columbus Day; it will cost \$1 on weekdays. Additionally, 25 percent of the profits go to the Sandy Peszynski Breast Cancer Foundation.

"The ride," which was added to the fun three years ago, is Dan's doing. "The ride" is made up of 30 pumpkin characters and runs every Saturday and Sunday, as well as Columbus Day, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. starting Sept. 21 and going until Oct. 31. "The ride" costs \$6 per person.

"For a nominal cost, you can go out with your family for a day of fun," Kelley said.

Portland School Board Discusses Students' Statistics

by Elizabeth Bowling

Because the Board of Education had its meeting Tuesday night – immediately following the first day of school for Portland students – the board had plenty to discuss, on everything from new teacher evaluations to school lunches.

Despite a smooth first day of school, Superintendent of Schools Sally Doyen noted there were some issues with the bus schedule in the afternoon.

"Some kids were on their buses substantially longer than they will be from now on," she affirmed.

According to Doyen, the overall district enrollment for this academic year is 1,376 students. But before those students could take their seats in the classroom, the teachers needed to prepare for their arrival. To do so, Portland schools' teachers participated in a four-day professional development seminar last week "because there's so much going on this year that

the teachers are responsible for," Doyen said.

Some of those responsibilities include the new Common Core curriculum, as well as the new teacher and administrator evaluations.

School board member Michael Pelton, referring to the new evaluations, said, "It seems like a really powerful tool."

He asked if evaluations will be used to decide which teachers get raises based on performance. Doyen responded that it is still undetermined how the evaluations will affect teachers in that sense.

In sum, Doyen said the four days of professional development were "very productive, but also very exhausting for the teachers."

Also at Tuesday night's meeting, Doyen informed the board that there would be a transfer of \$7,500 to the school lunch fund from the Board of Education's 2012-13 operating funds

that were not spent from that year, as approved by the Board of Selectmen two weeks ago.

Regarding school lunch, the Board of Education's contract with Sodexo, an outside company that provides the schools with their lunches, will be up after this school year, thus the lunch program "has to go to bid," Doyen said.

Board member Ben Srb said, "Sooner would be better than later."

Doyen also took some time Tuesday night to go over some statistics regarding Portland students. She said that, according to a student Body Mass Index report, Valley View Elementary School students were overweight on average.

Doyen noted that Valley View serves healthy cafeteria food as it is, so something else would need to be done to get and keep students fit.

The report was based on last year's numbers,

and students remained anonymous.

Other statistics presented at Tuesday's meeting were more academic-based. For example, last year 66 percent of the senior class took one course toward college credit, Doyen said. Additionally, the number of sophomores and juniors that take the PSATs has increased over the past couple of years.

Doyen called that increase "a great indicator of expecting more from the kids."

Regarding the regular SATs, the test scores for 2013 were approximately the same as they were for the class of 2012.

"The high school is making progress [academically]," Doyen said.

The next regularly scheduled Portland Board of Education meeting is Tuesday, Sept. 17, at 7 p.m., at the Portland High School media center.

Why Are There No Minutes in Andover?

by Geeta Schrayter

The Board of Selectmen at its meeting Wednesday discussed an issue they've talked a lot about in recent years – the town website. This time, the focus was on the fact meeting minutes haven't been added to the site since spring.

In a memo sent to First Selectman Bob Burbank that was shared at the meeting, administrative assistant Penny Auer provided an update on the website. She said she'd been learning how to access and use the site and had updated a number of pages, created a new page for the tax assessor and had plans to create new pages to post board and commission meeting minutes.

However, she noted "no minutes have been posted since January or February 2013." Furthermore, she said the selectmen's office doesn't receive the minutes, and the town clerk no longer posts them.

But at the meeting, Burbank said it was Town Clerk Carol Lee who was supposed to be posting them. He explained the selectmen decided Lee should be responsible for putting the minutes on the website when the topic was discussed two years prior – and she had agreed to do so.

At a September 2011 Board of Selectmen meeting regarding the website, it was decided the responsibility of putting the minutes on the website in a timely manner should fall on Lee and assistant town clerk Mikki Busch. Lee said at the meeting, "I don't have a problem doing that."

But at Wednesday's meeting Burbank said

that was no longer the case.

"There's been a change of heart," he said, "so the minutes have not been posted since February which, in reality, goes against state statute, but there's not much I can do about it."

At first, selectwoman Cathy Desrosiers said not putting up the minutes was "almost insubordination in [Lee's] job," but selectwoman Elaine Buchardt said there may have been a misunderstanding, since the decision was made to have Auer take care of other aspects of the website.

"But the town clerk's office is supposed to be posting the minutes," she said.

In response to the issue, the selectmen designated Desrosiers to craft an interoffice memorandum to be sent to Lee about the issue, informing her updating the minutes was in fact a part of her job.

However, on Thursday, Lee said that wasn't the case. She referenced a list of duties released during the May 3, 2012, annual town budget meeting that said if the selectmen were able to reinstate the administrative assistant position for Burbank, the assistant would be "responsible for providing information and updating the new website."

Furthermore, Lee said, having the town clerks update the minutes was supposed to be temporary.

"That was just agreed that it would be a temporary situation until someone was appointed to fill that role," she said.

Lee added it would be more efficient for the minutes to be submitted by the board clerks to

Auer and posted immediately to the website.

Although Lee and Busch couldn't say exactly how long uploading the minutes had taken them when they were doing it, they explained the process involved printing and receiving the minutes, making copies on archival paper for the minute books, scanning them back into the computer and uploading them to the website "whereas with the board clerk it is a direct one click."

But Burbank didn't agree with Lee's points. He said Thursday the selectmen didn't say the position was temporary. In addition, he said it made more sense for the town clerks to upload the minutes, not Auer.

He noted Auer worked no more than 10 hours per week, while Lee was supposed to be full-time and Busch worked part time at 20 hours per week.

"So that office is kind of 24/7," he said. "They get the [minutes] emailed directly to them. I don't get the emails. They get the emails to post the minutes in the appropriate books. All they have to do is forward it to the website."

Regarding the list of duties for Auer that had been handed out last year, Burbank said that was a draft list he had put together – not something put out by the selectmen.

"The bulletin was put out by me, but the town clerk was directed by the Board of Selectmen," he explained. "The directive about the administrative assistant was just from me – some of the things we could do. It was never approved by the Board of Selectmen. Directives like that

[making the clerks responsible for the minutes] come from the Board of Selectmen and that directive from the Board of Selectmen was never changed or modified."

When asked whether she would start adding the minutes to the website again – if indeed the selectmen tell her it's part of her job going forward – Lee would not respond.

"I don't have a comment at this point in time," she said, later adding "I haven't had any time to think about it or consider it or find a way to make [uploading the minutes] more efficient."

At Wednesday's meeting, Desrosiers called the situation "ridiculous."

"This is a five-, 10-minute job – this is ridiculous," she said.

"And," Buchardt added, "it belongs in the town clerk's office because they're the ones who get the minutes."

* * *

Also at the meeting, the selectmen set a public hearing for Tuesday, Sept. 10, to discuss the proposed location of the new multi-use recreation field in town.

"This is basically a public hearing to let the public know exactly what's going on with the recreation field," explained Burbank.

The public hearing will be held at 7 p.m. in the community room at Town Hall.

* * *

The next Board of Selectmen meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, Oct. 2, at 7 p.m. in the Andover Town Hall community room.

Final Year for Andover Elementary Principal

by Geeta Schrayter

The Andover school year has just begun and there is plenty to keep the staff occupied. Along with the usual day-to-day activities, changes in curriculum, testing and teacher and administrator evaluations are scheduled to take place.

Despite the full plate, the thoughts of some are on a change that will come with the *next* school year: a new principal.

In June, Principal Dave Griffin submitted to Superintendent of Schools Andy Maneggia a letter of intent to retire at the end of the 2013-14 year. Griffin said he had wanted to keep the news quiet until the letter was brought to the Board of Education (it's listed as an agenda item for the Sept. 11 board meeting) and he informed the staff at the school – something he did at a meeting held Tuesday.

"I just felt I owed it to them [to tell them] because I think the world of all my staff and I wanted it to come from me," Griffin said Wednesday.

Griffin, a Columbia resident, will have been with Andover for 10 years when he concludes his tenure as principal next June. As he heads into retirement, he will have worked in the education field for 41 years.

The journey began at Penny High School in East Hartford, where Griffin worked as a teacher from 1969-1981. Afterwards he took a position at E. O. Smith High School in Storrs, where he was the last director of the school when it was still owned by the state and run by the University of Connecticut (in 1987, the school became a regional high school, serving Ashford, Mansfield and Willington). Following that stint, he finished his doctorate at UConn and worked as a supervisor for student teachers at the university.

Griffin then took a position as the director of curriculum in Plymouth, followed by some work with the development of education software, and 13 years in East Hampton as an assistant principal at the high school and elementary school.

From there, Griffin moved to his current *Rivereast* town, Andover.

"When I stop to think of it, 41 years – that's

a good amount of time and there are other endeavors I'm looking forward to being involved in," Griffin explained.

He said a large factor in his decision was his family and a desire to spend more time with his children and grandchildren. In addition, he was looking to do some traveling.

"I love to travel, and Greece is on my bucket list," he said. "So those are the things I'm taking into consideration, and I did talk to my family and they said, 'Dad, that's awesome – go for it!'"

But at Andover Elementary School, while they're excited for Griffin to move onto the next chapter in his life, administration members have expressed regret over his leaving.

Board of Education Chairman Jay Lindy spoke this week of Griffin's dedication.

"If I called him up at 1 in the morning and we had a problem he'd be out here from Columbia; he always put the school in front," Lindy said. "But now he wants to enjoy his grandkids. It's going to be our loss but it's going to be his gain."

Maneggia said he was at a loss for words Wednesday, and although Griffin had been talking about his future for the last couple of years, he was still unprepared for the letter of retirement.

"You anticipate it, but you're not ready for it," he said. "And that's kind of my reaction at this particular time. Dave has done a good job here at Andover Elementary School and he'll be missed and we wish him the very best."

But in the meantime, Maneggia stressed there was a busy year ahead, with all of the changes and plenty of work for Griffin to be involved in before he goes.

"We have a very challenging year ahead of us and he has a critical role to play in meeting those challenges," said Maneggia.

But Griffin isn't a stranger to change, and said he enjoyed some of the ones that had already occurred.

"I think what I've enjoyed the most is seeing the changes that have taken place – and I think the changes have been positive," Griffin said of his time in Andover.

Griffin considered some of those changes his biggest accomplishments. He mentioned the start of all-day kindergarten in 2010 as a "big thing," explaining the change made a difference in student readiness as they moved up the grades. In addition Griffin mentioned a change in the reading and math series used by the school as positive, as well as improvements made in writing.

"We were weak in the area of writing here and those scores have gone way up," he said. "I think the fact that our sixth graders scored third in the state in reading and writing last year for the [Connecticut Mastery Tests] – that's just absolutely outstanding."

Griffin also commented on technology at the school. He noted there are SMART Boards in each classroom and a SMART Table in the pre-school class.

"That's pretty amazing for a small district," he said, adding the school also made sure teachers had the appropriate professional development to ensure they understood the technology and could use it appropriately.

"Regardless of whether it was the reading and math series or the technology or the writing program, there was professional development that backed the product up so the teachers understood and we were able to give back to the children," he said.

And it's the children Griffin said he'd miss the most.

"I think what I will miss the most certainly will be the children and the wonderful staff that's here," Griffin said.

He added working with Maneggia, who started in Andover just a few months before him, had been a "tremendous experience," while working with the Board of Education had been "very positive."

Griffin said he felt connected to the Andover community, which was part of the reason he felt it important to abide by the requirement in his contract and give the district a year's notice of his departure.

"I feel so connected with Andover Elementary – with the staff, with my students and fami-



Plenty of changes are slated for the current school year at Andover Elementary School, and another one is already known for next year: Principal Dave Griffin will be retiring at the end of the 2013-14 school year – his tenth in town.

lies – that it was only fair I give them as much time as possible to find a replacement," Griffin said.

And regarding said replacement, Griffin said the district needed someone who is "compassionate, is understanding and certainly somebody that loves children."

"And the person also has to be pretty savvy with regards to the changes that are coming down with regards to curriculum" he added, "and certainly up-to-date with changes in the teacher and administration evaluation plan."

All of which is easier said than done, as far as Lindy is concerned.

"It's going to be hard to replace him," Lindy said. "He's going to be missed. It was an honor to have him as principal."

Obituaries

East Hampton

David Johnson

David Johnson, 83, of East Hampton, widower of the late Marie (Pierce) Johnson died Thursday, Aug. 29, at Hartford Hospital. Born Aug. 23, 1930, in Auburn, Mass., he was the son of the late Axel and Gunda (Broman) Johnson.

David proudly served his country in the U.S. Navy during the Korean War. He retired from Pratt & Whitney Aircraft in 1989, where he had worked as a quality inspector. David was a member of the Army Navy Club and was an active member of the East Hampton Senior Center.

He is survived by his loving companion, Gail Lutton, and her family, his two sons Kevin Johnson and his wife Nadean of East Hampton, Jay Johnson and his wife Kimberly of Berlin; a brother, John Walter Johnson of Glastonbury; a sister, Helen Bergman of Massachusetts; two grandchildren, David and Kathleen; and five great-grandchildren Matthew, Anthony, Lilliana, Gabriel and Luke.

He was predeceased by a brother, Elmer Nordfeldt, and three sisters, Ethel Perreault, Gunhild Dunn and Edna Corcoran.

The family would like to thank the staff of the Hartford Hospital Palliative Care Unit for the wonderful care their father received.

Funeral services were held Tuesday, Sept. 3, in the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton. Burial was Wednesday, Sept. 4, in Northside Cemetery in Charlton, Mass. Friends called at the Spencer Funeral Home Tuesday, before the service.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the East Hampton Senior Center, 105 Main St., East Hampton, CT 06424.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Portland

Jane M. Stevens

Jane M. (Ohlson) Stevens, 63, of Portland, wife of 42 years of Bruce E. Stevens, passed away Friday, Aug. 30, with her family by her side. She was born in New Britain and was the daughter to the late Frank and Ruth (Young) Ohlson and was raised in Kensington.

Aside from being a loving wife and mother, Jane was an avid UConn women's basketball fan. She enjoyed vacationing in the Lake Winnepesaukee area of New Hampshire and spending time with her many friends and neighbors of the Bartlett Hill community.

Besides her husband, she is survived by two children Michael Stevens and his wife Kat, and Sarah Barr and her husband Tom; four grandchildren, Matthew and Samantha Zapor, and Elizabeth and Zachary Barr; one sister Judy Devokaitis; one sister-in-law Joan Hartley; one brother-in-law, John Stevens his wife Deborah; and several nieces, nephews, and extended family.

The family wishes to thank the nurses, doctors and staff in the Critical Care Unit at Middlesex Hospital.

Graveside services will be private and at the convenience of the family.

Friends and family called Tuesday, Sept. 3, at the Cromwell Funeral Home, 506 Main St., Cromwell.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to American Heart Association, 5 Brookside Dr., Wallingford, CT 06492 or American Diabetes Association, 2nd Floor, 2080 Silas Deane Highway, Rocky Hill, CT 06067.

To send messages of condolence or share memories with the family, visit doolittlefuneralservice.com.

Colchester

Ellis Tracy Smith

Ellis Tracy Smith of Colchester, 91, widower of the late Esther (Marsh) Smith, passed away Wednesday, Aug. 28. He was the son of the late George and Shirley (Miner) Smith.

He retired as an assistant extruder operator for Gilman Bros. Ellis was one of Jehovah's Witnesses.

Donations in his memory may be made to Apple Rehab Recreation Dept., 36 Broadway, Colchester, CT 06415.

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

Hebron

Lt. Col. Marvin Ross

Lt. Col. Marvin Allen Ross (U.S. Army, Ret.), age 100 years, passed away peacefully at home in Hebron Saturday, Aug. 31.

Born in Bonita, Texas, on April 23, 1913, he was the son of the late Lonzo Harrison and Jimmie (Stokeley) Ross. Mr. Ross attended CT State Teachers College and earned a Masters in Education from the University of Hartford. He married Yolanda Barrasso on May 16, 1953. She survives him.

Mr. Ross retired from the U.S. Army after having proudly served for 26 years during World War II and Korea. While serving his country he was awarded the WWII Victory Medal, Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal, Army Occupation Medal, American Defense Service Medal, Philippine Liberation Ribbon, Bronze Star Medal, Korean Service Medal, United Nations Service Medal, four Overseas Bars, Oak Leaf Cluster to Bronze Star Medal, Armed Forces Reserve Medal, National Defense Service Medal, American Campaign Medal and ROK Presidential Unit Citation.

He went on to teach in the East Hartford school system for over 15 years. Mr. Ross was a member of the Masons in Oklahoma and a life member of the American Legion in Hebron. He was an active member of the Hebron community, having formerly served on the Board of Education and Board of Finance and was a member of the Hebron Republican Town Committee.

He enjoyed wood-carving, gardening and spending time with his grandchildren. He will be remembered fondly and with pride for his commitment to his country and family.

In addition to his beloved wife of 60 years, he is survived by two children and their spouses, Jonathan and Sandra Ross of Colchester, Marlene Kiser of Amston; a sister, Maydell Kelley of Temple, Okla.; nine grandchildren and their spouses, Jonathan Ross Jr., Jocelyn and Fotios Anastasiou, Brian and Ngan Kisner, Tyler Kisner, Joanne and Kenneth Crawley, Julie-Ann and Ian Lunn, Tracy and Elaine Ross, Daniel and Kasia Ross and Tony Fisher; 12 great-grandchildren; one great-great grandchild; and numerous extended family members and friends.

He was predeceased by two children, Marvin Ross, Jr. and Barbara Ann Fisher; and a son-in-law, Paul Kisner.

Calling hours will be held Sunday, Sept. 8, from 4:30-6:30 p.m., at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. The funeral liturgy will be celebrated Monday, Sept. 9, at 10 a.m., directly at the Church of the Holy Family, 185 Church St., Hebron. Burial with full military honors will follow in Rose Hill Memorial Park, Rocky Hill.

Donations in his memory may be made to woundedwarriorproject.org.

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Colchester

Robert Michael Wales

Robert Michael "Bob" Wales, 42, of Lebanon and formerly of Colchester, beloved husband of Michele (Colligan), passed away suddenly Sunday, Sept. 1, at the Rhode Island Hospital in Providence.

Bob was employed as a corrections officer with the State of Connecticut at York in Niantic for over 19 years.

He was a model helicopter pilot, affiliated with R.C. Prop Busters in Salem. He was an antique car enthusiast, having restored a 1933 Ford pickup truck. Most importantly, he will be remembered by those who knew him as having a big heart, an even bigger smile and a fierce devotion to his family.

In addition to his wife, Bob is survived by his father, Preston Wales Sr. of Amston; his mother, Patricia (McGarty) Neer of Colchester; stepfather, John Neer of Rochester, N.H.; two brothers and their wives, P.J. and Anne Wales of East Hampton and Steven and Jenn Wales of Lebanon; a sister and brother-in-law, Kimberly (Colligan) and Robert Monaco; three nephews, Alex, Tristan and Shawn Wales; two nieces, Siena Wales and Madison Monaco; and numerous extended family and friends.

Calling hours will be held today, Sept. 6, from 4-7 p.m., at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. The funeral will gather at 10 a.m. at the funeral home with a chapel service at 11 a.m. Burial will be private.

Donations in his memory may be made to Yale Children's Hospital, 1 Park St. New Haven, CT 06510.

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

East Hampton

John Thomas Grimshaw

John "Jack" Thomas Grimshaw, 91, of Lake Havasu City, Ariz., and formerly East Hampton, passed away Sunday, June 30. He was born April 20, 1922, in Killingly to John Henry and Mary (Blanchard) Grimshaw.

Dad spent his early years working a variety of jobs and had several businesses. He was most proud of his years with the Connecticut State Policy Emergency Division, where he received awards for marksmanship. Dad was very athletic and in his youth was scouted by Major League Baseball teams. Snow skiing and ice skating brightened his winters until retirement; he would reminisce about doing tricks on barrel skis and axes on ice skates.

Dad really enjoyed traveling. He was an avid golfer who played all over the country. Fishing was another passion he enjoyed throughout the country, however he always returned to Connecticut to spend opening day of fishing season with his son. In his late 60's he took up dancing on roller skates. He traveled to the Poconos for competitions where he won a silver medal.

While in Lake Havasu he enjoyed fishing, exercising at the Aquatic Center, visiting the senior center and most of all playing Bunco all over town. Jack relocated to Lake Havasu in March 2008, prior to which he was a longtime resident of East Hampton. He was a member of the Desert Singles, Moose Lodge, Eagles 4299, a life member of the Elks and a senior center volunteer.

He will be missed by all who knew him. His greatest passion was life and he enjoyed it to the fullest, bringing smiles wherever he went.

He is survived by his son, John T. Grimshaw Jr., of East Hampton; daughter Melaney (Norman) McHale of Lake Havasu City, Ariz; sister Jeanette Burbrick of Connecticut and granddaughter, Katelyn Grimshaw of East Hampton.

He was preceded in death by his brother, Michael, and sisters Theresa Rygielski, Mary Gunthner and Maria.

Condolences can be sent to the family directly or at lakehavasumortuary.com.

Hebron

William Lazlo

William Lazlo, 67, of Hebron, passed away at Hartford Hospital Sunday, Sept. 1, of liver disease. Born in Hartford, he was the son of the late Walter and Stephanie (Chudinski) Lazlo.

Bill attended schools in Hartford, West Hartford and Manchester College. He was a "jack of all trades." He started work at age 16, working at the vet clinic in West Hartford for his best friend Hop. Later he became a union carpenter followed by engineering work for 15 years at P&W. He moved to Punta Gorda, Fla., running a start-up business of monitoring absentee-owner homes in 1989.

Ten years later Bill moved back to Connecticut, working in real estate and appraising, followed by a school bus driver, a poker dealer at Foxwoods and settled into managing a branch office of a window replacement company (Thermal Industries) until his retirement in 2011. Bill also had his private pilot's license.

Bill had two children by a previous marriage; in 1985, he married Jeanette (Lavariere) DeLeon Lazlo. He enjoyed his cat Sheba, woodworking, remodeling, trading stocks, relaxing at his summer home in Maine, talking with friends and playing Blackjack at Mohegan Sun Casino.

Bill is survived by his wife Jeanette; daughter Deborah Lazlo and her children Joshua, Nicholas and Crystal, all of Manchester; a son Billy and his wife Renee and their children Donna and Cassandra; two great-grandbabies, Zaiden and Blaiden of North Carolina. Bill also leaves behind his step-son Troy DeLeon and his wife Gloria, and their children Troy Jr. and Taylor, stepdaughter Lynne Maldonado and her husband John, and their children Kayla and Evan, an aunt, several nephews and many cousins.

He was predeceased by his older brother, Walter.

Calling hours were held Thursday, Sept. 5, from 5-7 p.m., at the Glastonbury Funeral Home, 450 New London Tpke., Glastonbury, followed by a eulogy and Catholic memorial service at 7:30 p.m. at the funeral home. Burial is private and at the convenience of the family.

To leave an online condolence, visit glastonburyfuneral.com.

Colchester

Madeline Jackson

Madeline (Scarino) Jackson, 90, of Colchester and formerly of Wolcott, widow of the late Edgar J. Jackson, passed away Tuesday, Sept. 3, at home, with her loving family at her side. Born July 22, 1923, in Waterbury, she was a daughter of the late Nicholas and Helen (Bergamo) Scarino.

For many years, Mrs. Jackson volunteered with the Auxiliary at St. Mary's Hospital in Waterbury. She was a long-time communicant of St. Pius X Church in Wolcott.

Her greatest joy in life, however, was found in loving and caring for her family, to whom she was ever devoted.

She leaves her daughter and son-in-law, Sandra and Robert Fedus of Colchester; five grandchildren, Bridgette Duvall (and her husband, Shawn) and Carolyn, Robert, Jr., Brittany, and Eric Fedus; a great grandson, Christopher Duvall; three siblings, Florence Hanson of Waterbury, Rita Primiano of Middlebury and Edward Scarino (and his wife, Janice) of Wolcott; and numerous extended family members and friends.

In addition to her loving husband of 58 years, who passed away Jan. 12, 2009, she was predeceased by a sister, Dorothy Stoddard.

The family will receive guests starting at 9:30 a.m. today, Sept. 6, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. The celebration of the Funeral Liturgy will follow at 11 a.m. at St. Andrew Church, 128, Norwich Ave., Colchester. Burial will follow in the Old St. Joseph Cemetery, Waterbury.

Memorial donations may be made to the Alzheimer's Association, 2075 Silas Deane Highway, Suite 100, Rocky Hill, CT 06067.

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

East Hampton

Ruth Ann Tegge

Ruth Ann (Robinson) Tegge, 56, of East Hampton, beloved wife of Brooke Tegge, lost her courageous battle with cancer Wednesday, Aug. 28. Ruth was born in Hartford June 4, 1957, the daughter of the late Kenneth and Joan Robinson.

She was a devoted mother to Jennifer, Sara and Brooke Tegge Jr. of East Hampton and grandmother to Douglas. She leaves a brother, Kenneth Robinson and his wife Debbie of Middletown; a sister, Kathleen Robinson and her partner Michael Hall of Wethersfield; and her nephews, Neil, Shawn and Kristopher Robinson. She also leaves her mother-in-law, Nancy Tegge of Southington; sister-in-law, Joan Tegge of Cape Cod, Mass.; her great aunt, Ester Boardman of West Hartford; and her best friend, Jo-Anne Callinan of Middletown.

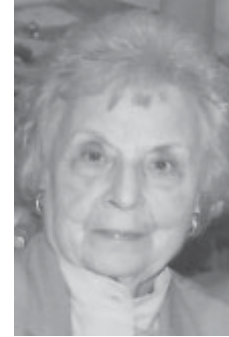
Ruth was a devoted employee to Middlesex Hospital and loved her job and co-workers deeply. She worked several years in the field of human service. She always gave 100 percent in anything she involved herself in. She was active in NE P.O.S.T (New England Paranormal Observation Science Technology) and truly enjoyed ghost-hunting.

Ruth's family would like to thank the oncology department at Middlesex Hospital for their wonderful care and support. Special thanks also to Middlesex Hospice and Dr. Cathy Zack for her care and friendship.

A memorial service was held Saturday, Aug. 31, at Biega Funeral Home, 3 Silver St., Middletown. Friends called Saturday morning, prior to the service, at Biega Funeral Home.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Salvation Army, 217 Washington St., Hartford, CT 06106.

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



Portland

Ruth A. Johnson

Ruth A. Johnson, 79, of Glastonbury, beloved wife of Ted (H. Theodore) and the devoted loving mother of Carolyn, David and Laura, passed peacefully Friday, Aug. 30, at Portland Care & Rehabilitation. Born in Brooklyn, N.Y., Dec. 11, 1933, she was the daughter of the late J. Thorgier and Gladys Anderson, and daughter-in-law of Hartvig and Anna Johnson.

Ruth was educated in Brooklyn, studied law and speed shorthand. She worked as a legal secretary for prominent law firms in New York City and Hartford. At retirement, Ruth ended her career with the Phoenix Mutual Life Insurance Company. Ruth loved music and the piano and was a talented and accomplished player. She took lessons for many years and studied with noted pianist Kathleen Buswell. Churches in both New York and Connecticut were privileged with her playing and accompaniment of their choirs.

In Brooklyn, N.Y., soccer was a prominent sport. Sunday afternoon was a gathering time for European teams to play and compete. It was at one of these occasions that Ruth met Ted. They dated, fell in love and married in October 1955. In January 1956 Ruth and Ted moved into their newly constructed home and have lived there together for 58 years. Their three children were born there, Carolyn, David, Laura, educated in Glastonbury and subsequently married with children of their own. Carolyn's family is in Denver, Colo., Laura's family in Williamsburg, Va., and David lovingly cares for his father Ted at home.

At a young age Ruth attended and was a Sunday school teacher in the Evangelical Lutheran Church. Later, she and Ted were members of the Evangelical Free Church and First Church in Wethersfield.

Ruth was totally devoted to her family, holiday occasions and spent many enjoyable years camping in New Hampshire. She visited with family in Norway and traveled with Ted to the Alps and Austria.

Ruth is survived by her husband Ted and their children's families, Carolyn and Mark Wieber and grandchildren, Nicholas, Kristen, Alec and Jaelyn; Laura and James Brunson and grandchildren, Victoria and Christopher; David Johnson Sr., devoted son and caregiver, also grandson David Jr. Ruth also leaves behind brother-in-law, Kenneth Christiansen and his children Louise, Ken Jr. and Lynn Joy, plus their partners and children.

In addition to her parents, Ruth was predeceased by her two sisters, Joan and Thelma.

Friends attended a period of visitation Thursday, Sept. 5, at the Glastonbury Funeral Home, 450 New London Tnpk., Glastonbury, followed by a Celebration of Life service at the funeral home and burial in Green Cemetery, Glastonbury.

Memorial donations may be made to First Church of Christ, 250 Main St., Wethersfield, CT 06109.

The Johnson family is especially grateful to the nurses and medical staff of Portland Care & Rehabilitation for their loving care during Ruth's illness. Our sincerest thank you from Ted, David, Carolyn and Laura.

For more information or to leave an online condolence, visit glastonburyfuneral.com.

Colchester

Kathleen A. Scytkowski

Kathleen A. (Hodge) Scytkowski, 49, a 10-year Springfield, Mass., resident, formerly of Colchester, passed away suddenly at home Friday, Aug. 30.

She was born in Middletown Jan. 6, 1964, the daughter of Harrison M. and Patricia Y. (Young) Hodge of Colchester.

She attended Bacon Academy in Colchester. Kathleen was a devoted mother and loving grandmother. She was previously employed as a cashier at Pride Convenience Stores.

In addition to her parents, she is survived by her husband of 26 years, Stephen S. Scytkowski; two sons, Lee Hodge of Springfield, Mass., and Stephen G. Scytkowski of Chicopee, Mass.; and one daughter, Jamie Scytkowski of Springfield, Mass. She also leaves two brothers and their wives, Bob and Linda (Riley) Hodge of Colchester and Kevin and Cindy (Carson) Hodge of Lebanon. She will also be sadly missed by her grandson, Salvador Planadeball III, who she fondly called "J.J."

Calling hours are Saturday, Sept. 7, from 10 a.m.-1 p.m., at the Legacy Funeral Home, 4 Princeton St., Westfield, Mass. Burial will be at the convenience of the family.

Donations, in lieu of flowers, can be made to Catholic Charities, 65 Elliot St., Springfield, MA 01105, noting "in memory of Kathy Scytkowski/Homecoming Project."

Please visit legacy-funeralhome.com.

Portland

Ann Collins Rode

Ann Collins Rode, 96, passed away peacefully Sunday, Sept. 1, on Cape Cod, Mass., after a brief illness. She was married for 49 years to Otto J. Rode and lived in Portland for all her married life.

She leaves her son Walter and wife Marjorie of Portland; daughter Margaret Zubik and husband Michael of Passadumkeag, Maine; grandson Michael B. and wife Molly of Gorham, Maine; granddaughter Carrie Collins Zubik of Passadumkeag, Maine.

Ann attended schools in Massachusetts and went to Katharine Gibbs Secretarial School in Boston. After raising her family she worked and volunteered at libraries in Portland and Middletown, and when she retired she found great fun and friendships through volunteering at a local thrift store. She summered all her life on Cape Cod at her family home in North Eastham, where she enjoyed many years of great happiness with family members. She also leaves her sister, Colie Cook, Colie's children and three special nieces from California.

A service in her honor was held Wednesday, Sept. 4, at the Nickerson Funeral Home in Orleans, Mass.

In lieu of flowers, donations in her memory may be made to Cancer Care of Maine, 489 State St., Bangor, ME, 04401 or call 877-366-3662.

For online condolences, visit nickersonfunerals.com.



East Hampton Police News

8/17: Jeffrey Pratt, 19, of 27 Ola Ave., East Hampton was arrested after he was observed driving well over the posted speed limit of 25 M.P.H. on Clark Hill Road. Pratt was charged with traveling unreasonably fast and driving under the influence, East Hampton Police said.

8/20: Brooke Tegge Jr., 19, of 5 Niles St., East Hampton was arrested for second degree burglary, sixth degree larceny and second degree criminal trespass, police said.

8/22: Peter Moore, 33, of 85 No. Main St. turned himself in pursuant to a warrant for his arrest for failure to register change of address as a sex offender, police said.

8/22: Danielle N. Tyler, 29, of 137 Young

St., East Hampton was placed under arrest and charged with violation of a protective order, disorderly conduct, criminal mischief and risk of injury, police said.

8/26: Mallory Reynolds, 26, of 84 Saner Rd., Marlborough was placed under arrest pursuant to an active PRAWN Warrant. Reynolds was charged with second degree failure to appear, police said.

8/27: Zachary Lee Plitt, 18, of 1164 Heron Ct., Mechanicsburg, PA turned himself in pursuant to an active arrest warrant. Plitt was charged with disorderly conduct, second degree criminal mischief and tampering with a motor vehicle, police said.

Colchester Police News

8/27: State Police said Cierra Straub, 27, of 172 Crystal Ave., Apt. 3, New London, was charged with possession of drug paraphernalia, failure to drive in the proper lane on a multiple lane highway, operating a motor vehicle at too slow of a speed, DUI and insurance coverage fails to meet minimum requirements.

8/27: Colchester Police said Samantha Ann Melendez, 19, and Mathew Vik, 25, both of 23 Hayward Ave., Apt. 1, were each charged with third-degree assault and disorderly conduct.

8/29: State Police said David D. Rulli, 47, of 15 Park Rd., was charged with criminal at-

tempt to commit third-degree larceny and criminal attempt to commit insurance fraud.

8/30: State Police said Gottam Mahey, 18, of 24 Oakleaf Dr., was charged with possession of narcotics and possession with intent to sell.

8/31: State Police said Robert J. Snow, 50, of 355 Babcock Hill Rd., Lebanon, was charged with DUI and improper turn.

9/2: State Police said Adam Viggiano, 34, of 55 Hilltop Trail, Salem, was charged with third-degree assault and breach of peace.

Marlborough Police News

8/28: State Police said Osvaldo A. Rodriguez, 30, of 26 Lawrence St., Apt. 2F, Hartford, was charged with possession of narcotics.

9/3: State Police said Kerstin Wesson, 37, of 19 South Main St., was charged with second-degree assault and disorderly conduct.

From the Editor's Desk

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

Getting something for nothing is pretty sweet; I think that should go without saying. But one thing that's always burned me up a little has been when people get something for nothing – and then complain about it.

This past weekend in Portland proved my point.

The annual Portland fireworks show was held Saturday night. I missed it, but from what I hear it was a well-done show, providing lots of smiles all around.

I was actually a little surprised to hear the show went off as planned, particularly since it wound up pouring here in Manchester late Saturday night. With the gloomy forecast, were the fireworks going to be scrapped? I hoped not, because Sunday didn't figure to be any better – indeed, it wasn't – and the deeper we got into September the more likely, I feared, that the fireworks would be scrapped altogether.

Tuesday morning when I got to work I learned that, because of the gloomy forecast, the fireworks committee moved the show up just a bit – by 20 minutes – as you obviously can't shoot fireworks off in the rain, and you also want people to be able to get home safely.

A perfectly sound move, I thought. Then I heard about Facebook.

Apparently, people took to Facebook to register their disgust at the fireworks being moved up. And there was a fair amount of disgust.

“Extremely disappointed,” wrote one. “My husband and I along with another couple got there just about 8:40 and never made it to the fairgrounds. We watched about 10 minutes' worth from the street, turned around and went home. What a real waste.”

Another chimed in, “We are very disappointed in the fireworks, from the start time to the quality of the display...almost a waste of time..as we planned our evening around the time that was advertised.”

A third wrote, “we saw about 5 mins even though we got to our spot at 845.”

Now there, if you ask me, is the problem. Why were people cutting it so close? When going to see fireworks, I always try to allow myself plenty of time, not because I expect them to go off early but because I want to ensure I've got a good spot. My trips up to the Buckland Mall in Manchester in July – a great spot, I've found, to see that town's fireworks – have shown me I'm far from the only one who thinks this way.

The Portland Fireworks were due to start at 8:45; why are people still getting to their spots then?

Look, I know it's annoying to miss something which you thought you were actually on time for. But all the criticism heaped upon the Fireworks Committee on its Facebook page was unwarranted. Two years ago, in 2011, the fireworks show was postponed twice before ultimately being canceled altogether. I don't think anybody wanted to see that again.

And this isn't even the first time the fireworks were shot off a little early; last year, they went off a bit sooner than expected, likely for the same reasons.

Fireworks Committee member Sharon Hoy explained the rationale behind the early start time in a letter in this week's paper, writing that since radar “showed a major thunderstorm that was heading directly toward Portland, in the interest of the public's safety, the decision was made to start the fireworks early. We apologize to those who came late and didn't see the entire show but having so many people in an open field, without cover, it was the best decision.”

I'm hoping the vast majority of fireworks-watchers understood this. And to be fair, there were some people who just took to the Facebook page to offer praise. “Excellent Portland show!” one wrote. “Thank you for a

great show!” wrote another.

Still, it's a shame to see people complaining about what was *a free show*. It's not even a show put on by the town, so you can't say it's taxpayer-subsidized. It was a free show, put on by people who work hard all year round to raise money for the event, and you hate to see those folks lambasted for acting in what they really felt was the best interest of the public.

* * *

After hearing nothing but praise about it for a very long time, in late June I decided to catch up with the show *Breaking Bad*. I knew I wanted to get caught up in time for the final batch of eight episodes – one last cook, if you will – which started the middle of last month. It took some heavy-duty watching – after all, I had 54 episodes to view before the final eight started – and I wasn't completely caught up by the time the new episodes started. But, thanks in part to Labor Day weekend, I am now.

And what. A. Freaking. Awesome. Show. The basic plot may be fairly well-known by this point (as the show is a critical darling and has won a bunch of Emmys): a bland, rather sad chemistry teacher, Walt White, is diagnosed with lung cancer and decides, to raise enough money to make sure his family is comfortable after he goes, to begin making and selling crystal meth. Walt brings on board Jesse Pinkman, a former student of his, as his business partner, and the two develop a tortured – to put it mildly – relationship, with neither seeming to like the other very much (though Jesse at least tries; it's obvious he looks to Walt as the father figure he never had, and Walt – maddeningly so – more often than not acts as if he couldn't care less).

The ensuing four and a half seasons bring wild plot twists and turns, as Walt and Jesse's situations become more and more dangerous, Walt himself becomes more and more ruthless (indeed, he undergoes a breathtaking transformation from a milquetoast shnook to a diabolical egomaniac, someone who, as he memorably puts it in one episode, is “the one who knocks”), and the two encounter a cast of supporting characters ranging from hilariously delightful (attorney Saul Goodman) to menacing supervillain-types (restaurant owner and drug kingpin Gustavo Fring).

Now, as you could probably guess from the subject matter, *Breaking Bad* is not for the squeamish. It's a very violent show, sometimes shockingly so. And if you want your main character, the guy you root for, to be an old-fashioned, wholesome type, you're out of luck. Walter White – if you can even call him the hero anymore – is definitely more along the lines of Tony Soprano or Don Draper. In fact, to call him a “flawed hero” would be vastly understating the matter. I've seen him pegged as an “antihero,” and that's probably a good description.

But if you can get past that, some remarkably good television awaits you. Don't do what I did, and try to catch up with the show so you can watch the new ones while they're still airing. Not only would that be pretty much impossible at this point – there's only four episodes left in the series – each episode of *Breaking Bad* is so well-crafted that you want to give it time to sink in and roll around in your brain a bit before the next one pops up.

So take some time, hit up Netflix (or, if you're lucky, the local library; some – but not all – carry DVDs of the show) and watch the series from the beginning. Or even just go out to Target or someplace and buy the series outright; it would be a sound investment, to be sure. I've watched a lot of TV in my life – more than I'd care to admit, to be honest – and this show is one of the very best I've ever seen.

* * *

See you next week.