

RIVEREAST

News Bulletin

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

Volume 38, Number 52

Published by The Glastonbury Citizen

April 18, 2014



Watershed Clean-Up Coming... The Friends of Lake Pocotopaug will host the annual Watershed Cleanup Saturday, April 26. Clean-up starts at Sears Park at 9 a.m. This year, the Friends group has teamed up with the Boy Scouts and will have a bin available for people to donate an item for the East Hampton Food Bank. All volunteers are invited to a complimentary buffet lunch to be held at Angelico's Lakehouse afterward. Rain date for the event is Sunday, April 27. Shown here, ready to get down to cleaning, are, from left, Emilee Ahrens, Kamey Cavanaugh, Bailee Ahrens, Gladys Yeager, Sherri Owitz and Peter Owitz.

RHAM Community Gathers for Healing

by Geeta Schrayter

As the sun set Sunday, April 6, members of the RHAM community gathered at Church of the Holy Family in Hebron for a Night of Healing. The lights were dim as people entered, with the sun illuminating the giant stained glass windows that rose behind the altar.

The event, which was a collaboration between AHM Youth and Family Services, RHAM High School and faith communities from Hebron, Andover and Marlborough, was planned in response to the loss and trauma that has occurred at the RHAM schools over the past year.

As the event began, those losses – which include the deaths of four students and one teacher – were acknowledged through the lighting of candles.

"Tonight, we acknowledge our grief and the pain that we feel," said the Rev. Denise Esslinger of Gilead Congregational Church. "We come to share our grief, but also to move out of our own painful places and join in community to seek healing. Each candle here represents one of our lost loved ones: Amanda, Dawn, Garret, John and Paige."

Amanda Monington, 15, was a freshman at RHAM who passed away last June after falling 20 feet from a waterfall at Enders State Forest in Granby; Dawn Mallory, 65, was a middle school teacher at the school who was fatally struck by a vehicle in March; John Georgiades, 16, died last October after a battle with cancer; Garret Campen, 18, died in Janu-

ary as a result of a car accident; and Paige Houston, 17, also died in a car accident last August.

A sixth candle was also lit for any other losses in the community.

"In this time, we name our pain at the loss of those who we loved so much and who we will continue to love," said Andover Congregational Church Rev. Ray Kostulias after the candles were lit. "We grieve these losses in faith that our loved ones will always be with us in spirit and in love. We pause now in the light of these candles to look within ourselves and to quietly reflect as we name our own pain."

The Night of Healing provided an opportunity for community members to, as the release regarding the event stated, come together "seeking a strong sense of community, offering prayers for healing, and discovering a hopeful path forward where we can find light even in the midst of the darkness."

That purpose was affirmed by RHAM High School Principal Scott Leslie and Mary Rose Meade of AHM Youth and Family Services, who each provided words of welcome.

"Throughout this year," said Leslie, "RHAM students, parents and staff members have grieved together far too often, but we have also learned what it means to support each other."

"We understand that this night is not a cure all to our pain and sadness," added Meade, "but it is a chance to come together and support each other. It is a chance for us to acknowledge that

See Healing Page 2

Belldown 'Celebrities' Cook Off for Charity

by Elizabeth Bowling

Despite Sunday afternoon's 70-degree weather and sunny skies, many members of the East Hampton community gathered inside at Angelico's Lake House for a "celebrity chef" event, in which six of East Hampton's most familiar faces competed to prepare the tastiest hors d'oeuvres and win the votes of ticket-holders.

The six "celebrity chefs" were Father Walter Nagle, of St. Patrick Church; former Board of Education and Town Council member John Tuttle; Friends of Lake Pocotopaug Chairman John Moore; member of Friends of Lake Pocotopaug, the East Hampton Lake Commission and the Connecticut Federation of Lakes Joe Carbonell; Town Council Chairwoman Barbara Moore; and Town Council Vice Chairman Kevin Reich.

Each chef cooked on behalf of a charity of their choosing. They prepared their specialty dishes for the event's 75 ticket-holders to sample and rank on a scorecard. At the end of the event, the scorecards were tallied and Nagle was crowned the winner with 279 points. Tuttle came in second place with 250 points, just barely edging out John Moore with 249 points.

Because Nagle ultimately "won" the cook-off, his charity of choice, the Alzheimer's As-

sociation, will receive the proceeds from the event.

The Alzheimer's Association's mission, according to its website, is "to eliminate Alzheimer's disease through the advancement of research; to provide and enhance care and support for all affected; and to reduce the risk of dementia through the promotion of brain health."

Nagle said his choice in a charity was "personal," because his mother passed away from dementia. He called the opportunity to participate in last weekend's event "a nice way to take something negative and turn it into a positive."

Nagle certainly was able to do so, and with style. The reverend dressed the part of "chef" in a big red chef's hat and served "Louisiana-style crab cakes," which he said seemed to be "the biggest hit" of all his dishes. He also made "Cajun chicken fritters" and "dirty rice cakes with Creole mustard."

But Nagle didn't take all the credit himself; he said he had friends help him out with the cooking.

Nagle concluded, "It's a wonderful way to bring the community together. It's all for charity."

According to Angelico's owner, Paul See Cook Off Page 2



Six East Hampton "celebrities" participated in a cook-off Sunday to raise money for their favorite charities. The winning chef was Father Walter Nagle, of St. Patrick Church. His charity of choice, the Alzheimer's Association, will receive \$460 as a result of the event. Pictured from left are Nagle, John Tuttle, John Moore, Joe Carbonell, Barbara Moore and Kevin Reich.



On April 6, over 200 people gathered at Church of the Holy Family in Hebron for a community Night of Healing. The event was a collaboration between AHM Youth and Family Services, RHAM High School, and faith communities in Andover, Hebron and Marlborough in response to the loss and trauma that has occurred at RHAM over the past year.

Healing cont. from Front Page

each one of us here is having a different grief experience because no grief is like another's."

Last week, Meade called the event "beautiful," and said she was "so glad" so many people participated. She estimated the attendance at 240-250 people, and added she'd received positive feedback.

"I got some very nice support from people who said they felt a lot of healing," she stated.

The event consisted of prayers, poetry and readings – as well as songs written by RHAM students, such as *Paige's Threnody*, which was composed and played by Morgan Cunningham, and the song *Blink of an Eye* written by CJ Yopp and performed by Yopp and Claire Russo.

"Things we take for granted can all go away, in the blink of an eye the shade turns to grey," Yopp and Russo sang. "We'd give the world to go back and fix right from wrong, but God's got a plan for us – we've all got a song."

The song *Free*, written by Jess Rivard, was also performed by Rivard and Celia Rhoderger. This week, Rivard shared *Free* was inspired by Houston's passing. Then when Campen, who was one of her close friends, passed away, she wrote another song, entitled *Two Angels*.

"I was supposed to sing *Two Angels* [at the Night of Healing], but after the passing of our teacher Mrs. Mallory, it felt like *Free* was more appropriate," Rivard stated. Speaking on the event in general, she said "I thought it was very good for the community and I was so happy to be a part of it."

Various prayers and passages from scripture were also shared, including a traditional Native American prayer, the Prayer of St. Francis and a Litany of Community which was read by the different clergy.

Deacon John McKaig from St. John Fisher Church in Marlborough, exclaimed, "God of

Love, fill our hearts with light and grace and hope that can overcome our feelings of fear, anxiety and division and inspire in each of us a spirit of community, compassion and selflessness."

"God of hope," added Esslinger, "hear our prayers and bless us with your gift of hope. May we seek always to be united as one family under God committed to being healed and reconciled and standing together in the belief that love and compassion are greater forces than loss and grief. In all your many holy names we pray."

Throughout the event, multiple speakers tried to make those present understand grief takes many forms, and whatever way an individual was grieving was ok.

"Each of us has grieved and provided and sought comfort in our own unique ways," Leslie stated. "Some of us have reached out to others while others have been dealing with their feelings more privately. ... Each of us has had to navigate our way through unknown waters."

Meade continued, "Sad, angry, unbelieving, happy, then guilty for being happy, and then back to angry again – any feeling you have is ok because that is the nature of grief."

Meade called grief "a private journey," but added it wasn't one that had to be taken alone.

"We want you to know that your grief journey, though individual and unique, does not have to be traveled alone," she said.

And as the night came to an end, those present stepped outside into a night made brighter by the luminaries that lined the walkways – like a symbol of the light that can be garnered when a community comes together in the midst of darkness, as they had that evening to support one another in the face of a grief-filled year.

Cook Off cont. from Front Page

Angelico, The Lake House originally offered to donate 20 percent of all ticket sales to the winning chef's charity of choice but ultimately increased that amount to 30 percent because, he said, "It was just a great event and the chefs put so much effort into it."

Angelico explained that about 30 percent of ticket sales, or \$460, was donated to the Alzheimer's Association and the remaining 70 percent covered the cost of ingredients for the food, staff and the afternoon's live musical entertainer, "Acoustic Rick."

Tickets were \$20 per adult, and with about 75 tickets sold, ticket sales totaled approximately \$1,500.

The chefs and their helpers, as well as Angelico's staff, were in and out of the restaurant's kitchen all afternoon, carrying out trays full of food for people to sample, but the chefs did "all prep and cooking themselves," Angelico affirmed. And while it was certainly hot in the kitchen, it seemed all the chefs were able to handle the heat.

Though Nagle's dishes turned out to be the crowd favorite, his weren't the only ones to leave ticket holders with satisfied taste buds.

One couple at the tasting said they voted for Nagle, calling all three of his dishes "really good." But they were quick to note that they "hadn't had anything bad!"

Tuttle made "lemon herb chix rings." But what made his dish so tasty? "My secret is my wife," he laughed.

Tuttle cooked for the East Hampton Athletic Hall of Fame Jane A. Cerri Memorial Scholarship Fund, which is in memory of his late mother.

Barbara Moore cooked for the Smilow Cancer Hospital at Yale-New Haven, which treats more cancer patients than any other hospital in the state. According to its website, the hospital focuses on personalized medicine, patient-centered care, working toward a cure through research, and expertise and specialization.

"They do amazing work," Barbara Moore said of her charity of choice.

Barbara Moore served Reuben sliders and a dessert dish of cannolis and blueberries in a cup. Regarding the celebrity chef event in general, she said, "I think it'd be a great thing to do annually."

Carbonell cooked for CHC New Horizons. According to its website, "Community Health Center, Inc. is a private, non-profit agency providing primary care and social services. Its quality health care services are available to all, and particularly to those who cannot gain access to such services elsewhere."

Carbonell served "bacon-wrapped treats," like dates and scallops.

John Moore cooked for Hole in the Wall Gang. The organization's goal, according to its

website, is "to ensure that every child with a serious medical condition has the chance to experience the world of possibilities that camp has to offer."

Essentially, the charity provides fun, camp experiences to seriously ill children and their families throughout the Northeast, free of charge.

John Moore said his "mom would be so proud" of his choice of charity because she used to donate there, too. He said she used to make Afghans for them, but passed away a couple of years ago.

John Moore's specialty dish was "bacon-tomato cups" with a "secret blast of chipotle sauce," he said.

Reich cooked for the locally-based Sandy Peszynski Breast Cancer Foundation.

According to the foundation's website, "Sandy's husband and children have created a foundation in her name to collect funds to help support two organizations that were essential to her and her family during her 25-year battle with this horrible disease. All funds collected are divided equally between the Middlesex Cancer Center and Hartford Hospitals Partnership for Breast Care."

The foundation is run by Sandy's family and is backed by their garden center and hardware business, Paul's and Sandy's Too.

"Their charity has done so much," Reich said. "I have fond memories of Mrs. Peszynski. She was always good to me and my family."

Also, Reich said, his wife died young of ovarian cancer, so cancer is a cause "I know all too well." He added, "The [Peszynski] family was very good to my family."

Reich was clad in a full body apron, which he said got a lot of compliments. He served "skewered chix with dipping sauce" and said his secret was baking the chicken with potato chips.

Asked if he had help with the cooking, Reich joked, "I'm beyond help."

Reich noted the great turnout at the event, despite the beautiful weather outside and the parade in Hartford honoring the men and women's University of Connecticut basketball teams as national champions.

With such a great turnout, it was easy to wonder when the next "celebrity chef" event will be. And while a date hasn't been set yet, Angelico said he is planning to do another one.

Angelico, who is credited with coming up with the idea for the fundraiser, said it started off as a "chef throw-down" between John Moore and Carbonell and "expanded into this."

"We didn't know what to expect. It's a good turnout and [there's] good support from the town," Angelico said. "There's a nice community spirit."

Orange to Seek 10th Term

by **Melissa Roberto**

Democrat Linda A. Orange recently announced her intention to run for election to the state House of Representatives – which she has done, and succeeded in, nine consecutive times.

Going on her 18th year in the seat, Orange's momentum to continue serving the 48th Assembly District – which includes Colchester and portions of Lebanon, Mansfield and Windham – is apparent.

"I am energized and excited by the opportunity to serve residents of the 48th District," Orange said in a press release. If voters allow her to do so for another two-year term, the legislator said this week, "It would be my honor."

In addition to simply wanting to run again, Orange said her decision to do so also came from encouragement from the constituents in the communities she serves.

"Many constituents and advocacy groups and residents have asked me to run again," Orange said, adding she believes she still has "a lot to offer the district."

The seasoned legislator has lived in Colchester for 37 years and raised a family in the town during that time. She was first elected to the state representative seat in 1997, at which time the 48th District was made up of Colchester and East Haddam. She represented those two communities up until the start of 2013, when redistricting changed the district to its current configuration.

Orange said the new makeup of the district allowed her to "learn quite a bit" in the last year.

"I've enjoyed working with the representatives that I am lucky enough to share those towns with," Orange said regarding Windham, Lebanon and Mansfield.

This week, Orange reflected on some of the accomplishments she is proud of in the last nine terms. She recalled seeking and ultimately passing special legislation regarding the asphalt plant on Old Hartford Road in Colchester, which she said was "a very difficult feat" that set regulations on the location of the plant in

relation to residential zones and water ways.

Additionally, Orange recalled passing "a lot" of legislation for individual constituents as well as legislation for environmental groups, such as the Air Line Trail and the erosion of the Lyman Viaduct that was crumbling back in 2010-11. Orange was also proud to reflect on her creation of the first anti-bullying bill in 2006, a video voyeurism bill and the state's first family medical leave bill.

"I also pride myself on doing legislation for working families of the middle-class," Orange added.

During these accomplishments, Orange also reflected on the growth within the towns, saying, "Oh, absolutely the communities have changed."

"We had—in the old part of the district—a population explosion, which seems to have now leveled back off," the representative added.

Orange also reflected on positive changes she's sought for in her current term. As a member of the General Assembly's Appropriation Committee, a press release announcing Orange's intent to seek re-election stated she has pushed for additional PILOT (Payment In Lieu Of Taxes) funding.

"Orange has pushed for additional state funds for Colchester, Lebanon, Mansfield and Windham, leading to an additional \$700,000 over what was allocated in the previous state budget," the release said.

"I stand by my record of securing state dollars for our towns," Orange wrote in the release. "Our local budgets, especially our education budgets, are stretched to the limit. State funding makes a big difference to the bottom line."

(However, not everyone is as taken with the state funds. In a press release issued this week, Colchester resident Jason Paul, who is challenging Orange for the Democrat nomination, said "almost everyone received additional funds" in the state budget. Annual aid to all municipalities went up by about \$55 million, he wrote;

"not a single town saw its appropriation decline.")

Orange also recently pushed for the overturn of the state police coverage consolidation, which left state police barracks around the state, including Troop K in Colchester, closed at various times of day.

"I was the first on the record saying I was opposed to it," Orange said of the consolidation. "I spoke directly to the [Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection] commissioner regarding the issue and solicited the assistance of the Northeast delegation because it also impacted Troop D in Danielson and Troop E in Montville."

On March 24, around-the-clock police coverage was reinstalled at the troops.

"It's a step in the right direction," Orange continued on the topic. "We've gotten to that point and there's still some to do there."

In looking ahead to another two-year term, Orange said that, if elected, her plans involve "important key issues" of the 48th District in addition to public safety: "space, the environment, and farmland preservation."

In the state house, Orange also serves on a number of committees: Appropriations, General Law, Legislative Management, Public Safety and Security. She is also the deputy speaker of the house, a role she's held since 2009. She has previously been a deputy majority leader and assistant majority whip.

Before heading to Hartford, Orange also wore a number of hats in Colchester. She was a member and chair of the Colchester Board of Assessment Appeals from 1992-95, a Colchester Police Commission member from 1993-96, and is a member of the Colchester Democratic Town Committee. She is also an honorary member of the Colchester Hayward Volunteer Fire Department (CHVFD) and, since 1997, has been a justice of the peace. Orange is also an associate member of the Connecticut National Guard.



Linda Orange

Dave Martin, president of the CHVFD, expressed his support for Orange.

"Linda stands with first-responders. She makes sure the state hears our voices and works hard to provide the training, equipment and support we need," Martin said in the same press release. "Linda Orange was instrumental in securing more than \$26 million for our crumbling regional fire schools – including the Eastern Connecticut fire school in Willimantic."

"I've held a leadership position many years now," Orange concluded of her long stint at the state capitol. "I've always worked and continue to work with both sides of the aisle to get the job done and bring something home."

For more information on Linda Orange, readers can check out her Facebook page at [Facebook.com/representativelinda.orange](https://www.facebook.com/representativelinda.orange) or can reach out to her at Lindaaorange@yahoo.com.

Mulligan Announces Run for State Rep.

by **Geeta Schrayter**

State Rep. Pam Sawyer announced earlier this month she won't be seeking re-election in the fall – and fellow Republican Gayle Mulligan, chairwoman of the Hebron Board of Selectmen, is looking to be the one to fill her shoes.

Mulligan announced this week she's seeking the 55th House District seat Sawyer will soon vacate, which covers Andover, Bolton, Hebron and Marlborough.

And she's off to a good start, having already received an endorsement from Sawyer.

"Gayle has many of the strengths of a successful candidate," Sawyer said earlier this month. "She knows the district from the inside out. ... She understands the tremendous problem of the high cost of state mandates on property taxes, but she also understands those state mandates. And she's a proven leader. She has small towns in her heart."

Mulligan, a Republican who has lived in Connecticut her whole life and has called Hebron "home" since 1996, said this week she decided to run after conversations with Sawyer. She explained she'd spoken with Sawyer shortly before the latter announced her decision not to seek re-election, "and she asked if I would consider running."

"I absolutely had no idea she wasn't going to run again," Mulligan explained. "I figured she'd be there for a long time and she does a great job and I'm enjoying what I do here in town, so up until she let me know, I didn't really have any consideration [about running]."

But with that new knowledge, and with Sawyer's urging, Mulligan took some time to speak with her family, and consider the possibility, ultimately deciding to move forward with the idea.

"With Pam not running again, I think it's a great opportunity for me to take this next step and hopefully make an impact at the state level," Mulligan explained, adding "I am a huge sup-

porter of [Sawyer] and a lot of the things she's done and I think my ideas are very similar to her.

In fact, Mulligan said she was recently approached by an acquaintance who had heard through the grapevine about her decision. The acquaintance told her that, when she learned Sawyer wasn't running again, she'd thought Mulligan would be great in the position, as the two are similar.

Along with Sawyer's endorsement, Mulligan was also endorsed by the Hebron Republican Town Committee at their March meeting.

Chairwoman Catherine Marx said that, while no one can replace Sawyer, "Gayle certainly brings the same passion for public service and education that Pam championed. Gayle has received strong bi-partisan support during her elections, and during her time on the Board of Selectmen."

Marx added voters in the small towns weren't interested in "nasty partisan politics."

"They want a representative to listen to both sides and someone who can reach out to all the stakeholders," Marx furthered. "Gayle is just that kind of person."

Mulligan, according to an April 16 press release by her campaign committee announcing her election bid, "believes that effective government is one that listens to the people, represents all the people, and makes thoughtful, well-informed decisions on their behalf."

The release continued, "Gayle will continue to listen to all sides of the issues and she will be a voice of reason and common sense in the [state] legislature."

Mulligan's community involvement began with helping at Hebron Center Nursery School, which her two children attended. She was then involved with the Hebron Parent Teacher Association where she acted as co-president for two years, has coached youth soccer and was a member of the Hebron Soccer Board of Directors.

In addition, Mulligan was appointed as the

Republican Deputy Registrar in 2004. She was elected to the Zoning Board of Appeals in 2005 followed by the Hebron Board of Selectmen in 2007. She was voted vice-chair that same year, a role she held until she was voted chairwoman of the board last year.

Mulligan is also a member of Gilead Congregational Church, a Justice of the Peace, works part-time at the Hebron Quick Lube and actively raises funds for the American Cancer Society and The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society.

Mulligan shared she moved to Hebron for the education and the rural character – "a lot of the reasons so many people did" – and said her involvement with the selectmen, where she serves as liaison to the RHAM Board of Education, the Fire Department, and the Russell Mercier Senior Center, has allowed her to truly understand what affects the community.

"Going to those meetings and talking to people, you really get a feeling for the demands put on this community" Mulligan stated, adding it was becoming difficult to stay in the area "because of the demands coming down from the state – policies that are forced on us really with very little support financially. And I don't think some of these decisions are well thought-out."

Mulligan furthered some of these demands were making it harder to craft budgets in the small towns; small businesses, which she called "the foundation of our state," were struggling; and rights were being infringed upon.

Mulligan's top priorities were listed as sensible spending, lower taxation, and the promotion of legislation that will keep jobs in the state.

Mulligan, according to the release from her campaign, believes "small business owners need a voice in Hartford, local governments must run efficiently without the constant interference and complications of unfunded mandates, and our small towns have unique challenges as compared to the larger towns



Gayle Mulligan

and cities."

"I think you live in these communities, and we're all looking for the same kind of thing," Mulligan said. "Just to be able to enjoy our home, to be able to afford to stay here and to enjoy our life as Americans and not have to panic about where every last dollar is going to come from or how I'm going to pay my bills every day."

And it's those kinds of things Mulligan would work to help ensure.

The next step for Mulligan is to hopefully receive the Republican nomination for the 55th District House Seat at the Republican convention May 14.

For more information, or to find out how to support Mulligan's campaign, email mulliganforstaterp@gmail.com.

\$10.65 Million Budget Heads to Hearing in Andover

by Geeta Schrayter

Next Wednesday, Andover residents will have the opportunity to weigh in on the proposed 2014-15 budget of \$10.65 million, at the annual town budget public hearing.

The proposed budget is a decrease of .26 percent from the current year's budget, or \$27,320.93, and clocks in at \$10,651,362.45. That number includes \$4,269,044 for Andover Elementary School and \$3,949,770 for Andover's portion of the RHAM budget.

The budget also calls for a drop in the mill rate, of .05, bringing it to 30.72. The mill rate is used to calculate a resident's taxes; for a house valued at \$200,000 this would mean a \$10 tax decrease from \$6,154 to \$6,144.

Despite the overall budget decrease, some proposed increases are included such as an additional \$12,000 for snow removal, which Board of Finance Chair Georgette Conrad explained is to replace money that had been cut in a previous year's budget; an additional \$6,865.83 for the Public Works Department which includes union raises and funds for tree removal and vehicle maintenance; and \$6,154.32 for the Town Office Building account

for the replacement of laptops that run on Windows XP, which is no longer supported by Microsoft.

In addition, a \$4,977 increase was added for maintenance and gas for the senior vans as well as more money for the drivers; \$3,096.44 was also added to the Planning and Zoning Department budget, which includes such items as an additional \$1,000 for legal fees and professional services, and a wage increase for the department clerk; and \$1,380 was added to update wiring at the Old Town Hall.

As far as salaries, non-elected employees are set to receive a 3 percent wage increase, while unionized employees will receive a 2 percent raise; a 3 percent raise has also been included for elected personnel, but that raise must be voted on at the time of the referendum.

"The Board of Selectmen did feel this year small increases and raises could be given," Conrad explained. "They thought, 'While we have the chance, let's increase their pays a little bit because they don't get them every year by any means.'"

In addition, three capital requests were ap-

proved in the budget for next year: \$50,000 for the purchase of a minivan with a wheelchair/walker accessible ramp; \$33,145 for the second of a five-year annual lease to purchase a dump truck; and \$16,306 for 16 voice amplifiers and radio interface units for the Fire Department.

The decreases were spread throughout the budget and include a \$7,508.15 decrease in employee benefits, a \$5,433 decrease in capital expenditures, and a \$3,870 decrease in interest expense, which Conrad explained went down 10.98 percent and goes down each year as loan amounts get smaller.

In addition, the budget includes a \$1,559.08 decrease from AHM Youth and Family Services.

Along with the above, the Andover Elementary School budget decreased by \$65,074 and Andover's contribution to RHAM, which is based on the number of students from town who attend the school, decreased \$11,905.

On the revenue side of things, non-tax revenue is estimated to be \$2,592,633 which represents an increase of \$35,000 over last year.

The revenue comes from a variety of sources such as grants and fees.

"I think we worked hard to cover all the bases, all the expenses and still keep it within our means," Conrad said this week. "I don't expect any problems with it since we managed to drop it down a little bit for the second year in a row," she furthered. "I'm pleased with it. I wish we could have made it lower, but we can't."

The hearing will take place next Wednesday, April 23, at 7 p.m. in the Town Hall. At the hearing, members of the public can express their views and make suggestions to increase or decrease items (but not on the school budgets). The finance board can then decide whether they want to take any action.

On May 7, the Board of Selectmen will then hold a town meeting on the budget, where residents can vote to send the numbers to referendum or not. During that time, requests can be made to decrease – but not increase – items, and the finance board will once again have the option to take action on any suggestions.

Traffic Pattern Change at RHAM

by Geeta Schrayter

Whether they'll be riding the bus or dropped off by parents, when students return to RHAM Monday, they'll find new traffic patterns in place.

The changes affect the morning drop-off period, and come as a result of the March 14 accident, in which middle school teacher Dawn Mallory was fatally hit by a car. Mallory, 65, was struck when she was walking through the parking lot at the middle school. According to State Police, she was hit by a car that had been backing up after the driver realized she was in the bus lane at the school.

Working with Hebron Town Manager Andrew Tierney, Town Planner Mike O'Leary and the town's engineer, Tom Fenton, RHAM Superintendent of Schools Bob Siminski said changes were devised in an attempt to improve traffic at the school without the need for construction.

"We're trying to do this without construction right now," he said. "We're going to try this and if it needs to go further we will."

During morning drop-off, all buses will now

enter RHAM through the main high school entrance on Wall Street and turn right into the bus lane that runs between the high school and the softball and middle school baseball fields.

All students will now be dropped off at the high school; the middle school students will walk through the high school atrium, the middle school cafeteria and into the middle school. After dropping off the students, the buses will continue around the school and exit onto Route 85 via RHAM Road.

Previously, Siminski explained middle school students were dropped off at the middle school entrance whether they were riding the bus or being driven by their parents. But now, only those arriving with mom or dad will be dropped off at their school.

The parents of those students will be expected to enter RHAM from Wall Street through the high school entrance adjacent to the Wall Street practice fields, travel along the access roads adjacent to the tennis courts, and drop off their children in front of the middle school entrance. They will then be required to take a left at the

stop sign and exit onto Route 85 via RHAM Road.

Parents of high school students – as well as parents with students in both schools – will now come in through the main high school entrance and drop off their children at the drop-off area in front of the weight room. They will then exit back onto Wall Street from the exit adjacent to the Wall Street practice fields.

Students driving to school that park in the upper or lower student parking lots should enter through the Wall Street entrance adjacent to the Wall Street fields.

As far as faculty are concerned, high school staff parking in the curved parking area adjacent to the high school should enter through the main high school entrance off of Wall Street. High school staff parking in the gym/auditorium lot should use the Wall Street entrance adjacent to the Wall Street fields; they may also enter from Route 85 before 6:30 a.m.

Middle school staff should now enter from either Route 85 or the Wall Street entrance ad-

acent to the Wall Street fields.

Along with the above changes, Siminski said about \$3,000 will be used for the purchase of signs, speed bumps and Jersey barriers to improve traffic at the school. He added there will also continue to be people outside supervising, along with a constable on Route 85 assisting traffic.

"We will evaluate this at the end of the year and then make decisions as far as what we need to do," Siminski furthered.

If the new pattern is "no good," he said, the shortcomings will be discussed with the traffic engineers and changes will be made.

Information on the new traffic patterns will be sent out via the school's AlertNow! system this weekend. In addition, a letter documenting the changes as well as a map illustrating the traffic patterns will be emailed Monday.

Siminski added, "I know the first couple of days it's not going to be smooth," but in the end, he said he hopes the changes will result in "an orderly, smooth traffic flow."

Brush Fire on Bigelow Road in Colchester

by Melissa Roberto

Bigelow Road in Colchester was briefly closed Monday afternoon due to a brush fire that was caused by a downed power line, according to the Colchester Hayward Fire Department.

Deputy Fire Chief Don Lee said the call was received at the department at 1:48 p.m. on April 14. The fire was caused by a downed power line due to the heavy winds, the chief said, which caused the fire to move "very quickly."

The CHFD responded to the scene with an engine, truck, and a tanker, as did the East Haddam Fire Department, Lee said.

The fire began at the bottom of the road, at 21 Bigelow, a residential home also surrounded by a storage shed, a generator shed, and a pump house.

"We had residents in danger with outbuildings," Lee said.

Lee said there were no injuries sustained

and no personal property damaged.

"We were able to stop it before it got to the buildings," he furthered.

Lee described a brush fire as one that burns dead vegetation such as leaves, bushes or thickets. He said in cases where the area gets "real dry as it's been in the last few weeks, all of the fuels that are suspended off of the ground are elevated."

"That's what happened here," Lee continued.

The deputy chief furthered the winds Monday were over 40 miles per hour. The departments were on scene for 45 minutes and closed the road until it was put out.

"It wasn't a big fire," Lee concluded. "It was just a very fast moving fire with the wind and it being so dry it gave us a whole bunch of extra challenges."

Firefighters left the scene before 3 p.m., and the road was reopened.

Colchester Town Meeting on \$53.66M Budget Next Week

by Melissa Roberto

The proposed 2014-15 town operations and Board of Education budgets will go before voters at a town meeting next Wednesday – the next step before the budgets head to referendum next month.

Combined, the budgets total \$53,658,889— an increase of \$1,432,985, or 2.74 percent over the 2013-14 fiscal year package.

However, when taxpayers flock to the polls next month, they'll be voting on the town government and school board budgets separately. The town operations budget, which includes debt and capital expenses, totals \$13,478,094, which is an increase of 2.50 percent over the current year's spending, or an increase of \$328,244. The departments that contributed the most to an increase for next year's spending are the public safety and public works accounts.

The school budget totals \$40,180,795,

which reflects an increase of 2.83 percent, or \$1,104,741. Major increases are within the tuition and capital accounts. Capital expenses total \$300,000, while tuition is rising due to the number of Colchester students attending magnet schools.

The proposed mill rate for the coming year is 31.17, up from the current rate of 30.28.

First Selectman Gregg Schuster asked the public to attend next week's meeting.

"I would encourage citizens to come to the town meeting, ask questions and vote upon the proposed town and school budgets," Schuster said.

The town meeting will be held Wednesday, April 23, at 7 p.m., at Town Hall, 127 Norwich Ave. The referendum on the budgets will take place May 6 from 6 a.m.-8 p.m., also at Town Hall. Additional information on the budget is provided at the town website at colchesterct.gov.

MES Student Says ‘Be Green’ for Earth Day

by Melissa Roberto

St. Patrick’s Day came and went, but the greenest day of the year will soon be upon us and Marlborough Elementary School student Jenna Cieslowski is trying her best to remind everyone of that.

“Earth Day is April 22nd,” she said proudly.

And although, in Jenna’s book, every day should be spent treating the Earth with care, she’s using next Tuesday as a way to spread the word even more so than she has in the past.

“Basically what I’m trying to do is get people to realize that they need to recycle more,” the fifth-grader said. “We’re going to wear green shirts in honor of Earth Day and we’re going to try to use no foam for anybody on Earth Day.”

It’s an idea spearheaded by Jenna that she has been executing with some help.

“I did announcements twice last week [over the intercom at school] and we put a bunch of posters around the school that student council members made,” she said.

However, Jenna said she is unsure if eliminating the Styrofoam trays at the school on Earth Day will be possible; it’s an answer she’s still seeking from staff at the school.

Rivereast readers may already be aware that this is not Jenna’s first stab at eliminating the use of Styrofoam lunch trays at the school. In fact, it’s something the 11-year-old has been vying to get rid of—not just for one day out of the school year but permanently—for years.

Last October, the *Rivereast* first wrote about Jenna’s recycling efforts. She explained that when she was in third grade, lunch was served on plastic trays that were then put through a dishwasher. That was in 2011, the last time that method was used. Following winter break of that year, Jenna returned to find the plastic trays were replaced with Styrofoam trays – and the nature-loving girl became concerned. The trays are “bad for the earth and the environment,” she said last fall, as they do not break down, but instead sit in landfills, she explained.

Jenna was so concerned she started bringing in her own plastic tray from home that her mother Shannon would wash each night. That is, until she was told by a staff member at the school she could no longer do so. Jenna spent third grade, and the fourth grade, meeting with former school principal Scott Nierendorf to discuss recycling at the school. She even collected signatures from classmates and formed a petition that highlighted the benefits of establish-

ing a recycling program at MES.

Today, a recycling program is in place. However, that hasn’t stopped the young green activist from striving for more. Last fall, Jenna met with then-Interim Principal Kathy Veronesi about the issue and, most recently, sat down with current Interim Principal Paula Schwartz. With help from Schwartz, Schwartz’s secretary and a friend, Jenna walked around the school in March to determine which classrooms were missing recycling bins.

Schwartz has ordered the bins, Jenna said, “but they haven’t arrived yet. I don’t know what’s taking so long.”

Now the focus is on Earth Day. The fifth-grader said it’s the first time she’s ever thought up the idea to honor the day at the school.

“I thought it was a good idea to add something on to that day where you just recycle and give thanks to the Earth,” Jenna said.

In addition to hoping Styrofoam trays can be eliminated at school on Tuesday—which would entail possibly restarting the dishwasher, she imagined—Jenna said that means no Styrofoam coffee cups or outside foam being used in the community either.

“I’m hoping that I could get more people who aren’t in the school to help,” she said of her efforts. “And maybe think a little bit more before they do something.”

“Help recycle. Be green. Just help out Marlborough,” Jenna said are her efforts.

Because school has been closed this week due to April vacation, Jenna said this week she is unsure what method of serving lunch in the cafeteria will be used on Tuesday. Regardless of the unknown, Jenna has supporters.

One is resident Dave Porteous, a research administrator at the University of Connecticut who sat on the university’s Green Team to strengthen its recycling program. Upon reading the *Rivereast*’s article last fall, Porteous contacted Jenna, and has assisted her in communicating with school administrators since.

Of Jenna, Porteous said, “The first word that comes through is ‘amazing.’ It’s amazing she has sustained a serious long-term interest to help the school make a difference when it comes to recycling.”

Aside Jenna, Porteous said he’s there to “empower her.”

“I’m not doing anything for her,” he explained. “She’s got the energy. I’m just there to help her not allow systems or authorities to get



Jenna Cieslowski, 11, and her mom Shannon often say “Down with foam!” Jenna is encouraging Marlborough Elementary School and the town to live by the slogan this Tuesday, April 22, Earth Day.

in the way.”

Porteous said that, to his knowledge, the dishwasher is no longer being used because there aren’t enough cafeteria staff members to utilize it. He said he believes this is a result of a cut of a cafeteria staff member a few years back made to fix a deficit in the cafeteria program. The *Rivereast* could not reach MES staff to confirm this. Porteous said he’s unaware if the old method could be brought back, but he did hint at what Styrofoam does to the environment.

“I’m pretty sure it goes into an incinerator,” he explained, “and when it gets incinerated there are toxic gases that are given off. So what we’re doing is we’re saving money on the cafeteria program and we’re putting more toxic gases in the air.”

Jenna’s mom Shannon said the school has recently been responsive to Jenna’s goals.

“They have been very receptive. It’s hard for

Jenna because she’s gone through three principals so she’s had to sort of retell her story,” Shannon said. “But I feel they’ve been very receptive. They’re doing more with different types of recycling bins and making sure every room has their own.”

The mother also voiced support of Jenna’s goals.

“I just find her tenacious and amazing and bright,” Shannon furthered, “and just aware of so many things that I feel so many adults are not.”

And Earth Day may not be the last time the community hears about recycling from Jenna.

“She is going to go to RHAM and I do know they use foam trays,” Shannon said with a laugh. “She even said to me ‘I’ll do what I have to do.’”

At home, Jenna and Shannon use their own slogan, “Down with foam.” And hopefully on Earth Day, MES and surrounding communities will be on board with it.

More Graffiti at Blish Park in Marlborough

by Melissa Roberto

The Marlborough resident state troopers’ office is currently investigating an act of vandalism to Blish Park – again.

Daytime Resident Trooper Benjamin Dodge said Tuesday there are spots of green spray paint on both the playscape and the tennis court at the park, which are adjacent to one another at the Park Road property.

Though he said the graffiti is “not much of anything,” Dodge said he recalled making out a triangle and a picture of a mushroom on the site.

“It wasn’t like kids tagging their name,” Dodge said, adding that is what makes the investigation complicated to solve.

The trooper explained the graffiti was brought to the attention of the local troopers about “a week and a half ago” by Marlborough’s Parks and Recreation Commission. He said the police are unaware of the timing of the incident.

“It hasn’t been checked out since the fall,” Dodge said of the park, “so it could have been sometime this winter.”

The trooper confirmed there are no leads or suspects yet, but that the local police are “absolutely” looking into the incident.

“I wish we had more to go on,” Dodge said. “It seems like with that big of a time frame and nobody’s name it is kind of tough.”

However, he said patrol at the park has “definitely” increased since the news.

And although Dodge, who has covered the town for about one year, declared the act of vandalism “rare” for Marlborough, this isn’t the first time the local park fell victim to criminal activity. The *Rivereast* in February 2012 reported police were investigating the recent discovery of graffiti on the wall of the bath house that read “smoke tree.” Additional paint was also found on the roof of the pavilion at the time.

In the 2012 article, Parks and Recreation Commission member Louise Concodello said she also spotted mushrooms painted on the floor of the pavilion and several black markings.

Also, in September 2011, spray paint on the playscape in Blish Park cost the town approximately \$2,000 to clean up. A 17-year-old turned himself in to Troop K in Colchester that November for the graffiti, and was charged with second-degree criminal mischief.

On Tuesday, Concodello said it was “just last month” the Parks and Recreation Commission considered itself lucky for going without vandalism at the park since then. Asked whose job it is to check up on the town’s buildings and grounds, Concodello said she believes that is a job expected of the Public Works Department. The commission member continued April is the time of year where the park begins to buzz with activity again.

“The tennis nets are put up, and picnic tables soon after,” she said. “People are going to go to the lake.”

It was for that reason—warmer weather—that Parks and Recreation Director Mandy Rocznik visited the park last Friday, April 11, when she discovered the vandalism and contacted police.

“It was a nice day finally and I just got down there and saw a few spots that were spray painted,” Rocznik said.

Rocznik said she was unsure if the Public Works Department checks the park during the winter. Even so, she said, the graffiti may have been hard to identify because of its location.

“I don’t know how long it’s been there,” Rocznik said. “It’s definitely something you would have to go to the playscape to see.”

Rocznik voiced frustration of the incident.

“It’s just frustrating because it obviously defaces a really nice thing we have here in town and obviously it just looks bad,” Rocznik said. “And then you have to go through all the steps of trying to get it off.”

Resident Ken Hjulstrom said he, too, was “frustrated” by it. Hjulstrom was one of many citizens who volunteered to build the original playscape at the park about 20 years ago, and helped in its reconstruction in 2008.

“Both of [the playscapes] were basically a



Graffiti was recently discovered on the playscape at Blish Park in Marlborough. The Marlborough resident troopers’ office is currently investigating the incident.

volunteer effort,” Hjulstrom said. Of the vandalism, he furthered, “It’s frustrating when kids do that kind of stuff.”

Hjulstrom – who is also a Board of Finance member, but said he was speaking as an individual and not as a member of that board – noted these acts of vandalism cost the town money.

“It’s costly to the Parks and Recreation Commission because they’re going to have to bring someone in either to try to power wash it or repaint the areas,” Hjulstrom said. “And those are funds they’d like to spend on more productive things. It’s just very frustrating that they have to spend money on this.”

Rocznik confirmed money to cover the graf-

fiti marks would come from the playscape account, which is a fund of money raised through fundraisers. She described the spray paint as “a dark green color” so she is worried it “may be hard to get rid of.”

“And then you hope it doesn’t then damage the materials,” she said of covering up the drawings.

Dodge said he hoped children with community service requirements may be able to help cover up the unwanted illustrations. In the meantime, the trooper said his office will continue patrolling the parks and investigating for suspects or leads.

New Consignment Shop Opens in Portland

by Elizabeth Bowling

The name speaks for itself.

Savvy Swap Consignment is a consignment shop that carries trendy, quality clothing, accessories and home furnishings for fashionistas on a budget, or for those trying to make a few bucks and clear out some closet space.

The store's owner, Kerianne Heil, moved to Portland 13 years ago and decided recently to open up shop in town because she is "familiarized with the community" and "felt comfortable here," she said.

She also noted her interest in opening her shop in Portland because there is no other store in town like it.

She said, "There are prominent brands in here that cater to young and old. It's kind of all across the board."

Those brands include Target, Versace, Talbots, Chico's, Ann Taylor, Cold Water Creek, Gap, Old Navy and Forever 21, to name only some.

Heil said she is mainly trying to attract women between the ages of 18 and 60, particularly mothers.

Heil said since the store's opening on April 1 it already has a "great reputation" among its customers.

The one-woman operation has kept Heil busy, as the shop is open seven days per week.

"I'm just trying to feel it out and see how the business goes," she said.

Savvy Swap Consignment took the place of Chris Cote Golf Shop at 275 Main St.; the golf shop moved to another location in town last year. Though her lease for the building is only for three years, Heil said, "I would love to go the long haul with this."

"I would love to expand into children's [clothing] for sure," Heil said, looking toward

the future of her store. "I think that would really cater to the Portland customer."

Also in time, she said she'd like for it to evolve into something even more "boutique-like" by going to trade shows to pick up items to sell.

As of now, it's "more of an upscale consignment," she said, noting that it's very organized and has the feel of a department store, rather than a second-hand shop.

Heil said she gathered clothes to sell for about a year before the store opened. But since its opening, approximately two to three people have come in each day with anywhere from five to 30 pieces of clothing to be sold, Heil affirmed.

She said she is "very picky" about the items she sells. She doesn't accept anything that looks too worn, has holes or is distressed.

"I'm very particular about what I want in the store," she explained, noting that she wants the place to retain the reputation of the "awesome boutique" it's already been dubbed by customers.

Clothes aren't the only items for sale. Heil's shop also offers furniture, journals, books, trendy iPhone cases, hats, scarves, jewelry, and even spring decor for those in need of some last-minute Easter decorations.

Heil is now accepting spring and summer items (she is no longer accepting winter clothing). She takes sizes starting at pre-teen sizes eight to 18, juniors' sizes, and women's sizes up to 3x.

Her 60-day consignor agreement contract calls for a 40/60 split – with 40 percent of the selling price going to the consignee once their items are sold, and 60 percent going to the store.

Heil has about eight years of experience in retail and management. Most recently, she was



Savvy Swap Consignment opened April 1 at the former location of Chris Cote's Golf Shop at 275 Main St., Portland. The new business' owner, Kerianne Heil, is hoping to attract women between the ages of 18 and 60, particularly mothers.

a department manager at Nordstrom for three years.

Additionally, she has her associate's degree in marketing from Middlesex Community College and her bachelor's degree in fashion and retail merchandising from Lasell College in Newton, Mass.

* * *

Savvy Swap Consignment will have a grand

opening Saturday, April 26, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. The grand opening will feature Nordstrom representatives from Jo Malone Fragrances who will offer fragrances and hand massages. Savvy Swap Consignment will serve refreshments and h'ors doeuvres throughout the grand opening event.

To set up an appointment to consign, email savvyswap@gmail.com or call 860-788-6437.

Portland Residents Advocate Park Complex

by Elizabeth Bowling

A handful of residents attended Wednesday's Board of Selectmen meeting to push for the recreational park complex proposed for Route 17.

The chairman of the park's planning committee, Brian McCarthy, told the selectmen the project's engineers are "crunching through the hard design aspect of things," and said a final draft of the design, as well as plans and a budget should be ready in two to three months.

McCarthy added that finding grant money is "one of the goals" of the committee.

First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield explained that the cost of planning for the project is covered by a \$237,000 STEAP (Small Town Economic Assistance Program) grant, which the committee is utilizing now.

Regarding the project in general, Bransfield said, "It's a concerted effort and there's still a lot of work to do."

Residents at Wednesday's meeting voiced their support of the proposed park.

Portland resident and president of the town's Little League program Joe Inglis told the board that the proposed project would allow the Little League program to run tournaments, which would benefit the kids as well as the community at large because it would bring visitors to

town.

Inglis also said the town needs more space for youth sports because various sports seasons overlap.

"The days of soccer in the fall and baseball in the spring are over," he said. "Everybody's running three seasons a year at least."

David Cohen, a travel soccer coach and the father of a Portland soccer player, sang a similar tune.

He said, "We're running out of space and we [the different sports offered in town] are competing with each other."

He also noted, "My son's playing on the same fields I did 35 years ago."

Resident Jeff Graves, who is involved in Portland youth football, agreed about the space issue.

"We share the field with the soccer squad," he said. "We support this project."

* * *

The next presentation of the night came from, Ruth Maio, who addressed the board as a representative from the town's senior advisory committee and requested changing the name of the senior center from "Portland Senior Center" to "The Waverly Center: A Place for Se-

niors and Their Friends."

She told the board that the number of people ages 65 and older who are interested in participating in senior center programming has decreased, and may be a result of the negative connotation associated with the word "senior."

"I think that a name change would be something that would really draw more people to the center," she said.

Selectman Ryan Curley expressed support. "I think it's a smart re-branding strategy," he said. "I think 'The Waverly Center' is a good name."

But board member Fred Knous said he wasn't sure the name change would help much because it still includes the word "senior."

"If you call it 'The Waverly Center: A Place for Seniors and Their Friends' then you still have the same issue," he said. "I don't quite see what that's going to accomplish."

Selectman Mark Finkelstein added, "It just seems odd to me that people wouldn't go [to programming at the senior center] because of what it's called."

He then suggested the town hold a public hearing and invite elder residents to come voice their opinions on the matter. The public hear-

ing will be Wednesday, May 21, at 7 p.m. at the Portland Library.

* * *

The board will address the issue of a possible new communications tower at 9 Rose Hill Rd. at its May 21 meeting. An applicant has approached the Town of Portland with an interest in erecting an 85-foot-tall cellular tower, Bransfield explained.

Members of the public are welcome to attend the Board of Selectmen meeting May 21 at 7:30 p.m. at the Portland Library to provide input and further discuss the project proposal.

The board also set a special town meeting date for the supplemental appropriation of \$497,500 from the General Fund to the Long Range Capital Improvement projects, which includes window replacement at Brownstone Intermediate School (BIS).

Bransfield said of the windows on the north side of BIS, "They are very much in need of repair."

The special town meeting will be Wednesday, April 30, at 7 p.m. at the Portland Library.

The next regularly scheduled Portland Board of Selectmen meeting is Wednesday, May 7, at 7:30 p.m. at the Portland Library.

East Hampton Woman Arrested After Killing Own Dog

by Elizabeth Bowling

An East Hampton woman was arrested Saturday, April 5, after killing her pet dog following an altercation between it and another dog, police said.

Lisa Marie Fontano, 42, was charged with cruelty to animals and allowing a dog to roam, East Hampton Police said.

Fontano told police her dog had been "in the process of hurting" another dog, Police Chief Sean Cox said. "It was hurting another canine and not listening to voice commands," he furthered.

Cox said Fontano claimed that she used her motor vehicle to break up the two dogs. Once she broke them up, she brought her dog home and shot it "on her own property," Cox said.

Asked if the dog belonged to Fontano, Cox said, "We believe that the dog was licensed to her."

Fontano appeared before the Middletown Superior Court Tuesday, April 15. She was held on a \$2,500 bond and has since been released from custody. She is next due to appear in court Friday, April 25.

East Hampton Pedestrian Hit by Car, Seriously Injured

by Elizabeth Bowling

An East Hampton woman was hit by a car and seriously injured Tuesday evening, while attempting to cross Route 66, East Hampton Police said.

Sylvia Pulino was struck by 2009 Subaru Forester traveling eastbound on Route 66 in the area of 22 East High St. at around 7:40 p.m. Tuesday, according to a press release from the East Hampton Police Department.

The operator of the vehicle was identified as East Hampton resident John Arcidiacono.

Police said Pulino "appeared to have sustained serious injuries," and was transported to Hartford Hospital via ambulance. Arcidiacono did not sustain any visible injuries, police added.

Police said Pulino was "in the (center) travel portion of the eastbound lane" and not in the designated crosswalk when she was hit.

Police added the weather conditions at the time of the crash "were a heavy wind-driven rain."

Hebron Resident Recognized for Breast Cancer Efforts

by Geeta Schrayter

For Hebron resident and RHAM High School senior Jessica Rivard, pink nails are more than just a fashion statement. As the daughter of a breast cancer survivor, pink nails – from pastel to fuchsia and everywhere in between – are a nod to those who are battling with, or have survived breast cancer. They’re a show of support, a way to raise awareness – and, thanks to Rivard, a way to raise funds for breast cancer research in Connecticut.

For the past couple of years, Rivard has been holding fundraising events – “Paint Your Nails Pink for Breast Cancer” – where individuals can make a donation and receive a basic manicure.

“People come and we have the basics: nail polish remover, several shades of pink, and we do basic manicures and we’ll sometimes finish it if they want, with a little white ribbon,” Rivard explained.

The inspiration for the fundraiser came from the support her mother received when she was going through treatment. At the end of eighth grade, Rivard shared, her mother was diagnosed with breast cancer. Throughout her treatment, she said, friends and family would paint their nails pink and send pictures in a show of support.

“It’s just a show of moral support,” Rivard said of the nails, “and that was what kind of got me thinking about it.”

The fundraisers have been held at sporting events, senior centers, and businesses around town such as Patti Dunne Gymnastics where Rivard’s been going since she was four; the next one is planned there for Mother’s Day weekend.

The funds Rivard raises – so far she said that’s over \$3,000 – are given to the Connecticut Breast Health Initiative (CT BHI), a non-profit founded in 2004 whose mission, according to ctbhi.org, is to “make a difference locally in the fight against breast cancer through education and research.” All of the money raised for CT BHI stays in Connecticut, which CT BHI President Joyce Bray said last week was making an impact in the state.

Bray said the organization, which is in its 11th year, had awarded \$2.3 million in grants to researchers across the state. She added, “I think that by keeping our money in Connecticut and focusing on these researchers we’re seeing an impact – that we’re changing the face of breast cancer in the state.”

Rivard said she chose CT BHI because “I

wanted a place I could donate my money to and that was just the best place I could think of to donate.”

Along with raising funds for the organization, Rivard has also been involved in other ways. She’s the Hebron town ambassador for CT BHI, which involves promoting events like the annual Race in the Park – a 5K and walk held each May in New Britain – and “getting the word out there about Connecticut breast health – anything you can do to kind of promote the cause.”

In addition, Rivard also sang with her mom at last year’s Survivor Brunch, which is held every year immediately following the Race in the Park – and they’re scheduled to do so again this year.

Speaking about her involvement, Rivard said along with raising funds, one of the main things she wanted to do was spread the message that there was something *to do* about breast cancer, no matter your age.

“My real message kind of behind doing the fundraiser is that it doesn’t really matter what age you are,” she said. “If you have an idea of how you can contribute to the cause – do it. Just run with the idea and people will respond to it and they’ll love it. So that was kind of my message: It doesn’t matter how old you are.”

And that mentality and involvement hasn’t gone unnoticed. Last month, Rivard was named CT BHI’s honorary youth chair for 2014 – a recognition she shares with honorary chairs Lt. Governor Nancy Wyman, basketball analyst and former UConn star Rebecca Lobo, and New Britain Mayor Erin Stewart.

Rivard said it was “awesome” being selected. “I know that a lot of really prominent people have been chairs – like Rebecca Lobo – so it’s really cool to be up on the website right next to those people and it makes me feel like I’m getting somewhere,” she said. “It’s a nice recognition and to be completely honest, I’m so excited.”

This week, Bray called Rivard a role model to other young teenagers.

“Last year and this year we chose two teenage girls [Southington’s Erika Florian was named the honorary youth chair for 2013] who stepped up to the plate and have done something different and something very admirable and unselfish,” she said. “I think they’re great role models for other teenagers. They raise money, and just show that every little bit can help.”

Bray went on to say it was an “honor” to



Hebron resident Jess Rivard was recently recognized as the 2014 Honorary Youth Chair with CT Breast Health Initiative. For the last few years Jess has been holding “Paint Your Nails Pink for Breast Cancer” events, where individuals can make a donation and receive a basic manicure – with pink polish of course.

know young women like Rivard, “who do something very special and something out of the ordinary for a young teenager to do.”

And, Bray explained, talking openly about breast cancer, and being able to fundraise and try to help as Rivard has, wasn’t something people could always do. When she was a teenager, Bray said her mother was diagnosed with breast cancer but didn’t tell anyone for five years, “because at that time you didn’t talk about breast cancer.”

In addition, once she found out about her mother’s diagnosis, Bray said she never really did anything to help the cause.

“I grew up at a time when you didn’t do anything. There were no support groups – you just didn’t talk about it,” she explained. “So today, for Jess to be able to do what she’s doing is phenomenal to me, and I wish I could have been that way.”

Rivard will be present at this year’s Race in the Park, which takes place in Walnut Hill Park in New Britain on May 10. There, she’ll speak briefly about herself and why being there is

meaningful, and will start the kids’ races and hand out their medals.

This will be the last year Rivard will participate as a high school student. But this fall, she heads to Nashville, Ten., to study music business at Belmont University, and she said that, if the opportunity presents itself, she’ll bring Paint Your Nails Pink for Breast Cancer down to Music City.

“If the opportunity presents itself I’d absolutely love to do that,” she said. “And I hope someone, maybe one of my younger friends, can take [the event] on themselves and keep it here.”

Which would, of course, be a testament to the influence Rivard’s had on other teenagers and proof she’s succeeded in spreading her message – “if you have an idea of how you can contribute to the cause – do it.”

After all, for Rivard, it all began with a bottle of pink polish.

For more information on CT BHI or the Race in the Park, visit ctbhi.org.

East Hampton Police News

4/5: Lisa Marie Fontano, 42, of East Hampton, was arrested for allowing a dog to roam and cruelty to animals, after implementing less than humane means to dispatch a domesticated animal, East Hampton Police said.

4/8: Michael Sentell, 29, of 172 Nachaug Dr., Glastonbury, was issued a summons for misuse of plates, having an inoperable headlamp and operating an unregistered and uninsured motor vehicle, police said.

4/10: Wigberto Laboy, 33, of 17 Childs Rd., was arrested for third-degree criminal mischief, police said.

Marlborough Police News

4/11: State Police said Lee Colon, 27, of 16 Clement Rd., East Hartford, was arrested for DUI and speeding.

4/11: State Police said John Prado, 33, of 107 Foster St., Hartford, was arrested for DUI and reckless driving.

Hebron Police News

4/11: At approximately 3:43 p.m. State Police responded to a home on London Road for the report of a non-active larceny. Police said sometime between April 6 and 11 a dirt bike was stolen from the property. Anyone who may have information regarding this case is urged to contact Troop K at 860-465-5400.

Colchester Police News

4/11: State Police said Monica Piette, 29, of 164 Norwich Ave., was arrested for violation of probation.

4/11: Colchester Police said Peter Kevorkian, 29, of 44 Brainard Rd., was charged with second-degree failure to appear.

Obituaries

Colchester

Dolores S. LaTerra

Dolores S. LaTerra, "Dolly," 86, of Colchester, widow of the late Saverio "Savvy" LaTerra, passed away peacefully Thursday morning, April 10, at Atria Crossroads Place in Waterford. Born March 19, 1928, in Jewett City, she was a daughter of the late Larry and Leda (Pariseau) Richard.



Dolly and Savvy were married on Sept. 7, 1946 in Occum. Following his military service, they settled in Colchester to raise their family. Early on, they bought a chicken farm – however her true love and vocation was always found in caring for her family.

She was a talented seamstress, excellent cook and graceful dancer (especially ballroom), as she was a music lover as well. In later years, Dolly and Savvy enjoyed traveling around the country and cruising the Caribbean before he predeceased her on Jan. 3, 2004.

Mrs. LaTerra was a daily communicant of St. Andrew Church in Colchester, where she was a member of the First Friday Rosary Group. Dolly also served as a greeter, lector and Eucharistic minister, both at Mass and during countless visits that she made to local convalescent homes to brighten the days of the residents there.

Always remember to "Have a magical day!"

She leaves five children, James and Alta of Florida, Nicky and Gwynette of South Carolina, Ricci and Margie of Niantic, Carri-Lee LaTerra of Madison and Dante and Agata of Niantic; 10 grandchildren, Robert, Kenny, Anthony, Tiffany, Josh, Dante, Danielle, Rachel, Patty and Jennifer; six great-grandchildren; a brother, Mel Richard of Wallingford; and numerous extended family members and friends.

In addition to her loving husband of 57 years, she was predeceased by a granddaughter, Crystal Woodtke; and two siblings, Russell Richard and Joan Pickens.

Friends called Tuesday, April 15, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. The funeral liturgy was celebrated Wednesday, April 16, directly at St. Andrew Church, 128 Norwich Ave., Colchester.

Donations in her memory may be made to the Spellman Council KOC Building Fund, P.O. Box 86, Colchester, CT 06415.

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

East Hampton

Scott Edward Evans

Scott Edward Evans, 29, of East Hampton, died unexpectedly at his home Thursday, April 10. Born Sept. 26, 1984, in Middletown, Scott was a lifelong East Hampton resident and graduate of East Hampton High School.



He was formerly employed by Heat and Frost Insulators, Local 33. Scott enjoyed spending time with his family, especially fishing on Opening Day and going on Father's Day canoe trips with his brothers and uncles. He was an avid sports fan and a devoted follower of the Boston Red Sox, the L.A. Lakers and UConn Basketball.

He will be remembered for his generosity of spirit and selfless willingness to help anyone. His laughter, spontaneity and playfulness were infectious and he was always the life of the party. The greatest love in his life was his son, Jordan.

He is survived by his son, Jordan Evans of East Hampton; his mother, Kim Moon and her companion, Kenny Miner of East Hampton; his brother and sister-in-law Joshua and Michelle Moon of Simsbury; his brother, Matthew Evans of Groton; his grandmother, Margaret Mott of East Hampton; his stepsister Daphne Cox of Parkersburg, W.V.; his stepbrother, Justin Miner of Norwich; and his uncles, aunts, cousins, and a niece and nephew.

Scott was predeceased by his father, Donald Edward Evans of Colchester; his grandfather, Frank Mott of East Hampton; and his grandparents, Hope and Donald Evans of Colchester. A wake was held Monday, April 14, at Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton. A private family burial will be held Tuesday, April 15.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Jordan Evans Education Fund. at fundly.com/jordan-evans-education-trust.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

East Hampton

Christine Anne Ferguson

Christine Anne Ferguson, 78, of East Hampton, died Thursday, April 10, at Marlborough Health Care, with her loving family by her side. Born Jan. 26, 1936, in Boston, Mass., she was the daughter of the late John and Dorothy (Bower) Sweeney.



Christine grew up in the Boston area and had worked as an x-ray technician at Massachusetts General Hospital. After her retirement, she had served as a chaplain for Marlborough Health Care.

She is survived by her two daughters, Angel French and her husband Richard of Florida, Donna Benard of East Hampton; six grandchildren, Shavon, Hannah, Richard, Talitha, Andrew and Chelsea. She was predeceased by her son-in-law, Michael Benard.

Funeral services will be private at the convenience of the family.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Fellowship Community Church, 24 South Rd., Marlborough, CT 06447.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Colchester

John Koes

John Koes, 94, of Colchester, beloved husband of Elizabeth "Betty" (Turner) Koes, passed away peacefully Friday, April 11, surrounded by his loving family. Born Nov. 2, 1919, in Duryea, Pa., he was the last surviving of the four children of the late Nicholas and Matrona "Mary" (Krenitsky) Koes.



Before he and Betty were married on June 16, 1945, he had been active with the Civil Conservation Corps. Together, they started their family in Pennsylvania, where he started his career as a machinist. In 1956, they moved to Connecticut and he continued as a machinist for Pratt & Whitney for 26 years before his retirement in 1983.

In his spare time, he was a talented woodworker, loved the outdoors and was an avid fan of UConn basketball and New England Patriots football.

In addition to his loving wife of 68 years, he leaves three sons and daughters-in-law, John and Marcia of North Kingstown, R.I., William and Janet of Sharon, Vt., and Nicholas and Christina of Vernon, Vt.; seven grandchildren; one great granddaughter; and numerous extended family members and friends.

Friends called Monday, April 14, at the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home, 167 Old Hartford Rd., Colchester. The funeral service was held Tuesday, April 15, directly at the Colchester Federated Church, located at 60 Main St. Burial followed in Linwood Cemetery, Colchester.

In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory may be made to the Colchester Senior Center, 95 Norwich Ave., Colchester, CT 06415 or to the church.

For online expressions of sympathy, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Hebron

Philo John Perham

Philo John Perham, formerly of Hebron, passed away in Merrimack, N.H. He was predeceased by his former wife, Rose Perham, and son David.

He leaves behind a son, Arthur of Rye, N.H.; a daughter, Diane Caron of Merrimack, N.H., and a daughter, Roxanne Barrett and husband Dwight of Hebron. He will be missed by many grandchildren, great-grandchildren and great-great grandchildren, and also a longtime companion, Gloria Perham.

He was a proud Marine who served in World War II. He was also a past commander of the Hebron American Legion, and also served on the Hebron Volunteer Fire Department and Hebron Lions Club.

A memorial service will be held Saturday, April 26, at 1 p.m., at the Gilead Congregational Church.

In lieu of flowers, please send donations to the VA hospital in White River Junction, Vt.

Amston

Lawrence Edward Green

Lawrence Edward Green, 81, of the Amston section of Hebron, widower of the late Fay (Evans) Green, passed away peacefully on Saturday, April 12. Born July 27, 1932, at home in Occum, he was the only son of the Archal and Henrietta (Staba) Green, late of Amston.



Larry attended Bacon Academy in Colchester, graduating with the Class of 1950. While there, he met Fay, his high school sweetheart. They were married Sept. 18, 1954, at the Colchester Federated Church and shared 48 years of marriage before she predeceased him on Oct. 21, 2002.

Mr. Green was the owner, operator and president of the family business, Archie H. Green and Son Inc., a native hardwood lumber producer and real estate developer.

Larry was a member of the Wooster Lodge No. 10 A.F. & A.M. in Colchester, member and past president of the Colchester Lions Club, life member of the Hundred Club of Connecticut and the Colchester Federated Church.

He enjoyed spending time at his vacation homes in Rhode Island and Puerto Rico and traveling throughout Europe, Asia, and South America.

He will be remembered for his kindness and generosity, but most importantly, he was ever devoted to his family.

He leaves his two children, Christopher A. Green of New York City and Colleen Green Everett and husband, Franklin C. Everett of Newport, R.I.; devoted companion, Lee Moore of Amston and her family; two grandsons, Nathaniel Lawrence Everett of Orlando, Fla., and Jameson Wm. Everett of Savannah, Ga.; numerous extended family members of the Green, Staba, Evans, Standish and Pach families; and a host of friends.

A celebration of Larry's life was held Thursday, April 17, directly at the Colchester Federated Church, located at 60 Main St. There were no calling hours and burial in the Green family plot at the Linwood Cemetery, Colchester, will be private.

In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory may be made to the Community Free Lunch Program, c/o Colchester Federated Church; the Hebron Volunteer Fire Department, 44 Main St., Hebron, CT 06248; or to the Hebron Food Bank, c/o HIHS, P.O. Box 634, Hebron, CT 06248.

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

Portland

Nancy Helen Fitzsimmons

Nancy Helen (Corley) Fitzsimmons, 90, of Portland, widow of the late Bernard Fitzsimmons, died peacefully Monday, April 14, at Hartford Hospital, surrounded by her loving family. Born Nov. 16, 1923, in Louin, Miss., she was the daughter of the late Ivy and Amanda (Ritchey) Corley.



Helen was a lifelong resident of Portland and a member of the Portland Congregational Church and past member of the Portland Garden Club. Helen had a passion for flowers and gardening which she enjoyed her whole life.

She is survived by her four sons, Roy Fitzsimmons and his wife Karen of Portland, James Fitzsimmons and his wife Donna of Massachusetts, Russell Fitzsimmons and his wife Darlene of Nevada, Larry Fitzsimmons and his wife Sheila of Colchester; two daughters, Nancy Brown and her husband Pete of East Hampton, Judith Hedges and her companion Art Heppenstall of Portland; two brothers, Maurice Corley and his wife Valerie of Killingworth, Charles Corley and his wife Clara Mae of Middlefield; a sister, Mary Simmons of Louin, Miss.; 13 grandchildren, nine great-grandchildren, one great-great-grandchild; and many nieces and nephews.

She was predeceased by her sister, Jean Reeves.

A funeral service was held Thursday, April 17, in the Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton. Burial followed in Lake View Cemetery in East Hampton. Friends called at the funeral home Thursday morning, before the service.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Cobalt

Donald Mitchell Edwards

Donald Mitchell "Mitch" Edwards, 82, of Cobalt, husband of Diana (Atkinson) Edwards died Thursday, April 11, at Middlesex Hospital Hospice. Born Oct. 30, 1931, in Plainville, he was the son of the late Donald R. and Bernice M. (Mitchell) Edwards. Mitch had lived in both Plainville and Hartford before moving to Cobalt in 1975.



Known as "Mitch" to most and "Dad" to a couple of lucky girls, Mitch was an avid hunter, fisherman and overall outdoorsman. He served his country proudly as an Air Force Communications Specialist during the Korean War. Upon returning home, he joined the Masons and became a Master of the Plainville Masonic Lodge.

He married Diana in 1977 and they spent 37 fun filled and adventurous years together. Mitch retired from Southern New England Telephone in 1986 to be a stay-at-home dad for his two youngest daughters, Jessica and Kristin. He also spent many summers camping at Cape Cod with Jess and Krissy as well as a yearly family vacation to Pensacola, Fla., to visit his sister Nan. He enjoyed traveling and taking hunting trips to Alaska, Montana, and British Columbia among other locations.

Those who knew him knew he was a straight shooter who was mostly quiet but had a quick-witted sense of humor. To know him was to love him and he will be missed by all.

Besides his wife, he is survived by his three daughters Donna Edwards of Reno, Nev., Jessica Roy of Middletown, Kristin Bombaci of East Hampton, and his three grandchildren, Cassandra, Lilly and Mitchell.

He was predeceased by a sister, Nanette Villard.

Friends called at the Spencer Funeral Home Wednesday, April 16. A memorial service will be private for the family.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the Weiss Hospice Unit c/o Middlesex Hospital Department of Philanthropy 55 Crescent St. Middletown, CT 06457.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

East Hampton

Gabriel P. Frontel

Gabriel P. Frontel of East Hampton, 94, died Friday, March 28. He was born in East Haddam Dec. 29, 1919, to the late Harry and Blanche (Bozek) Frontel.

He leaves his wife of 72 years Christine (Lindquist) Frontel; his five daughters and sons-in-law: Joan and John Land of Mission Viejo, Calif., Mary Jane and Lee Dutton of Manlius, N.Y., Lorraine and Larry Lawrence of East Hampton, Cynthia and George Tourville of East Hampton, and Gretchen and Bill Foster of Middletown.

Gabe leaves his grandchildren: Christian and Amy Listro, Jennifer Padula, Rebecca Purple, Nicole Bagley, Stephen and Janet Land, Emily and Jamie Askar, Jesse and Jen Von Dietsch, Eric and Carla Von Dietsch, Adrienne Shonio, Christopher and Karin Dutton, Jenny Devos, and Jason and Janice Dutton; 15 great-grandchildren; and many nieces and nephews.

Gabe was predeceased by his brothers John, Joseph, and Ozzie.

He worked for the Gong Bell, International Silver, Spring Brook and Woodland View dairies, and JC Barton Co.

Gabe played semi-professional softball with the East Hampton Belltown Bombers, enjoyed fishing, square dancing, the Red Sox, and card-playing with his friends at the VFW. He also served as an East Hampton volunteer fireman.

Calling hours were at Spencer Funeral Home, 121 Main St., East Hampton, on Tuesday, April 1.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the East Hampton VFW Post 5095, 20 North Maple St., East Hampton.

East Hampton

Elsie L. Wheeler

Elsie L. Wheeler, 94, of East Hampton, widow of the late Delano Wheeler, died Sunday, April 13, at Portland Health and Rehab. Born May 7, 1919 in Hartford, she was the daughter of the late Raymond and Ruth (Mottram) Luzmoor.

Elsie had lived in Glastonbury and Maine before moving to East Hampton 25 years ago.

She is survived by her son, Robert Wheeler and his wife Pamela of Portland; her daughter, Nancy Dickson of Marlborough; five grandchildren, Christopher Wheeler, Jill Wheeler, Kimberly Losier, Michael Dickson, Stacey Fortin; and 13 great-grandchildren.

She was predeceased by her son-in-law James Dickson, and her two sisters, Norma Montana and Ruth Flack.

The family would like to thank the care givers at Portland Health and Rehab for the wonderful care they gave to Elsie.

Funeral services will be private with burial in Buckland Cemetery in South Windsor.

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

The Spencer Funeral Home has care of arrangements. To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Marlborough

Joseph Roland Tardif

Joseph Roland Tardif, 72, of Marlborough, died Sunday, April 13, at his home. Born June 28, 1941, in Lewiston, Maine, he was the son of the late Silvio and Aldea (Letarte) Tardif.

Joseph proudly served his country in the U.S. Air Force during the Vietnam War. He had worked at Pratt & Whitney Aircraft in East Hartford as a jet engine mechanic for many years was a retired Butcher having worked at Tri-Town IGA. He was a member of the American Legion Post 197 in Marlborough.

He is survived by his two sons, Mark Tardif and his wife Brenda of Marlborough, Christopher Tardif of Glastonbury; a sister, Constance Pickering; and four grandchildren, Erica, Kylie, Jessica and Owen.

Funeral services will be private for family and friends on Monday, April 21, at 10 a.m., in Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton. Burial with military honors will follow in the Connecticut State Veterans Cemetery in Middletown.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Marlborough Volunteer Fire Department, P.O. Box 237, Marlborough, CT 06447.

To leave online condolences, visit spencerfuneralhomeinc.com.

Haddam Neck

Donald Bement Memorial Service

A celebration and remembrance of the life of Donald Bement will be held Saturday, April 26, at the Rock Landing Cemetery in Haddam Neck at 11 a.m.

Bement, 78, passed away Dec. 8, 2013, at his home in Haddam Neck.

In case of bad weather, Saturday's service will be held at the Haddam Neck Congregational Church on Quarry Hill Road, Haddam Neck.

Colchester

Max Gilbert

Max Gilbert, 85, of Colchester, passed away Saturday, April 12, at his residence. He was born July 11, 1928, in New York City, son of Nathan and Rose Schechter Gilbert.

Max was a U.S. Army veteran of the Korean War serving with 143d Tank Battalion. He worked for many years as a machinist for Pratt & Whitney Corporation. He was a member of the Colchester Grange No. 78, Worcester Lodge of Masons No. 10, International Association of Machinist Aero Space Club, American Legion Post No. 54 the VFW of Colchester, AARP, Colchester Senior Citizens and the Ahavath Achim Synagogue.

Surviving is his sister, Fay Woltag, and her husband Harold, several nieces, nephews and grand nephews.

Funeral service was held Thursday, April 17, at the Congregation of Ahavath Achim Synagogue on Lebanon Avenue, Colchester. Burial followed with military honors in the Jewish Aid Cemetery in Colchester.

Belmont Sabrowski Funeral Home of Colchester are in care of arrangements.

Portland

Barbara Newton Hahn

Barbara Newton Hahn, 88, of Portland, died peacefully Tuesday, April 15, with her family at her side. She was born June 27, 1925, in Hartford, daughter of Helen (Marvel) and Theodore Burnet Newton, owner of the former Netherlands Hotel in Hartford.

Following her 1943 graduation from the Oxford School in West Hartford, she attended Centenary College of New Jersey for an associate's degree, followed by studies in journalism at Boston University, where she was inducted into the Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society.

While busy raising six children (two sets of twins), Barbara still found time for her passion – oil painting. Her favorite medium was oil and she depicted many subjects and scenes in a realistic style using unique color and texture. In 2000, she participated with over 50 Connecticut artists in providing paintings of historic structures for Lebanon's 300 year remembrance celebration. If she was moved by an event, she would paint it, such as Hurricane Katrina or a walk on the beach. She also volunteered at Trinity Church in Portland.

Barbara is survived by her six children – Theodore Hahn, Thomas Hahn and Marilyn Hahn, all of Middletown; Henry B. Hahn and Barbara Fuller of West Newton, Mass.; Janet Hahn Lougee and Alan T. Lougee of Chicago, Ill.; and Joan Earle Hahn and husband of New Hampshire. She is also survived by her brothers, Theodore Newton of Old Saybrook and Richard "Bud" Newton and his wife Ruth (Christie) of Virginia; three grandchildren – Nolan Hahn, Paul and Lauren Lougee; and four nieces.

We will always remember her for her unwavering love, fortitude, strong ethics and great sense of humor.

The funeral service will be Saturday, April 19, at 11 a.m., at the D'Esopo Funeral Chapel, 277 Folly Brook Blvd., Wethersfield. Burial will follow in Cedar Hill Cemetery, Hartford. The family will receive relatives and friends prior to the service, from 10-11 a.m., at the funeral chapel.

Donations in Barbara's memory may be made to Middlesex Hospital Hospice, 28 Crescent St., Middletown, CT 06457.

For online expressions of sympathy to the family, visit desopo.com.

From the Editor's Desk

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

Allow me to use a phrase that may have been uttered in this state once or twice over the past week:

How about those Huskies?

As everyone knows, both the men's and women's UConn basketball teams won championships last week – an incredibly rare feat, one that's only been accomplished by one other school in history (which, as we also all know by now, was UConn as well).

And while I was excited for the women's team – more excited than I usually am for the women's team, but I'll touch on that in a bit – it was the men's march to victory I found most rewarding. They weren't picked by hardly anybody to go very far in the NCAA tournament – certainly not all the way to the championship game.

I love underdog stories (see? There's more to my Mets fandom than mere masochism), but that's not the only reason why this team had a special feel. Nothing at all against Jim Calhoun, but the win just took on a special flavor with Kevin Ollie at the helm. In just his second year coaching, he took his team all the way. That's a great story.

And once the men went all the way, well, the women just *had* to go all the way. How awesome would that have been? Like I said, the women winning the title doesn't really thrill me that much these days. Oh, sure, Connecticut's my home state, so – as long as my alma mater, the Marist Red Foxes aren't around – I'll pull for the Huskies. But after so many championships in recent years, Geno and his crew nabbing another title had developed a certain "been there, done that" feel to it.

This time was different, though. This time, history was in the making. The women's and men's team would be the queens and kings of the college basketball world. So last Tuesday night, I eagerly watched as the Huskies picked off Notre Dame. The game wasn't as thrilling as Sunday's men's final was – to be honest, it was kind of a snoozer, as UConn was never really in any kind of trouble – but the outcome was quite satisfying.

After the women's team won last Tuesday, *SportsCenter* came on the air. And, leading off the show, co-anchor Steve Levy put it quite well: "And once again," he said, "the state of college basketball is: Connecticut." That was cool to hear. And at the UConn parade over the weekend, Gov. Dannel Malloy, Ollie and Geno held up a giant commemorative license plate, declaring Connecticut as "Basketball Capital USA."

Hey, not a bad thing to be known for.

* * *

I was somewhat surprised – even though it had been heavily rumored – to see Stephen Colbert named to replace David Letterman last week. I guess I didn't think the announcement would happen so soon. While I like Colbert – he's funny, plus he seems like a genuinely nice guy – it'll be interesting to see how he goes over when he assumes the *Late Show* throne next year.

Why will it be interesting? Because the show that's made Colbert a household name – *The Colbert Report* on Comedy Central – features Colbert playing a fictionalized version of himself. Stephen Colbert the television character is a spoof of conservative talk show blow-hards like Rush Limbaugh, Bill O'Reilly and.... well, I don't have the space to list the names of everyone on the Fox News Channel. But everyone on the Fox News Channel.

His viewers (as well as folks like Limbaugh and O'Reilly) know of course that it's all a joke – but it's still his shtick, and it's been largely what he's presented to the public for the past 10 years or so. Colbert has already said he'll drop the act and just be himself when he takes *Late Show* next year (news that, by the way, has apparently eluded Limbaugh's grasp, as he said that, by hiring Colbert, "CBS has just declared war on the heartland of America"), and I find him a funny, smart guy so I think he'll put on a good show – but it'll be interesting to see just how much America winds up missing the Colbert character.

* * *

See you next week.