

RIVEREAST

# News Bulletin

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**Message in a Bottle...** Marlborough Elementary School sixth-graders thanked area veterans at a special celebration Monday. As part of the event, bottles were tied to a tree outside the school; each one contained a special message of thanks to the veterans. See related story on page 10.

## Veterans Honored At Portland Dinner

by John Tyczkowski

Two hundred forty veterans, as well as their family and friends, gathered in the Portland High School cafeteria to enjoy good company, good food and to be recognized for their service.

The veterans, who had served across decades from World War II to Iraq and Afghanistan, sat at tables adorned with handmade cards from pre-kindergarten through second grade students at Valley View Elementary School.

"Thank you for keeping our country safe and you are a good person," one card read.

"Thank you for serving our country, being away from your family and protecting us," read another.

"Thank you for keeping our country safe," one said simply and to the point. "Thank you for giving us freedom."

In addition to these handwritten messages, the red, white and blue cards were adorned with drawings of soldiers, American flags and tanks, planes and ships.

Robert DeCarlo, the Districts 2 and 7 commander of the American Legion in Connecticut, gave a speech to mark the beginning of the event.

"The commander and some of the officers from the Portland American Legion Post told me about this annual event," he said. "I'm glad to be here for the opportunity to celebrate this appreciation of our service to our country."

DeCarlo called for people to support service members of all ages, both veterans and those on active duty, from the current 250,000 veterans in the state to the nearly two million more that will be returning home over the next two years.

"Provide support for them and their family members; if you have a business, or know of employment opportunities available, make that information available to them," he said.

First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield was in attendance at the dinner, and read from a poem titled "Veterans Day" before dinner began.

"They fought for us and all our rights/They fought through many days and nights," she read. "And though we may not know each name/We thank each veteran just the same."

"Thank you to all the veterans who are here, and to those who can't be with us here tonight," she said.

Bransfield, along with Deputy First Selectwoman Kathy Richards and state Rep. Christie Carpino, served veterans dinner throughout the evening.

Bill and Priscilla Martz of Portland were one couple at the dinner who brought an interesting perspective on the event: both are veterans.

Bill served in the Air Force as a navigator on RB-26s flying night reconnaissance photog-  
See Veterans Honored Page 2

## 'Wheels for Alex' Rolled Right Along

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

Colchester resident Alex Robley can now sit up front with his mother in their van, proud and smiling.

Lauren Robley, Alex's mother, can now bring her son places without having to worry about breaking down and having the road closed for hours to help get them home.

It's all thanks to the "Wheels for Alex" group and the Colchester community.

In May, Wheels for Alex began when the Robleys' 16-year-old wheelchair van began breaking down and Lauren put up a GoFundMe page to help pay for the up to \$50,000 expense.

Alex, 19 and a graduate of Bacon Academy, has cerebral palsy and is confined to a power wheelchair, which weighs approximately 400 pounds. Alex was born prematurely and spent three and a half months in the hospital before he could come home; doctors told the Robleys Alex may be blind and not ever talk, but Lauren said he "doesn't stop talking."

Lauren had been transporting Alex around town, to doctors' appointments and to social events – including plenty of Bacon Academy sports games – in a used 1999 wheelchair-accessible van. However, the van had been rusting out badly, making horrible noises and the muffler even had to be tied on, Lauren said. More importantly, it had also been breaking

down. Lauren told the *RiverEast* in May this had created some "scary days" for her and Alex.

"We've broken down on the highway and the road has had to be closed down to unload Alex," the mother explained.

But on Oct. 28, Lauren and Alex's dream came true when they were able to bring home their new blue 2011 wheelchair-accessible power lift van. The van has only 5,500 miles on it – and Lauren said it's been running great.

"My heart is still going just talking about it," Lauren said. "It's given us some peace of mind. We can go somewhere and not be nervous about being stuck."

"It's been amazing," Alex said. "Without the community, we couldn't do this."

The Wheels for Alex committee was started by Nicole Reardon of Colchester, who knew Alex by her position as a lunch lady in the Bacon Academy cafeteria.

"So many different people stepped up," Lauren said. "It's been amazing, the support that we got."

Lauren said when she put up the original GoFundMe page, she never thought it would take off quite like it did.

"I never thought this would happen," Lauren said. "I can never thank people enough."

Along with the van being in tip-top shape, Lauren said it's all power-controlled, which  
See 'Wheels for Alex' Page 2



Alex Robley, 19, and his mother, Lauren Robley, both of Colchester, stand outside of their new wheelchair-accessible, power-lift van that the community helped them afford through the town's 'Wheels for Alex' fundraising effort.



**Portland High School's cafeteria was packed Tuesday evening with hundreds of veterans and their family and friends for the town's fifth annual veterans' dinner. Veterans present served in conflicts from World War II to Iraq and Afghanistan.**

#### **Veterans Honored cont. from Front Page**

raphy missions with the 12th Tactical Recon-

naissance Squadron in Korea.  
 "I was based out on Kimpo, Korea in 1952. I was there about eight months," he said. "I flew at night and we photographed whatever we were assigned. It was our job to get the photographs and bring them back."

After the armistice was signed, Bill said he was transferred stateside, first to Hill AFB in Ogden, Utah, and then to the Air Force's reconnaissance center at Shaw AFB in Sumter, S.C.

He ended his service as a first lieutenant. Priscilla was a part of the U.S. Navy's "Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service" reserves program, more popularly known as the WAVES. Her post was Opa-Locka Naval Air Station in Miami, Fla.

She said she was one of the "14-Day Wonders," so named because they completed their basic training in Bainbridge, Md., in just two weeks instead of the usual three months.

"They were trying to get us into the base to do the secretarial work as soon as possible, and to recruit new WAVES," she said.

Priscilla said that as a Recruit Chief Petty Officer, she was in charge of drill duties for her unit.

"I had to march those girls everywhere," she said, laughing.

She also said that when she married Bill, it was mandatory that she be discharged from the Navy.

"We weren't allowed to be married and in the Navy," she said. "I got married and was discharged honorably after one year."

Bill and Priscilla have been married for 60 years. They only recently moved to Portland 10 years ago, because their daughter got married and moved to East Hampton.

Melilli Caffe and Grill catered the event for the second year in a row. They've been located on Main Street in town since May 2013, but

had been in Cromwell for nine years before that, and in Middletown for five years before that.

They provided plenty of shells and sauce, chicken parmigiana, potatoes, green beans, salad, bread and cake for everyone in attendance.

Restaurant owner Seb Milardo said he started catering the event two years ago after being asked to when the previous caterer moved out of state, and he is happy that he can give back to the veterans at this event.

"The best thing about it is that we're taking care of the veterans just as they took care of us; they're a bunch of great people," he said. "We hope that every year it gets bigger and bigger. It's something that I really love to do. It's very rewarding."

Milardo said he also wanted to give credit to his wife Teresa and his daughters Nikki and Josephine for all the help they provide for the event.

"My family really helps me out a lot, it takes all day to set up this dinner for the veterans," he said. "I'm very grateful to them."

Additionally, at the dinner, veteran Salvatore Orlando presented Milardo, his family and his staff with a 'thank you' award for their contributions to recognizing and honoring veterans.

"I'm very proud of you and what you've been doing," he said. "Thank you for remembering the veterans."

"Take it and don't hang it in the bathroom!" Sgt. Major Orlando said to laughter from everyone as he handed the plaque to Milardo.

Milardo accepted the plaque and then spoke. "I promise you, Sal, it's not going in the bathroom," he said, smiling. "We're doing a little renovation over [at the restaurant] and this'll look nice right in our new dining room."

"Thank you very much to you all. You guys gave us a lot, and we're just trying to return a little something back to you," he said to loud applause.



**The Robleys can now easily use their new van in all weather with the power lift rather than Laureen struggling with the lift, Alex and an umbrella in the rain.**

#### **'Wheels for Alex' cont. from Front Page**

helps especially in the rain.

"The power lift in the van is easier in the rain than having to juggle the lift, Alex and an umbrella," Laureen said. "We've never had anything as nice as this one."

Another big change in the new van is the ability for Alex to sit up front with his mother and enjoy the view.

After an initial spate of Wheels for Alex fundraisers, donations began to slow – and the Robleys began to worry a little. The van they had been eyeing had been placed on hold at an area dealership, but only until early November. If the Robleys hadn't been able to pay for that van, they didn't know when another one would become available.

Enter Board of Education Chairman Ron Goldstein. He saved the effort with a last-minute donation.

"If it wasn't for him, we would have lost that van," Laureen said.

"I don't really know Alex, but I certainly knew of him," Goldstein said. "I saw someone who has incredible spirit and a love of his school and what he was doing. He always had that terrific smile that everyone talks about."

Even though Goldstein didn't know Alex personally, he said he chose to donate after seeing the spirit of Colchester really thrive in the

hearts of those who helped out.

"The whole thing was an example for me for what Colchester is all about and how when someone is inspirational and needs some help, we all chip in to help him out when necessary," Goldstein said. "It was a worthy cause and showed everything good about Colchester."

Goldstein said overall, he was only a small piece of the efforts, passion and community spirit that made it all happen.

Laureen said she wanted to thank Reardon, Patty Pecoske, Catherine Humphrey, Kim Gross, Carrie-Ann Duff, Harrington Court, Sweet Frog, Kaleigh Vincent and Cuts Unlimited, Sons of American Legion, the Music Bureau, Colchester Rotary Club, Ron Goldstein, Bacon Academy, William J. Johnston Middle School, Copies Plus...More, Germano's Bar and Grill, the band In Deep, attorney John Haymond, two girls that hosted a lemonade stand, and all of the businesses and individuals that donated to the Wheels for Alex events.

Many of the businesses and groups joined up to host fundraisers for Wheels for Alex – some of which brought in thousands of dollars to contribute, Laureen said.

The Robleys will host a 'thank you' party Sunday, Nov. 23, from noon-2 p.m., at the Colchester Firehouse.

# Marlborough Elementary Students Thank Veterans

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

Sixth grade students at Marlborough Elementary School not only put on the school's first Veterans Day celebration, but learned the details behind the day off.

In accordance with the school's sixth grade academy academic program, social studies teacher Tina D'Auteuil said she wanted to do something after they had a combination Memorial Day and Veterans Day small school assembly last year.

"We talked about 9/11 in class and thought of doing a service project," D'Auteuil said. "We wanted to do something unique. This has just evolved."

What started as a small school assembly grew and grew and this past Monday, 60 veterans and their families joined the elementary school students in a celebration full of history, thanks, songs and poems.

"The sixth-graders planned lessons for the younger grades," D'Auteuil said. "The projects [that the grades completed] reflect that they learned about."

The class projects ranged from preschool making poppies, to banners with the branches of the military, details on what the flag means and more. These projects were scattered around the gym for all to enjoy.

"They've been working on it for five weeks," D'Auteuil said of the sixth-graders.

Along with planning the songs, presentations and poems, the class also sent out formal invitations to the veterans.

The celebration kicked off at 1:30 p.m. in the school's gym with the Pledge of Allegiance, and then "The Star-Spangled Banner" was played by the school band.

Veteran John Dimauro of Cromwell was one of the 60 veterans that attended.

"It's very humbling and I'm proud to be here," Dimauro said. "When I first got here, I

was immediately thanked. It's so nice to hear."

"It's great to see the kids get involved and know about the veterans," veteran Tom Goglia of Middletown said. "They learn what the day off is all about."

Sixth-grader Mekayla Pace, 10, of Marlborough, said that although she knew some basic things about Veterans Day before being involved in the celebration, she learned so much more through the process.

"I learned how to meet and greet a veteran and invite a veteran the proper way," Pace said. Pace worked on many of the formal invitations sent out.

"I knew veterans served and helped us by risking their life for our freedom," she said. "I learned the proper handshake, what to do when you see a veteran and more about the flag. I also learned why veterans do what they do and how we thank veterans."

Rachel Antonelli, 11, of Marlborough, also a sixth grade student, said she participated in three classroom visits to help teach the rest of the school about the real meaning of Veterans Day.

"The older you get, the more you can take in," Antonelli said. She was surprised how she had to change her presentation for the different grades. For example, Antonelli said, she could only tell the preschool students the war ended, but not that soldiers had died.

"Overall I learned a lot about veterans," Antonelli said. "They don't only fight. I met a veteran who was a psychologist. Veterans have different emotions."

Antonelli said she learned just how important it was that veterans sacrificed their lives for the country.

"If not for them, we wouldn't be free," Antonelli said. "They have a big impact on the whole nation."

"I'm impressed with them," D'Auteuil said



Veterans Tom Goglia of Middletown and John Dimauro of Cromwell (right) speak with Marlborough Elementary students before the school's first-ever Veterans Day celebration Monday.

of the sixth-graders. "This has been an entirely student generated assembly."

The celebration included a PowerPoint presentation with the history of Veterans Day along with a detailed presentation on what the poppy stands for. One of the last few songs of the celebration was "God Bless the U.S.A.," sung by the fourth and fifth grades. The sixth grade sang a song of thanks as well.

After the celebration, veterans and their families were invited to light refreshments. Outside

as they were leaving, each veteran could take a bottle hanging on a tree.

"The sixth-graders wrote sincere letters, more than a simple thank you," D'Auteuil said.

D'Auteuil went on to say as well that she hopes the celebration becomes a tradition at MES, especially as long as the Sixth Grade Academy teaching model continues.

"They can make a difference," D'Auteuil said of the students.

## Hebron Schools Focus on Transparency, Access to Information

by Geeta Schrayter

A number of recent changes with Hebron Public Schools – including a revamped school website, community forums and new Digital Backpacks – have been geared toward transparency and increasing access to information.

Since Hebron Schools Superintendent Jeff Newton started with the district in July 2013, he's repeatedly touted the importance of transparency and ensuring information is available to parents and the community.

Speaking on the subject, he said this week, "I think that [importance] stems back to the previous superintendent and the issues with money."

Newton was referring to former schools superintendent Ellie Cruz, who was arrested Aug. 8 and charged with first-degree larceny as the result of a year and a half-long investigation into her use of school finances. The Board of Education alleged it had found around \$15,000 worth of questionable expenses after Cruz's December 2012 departure from the district. After the subsequent investigation by state police and a forensic accounting company, around \$6,290 were found to be unauthorized.

When Cruz was superintendent, Newton said,

"There were things going on that shouldn't have been going on. And me, as a leader and superintendent, I feel that these are taxpayer dollars that we're working with – they're not our dollars – and we need to make sure we're showing the community how these are being applied."

He added, "That's the reason for transparency and all that we do" and called communication "essential."

As part of that, the district will be offering three public community forums this year on various topics. The first is scheduled for next Wednesday, Nov. 18, where the 2015-16 budget, Common Core State Standards and curriculum, and the Hartford Region Open Choice Program will be discussed. A light dinner will be served prior to the event at 6 p.m., and the forum will begin at 6:30 p.m. in the Gilead Hill School Activity Room.

"We're making every effort to reach out to our parent community and let them know more about these [curriculum] changes, because the more they're aware and the more they know and are familiar with the implications of Common Core and the new assessments through Smarter Balanced, the better off we are; we can

collaborate, we can work together to move children in the right direction," he stated.

Along with the forums, there's also a new district website in place. The new site launched Oct. 31 and in a letter Newton sent to parents and guardians that same day he shared, "The development of this new site is one additional method that we are using to continue to reach out to our parent community and increase access to information while remaining transparent."

The new site is meant to be easier to navigate and more user-friendly. It's also a responsive site, which means the content will adjust depending on whether an individual is viewing the page through a computer or mobile device.

In addition to the above, the schools introduced Digital Backpacks last month, which allow parents and guardians to access their child's homework and find out what's happening during the school week.

Newton explained he first worked with Digital Backpacks when he was a principal in Montville, and presented the possibility of bringing them to Hebron to Gilead Hill School Principal Eric Brody and Hebron Elementary

School Principal Amy Campbell.

"They have done a wonderful job," Newton said of the two principals, and called the Digital Backpacks "very helpful – and the staff has really embraced that."

He furthered they were "one additional tool to help communicate more with parents and get them the information they need in a timely manner."

The three efforts, Newton said, "all tie together. It's just a continued push as hard as we can to make easy access to information."

Newton added, "Those are our focus areas right now, all tying back to our new mission and vision – that's what we're staying true to."

He concluded, "The more information we can get out to our community and stakeholders the better off we are because questions are answered. Questions with no answers drum up confusion."

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Anyone looking for more information on the district can visit the district website at [hebron.k12.ct.us](http://hebron.k12.ct.us) or contact the school system's central office at 860-228-2577.

# Hebron Receives Finance Award 10 Years Running

by Geeta Schrayter

For the 10th consecutive year, the town of Hebron was recently awarded the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting by the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA), a non-profit professional association that serves approximately 17,500 government finance professionals in the United States and Canada.

The award, which was established in 1945, was given for the town's comprehensive annual financial report (CAFR) documenting the July 2012-June 2013 fiscal year.

Finance Director Elaine Griffin, who has worked for the town for the last 21 years (and also lives in Hebron), explained this week the CAFR is over 100 pages, and details "exactly where all the money goes for the expenditures and all the revenue that is received as well."

"It's a very detailed, lengthy report" she stated—one that's put together by Griffin along with Accounting Clerk Susan Husin and the town's accounting firm Mahoney Sabol and Company.

"It's the 10th consecutive year in a row [the town received the certificate] and it's a very prestigious award, so we're very proud of it," Griffin stated. "With each passing year we try to maintain our financial records and statements so they can clearly define all the activity done with taxpayer dollars."

A press release sent by GFOA regarding Hebron's recognition states the CAFR is judged by an impartial panel "to meet the high standards of the program including demonstrating a constructive 'spirit of full disclosure' to clearly communicate its financial story and motivate potential users and user groups to read the CAFR."

The release furthers, "the Certificate of Achievement is the highest form of recognition in the area of governmental accounting and financial reporting, and its attainment represents a significant accomplishment by a government and its management."

Along with the Certificate of Achievement awarded to the town, GFOA also presented an

Award of Financial Reporting Achievement (AFRA) to Griffin and Husin, the individuals designated as primarily responsible for the town's recognition.

Like Griffin, Town Manager Andrew Tierney said this week he was happy with the award and praised both Griffin and Husin for their efforts.

"We've received this certificate 10 years in a row and that shows that this town and this office, along with the finance department, is managing the town's money appropriately," he said, and furthered the certificate "shows we're doing what we're supposed to be as far as financial administration goes, and this [recognition] goes to Elaine and her staff; they're doing a great job."

Tierney added, "We strive at Town Hall to continually win over the trust of the taxpayers and the residents of Hebron and that's one measurement that shows that we're doing what we should. It's an award of excellence, so they're

[Griffin and Husin] doing exactly what they need to do."

But while the award is cause for praise, it doesn't mean it's time to relax, and Griffin said "downtime" is something she rarely has. At present, she shared, she's currently balancing work for three fiscal years.

"We still have to do the 2013-14 audit and we're in the 2014-15 fiscal year and we're prepping for the 2015-16 fiscal year, so sometimes it gets very mind-boggling," she stated.

Griffin added, "To win the award and to pull all that together, it's quite cumbersome, and trying to make sure everything is reported accurately and appropriately as I said, and sometimes working with three fiscal years – sometimes it's a challenge."

But clearly, if the town's constant GFOA recognitions are any indication, it's a challenge Griffin and her staff are more than capable of handling – no matter how cumbersome or mind-boggling things may become.

## PHS Program Honors Veterans for Fifth Year

by John Tyczkowski

Tenth-graders at Portland High School had a chance to learn about history directly from the source, at the school's annual veterans' panel.

The event was part of PHS social studies department head Michelle Stotler's 10th grade U.S. history class, and this was its fifth year.

"Today we commemorate a day where we recognize those who served the United States in wartime and peace," she said. "Today we are honoring veterans who have served our country in many different ways."

Stotler's husband, Chief Petty Officer James Stotler, a Navy reservist stationed out of Newport, R.I., as well as PHS social studies teacher and boys' soccer coach, has served as the panel's moderator for all five years.

He has been in the reserves since 2003, and was deployed for a year in Iraq with Naval Intelligence from 2007-2008.

During his opening remarks, Stotler mentioned two veterans, Louis Nardine, a bomber pilot who served in World War II, and Gene Reilly, who served in the Army in Vietnam, who had been participants during previous years, but who had recently died. Reilly was also a former teacher and coach at PHS.

"Both participated in our first presentation, and both passed away fairly recently," Stotler said. "I wanted to begin this presentation by remembering them, and by dedicating this presentation to them and those who have participated with us."

The program began with a two-minute long video that explained the origins of Armistice Day, as well as the subsequent history of the day – which was renamed Veterans Day in the 1950s.

Following the National Anthem, the five veteran panelists proceeded up to a long table on the stage to take questions.

The veterans began by introducing themselves with their name and serial number, each reciting the latter without missing a beat.

"You really never forget it," Franklin Hutchings, a Korean War veteran who served in the Air Force, said.

The composition of the panel was varied, and included Army, Navy and Air Force members who served across two continents and several decades.

Bill Willinski served in the Navy's Submarine Service during the 1960s. Reg Farrington, an annual participant and the head of the town's Veterans Affairs Commission, served in the Army in Vietnam. Tim O'Connell spent time in France with the Army during the Cold War. Robert Hayes served in Thailand with the Army during Vietnam.

O'Connell is a social studies/French teacher at the high school, and Hayes is a former teacher. Farrington is a substitute teacher.

In addition to Farrington, Willinski and Hutchings are also members of the Veterans Affairs Commission.

The veterans began by discussing their various introductions to military life.

Farrington put his boot camp experience rather simply.

"Master Sergeant Sutherland – he didn't like me the first day he saw me, and he didn't like me the last day he saw me," he said.

Hutchings said he never attended boot camp before being deployed to Pusan in Korea.

"We were simply briefed on what we were going to try to do," he said. "We were assigned a job and given a smattering of training for it and told to do it."

Hayes talked about chow time, which he and the other veterans agreed was one of the most central times to a soldier's day.

As the sole draftee on the panel, he also brought an interesting view to the daily ritual.

"Service numbers starting with 'U.S.' meant that you were a draftee," Hayes said. "Draftees had to stand at the end of the chow line. 'R.A.s' were people who signed up to be in the Army, and they got to be at the front, and the 'N.G.s' were National Guard, and they were in the middle."

Despite having to eat last, "Chow time was a great thing in the service," Hayes said, to nods of agreement from the other veterans.

Next, the panelists discussed their exact jobs during their service.

Hutchings talked about how he was part of a TACP (Tactical Air Control Party) in Korea from 1950-51. He coordinated providing close air support for U.S. and Korean ground troops against the North Koreans and Chinese.

Willinski mentioned how he was assigned to one of the only three U.S. fast attack submarines at the time, the *U.S.S. Skipjack* (SSN-585), and participated in missions to reconnoiter the Vietnamese coast before the war escalated.

Hayes was a truck diver in Thailand, delivering supplies to pilots who bombed the Ho Chi Minh Trail, and referred to his heavy equipment role as a "cowboy job," since it was largely only he and a Thai guide driving supply routes.

Farrington said he was an infantryman for his service, and that he spent two tours of duty in Vietnam. During his first tour he was an adviser, training South Vietnamese soldiers on 20-year-old U.S. military equipment.

O'Connell mentioned though the Army trained him to be a cryptologist, his actual duties were completely different. After completing his code-breaking training, he was then trained as a military police officer and sent to Europe.

In addition to discussing their service, each of the veterans talked about what it was like for them to leave their familiar lives to go into



From left, Frank Hutchings, Air Force; Bill Willinski, Navy; Reg Farrington, Army; Tim O'Connell, Army; and Robert Hayes, Army; discuss their experiences for Portland High School students. Below is Chief Petty Officer James Stotler, U.S. Navy, a PHS teacher who was also the event moderator.

the military.

"The toughest thing was to leave my girlfriend," Hayes said. "Also, it was very different to be in these new situations that you had absolutely no control over. You gave up control of your life to the military."

Farrington talked about how he had to leave his wife and three young children behind when he was deployed to Vietnam.

"My son was six months old when I left, so when I came back, he didn't know who I was," he said. "My two older girls, they kind of knew who I was when I came back. The oldest was 5 when I left."

By contrast, Willinski said he saw joining the Submarine Service as an adventure and a way to see the world.

"I was 18; I was young and stupid. To me, it was something that I hadn't the faintest idea of what it was going to be like," he said. "Leaving home was tough, but I was thinking of adventure. I wanted to see what was out there."

None of the veterans said they regretted their service.

"I have no regrets about my time in the service, and I am honored to sit up here with these guys," Hayes said.

"To me, I'll never forget it, I can still remember the good times," Willinski said. "There were bad times, but you only remember the good times, and you smile about them. I still think back on my experience, and I'm glad I did it."

The assembly concluded with a short video tribute to all veterans, and high school student



Tom Pelton's playing of Taps.

After the presentation, Michelle Stotler said she thought this year's presentation was a success.

"I'm proud every year of the level of admiration and respect these kids give the veterans," she said. "I'm pleased we were able to do something for the kids, but also for the veterans. We're very proud that we have this connection every year."

# Local Businesswoman Hosts ‘Operation Wedding Gown’ in Portland

by John Tyczkowski

Shelley Bailey, owner of and designer at The Wedding Dress in Portland, decided to bring Veterans Day into her shop this year, with a marriage twist.

Bailey, who also runs Distinctive Style in Middletown, where she held the event, hosted Operation Wedding Gown this Monday and Tuesday.

Part of the Brides Across America (BAA) program, Operation Wedding Gown set out to provide free wedding gowns to military brides.

Brides in the military and those whose fiancées are in the military are eligible. The brides or fiancées must have been deployed in the past five years, are currently deployed or will be deployed.

“There wasn’t anyone doing it yet around here,” Bailey said. “Veterans have always been near and dear to my heart, my dad is a veteran, and lots of my relatives and my husband’s relatives are veterans. I just wanted to say thank you on Veterans Day.”

Another special thing she did for the military brides was to offer all gowns in the store to the brides, rather than just a small special

selection, as other BAA programs have done in the past.

Having the inventory of two stores allowed her to do that, Bailey said.

Bailey is no stranger to giving back to the community. According to a press release about the event, over its 13 years in operation, The Wedding Dress has donated to the American Legion, the Portland and Middletown police and the American Cancer Society, to name a few causes.

Distinctive Style is a newer branch of The Wedding Dress. Bailey said she expanded there two years ago because her business in Portland was booming.

Sue Widomski, a Marine and native of Hartford, said she heard about Operation Wedding Dress from her sister.

“She knew I was getting married soon and she thought this sounded like the perfect thing,” she said. “This will definitely help a lot in our expenses for the wedding.”

Even more than that though, Widomski said she was pleasantly surprised by Bailey’s efforts.

“I’ve crossed paths with plenty of people who are just so rude. My husband told me that when he came back from his two tours in Afghanistan in 2010, no one seemed to care,” she said. “It’s a great comfort to be able to come back home and see that people actually do care about those who serve their country. It’s a great feeling, and so heartwarming.”

Widomski was in the Marine Corps from 2010 to 2013. Her fiancé, Brian Williams, is still in the Marines, and they both met while stationed at Camp Pendleton in San Diego, Calif.

“I love it,” she said. “We both have something in common that we can talk about and we have a way we understand each other.”

Widomski joined the Marines because of her brother. She said he just re-enlisted for another five years, but she is satisfied with her service, and would rather concentrate on raising a family.

“I don’t want to have my family grow up in military lifestyle where me and my husband are constantly going to be deployed,” she said. “I

do miss it, but I do want to have a family.”

Williams was also at Distinctive Style, and was keeping his guard up constantly to avoid seeing Widomski in her wedding dress.

“I don’t know why she brought me here; I definitely didn’t want to accidentally see her in the dress,” he said, laughing.

“We’re definitely saving a lot of money on our wedding with this,” he added. “But more importantly, it’s surprising and good to see that there are people out there that look out for service members.”

Williams said he joined the Marine Corps because his uncle and grandfather were also in the Marines. He’s been in the Corps for six years, and is currently stationed at 29 Palms in California.

However, he said he feels ready to move on from the Marines.

“I’ll have a family to concentrate on, and I want to go to college, definitely,” he said.

Also, as far as further post-Corps plans go, Williams said he’d be interested in going into journalism as a career.

## East Hampton Board Rejects Facilities Committee Report, Committee Itself

by John Tyczkowski

An irate Board of Education voted to reject the facilities committee report released last week – and to also call for the Town Council to reject the group with new guidelines.

Board of Education Chairman Ken Barber made a motion to request that the town council re-form the Facilities Committee, expand its membership and reconsider moving town facilities to Center School.

The motion passed 8-1, with all members voting in favor except for board member Josh Piteo, who served on the facilities committee.

Board of Education members took the report and committee to task specifically regarding Center School, with what many members said was a failure to appropriately research all of the viable options for the 75-year-old school.

In its report, the committee recommended that Center School’s failing boiler be replaced, which would extend the school’s useable life by several years while the town concentrated on building a new police/fire campus and town hall for \$18-20 million combined.

Lastly, the report said, the town should look into replacing Center School with a new building on land adjacent to Memorial School only after the police/fire and town hall building needs had been met.

School board member William Marshall, who is also chairman of the board’s own buildings and grounds committee, prepared a list of discussion points for the meeting detailing the Board’s objection to the committee’s report.

Chief among these was that the committee did not have an immediate plan for what to do with Center School.

“It’s the largest and most prominent building in the Village Center,” he said. “If it’s allowed to deteriorate, it would be a blight on the Village Center.”

Marshall referenced the fact that the board sent a letter to the Town Council back in February, which specifically offered the town the use of Center School as a new town hall facility, and there was never any concrete follow-up.

Marshall also mentioned the fact that the

state would reimburse the town 50 percent for the construction costs of building a new school, whereas there are no state reimbursements for the planned police/fire campus building.

Also, even in the case of constructing a new town hall/board of education office building, reimbursement would only be for 50 percent of the board of education office space, or about 3 percent of the total building cost.

In addition, Marshall criticized the committee’s proposal to construct the new town hall and board of education facilities downtown, on a known brownfield site.

Barber said he agreed with Marshall.

“The whole downtown is a brownfield site with contamination due to years of manufacturing, which is common in old mill towns like East Hampton,” he said. “What are the costs associated with clean-up of soil contamination?”

Barber echoed Marshall, and said he also took issue with the committee’s recommendation to build a new police/fire campus and town hall “with no reimbursement” when Center School’s 44,000-square feet were already available and useable for that space.

“To me, there are plenty of unanswered questions,” Barber said of the report’s findings. “In my humble opinion, this is no real solution at all.”

In addition, the board felt that the committee had not taken into account the will of the people in deciding what to do.

“Just from my short straw poll of people around town, when you ask them if they would be in support of turning Center School into a town hall and police department, their answer is a resounding ‘yes,’” board member Steven Kelley said. “I was very disappointed to see how closed-door this committee was. There was no feedback, no one was asking for surveys or input from the town.”

“This report is what a select group of people thinks is their great idea,” Kelly said. “I just have a very sour taste in my mouth.”

Board member Scott Minnick also expressed his displeasure with the facilities committee’s

actions.

“The report was isolated with its own pre-dispositions and with no consideration for the public’s wishes,” he said. “I am highly disappointed with this whole process.”

Minnick also emphasized the “pride and history” that Center School symbolizes for East Hampton.

“It happens to be located in our Village Center, which, if anyone looked at the plan of conservation and development during this process, they would know the people of this town made it very clear they want to revitalize the Village Center,” he said. “That’s our priority right there: it’s not from the police department, not from the Town Council, not from anyone on this board, but from the citizens themselves. And it’s been ignored.”

Board member Josh Piteo – who is also a member of the facilities committee – defended his committee’s report against the board’s numerous challenges.

Chiefly, he cited that Center School is “an excellent place for the students” and that “the kids love its history and character.” He said that’s why the committee recommended replacing the school’s boiler so it could continue to be used while the town searched for low-cost options for a replacement school and town buildings.

“We have to pay for the renovation of [the high school], and we’re going from a low tax burden town to a medium tax burden town just with that,” he said. “These kids at Center School are getting a great education now, and don’t let anyone tell you they aren’t.”

Piteo responded to the board’s calls for turning Center School into a police department by talking about its lack of easy public access.

“We ruled out the police station angle because it doesn’t have good access to the main road in town, Route 66, for responding to calls,” he said.

In addition, Piteo said that his biggest objection to moving town and police offices into Center School would be the increased taxes on the town that would come from having to build

a replacement school using bonding, even with reimbursement.

“Folks in this town will not go for building two schools at the same time,” he said. “Our idea was to buy some time. It’s not the job of this Town Council. A future Town Council will figure out the eventual usage of Center School.”

At the same time, Piteo said that there were “ongoing conversations and open discussions” about ways to fund future projects without greatly raising the tax burden on the town, such as through financing.

Town Council Chairwoman Barbara Moore, who was in attendance that evening, said she was concerned about the Board of Education’s action and attitude toward the facilities committee report and the Town Council.

“It’s upsetting that they’ve made all of these assumptions when they haven’t heard our side of it,” Moore said after the meeting. “We haven’t even discussed it yet and they’re making plans. They should wait until after we have our meeting.”

Also, she said she felt town opinion was more varied than the board suggested.

“If you polled 200 people, everyone would have a different solution to the problem,” Moore said. “As a council we have to look at what we think is the best solution, but we will certainly include the public in our decision.”

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The Board of Education also decided to approve the motion to submit the Common Core math standards grant application discussed at their last meeting.

The \$1,485 grant would provide additional instruction materials to teachers at the middle school to help them better understand new common core math standards and how to integrate them into lesson plans, Assistant Superintendent of Schools Timothy Van Tassel said.

The motion passed unanimously.

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The Town Council was to discuss the facilities committee report at a meeting Thursday night, after press time. A story about that meeting will be in next week’s *RiverEast*

# Andover School Board Talks Electricity and Repairs

by Geeta Schrayter

Superintendent of Schools Andy Maneggia shared a variety of informational pieces at Wednesday's Board of Education meeting, including the cost of electricity and school repairs.

First, Maneggia called the board's attention to different items on the financial report. He pointed out administrative services had a deficit of \$1,416, which he explained was a result of getting into an automated substitute teacher calling system. He also pointed out the electricity line item, which was budgeted at \$65,000 for the current year.

He was pointing this out, Maneggia explained, because of news that had been circulating recently that Connecticut Light and Power would be increasing their rates substantially come Jan 1.

The increase next year, he stated, had been estimated anywhere between \$8-9,000. In the current year, the money budgeted for electricity had actually going down by about \$5,000 over the year prior due to the installation of LED lighting and other conservation efforts at the school.

"The amount of money budgeted is \$5,000 less than the previous year [2013-14]. Now the new rate is going to go up as of January one, so we will have to watch that account very closely," Maneggia explained. "My expectation is we'll be in a deficit for the rest of the year, and for next year, there'll be a significant increase."

He added, "It seems like you win a little and then all of a sudden you start feeling pretty good about it, then we get a rate increase that takes it all away."

Maneggia also drew the board's attention to the repairs and maintenance services account, to which \$45,000 had been budgeted and about \$8,200 had been spent to date.

He told the board to keep the remaining balance in mind for later during the meeting. It was then that he brought up the need for repairs to the school's generator.

Maneggia shared when one of the additions was made to the school, the Board of Education and the town agreed to install a generator to supply power to parts of the school so it could be used as a shelter if need be.

"The generator will allow us to use the wells

and obviously the septic system, provide electricity for the cafeteria, the corridors, gym, halls – that type of thing," he stated, adding the generator would also provide power to the boilers so the school would have heat.

Board of Education Chairman Jay Linddy added the generator was "at least 15-16 years old."

Maneggia said he'd classify the generator as a "necessary evil."

"If the town did need a shelter area and we had a generator that malfunctioned or didn't work, I think that's inexcusable, because the Board of Education years ago made that agreement with the town to have a generator and use the school as a shelter," he stated.

Board member Whitney Covell noted, "We did two years ago," when much of the town lost power as the result of a snowstorm.

And member Christina Tamburro added "it's a reality."

Maneggia said the generator needs around \$9,500 worth of repairs.

The board unanimously voted to allow

Maneggia to move forward with the repairs for an amount up to \$10,000.

"We need it," Linddy concluded.

The money will come from the funds remaining in the repairs and maintenance services account.

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The board also approved two outstanding insurance claims for repairs at the school.

The first was for the replacement of a pole in the parking lot that was knocked down last winter. The board unanimously approved a vote to allow Maneggia to finalize the claim for the pole replacement, which is expected to cost approximately \$2,552-\$3,000.

The board also unanimously approved a motion to allow Maneggia to finalize the claim for the replacement of a burner control on one of the school's boilers, which is expected to cost \$3,500 with a \$1,000 deductible.

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The next Andover Board of Education meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, Dec. 10, at 7 p.m. in the Andover Elementary School library.

## East Hampton High School Holds Ceremonial Groundbreaking

by John Tyczkowski

Last Thursday morning, rain forced East Hampton High School to hold a somewhat untraditional, but no less enthusiastic, indoor ceremonial groundbreaking.

Voters approved of the \$51 million project in a June 2013 referendum. Construction is slated to finish by September 2017.

Superintendent of Schools Diane Dugas said that this renovation effort has been a long time in the making and is the product of many peoples' work. Ultimately, she said, the effort is for the students and the future.

"This project is not just about a shiny new building," she said, "but rather about how we believe our students should learn for decades to come in order to prepare them for a successful life and return to the community."

Dugas quoted Malcolm X to close her remarks, saying, "Education is the passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to those who prepare for it today."

The class presidents of the "bookend classes" of 2015 and 2018 also had a chance to speak at the event.

"I am not saying that we won't face challenges and disruptions along the way, but I believe that this will be a change for the better," Emma Cook, Class of 2018, said. "It will make our building as amazing as the students and teachers who go here."

"This is more than just a school to me. I learned a great deal in this 1960s building. I have become close to so many people while here," Alex Balletto, Class of 2015, said. "I hope that the future generations of students that pass through East Hampton High School will make as many wonderful memories as I have."

Balletto also slipped in some comments about the state of the school that drew laughs from the students in attendance, which included a looking forward to the day when students will be able to walk through hallways without "bumping into trash cans full of water" of

"dodging ceiling tiles falling on their heads."

EHHS Principal John Fiedler, who has worked in East Hampton Public Schools for 25 years, spoke well of the school – while also admitting the validity of Balletto's points.

"The learning and friendships that have been formed that Alex spoke about ring true for everyone of us in this building," he said. "Unfortunately, so do the buckets in the hallways and ceiling tile problems."

Fiedler also said he was excited to have the renovations begin after years of planning and work, and to see their results.

"I very much look forward to the amazing vision Emma laid out where we will have a totally renovated and brand-new building and all of that will be a thing of that past," he said. "This is a historic day for East Hampton, for the high school, for the community and for everyone."

Other speakers at the ceremony included Town Council Chairwoman Barbara Moore, High School Building Committee Chairwoman Sharon Smith and Board of Education Chairman Ken Barber.

"The one thing that I always hear from everyone is that the importance of your school life isn't just bricks and mortar," Moore said. "The important thing that you should remember is the foundation that this school and the teachers and staff will provide for you. It's one that you will move forward with."

Smith said that to say she and the committee were excited about the high school project "would be an understatement."

"While there may be a few inconveniences for the students, staff, parents and community members during these next couple of years, we're confident that the result will be so worth it," she said. "This building will truly provide a 21st-Century learning environment for our students, and a true community center for our town."



**Representatives from the High School Building Committee, the Board of Education, the Board of Finance, the high school, the Town Council and Downes Construction pose for a photo during a break in the rain. The actual groundbreaking will take place later in the month.**

Barber talked about how EHHS has been the hub of events in town for years, including the Old Home Days assembly and various concerts and shows. The high school has also served as the town's polling place, and the emergency center for the town, among other uses.

"Today, we're starting to renew and rebuild this building," he said. "But tomorrow, I want you to remember that it's up to each and every one of you to rebuild and renew our community: our home, and the home of the Bellringers."

After all of the remarks, Cook and Balletto rang the school bell to symbolize the beginning of the school's renovation journey.

The program began and ended with music. The high school band provided the National Anthem to commence ceremonies, and the groundbreaking closed with the school's cho-

rus providing a rendition of the alma mater.

After, members from various groups in attendance, including the Board of Education, Board of Finance, Town Council representatives, representatives from the High School Building Committee and representatives from Downes Construction posed for photos wearing hard hats and holding shovels. They stood behind a pile of dirt laid on a plastic tarp on the stage.

Due to a break in the rain, some photos were also taken outside.

The actual groundbreaking will take place later in the month, Dugas said.

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For more information on the renovation's progress, those interested can check [easthamptonps.org](http://easthamptonps.org) on a regular and continuing basis.

# Colchester Board of Selectmen Helps with Schools' Strategic Plan

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

During the Board of Selectmen meeting last week, members met with LEARN to participate in a focus group for the schools' strategic plan.

First Selectman Stan Soby and selectmen Kurt Frantzen, Bill Curran and Denise Mizla told the group from LEARN (LEARN Regional Educational Service Center) about what they felt was important for future Colchester students.

"Any child should have the ability to communicate well in the spoken word, written word and graphic realm," Frantzen told Doreen Marvin of LEARN. "They should have and be able to access a small and starting database of where we are locally, regionally, in the country and in the world. They should also have an appreciation of continual learning and be able to solve problems on their own and in a larger context."

Soby expressed to Marvin one of the most important traits for students was inquisitiveness.

"They should seek out information and understand the information and convey it to others," Soby said. "They should also be prepared for the future and to be engaged in the community."

Curran said it's important for students to understand what it's like to be on their own.

Mizla expressed the importance of students being able to try out careers and gain real world experience to better prepare them for after high school. Frantzen agreed with her, and said town officials should encourage pathways that may not be college for students interested in technical paths or the military among others.

Marvin asked the board what some challenges they see coming up in the next five years for students and the schools will be.

Mizla said one of them is to make sure students are exposed to a variety of subjects, such as home economics and technical education. Curran said after seeing the growth of the program at Bacon Academy for manufacturing, subjects like manufacturing are an important aspect of education.

"Not all students are going to college," Curran said. "It also doesn't mean if you go into manufacturing that you can't go into college."

Curran spoke about how a subject like manufacturing lends itself to a variety of skills including seeing things in other dimensions, using engineering skills and working hands on.

Soby stressed that students shouldn't have their pathway defined, but have the "tools to generalize and use their experience base to face problems that come."

Frantzen said that, with how the future looks, the town should provide students with a nurturing environment that teaches them the ability of how to cope when things are looking daunting.

"There is an ease of escape into drugs," Frantzen said. "We should help students find good mechanisms for a strong network and be open to others and dealing with difficulties."

Frantzen said this support network should be a "critical aspect of what Colchester Public Schools can provide."

At the end of the session, Soby told Marvin how she noticed they did not speak about Common Core or standardized testing.

"We have not yet seen improvement by the waves of educational reform," Soby said. "Standardized tests are not going to do it."

"Good teaching does it," Frantzen said. "Not more tests. Life is a different kind of test. Is that the test that students are capable of meeting?"

The feedback from the focus group with the board will go toward the overall Five-Year Strategic Plan that the district is putting together for the schools.

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The board approved a motion to enter into a

three-year contract with Point and Pay for electronic tax bill payments online.

With no charge to the town, the service provides the tax collector will the ability to have payees pay their bills online for a small fee.

Although the program won't be ready for the January tax bills because it takes 45 days after the contract is signed to have available, the service hopes to help simplify the tax payment process for residents.

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The code enforcement team will be reorganized after the board approved to make the town's fire marshal, Reed Gustafson, also the building official. The town's previous building official, Tim York, died in a motorcycle accident in June.

"It's a small department and we have an individual with the knowledge and skills," Town Planner Adam Turner said. "He would continue to be the fire marshal. The two go hand-in-hand."

The town would also hire an assistant to help do inspections and other technical things with the salaries adjusted accordingly.

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The next Board of Selectmen meeting will be Nov. 20 at 7 p.m. at Town Hall.

## Colchester School Board Puzzled Over Budget Survey

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

The Board of Education Wednesday had a lengthy discussion about the town's budget priority survey, eventually ending the conversation after it became clear board members were getting nowhere.

The survey is intended to go out to residents to garner feedback about what items in the town budget should receive more funding, and which ones are less important. The survey was put together by a Board of Finance subcommittee that included members of the selectmen, finance and education boards. Don Kennedy and Bradley Bernier were the Board of Education representatives, and were tasked on putting together the survey's section on school spending. The section focuses on having residents identify what they felt was critical in the school including AP classes, athletics, band, technology, school security and small class sizes among others.

After Kennedy and Bernier presented their part of the survey to the entire Board of Education Wednesday, the debate began, as members banded about what is essential to the budget – and therefore should not be suggested to be cut by residents – and what were extracurricular activities – and thus could be open for cuts if needed. The survey this year is very different from last year's survey, school board chair Ron Goldstein said.

Last year's survey asked what tax increase residents would want along with more complicated questions that Goldstein said many resi-

dents felt they didn't have the information necessary to answer in an informed manner.

"Surveying people and getting useful data back is a science," Goldstein said.

Some things Kennedy said they left off were the ones the board has to fund such as behavioral health.

"It's not a be all, end all kind of thing," Kennedy said about the survey's results, stressing that it would be one more tool for the board to consider.

Goldstein said it's difficult to give the residents a voice; however, he wondered, if 98 percent of the respondents were to say AP classes weren't important, would they really listen and cut down AP classes?

"Question one is asking people to select from a list of items on level of criticalness," Goldstein said. "AP was on that list along with clubs and sports, but each and every item is critical to a district. To what extent it's on there and appears it's an option to cut becomes troublesome."

After a difficult time passing the budget earlier this year, school board members struggled trying to strike a balance between getting good feedback from residents, but also funding the school district where it needs.

"What do we want to know?" Goldstein asked. "Do we want to know anything specific about the district?"

Superintendent of Schools Jeff Mathieu said they would like to know if people are satisfied with the district.

The board then brought up their questions on their five-year strategic plan survey which is independent of the budget survey. Drafted by a professional company, the strategic plan survey asks parents where they think the school needs improvement, along with other questions.

However, Board of Finance Chairman Rob Tarlov said these questions are often seen as leading by many people taking the survey.

The professional company "drafted the very questions that Rob thinks are leading," Goldstein said. "I'm not sure how to reconcile that. I'm going to look into that."

Goldstein went on to say getting this feedback from residents is crucial.

"We very much want the input, we need it, we thirst for it and we need to put that information together with what professionals know what makes for effective teaching and learning," Goldstein said. "It's not a 'but,' but an 'and.'"

Goldstein added it's not a question of what people want in the district, but if they feel the district should be doing something differently.

For example, he said, questions asking residents if they feel particular programs are important to offer provide the board "a sense of where folks' values are. It's somewhat misleading to let people think we can just do away with sports or AP because they're optional. Those are going to stay in, but how much do you value these things? How can we do them differently

not whether they exist at all?"

Goldstein said come town meeting time, you can feel the frustration in public officials because they want the feedback, but get it too late.

"But we keep trying and that's why the survey is an important piece of that," Goldstein said.

The members of the subcommittee will now go back to their smaller group with the Board of Education input and think about where to go from here.

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Also at Wednesday's meeting, the board was updated on the progress of the committee behind the William J. Johnston Middle School building project.

Goldstein said the committee is in "express mode" and is currently considering three distinct options: one is a complete renovation, one is completely new and one is a hybrid renovation and new.

"There's lots of momentum," Goldstein said.

He went on to encourage people to attend the Dec. 10 Tri-Board meeting where the options will be presented and the boards will receive the recommendation of the committee for what option would be best.

"It's extremely exciting times right now," Mathieu said.

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The next Board of Education meeting will be held Tuesday, Dec. 9, at 7 p.m., at WJMS.

## Route 66 Crash Injures Two in East Hampton

by John Tyczkowski

A two-car collision on Route 66 at Long Crossing Road has left both drivers injured.

On the afternoon of Wednesday, Nov. 5, Sue Schuler, 71, of 32 Mott Hill Rd., was driving eastbound while Carmelo Dagostino, 48, of Rocky Hill was driving westbound.

According to police, Schuler, driving a 2012 Nissan Rogue, crossed the road's center line "for no apparent reason" and hit Dagostino

in his 2009 Ford F150 head on.

Police said Schuler was transported to Hartford Hospital via Lifestar, and Dagostino was transported to Hartford Hospital by ambulance.

There is no word on their injuries, and the investigation is still active at this time, police said.

## Mystic Resident Dies in Route 6 Crash in Andover

A Mystic resident died last week after her vehicle was struck on Route 6 in Andover, State Police said.

According to police, Lissa Kowalski, 49, of 98 New London Rd., Mystic, was pronounced dead at Windham Hospital after her vehicle was hit in a near head-on collision on Route 6 Wednesday, Nov. 5.

Kowalski was traveling east when, about two-tenths of a mile west of Parker Bridge

Road, she was struck by a car being driven by Kathleen Byrne, 61, of 81 Cumberland St., Hartford, who was traveling west on the road.

Byrne was transported by LifeStar to Hartford Hospital due to her injuries, police said. She has since been released.

The crash remains under investigation and anyone with information should call Andover Resident Trooper Robert O'Connor at 860-465-5400.

*From the Editor's Desk*

# Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

My beloved New York Mets were all over the baseball news world Tuesday, for a couple of reasons. The second I'll get to later, but the first is, they made a big free agent signing, inking 36-year-old outfielder Michael Cuddyer to a two-year, \$21 million deal. I think it's a good move, for a couple of reasons.

For starters, the dude can still hit. Due to injury, he played in just 49 games for the Colorado Rockies last season, but he hit .332 in those 49 games. And in his healthy 2013, he won the National League batting title, hitting for a .331 average. He also hit 20 homers and had 84 RBIs that year. And that was just two seasons ago; we're not talking about somebody whose best years came while Bush was still in office.

Lest anyone think his success is a result of playing his home games in the offense-inflating conditions of Colorado, look at his away stats: over the past three years, he's hit for a .286 average, including .311 in his fantastic 2013 season.

Also, he's a quality outfielder with a proven resume. After the Mets' Chris Young experiment crashed and burned last season, they ran out a combination of Eric Young Jr., Kirk Nieuwenheis and Matt den Dekker. All perfectly fine players, all seem like nice guys, but guys who, on a contending team, look like they'd best serve as fourth outfielders.

And that's the thing: By making a big splash early on, and not rolling the dice with a gamble that may come up big but will more than likely not, the Mets are showing they're serious about next year. They consider themselves legitimate contenders. Cuddyer said after the signing that he didn't come to the Mets for the money – indeed, he turned down more money (\$15.3 million for one year in Colorado); he came here to be closer to home – he's originally from Norfolk, Va., the same hometown as Mets captain David Wright, who recruited Cuddyer heavily – and also because he wanted to win. It's been a while since somebody came to the Mets because they wanted to win. It's a nice feeling to hear the team thought of as contenders again.

Of course, the Internet being the Internet, tons of Mets fans were trashing the deal online within minutes of its announcement. Not so much because of Cuddyer's age or injury history, but because the Mets forfeited a first-round draft pick in order to sign him. Which, when I read all that, struck me as a little ridiculous. Yes, it's important to develop your minor leagues, but the Mets have been doing that for some time now – and as a result they have one of the best-regarded minor league systems in the game. Do you really want to avoid signing a guy who won the NL batting crown a year ago, who was an All-Star a year ago, because he's going to cost a first-round draft pick?

Before anyone says "Yeah, but first round!" let's review: Sure, Mets' first-round picks through the years have featured names like Wright and Matt Harvey, and legends like Darryl Strawberry and Dwight Gooden. But, more often than not, the list of their first-rounders reads like a who's-who of guys even die-hard Mets fans like myself barely (if at all) remember.

And that's the thing with draft picks. You just never know – and the odds really are not in your favor. There are several levels of the minor leagues players have to work through before they get to the bigs. And even if they get there, they may wind up just bouncing from team to team, never really becoming the impact player you hoped for.

Michael Cuddyer, meanwhile, has a history of being an impact player. Who knows, he may wind up being a difference maker next season. With the Mets' minor league system the way it is now, I think it's worth the gamble of losing somebody who *might possibly* have an affect on the team three or four years from now. It's been an awfully long time since the

Mets have been in the "win now" category. They seem to almost be there – and it's pretty thrilling to see.

\* \* \*

The other big piece of Mets news to come down Tuesday was rookie phenom Jacob deGrom won the much-deserved National League Rookie of the Year award. He's just the fourth Met in history to grab that award – and the first since Gooden in 1984. deGrom received 26 of 30 first-place votes, and if you look at his numbers, it's easy to see why: In 22 starts, he went 9-6 with a 2.69 ERA and 144 strikeouts in 140.1 innings (including a fantastic Sept. 15 game in which he struck out the first eight straight Miami Marlins he faced).

Unlike his teammates Harvey and Zach Wheeler, deGrom was not talked up all that much during his ascent through the minors. In fact, when he was initially called up in May, the plan was for him to pitch out of the bullpen. But an injury to starter Dillon Gee forced him into the rotation, and he never looked back. He was a surprising and thrilling success story.

One of the most interesting things about watching him in his starts this past season was that nothing ever seemed to rattle him. Heck, he made his Major League debut at Yankee Stadium in front of 41,000 fans – and he pitched superbly.

Simply put, deGrom's something special, and I'm quite happy for him that he got this award.

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As some of you probably know, the *Rivereast's* publisher, and former editor, Jim Hallas, also edits our sister paper, *The Glastonbury Citizen*. And in the *Citizen*, he has a weekly column called "This 'n That," where he offers thoughts on various odds and ends, much as I do with my column (only Jim manages not to talk quite as much about the Mets as I do). He also shares jokes in his column from time to time, and I came across one in his "This 'n That" from last week that gave me a nice little chuckle, so I thought I'd share it:

Three engineers and three accountants were traveling by train to a conference. At the station, the three accountants each bought tickets and watched as the three engineers bought only one ticket.

"How are three people going to travel on only one ticket?" asked an accountant.

"Watch and you'll see," answered an engineer.

They all boarded the train. The accountants took their respective seats, but the three engineers all crammed into a rest room and closed the door behind them. Shortly after the train departed, the conductor came around collecting tickets. He knocked on the restroom door and said, "Ticket, please."

The door opened just a crack and a single arm emerged with a ticket in hand.

The conductor took it and moved on.

The accountants saw this and agreed it was a quite clever idea. So, after the conference, the accountants decide to copy the engineers on the return trip and save some money. When they got to the station, they bought a single ticket for the return trip. To their astonishment, the engineers didn't buy a ticket at all.

"How are you going to ride without a ticket?" said one perplexed accountant.

"Watch and you'll see," answered an engineer.

When they boarded the train, the three accountants crammed into a restroom and the three engineers crammed into another one nearby. The train departed. Shortly afterward, one of the engineers left his restroom and walked over to the restroom where the accountants were hiding. He knocked on the door and said, "Ticket, please."

\* \* \*

See you next week.

## Colchester Police News

11/4: State Police said Jesse Woollacott, 20, of 7 Meadow Dr., was arrested and charged with use of a highway by a pedestrian, fourth-degree criminal mischief and second-degree threatening.

11/5: State Police said Steven Aberg, 25, of 281 Elm St., New Haven, and 281 Gardner Ave., New London, was arrested and charged with first-degree failure to appear for burglary, two counts of second-degree failure to appear on a warrant, and two counts of violation of probation.

11/5: Colchester Police said they are investigating after a door handle to a shed was removed on Balaban Road between Nov. 1 and Nov. 5. Nothing was reported taken, police said.

11/6: Colchester Police said Anthony Hale, 29, of 457 Glastonbury Tpke., Portland, was arrested and charged with first-degree burglary, third-degree criminal mischief, fourth-degree larceny, third-degree robbery, interfering with an officer, disorderly conduct, and conspiracy. Police also arrested David White, 33, also of 457 Glastonbury Tpke., Portland, and charged him with first-degree burglary, four-degree larceny, third-degree robbery, interfering with an officer, disorderly conduct, and conspiracy. Police said they had responded to an interrupted burglary on Westchester Road. Two men were found in the home by the homeowner and the men took off on foot. One was caught nearby and the other fled into the woods, but was found

## Marlborough Police News

11/7: State Police said John Markham, 18, of 22 South Main St., was arrested and charged with operating under the influence, operating an unregistered motor vehicle and failure to drive in the proper lane.

## Hebron Police News

11/9: State Police said Barbara Calkins, 42, of 78 Martin Rd., was arrested and charged with risk of injury to a child and disorderly conduct.

near his home, police said.

11/7: Colchester Police said Marybeth Sanady, 30, of 670 Middletown Rd., was arrested and charged with sixth-degree larceny. Police reported they had responded to Stop and Shop for an employee stealing items from the store.

11/8: Colchester Police said Tyler Vashalifski, 22, of 8 Jan Dr., was arrested on a warrant and charged with fourth-degree larceny, sixth-degree larceny, fraudulent use of an ATM, credit card theft, illegal use of a credit card, receipt of money by illegal use of a credit card, first-degree forgery and attempt to commit crime.

11/8: State Police said James Sthilaire, 36, of 391 Goshen Hill Rd., Lebanon, was arrested and charged with DUI, speeding and failure to drive right.

11/10: Colchester Police said they are investigating after a homeowner on Midland Drive reported items stolen from a closet.

11/10: Colchester Police said Francesca Colonna, 26, of 91 Midland Dr., was arrested and charged with first-degree failure to appear on a warrant.

11/10: State Police said Robert McGoff, 52, of 44 Midland Dr., was arrested and charged with second-degree failure to appear on a warrant. Police said he was also charged with first-degree failure to appear on a warrant.

## Andover Police News

11/11: State Police said they are investigating after an overnight burglary into a food cart trailer. Forced entry was used to gain access. Anyone with information should call Trooper Paul Arigno at Troop K.

## East Hampton Police News

10/17: Jennifer VanWycke, 34, of 14 Myrtle Rd., was arrested pursuant to an active warrant for her arrest, and charged with second-degree failure to appear, East Hampton Police said.

10/31: Diana M. Farrell, 32, of 1439 Willard Ave., Newington, was issued a summons for operating a motor vehicle under suspension and drinking while driving, police said.



# Obituaries

## Colchester

### James V. Palumbo

James V. Palumbo, 76, of Barclay Lane, Saugerties, N.Y., passed away unexpectedly Wednesday, Oct. 15, at the Albany Medical Center. Born Dec. 19, 1937 in Glasco, N.Y., he was the son of the late Frank Sr. and Kenia Palumbo.

He was a graduate of Saugerties High School, where he pitched on the Varsity Baseball team and gained his love of the sport. He was a veteran of the U.S. Air Force, stationed in Bangor, Maine. Jimmy was employed for 37 years at Northeast Solite, retiring as plant manager. An avid bowler, he was a member of the Saugerties Bowlers Club and was awarded the King of the Hill Trophy. His spirit and spark will be forever missed by his family and friends.

Survivors include: a son, Dean Palumbo and Colleen of LaQuinta, Calif., and daughters, Leatrice Wallach and Jason, Kristal Palumbo and Thomas Richard, all of Saugerties, N.Y., Tearice Peters and Donald of Colchester and grandchildren, Nina, Nathaniel, Keniamarie and Gabrielle Palumbo, Grant Peters, Jason and Cassandra Wallach; his sister, Virginia and Rudolph Marciano; brothers, Frank Jr. and Bernice Palumbo, Joseph and Barbara Palumbo; his former wife, Gail Walbroehl Bechtold; and several nieces and nephews.

His Service of Remembrance was held Sunday, Nov. 9, at the Seamon-Wilsey Funeral Home, Inc. Family and friends were received Sunday before the service.

Expressions of condolence may be shared with the family at [SeamonWilseyFuneralHome.com](http://SeamonWilseyFuneralHome.com).

## East Hampton

### Gladys E. Wilson

Gladys E. (Pukies) Wilson, 100, of East Hampton, widow of Joseph C. Wilson, died Saturday, Nov. 8, at her home. Born Feb. 10, 1914 in Brooklyn, N.Y., she was the daughter of the late Alexander and Emma (Mangels) Pukies.



Gladys was a resident of East Hampton for more than 70 years. She was retired from SNET Co., having worked there from 1958 until 1979. She had worked as a nurse's aide in Rest Haven Convalescent Home in East Hampton and at Russell Library in Middletown in the Children's Department for 14 years until the age of 90. Gladys was also a volunteer at Middlesex Hospital for many years.

Since her retirement, Gladys had been a member of the Telephone Pioneers, she was also a member of the Eastern Star of East Hampton and Middletown. She loved her home and gardens and enjoyed traveling.

She is survived by her daughter, Alice C. Money of Wethersfield; grandson Robert J. Money and wife Kristi of Reno, Nev.; nephews Edward and wife Adele Vynalek of Higganum, Ronald and wife Joyce Vynalek of Higganum, Ralph Vynalek of Durham; great-nephews Bob and wife Vivienne McGarry of Haddam, David Smith of Staffordville, Katharine Money, Christopher Money; special friends Wencke Lossius, Al and Rita Dunham and Jack Lanzi.

She was predeceased by her son-in-law, Robert D. Money.

Funeral services were held Wednesday, Nov. 12, in the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton. Burial followed in Lake View Cemetery. Friends called at the funeral home Wednesday morning, before the service.

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

To leave online condolences, visit [spencerfuneralhomeinc.com](http://spencerfuneralhomeinc.com).

## Portland

### Louise E. Richards

Louise E. Richards, 79, of Portland, died Tuesday, Nov. 11, in Cobalt. She was born April 20, 1935, in Providence, R.I., daughter of the late Albert and Ethel Towner Kamps.

She is survived by Joseph Finta, her companion of 23 years, of Madison. She is also survived by several nieces and nephews; a son, Carl Richards of Portland; two grandchildren; and her sister, Evelyn Smith of Central Falls, R.I.

Louise grew up in Rhode Island, where she graduated from Pawtucket High School. She moved to Connecticut, living in Portland and East Hampton.

Funeral services will be held privately.

Arrangements are in care of the Guilford Funeral Home, 115 Church St., Guilford. To share a memory or leave a message of condolence for the family, please visit [GuilfordFuneralHome.com](http://GuilfordFuneralHome.com).

## East Hampton

### Nicholas Featherchuk

Our beloved son, brother, uncle and friend Nicholas William Featherchuk died unexpectedly Tuesday, Nov. 4. He grew up in East Hampton and was a graduate of Xavier High School and UConn. The majority of his career was spent in the nuclear field.

Nicholas was a kind, warm-hearted, intelligent, and generous man. Nick and avid sports fan, loved the Boston Red Sox, golf, cooking and spending time with his friends.

He leaves behind his mother Frances Featherchuk, sister Katherine Clark, niece Ayla, and nephew Jack, all of Biddeford, Maine, as well as extended family and many friends.

He was predeceased by his father Aleck Featherchuk, grandparents, aunts and uncles.

Friends may call at the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, Saturday, Nov. 15, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. A memorial service will be held at noon in the funeral home.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the East Hampton Little League, P.O. Box 46, East Hampton, CT 06424 or to the Sandy Peszynski Breast Cancer Foundation at [spbcf.com](http://spbcf.com).

To leave online condolences, visit [spencerfuneralhomeinc.com](http://spencerfuneralhomeinc.com).

## East Hampton

### Sharon Mary Barrett

Sharon Mary Barrett, 52, of East Hampton, passed away Sunday, Nov. 9, at Middlesex Hospital. Born in Yonkers, N.Y., she was the daughter of the late Robert and Helen (Grunge) Barrett.

Sharon was employed at Habasit America for 15 years, worked as a travel agent for King Travelways, and at Zorba's Restaurant. She loved to travel, boating, the beach, motorcycle rides, and the Lebanon Valley Raceway in New York. Sharon was a free spirit and the life of any party who was known for being able to make a rock talk!

She is survived by two daughters, Ashley E. Gummo and her husband, Todd, of Wallingford; and Kirsten R. Cotrona, of Middlefield; a grandson, Ethan Gummo; three brothers, Robert R. Barrett and his wife, Susan, of Port St. Lucie, Fla.; David A. Barrett and his wife, Sara-Jane, of Higganum; and Jeffrey J. Barrett and his wife, Jo-Anne, of Meriden; her boyfriend, Gregory Allen, of East Hampton; her fur-child, Dozer; and several nieces, nephews, cousins, and many close friends.

The family would like to say a special thank you to Middlesex Hospital Weiss Hospice Unit and Smilow Cancer Hospital for helping Sharon fight a tremendous fight.

Family and friends called Thursday, Nov. 13, at Doolittle Funeral Home, 14 Old Church St., Middletown. There will be no service or burial.

In lieu of flowers, donations in Sharon's memory may be made to Middlesex Hospital Weiss Hospice Unit, 28 Crescent St., Middletown, CT 06457; or Smilow Cancer Hospital at Yale-New Haven Hospital, 20 York St., New Haven, CT 06510.

To share memories or send condolences to the family, visit [doolittlefuneralservice.com](http://doolittlefuneralservice.com).

## East Hampton

### L. Blaine Belz

L. Blaine Belz, 71, of East Hampton, died Thursday, Nov. 6, at Chestelm Health & Rehabilitation Center in East Haddam.

Blaine was born in Lewiston, Maine, son of the late Stanley and Katherine (Wright) Belz. He grew up between East Haddam and Maine and graduated from Nathan Hale High School in Moodus in 1961. He went on to work as a mechanic for Pratt & Whitney for many years until his retirement.

Blaine was a short track racer, racing at several Connecticut tracks for many years as well as owning and refurbishing antique muscle cars. He will always be remembered for his infectious smile and humor.

Blaine is survived by his daughters, Robin Goodspeed of Lyme and Sam Riley and her husband Kevin of Ladson, S.C.; his brother, Keith D. Belz of Windsor, Maine; his sister, Judith A. Barnett of Ocala, Fla.; his six grandchildren, Garritt, Todd and Kurtis Goodspeed, and Kyle, Jarrid and Jordan Riley; a great-granddaughter, Raelyn Joe; and nephews Kirtland Belz of East Hampton, Steven Belz of Old Lyme, John Belz and Mark Belz, both of East Haddam, Erskine Barnett of Florida; and his niece, Lisa Rich of Florida. Blaine is also survived by a special friend, Johan Ouellette of Killingworth.

In addition to his parents, Blaine was predeceased by his brother, Stanley Belz.

Visitation was held Sunday, Nov. 9, at the Robinson, Wright & Weymer Funeral Home, 34 Main St., in Centerbrook. Funeral service and burial were private.

Memorial contributions in Blaine's name may be made to the American Parkinson's Disease Assoc., 27 Allendale Dr. North Haven, CT 06473.

To share a memory of Blaine or send a condolence to his family, visit [rwwfh.com](http://rwwfh.com).

## East Hampton

### Nancy L. Booth

Nancy L. Booth, 72, died peacefully at her home Tuesday, Nov. 4. She was predeceased by her beloved husband, Barry T. Booth.

Nancy was the daughter of June and Bob Logozzo, of Meriden. A Platt High School graduate, Meriden was her home until moving to Lake Pocotopaug, East Hampton, as a summer then permanent resident. Nancy was a dedicated health service provider.

Born Feb. 23, 1942, Nancy is survived by her sons, Scott Minor and his wife, Tory, and Timothy Minor, both of East Hampton; sister, Betsey L. Wright, of Milford and her husband, Wil; brother, John N. Logozzo, of Meriden; brother, Rusty and sister-in-law, Lisa, who both left this world at young ages; Brenda Valauskus, longtime friend and sister-in-law; Marilyn Meyers, longtime friend of 46 years; grandchildren, Tucker, Shawn, Makala, Zachary, Dylan and Erica. Nancy will be sorely missed by eight nieces and nephews.

Nancy loved her flowers and especially two rescue kittens; therefore, please consider sending donations to the Meriden Humane Society, 311 Murdock Ave., Meriden, CT 06450.

The graveside service will also commemorate husband Barry T. Booth, with the service private to the family.

## East Hampton

### Michael Smithwick

Michael Smithwick, 69, of Indian Land, S.C., and a longtime former resident of East Hampton, died peacefully at home Tuesday, Oct. 28, with Gail, his loving wife, by his side.

Born in Middletown, he was the son of the late John L. and Helen F. Smithwick. Mike was a devoted and loving husband, father, grandfather, brother, friend, and mentor. He took much pride in the accomplishments of his children and grandchildren.

Mike was a graduate of Woodrow Wilson High School, Middletown. For several years, he was an owner of the former Nutmeg Glass Corp. in East Hartford. Following its closure in the early 1990s, he was able to follow his dream, completing a BA at Charter Oak State College, and MA in counseling from St. Joseph College, West Hartford. He was a well-known licensed professional counselor in private practice in East Hampton for nearly 20 years. He specialized in, and was better known, as a clinical hypnotherapist who took great satisfaction in the successes of his clients.

Mike was a longtime Boy Scout leader, serving as a cubmaster, scoutmaster, explorer post advisor, and commissioner for over 20 years in the former Long Rivers Council, BSA. He held a private pilot's license, and was an avid model airplane builder. He had a passion for history, ancient to modern and everything in between, and for historic firearms, which he loved to shoot and reload. Mike was a member of several professional organizations as well as the Glastonbury Elks Club.

Mike is survived by his wife and love of his life Gail (Bruneau) of 48 years; by his cherished daughter, Amy Montgomery, son-in-law Joe, and grandson Ian Riddle of Silverdale, Pa.; by his much-loved son Patrick, daughter-in-law Misha, and grandchildren Tanner, Kyleigh and Grant of Castle Rock, Colo.; by his dearest sister Patricia Hill (Tom) of East Hampton; cousin and friend Bill Hodge (Ann); best friend since childhood C. Peter Smith (Laurie and Cody) of Pelham, Ala.; and special friends Simone, Allen, Michelle and Martha, all of Indian Land, S.C. He is also survived by many other family members in Connecticut and Colorado, as well as friends, old and new.

Special thanks to Recency Hospice, Rock Hill, S.C., especially Nikki, Ethel, Steve, and David, to the Rev. Bob Faulhaber of Marlborough Congregational Church, and to Rev. David Bender of Faith Church for their loving support during Mike's illness.

A memorial service will take place in Indian Land, S.C., at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, please make memorial contributions to Faith Presbyterian Church Building Fund, 7520 Charlotte Hwy, Indian Land, SC 29707.

## Hebron

### Bruce MacDonald Bell

Bruce MacDonald Bell, 68, beloved husband of Lori Guidobono Bell, and father to Matthew, Jeremy, and Nathaniel, passed away near his home in Land O Lakes, Fla., on Sunday, Nov. 2. He was visited by many loved ones prior to his passing.

Bruce was born in Jackson Heights, N.Y., on Oct. 28, 1946, to Gloria and John Bell. He attended RHAM High School of Hebron, Class of 1964, and after graduation proudly served in the U.S. Navy on the USS Mackerel submarine from 1964 to 1967. While in the Navy, Bruce sang in the Blue Jacket Choir.

Upon completing his service to our country, Bruce enrolled in the Culinary Institute of America, graduating in 1970 and then embarked upon his career as a professional chef. Highlights of his career achievements include his positions as executive chef at the Avon Old Farms Inn and the Sheraton Hotel, proprietor of the Bel Compo Golf Course and as a sales executive for Better Brands and Seitenbacher of America.

He was a member of the Masonic Lodge and a member of the Harmony Hill 4 Barbershop Quartet. In addition to his love of singing, Bruce was an avid boater and a superior wood craftsman. Most of his life was spent in Connecticut, but for the past 10 years he resided near Tampa, Fla., with his wife of 23 years, Lori Guidobono Bell.

A loving son, husband, father, and grandfather, Bruce leaves behind wife, Lori; mother, Gloria Bell of Hebron; his sons, Matthew of Westfield, Mass., Jeremy of Hebron, and Nathaniel Bell of Wethersfield; daughter-in-law, Leia Bell; four beautiful grandchildren, Ryan, Gwenn, Jacob, and Eve; sisters, Lesley Bell-Yockachonis of Colchester and Laura Vieu of Vernon; brothers, John Bell of Tolland and Willie Bell of Hebron; brothers-in-law, Anthony Manganello, Dennis Bono, and Wayne Vieu; sisters-in-law, Susan Bell and Lorraine Hunt-Bono; and a house full of loving nieces, nephews and grandnieces and grandnephews.

Bruce was pre-deceased by his father, John M. Bell; newborn daughter, Jessica Bell; in-laws, Louis and Delphine Guidobono; and brother-in-law, Robert Yockachonis.

The calling hours were at D'Esopo Funeral Chapel, 277 Folly Brook Blvd., Wethersfield, on Thursday, Nov. 13. A memorial service was held today, Nov. 14, at 10:30 a.m., at Avon Congregational Church, 6 West Main St., Avon.

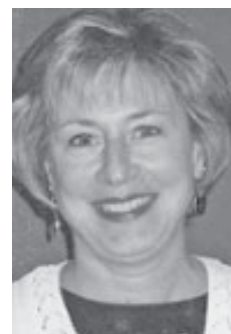
Donations in Bruce Bell's memory may be made to the Wounded Warrior Project, P.O. Box 758517, Topeka, KS 66675.

To share a memory of Bruce with the family, visit [desopo.com](http://desopo.com).

## Marlborough

### Judith C. Traverso

Judith C. Traverso, 66, of Marlborough, passed away Friday, Nov. 7, at home, surrounded by her loving family. She was born Jan. 23, 1948, to the late Robert and Emma (Gardon) Cahill.



Judy is survived by her husband, Michael Traverso Jr.; daughter, Kristin Dunnirvine, and her husband, Bill, of Marlborough; son, Todd Rainville, and his wife, Julie, of Wayland, Mass.; stepson, Brian Traverso, and his wife, Kelly, of Oxford; and stepdaughter, Ellen Mahoney, and her husband Josh, of San Francisco, Calif. Judy also leaves behind seven treasured grandchildren, Ryan and Kyra Dunnirvine, Zach, Jackie and Max Rainville, Drew and Emily Traverso; and her beloved dogs, Lacey and Matty.

Judy graduated from St. Francis School of Nursing. She worked in industrial, pediatric and visiting nursing, spending the last 22 years of her career as a school nurse at Philip R. Smith School in South Windsor. Judy enjoyed traveling, sewing, knitting, and making jewelry and stained glass.

Donations in Judy's memory can be made to the Connecticut Humane Society.

Friends are invited to celebrate Judy's life Saturday, Dec. 6, from noon-2 p.m., at Manchester Country Club.

Holden-Dunn-Lawler Funeral Home has care of the arrangements. For online condolences, visit [hdlfuneralhome.net](http://hdlfuneralhome.net).