

RIVEREAST

News Bulletin

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

Volume 38, Number 50

Published by The Glastonbury Citizen

April 4, 2014



Kathleen Narowski is playing Angel Gabriel in St. Andrew Church's 10th annual Passion Play, which is to be performed at the Colchester church next weekend. The play is a full-scale musical and features a cast of 150.

Passion Play Returns to Colchester

by Melissa Roberto

The age-old tale of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is read aloud in Mass through scriptures at St. Andrew's Church in Colchester each week – but next weekend that story will come to life, as the church will perform its 10th annual Passion Play.

But don't let the 10-year tradition fool you. Colleen Puscus, the writer, producer and music director of the play, rewrites the script and lyrics each year, to assure the audience the play is anything but static.

"Well I've realized that people would probably not want to come to a play that is the same," Puscus said. "It needs to be changing. There's so many scenes from the life of Jesus that there's always something we can add."

While most enjoy the lull following the winter holidays, each January Puscus begins writing the script. It takes a total of six weeks to complete, considering it's done outside of her day job as choir director of the church.

"Oh it's huge," Carl Cannella, technical director of the show and the church's sound engineer, said of the play.

The full-scale musical features a cast of about 150. A majority of the actors are from the parish, though several others come from the greater community, even as far as Rhode Island.

The St. Andrew's church will transform to depict the city of Jerusalem, among other changing sets. The 10th show will bring back some favorite scenes from past years, such as the dancing shepherds and singing apostles scenes.

However, many changes are included this year. Some were unexpected, like the loss of about eight or nine cast members in critical

roles, Puscus said. These vacancies were primarily a result of tragedies and illnesses. But Puscus positively noted the cast has rolled with the punches.

"It's just uncanny this year," she said, "but I've never felt so much of the blessing of God upon this performance because somebody always steps forward to fill the gaps that we have."

One of the roles impacted by change is Jesus. Played by Bill Watson for the last nine years, the cast went into the development of this year's show knowing Watson would not continue in the role due to work commitments. The new Jesus, Edward Benjamin of Providence, differs from Watson in that he is a baritone; Watson was a tenor. This allowed Puscus to write new songs to "come up with the right words and nuances."

The background music of Jesus' new song was taken from "Broken Vow" by musician Lara Fabian, who had publicly described the song as one about betrayal, forgiveness, love and hope.

Puscus spent one entire weekend writing lyrics to the song, which she said was a "wonderful challenge."

"I wanted [Benjamin] to have new songs so people wouldn't say 'I remember how the last guy did this,'" Puscus said. "I wanted him to have the dignity of his own role and his own songs."

Another newcomer to the cast is its director, Erin Sousa-Stanley. She stepped in at the last minute, after former director of three years Denise Cannella Kegler, had to step out due to health reasons. Sousa-Stanley works as a the-

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Sawyer Won't Seek Another Term

by Geeta Schrayter

After 22 years in office, state Rep. Pam Sawyer announced this week she won't be seeking re-election this fall.

Sawyer, a Republican from Bolton, is serving her 11th term in the state's General Assembly, representing the 55th District, which includes Andover, Hebron, Marlborough and Bolton.

Sawyer said the decision not to run came after much contemplation.

"I had a look back at a lot of things that have happened over the last 22 years and I realized I had accomplished a lot of my goals," she said, adding, "I still have time left to have some more great adventures and to be able to do some more community service in other ways."

While she wouldn't offer up any specifics just yet, Sawyer said she was "working on some stuff" at this time and still planned to be involved in various ways, such as Junior Achievement, which educates students on work-readiness, entrepreneurship and financial literacy skills; the Bolton Land Trust; and other community groups.

In a press release from April 1, Sawyer added, "I have other challenges I am ready to pursue, as well as having an evening or two home with my family."

And those "other challenges" will replace the many she faced during her tenure as representative – the biggest of which, she said, was being in the minority for the entire time. Sawyer explained the Democrats have held the majority in the legislature for the past 38 years, "so they have the votes to do just about anything they want."

In response, Sawyer said she had to work "double-hard to convince people what is the right thing to do on an issue." To achieve that, she worked to remain bipartisan, something she felt she owed her district.

"I always felt I was elected by my district – and not just one party or the other – so I owed it to them to work as bipartisan as possible," she explained. "I have truly enjoyed reaching across the aisle and creating working relationships because I deeply believe that better legislation is created when everybody has skin in the game."

And that view has seemed to work for Sawyer, who was elected again and again and able to impact the state in various ways – some of which were mentioned in the release.

These were: removing the label of "Suicide 6" from Route 6 by reducing the crash and death rate from Bolton to Columbia; pressing for development of the East Coast and Airline Greenway Trail ("It makes me smile every time I see my dream of the covered bridge in Andover on Route 6 and Route 316," Sawyer said); and passing the Safe Havens bill in 2000, which allows distressed mothers to leave their babies at hospitals without the risk of arrest and since which, 22 infants have been left and taken into the care of the hospital and the Department of Child and Family Services, according to the February 2014 report by DCF.

In addition, Sawyer obtained funding for the Connecticut Aero Tech school at Brainard Airport; supported and promoted the "master building plan" at the University of Connecticut, the state university system and community colleges throughout the state; was successful in estab-

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Pam Sawyer



At left, shepherds take the stage during rehearsals. At right, the St. Andrew Choir practices part of the Passion Play. They'll take the stage and sing during the portion depicting the birth of baby Jesus, shown below with Mary and Joseph.

Passion Play cont. from Front Page

ater director at Stonington High School and owns East Lyme Regional Theater; this will be her first time directing a religious production.

"I've always wanted to work on a religious piece and to work with something that had so much significance and could make such an impact on others," the director said.

And the cast certainly has made Sousa-Stanley feel welcome.

"I think they have this amazing history of this wonderful performance that you couldn't ask for anything better," Sousa-Stanley furthered. "There's a wonderful sense of family and community and strength here. That to me is very rewarding as a director."

Additionally, the show has a new opening scene and ending. And for the first time in 10 years, the entire St. Andrew's choir will appear on stage, during the birth of Jesus.

"It is an incredibly difficult, fast-paced song they have to sing," Puscus hinted at.

For stage manager Barbara Gozzo, the weeks leading up to the annual show are filled with anticipation.

"It is exhausting," the manager of 10 years admitted. "But always joyful. We have fun do-

ing this."

This year is personally a highlight for Gozzo, because in addition to assisting behind the scenes, she will actually enter the limelight.

"It's my way of celebrating the ten years," she said with a laugh.

In addition to assisting in the creation of the play each year, Gozzo added another aspect of the performances that has inspired her is witnessing the affect it has on the audience.

"People who come year after year become inspired," she said. "We've had people come back to us and say it really enriched their spirituality or maybe even awakened a missing spirituality. Each person takes it from where they are at."

Cast member Maureen Kelly Kevorkian agreed. She's been with the show all 10 years, and said that "just being a part of it helps keep my faith strong."

And Cannella, who also has had a role for the last decade, hinted at how powerful the acting is.

"If you don't cry and get chills during parts of this show," he said, "you're not watching it."

In terms of reaching a decade since the

show's conception, Puscus said she won't be putting a big bow on the outside of the church any time soon. Rather, this year's show is worthy of commemoration just because it's continuing tradition – and that tradition sure makes the cast feel good all the way up until Easter Sunday.

"It's what we do during Lent," Puscus concluded. "We dedicate ourselves to this performance and to the life of Christ."

Performance dates are next Friday and Saturday, April 11 and 12, at St. Andrew Church, 128 Norwich Ave., Colchester. Each night, the show will begin at 7:30 p.m., with doors opening at 7. Tickets for the performance are free although a free-will offering will be gratefully accepted to defray the cost of the production.

Tickets are available at Merciful Savior, the parish office, or by calling Theresa Dziatko at 860-295-8315. Members of the audience are encouraged to bring a small cushion for comfort.



Sawyer cont. from Front Page

lishing the Small Town Economic Assistance Grant Program in 2001, which she said this week was one of her "greatest joys;" and has advocated for high-tech research throughout her tenure which, according to the release, "has now resulted in mapping the six billion human genomes that have lead to imminent cures for cancer and other diseases at UConn Health Center and Jackson Laboratories" that will be "life altering for so many."

But Sawyer isn't done yet, and she added this week there were still some issues she was looking to address before her time as representative comes to an end in January.

Her "big bill" this year is to push to remove the tax on over-the-counter medicine.

"When we are taxing people's Tylenol – their first line of defense is over-the-counter drugs – we've gone too far" she stated, adding "we may get those taxes removed this year but that's only one. There are 321 others."

Sawyer commented that with 322, Connecticut has more taxes on the books than any other state in the nation.

In addition, Sawyer said she was also pushing to change the road salt currently used to treat the roadways which doesn't contain a rust inhibitor, is "exceedingly corrosive and is causing great damage."

Lastly, she added she wanted to help the small towns obtain their STEAP grants this year, because each of her towns has projects they're looking to work on. And it's that very advocacy for small towns that has made her a standout representative according to town officials.

Andover First Selectman Bob Burbank said this week Sawyer's decision not to run again meant "a big loss," especially because "she's been such a big supporter for small towns."

Burbank said Sawyer "always goes to bat for small towns when it comes to budgets and things like that and unfortunately some of the other representatives and state senators really go the way of the big cities."

He said Sawyer's shoes would be "rather tough to fill."

"We always hope for the best, but it's going to be disappointing to lose somebody like Pam,"

he said.

On Wednesday, Hebron Town Manager Andrew Tierney hadn't yet caught wind of Sawyer's decision.

"I didn't realize that and I'm devastated," he said. "She's done a great job. It's going to be hard to envision anyone else trying to keep up that kind of pace. She was a wonderful advocate for Hebron and she put timeless efforts into any projects she felt passionate about."

Marlborough First Selectwoman Cathy Gaudinski added Thursday Sawyer will "certainly be missed."

"I know she's been a driving force in assisting the towns she served and she's always looked out, especially for the small towns and their unique needs," Gaudinski stated. "She's always been there to answer questions or to provide support on an issue that the town has had that needed some action. I'm sorry to see her leave."

And for Sawyer, it's the very people she lent that support to – and who supported her in return – that she said she'll miss most.

"I am deeply grateful for the great support I have been given by the wonderful folks in the 55th District over the last 22 years," she said in the release. "I will miss seeing so many of them at the many events I have enjoyed – watching, eating, shopping, and hugging!"

She furthered this week it was the people that she enjoyed most throughout her time as representative.

"The people are wonderful, the issues were fascinating, and the politics stunk," she laughed.

Looking toward the future, Sawyer said she hoped whoever takes her place has "a great sense of small-town values" because there are so many small towns in the state, and "they create the rich fabric that Connecticut is known for."

And that's a hope town officials agreed with, as they stated they'd like to see someone who's helpful, responsive, values the small towns, and would become involved in the communities.

In short, the ideal replacement rep. would be another Pam Sawyer – yet the consensus seems to be she's one-of-a-kind.

Portland 2013 Grand List Shows Increase

by Elizabeth Bowling

A calculation of Portland's Grand List of assessable properties for 2013 shows a 0.72 percent increase from the previous year.

The Oct. 1 2013 Grand List, totaling \$802,729,670, is a \$5,732,473 increase from last year's \$796,997,197 list.

The Grand List is broken down into three items: real estate, motor vehicle and personal property. Compared to the 2012 totals, each of the three items increased slightly. The value for real estate went up to \$697,564,164, compared to the previous year's \$695,515,070. The total for motor vehicles went up, too, from \$69,115,440 to \$71,130,748. Lastly, personal property increased from \$32,366,687 to \$34,034,758.

Town Assessor Richard Lasky said the overall increase in the Grand List is mostly due to "new construction this year" and "new houses."

Portland's Grand List represents the net value of assessed property in town. It is used to help set the mill rate for the upcoming fiscal year, which is determined by dividing the town's budget by the Grand List total.

A mill is \$1 tax per \$1,000 of assessed property value. Residents can calculate their taxes by multiplying their total assessments by the mill rate, and then dividing that number by 1,000.

The mill rate in Portland for the current year is 31.28 and the proposed mill rate for

the 2014-15 year is 31.95. So, under the proposed mill rate for the coming fiscal year, a person with a house assessed at \$200,000 would pay \$6,390 in taxes on it, for example.

First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield's proposed 0.67 mill increase is still subject to change until after the Board of Selectmen sets the mill rate following the town's approval of the budget at referendum.

According to Lasky, the top 10 property owners in Portland are: Connecticut Light and Power, with property valued at \$13.98 million; St. Clements Foundation, at \$4.71 million; Safety-Kleen Systems, at \$2.86 million; Jarvis Airfoil, at \$2.67; Buckeye Cattle Company, at \$2.63 million; Perry Portland Associates, at \$2.46 million; Portland Care and Rehabilitation, at \$2.04 million; Woodgreen Portland Limited Partnership, at \$1.83 million; Clondalkin Pharma and Healthcare, at \$1.74 million; and Oakwood Sports Center of Glastonbury, at \$1.72 million.

Combined, the top 10 taxpayers own \$36.65 million of taxable property in Portland.

According to the town of Portland's website, the Grand List is a report of all taxable and tax-exempt property in the jurisdiction. Assessed values in Connecticut are based on 70 percent of fair market value.

Marlborough Drive-Thru Offers a Side of Volunteerism

by **Melissa Roberto**

Members of the Marlborough Congregational Church gather each Sunday for worship at 10 a.m., but once a month when the sun goes down, a group of citizens gather at the sanctuary for another purpose – and it's one that extends outside of the church doors, and leaves an impact on the greater community.

On the last Sunday of each month at 5 p.m., cars line up behind the church hall, at which time drivers and passengers present tickets to volunteers, who respond with home-cooked meals at no cost to those receiving them. It's known as the church's Drive-Thru Café, a program devoted to helping residents in need that stays true to the goal of serving "50 Meals in 50 Minutes."

I was fortunate enough to be invited to the seventh-consecutive drive-thru at the South Main Street church this past Sunday, March 30. And like many others, I drove away that night with a feeling of gratitude.

The program operates similarly to the method of the assembly line I assume is performed in fast-food restaurants, with the exception that the individuals filling the to-go containers are not employees; they do not show up to get paid. Rather they are volunteers participating solely to help their neighbors, and I witnessed first-hand that the ones passing off the meals reap benefits, too.

In the month leading up to the drive-thru, the Marlborough Food Bank determines 50 Marlborough residents who will receive tickets to utilize the drive-thru. A majority goes to food bank patrons, and a portion is distributed to seniors of the Florence S. Lord senior housing complex. For the senior citizens down the street at Florence Lord who cannot drive, volunteers deliver the meals right to their doors.

Upon my arrival late Sunday afternoon, I was welcomed by two members of the church who make the drive-thru café possible: volunteer coordinator Audra M. DeFelice and executive chef Dave Bates. DeFelice is responsible for soliciting 10 volunteers each month, which she said is done through announcements during worship or coffee hour. A majority of the volunteers belong to the church. Finding volunteers has not been difficult, DeFelice pointed out. In fact, the program has become so popular that volunteers are encouraged not to sign up two months in a row, that way, DeFelice said, "everyone gets a chance to give a hand to those

in need."

Chef Bates' title speaks for itself although it is important to note the meals come to him already prepared. At about 4:30, volunteers entered through the church hall bearing the contents of Sunday night's menu they purchased and cooked themselves in their homes. The March entrée was one of my personal favorites – lasagna, accompanied with garlic bread, green beans, and what Chef Bates defined as "cookies du jour," which happened to be as pleasing to the eye as they were to the taste buds; each bag was assembled with a homemade chocolate chip cookie and a frosted sugar cookie in the shape of a four leaf clover.

Chef Bates fired up the kitchen machinery to keep the meals warm, and prepared the vegetable side dish. Each month every volunteer is responsible for arriving with a dish to feed six. They are given the menu but are told to create it in any way they'd like.

Once the food and volunteers arrived, the clock started ticking. The next half hour was spent assigning volunteers to a task. Two stood outside the church's driveway directing traffic, others assumed positions on the production line, and I was lucky enough to be paired with a father-son duo, both named Bernie Odo. The Odoys and I were responsible for greeting cars, taking tickets and delivering the meals through the car windows. This small effort resulted in a great response. The receivers of the meals were all appreciative; each and every one smiled, and voiced thanks, some even positively referenced the aroma that began to fill their vehicles.

Young Bernie is 9, and he said it was his second time volunteering at the drive-thru. His dad pointed out the Odoys, including his wife Teresa and daughter Alexa, 7, became involved as a way to give back.

"It exemplifies being a part of the church and helping out our community," said the elder Odo.

And it seemed the activity in the kitchen was just as steady as the stream of cars outside. Hands worked fast to slice the bread, cut the lasagna and drop in a bag of cookies. Each container was wrapped up in a plastic bag donated by Stop and Shop in East Hampton.

Once the 50 meals go out the door, there's at least 10 leftover. Bates explained the leftovers are then shared amongst the volunteers. The Rev. Bob Faulhaber Jr., credited for bringing the café program to fruition, explained it's a



Volunteers filled the kitchen at the Marlborough Congregational Church last Sunday, March 30, for its seventh consecutive Drive-Thru Café, a monthly program spearheaded by members of the church that helps feed the less fortunate in town.

time when volunteers "break bread together and spend minutes over dinner discussing how much fun everyone had."

And it certainly was fun. Amidst assembling the cargo, volunteers shared laughs. One bout of laughter occurred when my duty transitioned from greeting cars to taking on the role of the Cookie Monster. This is the person who adds in the cookies, of course while wearing a bright blue cookie monster hat.

In addition to laughter, what seemed to echo within the church was volunteers—no matter where they were stationed – questioning, "What can I do next?"

A defining moment for me was the opportunity to transport meals to the senior housing complex less than a mile up the road. It felt good to see so many people smile.

During dinner I sat next to volunteer Karen Fick, who reflected on the afternoon with her grandson Andy, 9.

"I see a need and I'm blessed," Fick said of her decision to volunteer. "I just want to be able to pass it on. I'm lucky enough I can do it and I need to share it."

Fick continued she's enjoyed watching her grandchildren assist in the process. The Colchester resident and member of the church said it's a way for children "to count their own

blessings, and to share, and to be kind to others."

At the end of the day, Chef Bates pointed out "typically no one wants to leave," which proves just how addictive kindness can be.

"It's a great feeling," DeFelice reflected Sunday afternoon. "It's nice to be able to do something for people who aren't always able to do something for themselves. Being able to lend them the hand that they may need once in a while makes us feel much better."

I walked away from the experience with a desire to do it again. It certainly served as the healthiest drive-thru I'd ever been through – in every sense of the word.

The café program – still in its trial run – began in September. DeFelice said the desire is to reach out to other organizations within the community to give them the opportunity to get involved in the program and participate in a particular month's meal.

Faulhaber echoed that goal. Once people take part in it he said they'll soon learn "how easy it is to do it and how much it can bless their organization."

Anyone interested in becoming involved in the drive-thru café can contact Audra DeFelice at Audra211@hotmail.com or at 860-685-0521.

MES Principal, Assistant Principal Positions Filled

by **Melissa Roberto**

The leadership at Marlborough Elementary School has undergone many unanticipated changes in the last year and amid them all, one thing was for certain: Superintendent of Schools David Sklarz had a lot of hiring to do.

The first transition occurred last July, when the district learned former principal of three years Scott Nierendorf had accepted a position out of the district at EASTCONN. Following that came the appointment of Kathy Veronesi, who accepted an interim principal position to run until the end of the school year. However, Veronesi's leadership was short-lived, as she accepted an offer to be superintendent of Regional School District 13, and left a vacancy before the start of 2014.

Cue Paula Schwartz, who took over the reins of the school in January to see out Veronesi's stint. She is set to remain principal until the end of the fiscal year on June 30.

Shortly after Schwartz began, Assistant Principal and Director of Special Education Maureen Ryan announced she too would be leaving, effective at the end of the current school year.

Last Thursday, two unanimous Board of Education votes determined the 2014-15 school year will begin with Daniel White as its new principal, and Kim Kelley as assistant principal.

White is a resident of Columbia and a seasoned administrator, having spent the last nine years as principal of Chaplin Elementary School in Chaplin. Chaplin Elementary is similar to MES in that it is a pre-kindergarten through sixth-grade school. Since 2007, White has also served as acting director of special education within the Chaplin school, and prior to that he served as assistant principal of Killingly Central School for nearly two years. He is also a former physical education teacher,

spending 17 years in the Canterbury and Groton school systems for preschool through grade eight.

White holds a Bachelor of Science degree in physical education, a Master of Arts degree in special physical education, a sixth-year administrative certification and in 2013, graduated from the University of Connecticut's Executive Leadership Program.

While MES will be new to White, Kelley already knows her way around the place. Since 2013, she has been the curriculum specialist for math, science and technology at MES, and for seven years prior to that, she taught sixth grade at the school. Prior to her time working in Marlborough, Kelley served in many capacities at Windham Public Schools, from teaching various elementary grades and serving as an instructional consultant during 1989-2005.

Kelley is currently working toward a Connecticut Intermediate Administrator certification from Sacred Heart University and in addition she holds a Master of Science degree in reading/language arts and a Bachelor of Arts degree in education.

The two underwent a rigorous selection process. A principal search committee had been formed earlier this year that Sklarz said was "representative of our broader school community."

"[The committee] has to be applauded for the time commitment and their positive focus on the needs of our children, staff, and faculty and families," Sklarz continued.



White

The superintendent explained the committee's purpose was to hire a candidate who resembled the qualities that had been communicated in a public survey taken by staff, faculty, board members and parents.

Sklarz said survey results showed the public was looking for a principal with a "passion for education, love of children" and "demonstrated respect for all members of our school who work with our children." Additionally, top priorities were a candidate with experience as an elementary educator and school leader, and experience implementing new state initiatives, Sklarz said.

Ultimately, Sklarz said White was the candidate "who best met the qualities of the profile and had the proven experience." White's experience was challenged through an "intensive" process, Sklarz said, including interviews, reference checks and a site visit to his school.

Sklarz said the vision was "to put together the strongest leadership team of any elementary school in Connecticut" – something he feels he has in White and Kelley.

"This team now combines with a staff and faculty that is second to none and the future for MES has never been brighter for any child," Sklarz said.

In a letter sent home to parents this week, Sklarz said the appointed candidates "will make for a highly caring, knowledgeable, experienced and collaborative leadership team."

White and Kelley voiced those goals in phone interviews this week. White said he is "incredibly excited" to be joining the team.

"Having already met some of the staff, it seems like it's going to be a tremendous fit for me and the team in Marlborough," he said.

White furthered he was "very impressed" with the community involvement during the interview process. Additionally, he said while Marlborough was out searching for the right

candidate, White had been doing the same.

"I'm very happy here at Chaplin but I was looking for more of a challenge," White said, explaining that 185 students are enrolled at his current school (compared to MES' enrollment of 608) and shares a part-time superintendent with the town's regional middle and high school. "Not only did Marlborough select me but I selected them as a district I'm proud to be a part of. I can see myself wrapping up [the next 11 or 12 years of my] educational career in Marlborough."

While White won't officially start until July 1, he said he will, in the months ahead, "find days and ways in Marlborough leading up to [that date] so I can hit the ground running in July."

And Kelley, who already spends each week day at MES, defined her future role as an "incredible honor."

"It's a beautiful community," she said this week, "and I feel honored to have the opportunity to work with this group of parents and this group of students."

Kelley said alongside White and Sklarz, the administration team will continue the school's philosophy of "putting the children first."

A staff meeting was held Tuesday afternoon where MES faculty met with White and Kelley. Sklarz said there will be opportunities for the public to meet next year's leadership team in the weeks ahead.



Kelley

Volunteers Honored as ‘Spirit of Portland’

by Elizabeth Bowling

The dreary weather Sunday afternoon didn't keep members of the Portland community from coming out to celebrate the selflessness of three of their own. Three humble Portland residents were honored for their volunteer work and named the 2014 Ralph Paley Spirit of Portland Award recipients.

According to Senior Center Director Mary Flood, the award is presented each year to residents who have done their best – quietly and without fanfare – to make Portland a great place. The honorees were nominated by their fellow residents.

The Portland Senior Center was filled with supporters as Flood presented this year's honorees with their awards. This year's recipients were Ruth Freeburg, Andrew Bauer and Marion Anderson.

Flood put it simply, “We have some amazing people in this town.”

This year marked the sixth year of the Spirit of Portland Award – and the third year of the award being given in honor of the late Ralph Paley.

Flood explained, “The name change came about when Mr. Paley's daughters approached me about doing something to honor their late father's generous spirit. They graciously and generously offered to underwrite this celebration in their father's honor.”

Paley, who passed away in 2011, was a founder of Paley Brothers Hay and Shavings. He was known for his selfless charity work around town.

Paley's grandson, Michael Fleischmann, a Portland resident, said a few words Sunday on behalf of Paley's family.

“Each and every year it seems to be bigger and better than before,” Fleischmann said of the event. “It's about honoring those unsung heroes.”

He added, “While this may be a small town, it has a really big heart. ... Even though my

grandfather is no longer in this community, it's still in really good hands.”

The first award recipient of the day was Freeburg, who was recognized for her volunteer work with the Valley View Reading program and Meals on Wheels. Freeburg is also an active member of Trinity Church, Hemlock Grange, the Brownstone Quorum and the Portland Historical Society.

“Ruth is one of those people who seems to be involved in everything,” Flood said. “She has never asked for thanks or recognition, but we're happy to provide it.”

Freeburg accepted her award and gave a simple thanks to her friends and family in attendance.

The second recipient was Bauer, the chairman of the town's Clean Energy Task Force, who was honored for his work on the town's future, Flood said.

She explained that Bauer, a teacher at Portland Middle School, looks “toward our future through his work in the schools and the huge task he has taken on with the Clean Energy Task Force.”

According to Flood, Bauer oversaw the Future Problem Solvers academic competition and Environmental Day activities for his middle school students. He also oversaw the installation of solar panels on numerous homes in town and works to ensure that Portland uses energy effectively to allow for a sustainable future.

Flood called Bauer “a humble man who expects no accolades,” and added that he takes on his volunteer work “with great humor.”

Upon receiving his award, Bauer took the spotlight off of himself, and noted the seemingly endless amount of appetizers and desserts on hand for everyone to enjoy.

“I'm just glad there's something here for everyone to eat,” he said with a smile.

The third and final recipient, Anderson, was honored for her work with the American Le-



The 2014 Ralph Paley Spirit of Portland Award honorees are, from left, Portland residents Marion Anderson, Andrew Bauer and Ruth Freeburg. The award is sponsored by the Portland Senior Center and is presented annually to the town's best volunteers, as nominated by their fellow residents.

gion, the Zion Lutheran Church and the Rocky Hill Veterans Home.

Flood said she thinks of Anderson as family and considers her to be a “great resource when I need to know something about Portland history.”

Flood concluded of Anderson, “Hers has been a life well spent in the service of her community.”

In her acceptance speech, Anderson said, “This was fabulous. I can't believe all the people

that are here!”

One of the many people in attendance was Kathy Richards, a representative from the Board of Selectmen, who was there to thank the honorees for their volunteer work.

“These people are really deserving of this award,” Richards said of the trio. “They do wonderful things for the community.”

Richards, who knew Paley personally, concluded that Freeburg, Bauer and Anderson all “do things behind the scenes – just like he did.”

Full-Day Kindergarten Deemed a Success in Portland

by Elizabeth Bowling

Tuesday night's Board of Education meeting was one of vindication, at least in terms of the board's decision to implement full-day kindergarten to all students for the first time this current school year.

The half-dozen kindergarten teachers from Valley View Elementary School, as well as the school's principal, Deborah Graner, attended the school board's meeting to provide an uplifting presentation on the success of full-day kindergarten thus far.

Since its implementation in September, full-day kindergarten to all Portland Public School students has proven to be a huge success.

Graner said of the newly-implemented full-day kindergarten, “It's like a dream come true.”

“Our curriculum is stronger than ever,” she furthered. “Everyday we're revising and that's going to be ongoing.”

Graner chalked up the success of this year's kindergarten program to the “great team” of teachers, who she called “the heroes.”

The team is made up of a combination of new teachers, former first-grade teachers turned kindergarten teachers, and long-time kindergarten teachers.

“You'd think they were together for 30 years,” Graner said. “They work together really well.”

She explained that the team meets every day to discuss ways to further better the kindergar-

ten program. Their meetings have proved to be anything but futile, and the proof is in the pudding, or at least in the DIBELS Next assessment, which measures the acquisition of early literacy skills from kindergarten through sixth grade.

The DIBELS assessment is given to each student three times per year, Graner explained. Essentially, it assesses students on “a little bit of everything,” she said.

According to the DIBELS assessment results from January of last year, 57 percent of kindergarten students needed an intervention of some sort. This year, however, with the implementation of full-day classes, only 17 percent require intervention. (Those statistics include students with special education needs, Graner affirmed.)

“This really makes us really satisfied,” Graner said. “We're thrilled.”

The teachers attributed the success of their students this year to the additional time in the classroom.

Half-day kindergarten only allowed for 497.75 hours of class time throughout the school year, the teachers said, while full-day kindergarten allows for 1,010 hours of teaching and learning per year. That extra time each day allows the kindergarten teachers to set aside significant blocks of time for language arts, writing, math, science, social studies, specials

(like art, music and physical education), they said, as well as time for students to socialize with one another. Additionally, subjects like reading and writing are taught throughout the day, as they are integrated throughout the curriculum, the teachers said.

The teachers concluded their presentation to the Board of Education by explaining exactly what full-day kindergarten has allowed them to do, which they could not accomplish during half-day classes. They said full-day kindergarten allows them to: work with individual students; use a hands-on approach; and foster social and emotional growth in students.

Members of the Board of Education expressed their thanks and support to the good work being done in Portland's kindergarten classrooms.

Board member Michael Pelton affirmed that the feedback he's received from parents with children in kindergarten this year “has been positive across the board.”

Board member MaryAnne Rode said implementing full-day kindergarten was “money well spent” in last year's Board of Education budget.

She furthered, “The minuscule amount of money that went to this program to make it happen has come back to us a billion-fold in the performance of our students, in the satis-

faction of our staff, and in the satisfaction of the parents.”

Also at Tuesday's Board of Education meeting, the board set the Portland High School Class of 2014 graduation day for Wednesday, June 18.

The board also took action on the purchase of a \$55,000 mini-school bus, to be paid for out of the Capital Improvement Plan.

Board member Ben Srb asked, “Didn't we just buy a new bus last year?”

Superintendent of Schools Sally Doyen responded that the purchase of another new mini-bus is “forward thinking” in case one of the older vehicles breaks down.

Members voted 6-1 in favor of the purchase, with Srb voting against.

The board voted unanimously to move funds from the town General Fund to the Capital Improvement Plan in fiscal year 2014 to replace windows at Brownstone Intermediate School.

Doyen affirmed that the purchasing of the windows – which would cost \$240,000 – would need to be approved by the public in a special town meeting.

The next regularly-scheduled Portland Board of Education meeting is Tuesday, May 6, at 7 p.m. at the Portland High School media center.

Colchester Finance Board Approves Budgets

by Melissa Roberto

Wednesday night the Board of Finance approved bottom line numbers of the town and Board of Education budgets, which total \$53.66 million.

The bottom line town budget, which includes town operations, debt and capital, totals \$13,478,094 – a 2.50 percent increase, or \$328,244, over the current year's spending. The Board of Education budget amounts to \$40,180,795, an increase of 2.83 percent, or \$1,104,741, over the current year.

Although each budget is to be voted on separately at a referendum scheduled for May 6, the budgets combined total \$53,658,889. That's an increase of \$1,432,985, or 2.74 percent over the 2013-14 fiscal year package.

The school budget stayed the same as it has in recent weeks following cuts recommended and approved by the Board of Education earlier this month. However, Wednesday's meeting featured a detailed discussion of cuts presented by First Selectman Gregg Schuster last week. Schuster had presented multiple lists of cuts, including a list of some of the initial cuts he'd like to restore. The finance board discussed each at length, and some of the cuts that seemed to have the biggest impact to citizens based on public comments in recent meetings were restored. Those included restoring 2 percent non-union raises, a substance abuse counselor, and restoring the fire marshal to 40 hours, instead of the previous requests of slashing the hours to 20, and then 28.

Chief Financial Officer Maggie Cosgrove assisted the finance board during discussions. She explained the substance abuse counselor is not a current position. It also does not involve a future person to be hired, she said. Rather, it's a "contracting service" for youth services that will begin through the funding of a grant that is expected to last about three months. The money placed into the budget would then allow it to continue. Cosgrove and finance members agreed it was tough to weigh the benefits because it has not yet started. How-

ever, finance member Art Shilosky voiced strong support of funding it, to which his fellow members ultimately agreed.

"I was very disappointed," he said about cutting the substance abuse counselor. "I'd cut it out the roads. I'd cut it out of the fire department. I'd cut it out of the police department. I would cut it out of the school budget. That's how passionate I am about it."

"What I'm trying to say is the youth of this town are our future," Shilosky continued. "And we have to address that. We know substance abuse in this town and every town around us is getting out of control."

After the meeting, Tarlov communicated the mill rate is 31.17 as a result of the approved budgets with restorations and cuts, up from the current mill rate of 30.28.

* * *

In a public hearing on the budgets held just the night before, Schuster and Board of Education members gave presentations on their budgets one last time. Schuster explained public safety and public works are the two areas within the town operations budget that are seeing "some significant increases."

On the public safety side, fully funding the ambulance incentive program is one cause, and the other increase driver is due to the expiration of a SAFER grant that used to fund portions of four fire department salaries. The town is now to pick up 100 percent of the salaries. Public Works is going up primarily due to an increase in the snow removal account, as well as contractual increases.

In regards to the education budget, major increase areas are within the tuition account, up 13.71 percent, and capital. The rise in tuition is caused by private tuition costs and magnet school tuition costs. School board chairman Ron Goldstein explained private tuition is not to be confused with private schools. Rather it is the cost of "students of most significant needs that are attending schools outside of the district" because the district "cannot meet the

needs of these students."

Additionally, magnet school tuition is rising about 39 percent over the current year. Goldstein explained in 2011-12 28 students attended magnet schools and next year that number is anticipated to rise to 99. The district is responsible for paying magnet school tuition for Colchester students, and if 99 do in fact attend, that is to cost the district \$325,000.

Furthermore, Goldstein highlighted the increase in capital expenses is "one we are committed to."

"We heard loud and clear that folks are expecting us to maintain our buildings better than we have been doing," said Goldstein. "Admittedly our capital has been underfunded for a few years."

The capital costs total \$300,000 and a large chunk of that money is to fund blinds at the middle school used for safety and during a lockdown.

* * *

One member of the public commented that he'd like to see the town's fund balance to fund items in the budget for road maintenance.

"I say we should use it for the people," the gentleman said of the fund balance. "I think it should be used for the citizens of the town and not just to wait."

Finance members said the town's fund balance has 4 to 4.5 million dollars in it. However, per the fund balance policy, it is not to be used for mill rate relief, Tarlov explained. It is to be used towards emergencies.

"4.5 million sounds like a lot to all of us here but when you have 55 million dollars of annual expenses it's not a lot of money," Tarlov said.

Another member of the public urged the board of education to revisit the reduction in school staffing. He referenced kindergarten classrooms anticipated to increase from 19 to 21 students.

"It seems like a pretty big number that jumps out to me," he said. "I don't see that to be a savings at all."

The gentleman also questioned why more repairs aren't being made to the middle school.

"I think it's a double issue," he said. "I think there's an actual safety issue and then there's an appearance issue. It goes into teacher morale, student morale and parent morale."

Goldstein agreed. He said decisions were made based upon a possible middle school building project coming in the future. A building committee was recently formed to begin discussing the possibility.

"[We] are funding some [capital projects] that hopefully will migrate over to a new [school] building," Goldstein said. In regards to capital items proposed in next year's budget, Goldstein added, "those items we've decided we can no longer wait on so we're moving forward on those."

Additionally, one member of the public commented on the difficulty the school district is faced with. He referenced the \$1.1 million increase in the school budget, but stressed that's driven primarily by items the district has "no control over."

"It's going to be hard for some people to look at a 1.1 million dollar increase on both sides against 142 less kids and nearly five less teachers," the resident said. "I understand magnet school and special education costs you have no control over. But that's going to be hard for some people to justify."

Goldstein agreed. With exception to instructional supplies and capital costs, the chairman said special education tuition, magnet schools and salary increases "are driving the increase and none of those items are driven by enrollment or number of teachers to some extent."

Goldstein added those increases are "totally out of our control."

The Board of Selectmen was scheduled to hold a regular meeting Thursday after press time to set the town meeting for the budgets. The town meeting vote will determine whether or not the spending packages in question will head to a referendum vote.

Bacon Wrestler Makes History

by Melissa Roberto

Twelve years of hard work has paid off for Bacon Academy senior Howie Kilpatrick. The 17-year-old recently made history at the high school as its first two-time State Open wrestling champion.

Kilpatrick began wrestling in Colchester at six years old. His former youth and high school coach Mike Voiland said he's watched Kilpatrick over the years develop into a "fine young man" on and off the mat.

The young wrestler has received quite the number of accolades in regards to the sport. Taking first place in the state open in the last two years makes Kilpatrick a back-to-back champion. Kilpatrick also won the Class M State Wrestling Championship for the second year in a row and he walked away from this year's class tournament as its chosen Outstanding Wrestler.

Surprisingly, the athlete's accomplishments don't stop there. Kilpatrick finished third at the New England High School Wrestling Championship in Providence, R.I. And in February, the Eastern Connecticut Conference Committee – comprised of a number of athletic directors – named Kilpatrick Athlete of the Month out of all winter sport athletes.

Sean Smith, who is in his first year as head wrestling coach at Bacon following Voiland's departure, said the senior is just as determined in the classroom. Kilpatrick is a high honors student and member of the National Honor Society.

"He's just a well-rounded person," Smith said. "I've never had to question him. He's a great person in the classroom and has a lot of

success on the mat."

Smith credited Kilpatrick's success to the support of the senior's parents.

"They let him grow into himself without putting too much burden on him or pressuring him to be successful," Smith continued.

In the four years Kilpatrick has been a Bobcat, he's won 134 matches and lost 13. The athlete's senior year record was 40-1.

"I guess you'd say he's a crowd pleaser," Smith said with a laugh. "Everytime you watch him you'd always hear the crowd. It's very entertaining watching him wrestle."

Bacon Academy Athletic Director Kevin Burke defined the 17-year-old as an "outstanding athlete over the last four years."

Voiland echoed that. Although the season is over, Voiland said just last weekend he joined Kilpatrick and another Bacon wrestler, DJ Partinis, at the National High School Coaches Association Senior Nationals in Virginia Beach, Va. The tournament is not tied to the school, Voiland said, but high school wrestlers all over the country can choose to participate. This year there were over 2,800 participants and there, Kilpatrick picked up two wins and two losses.

"Howie wrestled very well," Voiland said.

The longtime coach also dished the skills Kilpatrick possesses that make him unstoppable on the mat.

"Howie's quick," Voiland put it. "He has a great technique and he pays attention. He is always focused out there."

The coach further explained coaches are constantly telling wrestlers to "stay in good position." When they do, Voiland said wrestlers are hard to score on. And, as no surprise, "Howie's

hard to score on," the coach said.

The *Rivereast* reached out to Kilpatrick this week. The senior remained humble of his accomplishments and credited his success to the support of his coaches, family and teammates.

"I mean it feels good to know all the hard work over the past 12 years have really paid off but I really couldn't have done it without my team and everyone that's been along with me for the ride," Kilpatrick commented.

Specifically, Kilpatrick said Voiland's extensive wrestling knowledge coupled with Smith instilling "new youth to the team" helped him out.

"They've taught me a lot of life skills and leadership," he said.

Speaking of leadership, Kilpatrick has been a team leader during his sophomore, junior and senior years. He explained what his goals were in that role.

"My main responsibilities were to lead by example, whether that be working hard in a practice room or getting good grades," the wrestler said, "and the other was just being a friend—being there to help my teammates if they needed help with anything."

Prior to this year's wrestling season, Kilpatrick played soccer. And now that wrestling is over, it's on to the next sport. The lacrosse season just began, he said, so his last few months at Bacon will be spent "working hard at that."

Next fall, Kilpatrick will wrestle at King's College in Pennsylvania, a Division 3 school. Though he said he wishes he could have gone Division 1 or 2, he chose King's for its physi-



Howie Kilpatrick

cian assistant program, "and I know my future is more important."

The 17-year-old said he's "definitely excited" to wrestle at the college level—and perhaps the community will keep tabs on him to see if he makes history there as well.

"We're definitely going to miss him at Bacon," Voiland said.

World War II Veteran Moves Audience in Colchester

by Melissa Roberto

A book or Internet search may give insight into what occurred during World War II – but hearing from someone who experienced the war first-hand is uncommon today.

Which is why 92-year-old veteran Ben Cooper's visit to Cragin Memorial Library last Thursday, March 27, featured a standing-room-only crowd. Cooper was a combat medic in World War II with the 45th Infantry Division in Italy, France and Germany. Just before returning home from the war in 1945, Cooper was an eyewitness to the Dachau concentration camp – the first camp Hitler built in 1933.

It took 45 years before Cooper opened up about the tragedies he encountered. Since 1990, he has shared his experiences with high school and college students and civic groups. Cooper told the crowd those talks – which he often does with his friend and one of the few Holocaust survivors left, Colchester resident Henny Markiewicz Simon – have “been an eye opener for them and a healing process for me.”

During his storytelling of the war, Cooper captivated the crowd with photographs he took during the 1940s, and displayed the very artifacts he carried with him, which he has since dedicated to the State Armory.

“I carried a camera through the war,” the veteran said. “I don't know where I got the film but every now and then I would take a picture or someone would take it for me.”

Cooper was born in Avon and is a lifelong resident of West Hartford. Several of his memories can be found in textbooks today. In 1936, when he was just a teenager, Cooper said he remembers spotting the Hindenburg “out of the clear blue.” That was one year before it exploded in New Jersey.

The veteran continued to recall significant dates. The next was Dec. 7, 1941, the day Pearl Harbor was attacked, driving America into World War II.

“I was very anxious to serve my country,” Cooper recalled, adding that at the time he worked at Colt's Firearms in Hartford testing guns to make sure they were ready for service.

In September 1942, Cooper joined the Army, at the age of 20. After an evaluation, he traveled to Camp Barkeley in Texas, where he began combat medic training.

“It was for medics, not doctors,” Cooper stressed. “Medics give first aid to soldiers and civilians.”

Cooper recalled visiting home in the early 1940s, which occurred whenever he was given a furlough. The veteran spoke eloquently of these memories because each involved his late wife, Dorothy. The love story began in Hartford in the fall of 1943 when a friend asked Cooper, “Would you like to meet a nice tomato?”

The veteran explained that expression meant a “good-looking girl.” Subsequently, Dorothy “literally knocked me off my feet,” Cooper said with a chuckle. He spent the next years in service writing her letters “every day” – and she returned the favor. (This would eventually stop when Cooper was overseas due to what he said were superstitions of his life ending shortly after writing home.)

One year later the two got engaged, shortly after exchanging class rings.

“We did promise her parents and my parents

that we would not get married until after the war because there were two wars going on, the European War and the Pacific War,” Cooper said.

However, all it took was until the next furlough, and the couple tied the knot on July 14, 1944, on Saco Beach, Maine. In September of that year Cooper boarded a liberty ship, of which he had a picture he shared with the audience.

“It took us 30 days to cross the Atlantic Ocean,” the West Hartford native recalled, while playing a tune for the audience. “And we used to listen to the music of our day, Frank Sinatra, no less.”

The men had “no idea” where they were heading, said Cooper. “They don't tell you a thing,” he added. The boat sailed through the Strait of Gibraltar and Mediterranean Sea. Upon arrival to Italy, Cooper was assigned to the 45th Infantry Division, one of three. Anzio, Italy was one of the division's stops, and is the same city where a Colchester man was severely wounded and saved “a lot of Americans,” Cooper explained. The fallen soldier was William J. Johnston – whose name now adorns Colchester's middle school. He received the highest medal honor in the United States, Cooper said.

Cooper walked the crowd through his journeys in France and Germany. The troops went back and forth between the two as replacement soldiers came and went, and at times, some did not return.

“In France we liberated towns. The French were happy to see us,” Cooper pointed out. “In Germany, we captured towns. Very rarely they'd come to talk to us.”

“Whenever necessary,” Cooper continued, medics would set up their stations. When the shooting started, he said the telephones at the medic stations “would ring off the wall.”

While in Germany, Cooper recalled witnessing “dog fights up in the air.”

“You'd see the planes coming down in flames or sometimes we'd see the airmen come down in parachutes,” he pictured.

The horror would soon worsen. Cooper recalled trudging through the Rhine River, where one of his buddies from Newington had been killed by a sniper. That, Cooper learned of near the end of the war, and upon returning to the states he went to Newington to extend his condolences to the parents.

* * *

Cooper forwarded to the capturing of Munich, and lastly, the final order U.S. soldiers received from General Dwight D. Eisenhower on another monumental day in history, May 8, 1945 – the day the war ended. Eisenhower ordered the men to head to Dachau.

“We had no idea where we were going ... but as we neared the camp the stench of burning flesh permeated the whole area,” said Cooper.

“Many of them died right in front of us,” the veteran said of the prisoners at the concentration camp. “They were so emaciated they could not swallow.”

The infantry released a statement of what they witnessed. It read, “There are no words for Dachau and even the pictures of its horror are pale beside its reality.” It furthered the camps showed “evidence of human cruelty beyond the

understanding of the human mind.”

That day, Cooper had written one of the only letters he would write while serving overseas. It was a letter to his wife Dorothy, and he read from it at last Thursday's visit.

“Oh darling, I don't feel any smarter for all the things I've seen and done,” he wrote. “I just feel all so lonesome for you, my dearest one and only one. I hope and pray that someday I'll be sailing back across the ocean blue to you, to live and love as time goes by in our home for two or four or more.”

Cooper concluded to the crowd that life in Germany from 1933-45 stood for “murder of innocent women and men and children, approximately six million of the Jewish faith and five million other people.”

“Hitler was out to conquer and kill,” he said. “It was mind-boggling.”

In response to questions from the audience, Cooper said he was inspired to collect memorabilia from the war because he “wanted to show the people what went on in Germany and elsewhere, how humanity was just being wiped out.”

Cooper said fellow veterans of his had turned to drinking after the war. For 45 years he “locked it up in my chest,” and now, aside Simon, he is able to share his experiences.

“Instead of reading a book, me and Henny can now talk about our own experience. We don't have to make it up. We don't have to exaggerate.”

But one point Cooper stressed to the crowd was a motto the two survivors live by, in a world that today, Cooper said, is still in need of peace.

“Today there is a lot of hate and bullying being spread by individuals, groups and countries,” the survivor said. “Try to remember that everyone belongs to the same race regardless of your color, religion, culture or background. The human race gets forgotten today.”

He projected on the screen the motto the two live by.



Ben Cooper

“No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted.”

He told the crowd to “just think about it.”

“It'll make you feel good and makes someone else feel better. Help promote peace everywhere in the world. Never ever give up.”

Simon spoke to a crowd at the library on March 20. The two widows and friends will continue to do so to spread the message.

After the presentation, Cooper said it “feels wonderful” to speak of his experiences, which also allows him to hear from veterans of several conflicts, who he said also “have an interesting story to tell.”



Ben Cooper, left, and Henny Markiewicz Simon visited Cragin Memorial Library in recent weeks. Cooper, a World War II veteran, and Simon, a Holocaust survivor, shared their stories about what they endured in the 1940s.

East Hampton Board of Finance Adopts \$40.87 Million Budget

by Elizabeth Bowling

The Board of Finance adopted a \$40.87 million budget at a special meeting Wednesday at East Hampton Middle School, to be sent to the Town Council for its approval.

The \$40,872,675 budget is a 4.17 percent increase over current year spending and is made up of the Board of Education budget, which comes in at \$28,492,560, and the general town budget making up the remaining \$12,380,115.

The budget passed with a 4-2 vote with Board of Finance members Mary Ann Dostaler, Alan Hurst, Dave Monignetti and chairman Ted Turner voting for; and members Don Coolican and Dean Markham voting against.

Coolican had argued for a lower percentage increase in the overall budget. "Any increase in overall budget should be limited to 3 percent."

The Board of Finance cut \$215,000 from the \$28,707,560 that the Board of Education requested. (The school board has already cut the superintendent's proposal from a 4.7 percent increase from the current year to a 4.27 percent increase.) The finance board's final adoption calls for a 3.49 percent increase from the current year for the education budget.

Turner said, "The Board of Education budget has been cut quite a bit but I hope they can live with it."

Markham said he believes that even with the cut to the Board of Education budget, the school board "can still do what they need to do, including the installation of full-day kindergarten."

Following Wednesday's finance meeting, Superintendent of Schools Diane Dugas said of the cuts made to the education budget, "We'll do the best we can with what we've been offered."

She added, however, that the budget isn't set until the town votes on it. She encouraged residents to get out and vote.

The general town budget is broken down into three categories: town operations, which the finance board approved at \$10,038,071; transfers to other funds, at \$1,184,771; and debt service, at \$1,157,273.

The adopted budget calls for the implementation of three new town positions: a police captain, to work under the police chief; a benefits clerk, to work under the town manager; and a facilities and grounds foreman, to work under the public works director.

Police Chief Sean Cox explained the importance of the proposed police captain at a public hearing Monday night.

Cox explained that a captain would devote time to finding ways to bring in grants and funds to the police department. A captain would also help the chief with infrastructure updates and updating the department's Standard Operating Procedures.

Town Manager Mike Maniscalco then explained the necessity and purpose of both the benefits clerk position and the facilities and grounds foreman.

The role of the facilities and grounds fore-

man, according to Maniscalco, would be to "supervise and direct mowing and other activities."

He furthered that over time, the Parks and Recreation employees that currently do work such as lawn mowing will be transitioned from the Parks and Recreation Department to the Public Works Department.

Maniscalco said the hire of a benefits clerk would free up some of his time that he could then dedicate to economic development – an area in which he has expertise.

He explained the benefits clerk would "take on the role of providing information and evaluating health insurance, pension information – all the different benefits that we offer to our employees – as well as to evaluate and review time cards and information on hours worked to make sure we're being held accountable and people are only getting paid for the time that they worked."

At Wednesday's budget adoption, Markham said he wanted to see Maniscalco's economic development plan before implementing the benefits clerk position in the budget.

He said, "Neither the Town Council nor us have seen any type of [economic development] plan. I think we need to have the town manager put together his ideas on how he's going to proceed with that [economic development]."

Monignetti, however, said it would be "short-sighted" of the finance board to "drop" the benefits clerk from the 2014-15 budget because having one could lead to great economic de-

velopment for the town.

Ultimately, the finance board approved a full-time benefits clerk position with a Jan. 1 start date (so the employee would be full-time but for only half of the year).

Regarding the full-time, half-year position, Maniscalco said, "We'll make it work."

Another matter the finance board took into account during its budget adoption was the public interest in having additional paid staff at the Senior Center.

Dostaler suggested the Park and Recreation Department "take on the programmatic role within the Senior Center" rather than adding a staff member.

However the board went a different route; it decided to implement a part-time position for a cost of \$13,000.

Following Wednesday night's meeting, Turner said, "It was a rough process. I hope [the budget] gets by the council and I hope it gets by the taxpayers."

The Board of Finance will submit its approved budget to the Town Council Tuesday, April 8, at the Town Council's regularly-scheduled meeting at 6:30 p.m. at Town Hall. After that, the Town Council will hold a special meeting (date is to be determined) to adopt the proposed budget and schedule a town meeting.

The town referendum on the budget is set for Tuesday, May 6, from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m., at East Hampton High School.

Clean Energy Incentives Move Forward in East Hampton

by Elizabeth Bowling

East Hampton's five-member Clean Energy Task Force (CETF) was established last June, and has "made a lot of progress" in the past 10 months, according to vice chairman Adam Dawidowicz.

Some of that progress includes the Town Council's signing of the Clean Communities Pledge. The non-binding pledge, proposed to the town by the CETF, is divided into two parts: to reduce 20 percent of the town's consumption by 2018 and to purchase or produce at least 20 percent of its energy from clean sources by 2018.

The energy conservation portion of the pledge is driven by monetary incentives – if the town earns 100 energy conservation points, then it gets a \$5,000 grant from the Clean Communities program via Connecticut Light and Power (CL&P), Dawidowicz said.

As of last week, East Hampton earned 88 points in this category but can continue to earn points until the 2018 deadline. It can earn points, for example, for every 1 percent of the town's population that participates in the Home Energy Solutions campaign.

The clean energy portion of the pledge also uses points as an incentive for the town. East Hampton currently has 245 clean energy points and for every 100 clean energy points, the town receives one kilowatt for a clean energy system.

Now that some progress has been made, the task force is looking at ways to continue moving forward with other initiatives, too.

For example, the CETF is currently looking into having the town purchase the overhead streetlights – which are currently owned and maintained by CL&P – rather than continuing to lease them.

Dawidowicz explained, "If we own them we can convert them to LED [light-emitting di-

ode]," which he said aims to expand the life of the lights, significantly reduce maintenance and reduce energy consumption by about half.

"The Town Council is actively interested in purchasing and switching to LED streetlights," he said.

According to Dawidowicz, the funding of the potential purchase would have to come out a capital fund, but "the savings would be substantial to the town."

He added the initiative "can cut down on the consumption end of the power bill."

Dawidowicz said the cost to purchase the lights and poles from CL&P would be approximately \$120,000.

According to Dawidowicz, the town currently pays approximately \$54,000 to CL&P each year for energy, equipment and lease charges. He furthered that the current energy cost for street lighting is about \$20,000 each year and converting to LED lights would reduce that cost by half.

Dawidowicz predicted that the streetlights purchase would pay for itself in the course of a five-year span. He affirmed that after the five years, the town would continue to see cost savings each year at least in energy consumption.

In addition to pushing for the purchase of the town's streetlights, the CETF is looking to solarize the town's schools, public works facility and water treatment facility, Dawidowicz said.

He also said the CETF is working with the high school building committee to look into energy saving options in renovating East Hampton High School.

Regarding the installation of solar PV (a solar panel electricity system that captures the sun's energy using photovoltaic cells) on the EHHS roof, as well as geothermal heating and cooling, he said, "The CETF is lending its support and expertise to the building committee in

making that decision."

He said that the cost payback for those potential installations would come in about 20 to 30 years.

He noted that the high school acts as the town's emergency shelter, so "a properly designed solar system on the roof would allow that building to stand alone in the event of a storm."

"Stand alone," he explained, means no generator nor heating or cooling source would be necessary outside of the geothermal system.

"A lot of town's are going to these stand-alone systems for buildings like their emergency shelters," he added.

He said the task force and high school building committee are "weighing the interest of the public and public safety for years to come."

The task force is also working on spring campaigns, which include a street fair, and Solar/Geothermal home and office tours, Dawidowicz affirmed.

Additionally, the CETF, along with CL&P, is in the process of benchmarking all town buildings as a first step toward determining what grants and programs East Hampton qualifies for in order to reduce the town's energy consumption, as well as look at new clean energy technologies for existing buildings.

"We are in the final throws of a benchmarking project," Dawidowicz said.

He said the project is free to the town through a pilot program with CL&P. The pilot program has already provided the town with a compilation of data and is due to deliver a report to the town this month. The upcoming report will provide the town with current consumption data and possible energy reduction methods, Dawidowicz said.

The benchmarking program will look at energy consumption of all municipal buildings

dating back to 2009 and will include the Water Pollution Control Authority building and the pump station. Essentially, the program is seeking ways to make these facilities more efficient.

Ultimately, "a lot of grants are available through CL&P" as a result of the benchmarking campaign, Dawidowicz said.

The CETF meets the first Tuesday of every month at 5 p.m. at Town Hall.

The CETF is holding a special meeting Thursday, April 10, at 6 p.m. in the East Hampton Library Meeting Room.

Dawidowicz explained that the purpose of the April 10 meeting is two-fold: to introduce the public to the CETF members and to address the issue of third-party power providers. The second portion of the meeting will be led by Taren O'Connor, a representative from the State Office of Consumer Council.

O'Connor will provide a 15-minute presentation to the task force and members of the public in attendance regarding those companies, other than CL&P, that provide electricity to state residents.

Dawidowicz explained that issues have recently arisen regarding third-party power suppliers. He said some people that have an "adjustable" or "non-fixed" rate with a third-party supplier have seen increased rates recently. These rate issues will be explained at next week's meeting and a Q&A will follow the presentation, Dawidowicz affirmed.

Regarding the April 10 meeting, Dawidowicz said, "We'd like to have the public come out and meet us and get an understanding of what's going on in town."

He added that a lot of the task force's incentives "require public input" and residents have the ability to "help steer the energy campaign in town."

Obituaries

Portland

Nels E. Nordquist

Nels E. Nordquist, 62, of Portland, left us Friday, March 28 to join his mother and father surrounded by his family. He was the son of the late Anton and Norma (Pierson) Nordquist.

Born Feb. 17, 1952, in Middletown, he was a lifelong Portland resident. He was employed by the Town of Portland for 42 years, retiring in August 2012. He was also a past member of the Portland Fire Dept Company 2. He loved his fishing and crabbing, but most of all NASCAR racing. He was especially fond of ALN motor sports, attending many of their races.

He leaves behind his three brothers, Eric and his wife Kay, Harold and his wife Lollie of Portland and Anton and his wife Debbie of South Carolina, and his nieces of Portland and Middletown. He also leaves his godchild Amy, his great-niece Mya, and great-nephew, Jonathan.

Relatives and friends called Monday, March 31, at Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St. Burial will be at the convenience of the family. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Middlesex Hospital Hospice, 28 Crescent St., Middletown, CT 06457.

To send an online expression of sympathy visit portlandmemorialfh.net.

Colchester

Dorothy Mae Gowen

Dorothy Mae Gowen, formerly of Colchester, passed away peacefully Tuesday, March 25, after a long illness. She was born April 15, 1938, to George and Dorothy Therrien.

She leaves her beloved husband of 37 years, Richard Gowen of Dunedin, Fla.; her four children, Denise Mizla and husband Joseph, Edward Quinn, Katherine Quinn and Thomas Quinn; six grandchildren, Jessica, Melissa, Kat, Alan, Zachary and Cassandra. She also leaves a sister, Christine Cosentino, and a brother, Thomas Therrien.

She was a cosmetologist for 39 years and was the owner of three salons. After retiring to Florida in 1998 she continued to work part time at Fantastic Sam's. She was an avid gardener and loved to cook, especially for her family. Her laughter and love of life will be sorely missed by her family and friends.

There was a memorial service Saturday, March 29, at R. Lee Williams & Son Funeral Home, 3530 49th St. North, St. Petersburg, Fla.

The family would like to thank the Suncoast Hospice for their wonderful care of Dorothy.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Dorothy's name to Suncoast Hospice, 5771 Roosevelt Blvd., Clearwater, FL 33760.

Colchester

Richard C. Watson

Richard C. Watson, 72, of Colchester, beloved husband of Francine A. (Royce) Watson passed away Friday, March 28, at Hartford Hospital. He was born on May 4, 1941 in Norway, Maine, to Ralph C. Watson and Eldora M. (Holman) Watson.

Mr. Watson served in the Vietnam War with the U.S. Air Force as staff sergeant. He worked for many years at Pratt & Whitney as an electronic engineer, retiring in 2005.

He enjoyed spending time with his family. He was an avid gardener. He also enjoyed watching the Boston Red Sox and UConn Huskies. He married Francine Royce on June 20, 1970.

Besides his wife he is survived by three sons, Richard D. Watson and his wife Noraine of Colchester, Raymond P. Watson and his wife Jane of Plainfield, and Ralph A. Watson and his wife Christine of Colchester. He also leaves behind four grandchildren, Rose Strickland, Kathryn Ilvento, Alicia Watson, Patrick Watson; and two great-grandchildren, Halie Szewc and Bella Ilvento and one more expected this September. He is also survived by one sister, Beverly A. Yates of So. Paris, Maine, and several nieces and nephews.

Besides his parents, he was predeceased by one sister, Carolyn A. Stevens.

Spencer Funeral Home, 112 Main St., East Hampton, is in charge of arrangements. Calling hours will be today, April 4, from 5-7 p.m., with funeral services being held Saturday, April 5, at 10 a.m., at the funeral home, followed by burial at Lakeview Cemetery in East Hampton.

Portland

Guy Carmello Bartolotta

Guy Carmello Bartolotta of Portland died peacefully at the age of 95 Tuesday, April 1. He was survived by his two children, Debbie Kaiser of Portland and Bruce Bartolotta of Deep River, as well as his grandson, Gabriel Bartolotta of Essex.

Services will be held today, April 4, at D'Angelo's Funeral Home, 22 S Main St., Middletown. Visiting hours start at 10 a.m. and will be followed by an 11 a.m. service. Burial to be private.

Portland

Franklin George Selleck

Franklin George Selleck, 80 of Portland, husband of Mary Faith (Peppard) Selleck passed peacefully in his home on Tuesday April 1, 2014. He was the son of the late Harold George and Anna (Dujay) Selleck.

Franklin was born April 5, 1933 in Middletown and was a graduate of Middletown High School. Franklin was a graduate of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute with high honors in mathematics and science, and received numerous awards. Franklin graduated with his Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering, as well as his Masters of Science in Engineering. Franklin was a fraternity member of Sigma Alpha Epsilon. Franklin moved to Portland in 1963, where he built/ designed his own home. Franklin was employed for 30-plus years by Pratt and Whitney Aircraft where he was manager of Instrumentation and Development.

During his employment he made several major contributions to the jet age which included 2 patents retained by Pratt and Whitney. Franklin was a Masonic member, a Shriner Jester and he was a U.S. Army veteran having served during Vietnam. Franklin made numerous donations to many charities and enjoyed dabbling in the financial market; he enjoyed his homes and was an avid gardener, a devoted father and a loving grandfather. His grandchildren were the light of his life in his elder years.

Besides his wife, he leaves his children, Jean-Ann Selleck and her fiance', Sean Williams and Walter Selleck and his wife, Kathy, a daughter-in-law, Joan Wadsworth Selleck, a sister, Elizabeth Jean Roy, grandchildren, Gus Franklin Selleck and Nicholas Luke Selleck, niece, Joann Kilmartin and her husband, William, and nephew, Chester Kokoszka and his wife, Laura. He was predeceased by a son, Scott Franklin Selleck and by a sister, Anna Louise Stevens.

Funeral services will be held Saturday, April 5, at 11 a.m., at Portland Memorial Funeral Home 231 Main St. Portland. Burial will be private. Relatives and friends may call today, April 4, from 5-7 p.m., at the funeral home. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to a charity of the donors choice.

To send an online expression of sympathy, visit portlandmemorialfh.net.

Marlborough

Frank Charles Schroll

Frank Charles Schroll, "Poppy" 81, beloved husband of Patricia (Loughlin) Schroll for 59 years passed away peacefully Sunday, March 30, surrounded by his loving family. He was born Feb. 14, 1933, son of the late Charles and Cecilia (Domian) Schroll.

He graduated from Wethersfield High School and attended Nichols College. He served in the Army as an MP in Japan. He owned Schroll Transportation for over 40 years and was named Connecticut Transportation Man of the Year in 1985. He was a principal owner at Glastonbury Hills Country Club since 1966 until he became sole owner in 1995.

He was predeceased by his son Michael and sisters Dolores and Barbara.

He leaves his loving children, daughter Karen and husband Michael Gigliotti of Glastonbury, son Frank and wife Anna of Portland, daughter Kathleen Young of Norwich, son Charles and wife Monique of Colchester. He also leaves the lights of his life, his grandchildren, Frank Jr., Drew and Brittany Schroll, Samuel and Sophie Schroll, Michael Jr., Ryan and Jason Gigliotti, and Nicole and Shawn Pistrutto, as well as a great-grandchild, Trent.

He leaves a brother, Robert, of Tennessee along with several nieces, nephews and cousins.

A Mass of Christian Burial was held Thursday, April 3, at St. Paul's Church on Main Street in Glastonbury. A viewing was held Wednesday, April 2, at Rose Hill Funeral Home, 580 Elm St., Rocky Hill.

The family would like to thank the staff at Marlborough Health & Rehabilitation Center for the care and support they provided Frank and his family.

In lieu of flowers the family request donations be made to the Frank C. Schroll Scholarship Fund to benefit local athletes.

Donations may be mailed to GHCC, 239 Country Club Rd, So. Glastonbury, CT 06073.

Marlborough

Vincent O. Pane

Vincent O. Pane, 89, of Glastonbury, formerly of Marlborough, passed away peacefully Wednesday, March 26. He was the beloved husband of the late Elizabeth (Betty) Pane. Vin was born Jan. 23, 1925, in Hartford, a son of Vincenzo and Maria Pane.

He was the youngest of eight children and was pre-deceased by his sisters Alyce Burnes and Josephine Abare, and his five brothers, Guido (Leo), Ernest, Claudio, Wilson and William. Vin leaves his sister-in-law, Rose Pane of Florida and his brother-in-law, Charles Carroll of New Jersey. He also leaves several nieces and nephews.

Vin was a member of Weaver High School, Class of 1942 and he served in the U.S. Navy (Pacific Theater) during World War II. Vin was a Glastonbury resident for 45 years and retired as shop foreman from Flanagan Brothers after more than 40 years of loyal and dedicated employment. Vin enjoyed weekends at Eastover, where he met many lifelong friends and where he met Betty.

A confirmed bachelor, he surprised everyone when, during a winter trip to Florida in the 1970s, he and Betty were married. They spent many happy years together at their home in Glastonbury, summers on Lake Terramuggus in Marlborough and, after he retired, winters in Fort Myers, Fla.

Vin and Betty had many friends from New York, New Jersey, New Britain, Eastover, Fort Myers Beach, and his great Lunch Bunch. They kept in touch and met with them as often as possible. He was a true lifelong friend and will be sadly missed by all who knew and loved him.

Friends called at the Mulryan Funeral Home, 725 Hebron Ave., Glastonbury, Wednesday, April 2, from 4-6 p.m. A service will follow at 6 p.m. Burial will be at the convenience of the family.

Memorial donations may be made to the Glastonbury Volunteer Ambulance Association, P.O. Box 453, Glastonbury, CT. 06033.

For online condolences, visit mulryanfh.com.

Portland

Thomas Joseph Bordonaro

Thomas Joseph Bordonaro, 74, of Bonita Springs, Fla., passed away unexpectedly after an operation Tuesday, March 25, at Health Park Hospital in Ft. Myers, Fla. Formerly of Portland, Tom had been a resident of Bonita Springs since 1996. He was born in Middletown March 12, 1940, a son of the late Samuel and Bella (Cuccia) Bordonaro.

Tom worked as a truck driver for 40 years for General Building Supply in East Hartford. Tom was a sports enthusiast who enjoyed NASCAR, bowling, baseball and his beloved New York Yankees. Traveling was another hobby he cherished greatly. He cruised from the Caribbean to Europe, Transatlantic, Alaska, Hawaii and the East and West Coasts of the United States.

Survivors include his beloved wife of 47 years, Elizabeth (Chandler) Bordonaro of Bonita Springs; nephews, Michael and Dean Bordonaro, Corey and Rhody Triplets, and niece, Loretta Bordonaro Faraci, all of Connecticut; as well as many great nieces and nephews. He will be missed by all who knew him.

In addition to his parents, Tom was preceded in death by his brothers, Anthony and Daniel Bordonaro.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated Wednesday, April 2, at St. Leo the Great Catholic Church, 28290 Beaumont Rd., Bonita Springs, FL 34134. Burial will be held in Portland at a later date.

Arrangements are being handled by Shikany's Bonita Funeral Home, 239-992-4982. Online condolences may be offered at shikanyfuneralhome.com.

Amston

Amy M. Kornbrust

Amy M. Kornbrust, 43, of Amston, died Tuesday, March 25, at Hartford Hospital. Born, Aug. 6, 1970, to Frederick and Gail (Harer) Kornbrust, she leaves behind her life-partner Mark Rubler, brother Eric Kornbrust, his wife Tammy, several dear friends and her beloved dog, PJ.

Amy was a physician's assistant at Hartford Anesthesiology Associates and had received a BA from UConn, graduating summa cum laude, a master's from Connecticut College, and a BS from SUNY Stony Brook. Amy was a sweet, kind, gentle person, beloved by her family and dear friends. We will always remember her beautiful smile and tender touch.

Calling hours were held Monday, March 31, from 1-3 p.m., in the Mulryan Funeral Home, 725 Hebron Ave., Glastonbury, with a memorial service to follow at 3 p.m.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Out to Pasture Farm & Rescue, P.O. Box 310174, Newington, CT 06131.

For online condolences, visit mulryanfh.com.

Andover

Bonnie B. Massey

Bonnie B. Massey, 59, beloved daughter of James and Bianca Massey of Andover, died Wednesday, March 19, at her home in Manchester, from complications due to multiple sclerosis. Bonnie grew up in Andover and graduated from RHAM in 1972.

Bonnie was an extraordinary writer and artist who wrote constantly, ruminating on the human condition in a wry and perceptive manner. In the 70s, she wrote a puppet play called "A Mother's Tale," in which she created and made an entire cast of witty puppets which was presented at local schools and libraries. Bonnie had a passion for beautifully-created objects and intensely appreciated the fine hand skills of antique craftsmen. She owned her own business, "Checcacci Designs," where her careful delicate work on estate jewelry was greatly appreciated by her clients. A large and loving family misses her profoundly.

Besides her parents and a predeceased brother, Michael, Bonnie leaves three caring and devoted brothers and their families who did everything they could to alleviate her struggle: Lee J. Massey and his partner Doreen Hussey, Mark M. Massey and his wife Paige, and J. Scott Massey and his wife Shannon. She leaves many nieces and nephews; Lee's children Chelsea and her son Evan; Briana and her fiancé Andrew and their daughter Lily; Marisa and her son Lucas; and former sister-in-law Leslee; Mark's children Karina, Chanel, Sierra and Monet; Scott's children Austin, Cole, Lexi and Chase. Also deeply mourning are her loving and caring Aunt Teresa Masilonis, who gave immeasurable help to Bonnie, Uncle Michael Masilonis, cousins Tracy and Joe Minson and Michael and Katy Masilonis and her aunts, Barbara Perry and Gail Andrews.

Although we all realize how bad her struggle had become, her absence will be felt by her many friends and clients. Frank Sinatra made the song "My Way" famous; but Bonnie really lived "doing it my way."

It was Bonnie's wish that she be cremated without services, therefore a private family gathering is being held. Bye Bon. Nobody ever worked harder.

Should friends desire, memorial contributions may be made to, Connecticut Humane Society, 701 Russell Rd., Newington, CT 06111.

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

Marlborough

John W. Boone

John W. Boone, 89, beloved husband of 63 years to the late Margaret (Bain) Boone, passed away peacefully Monday, March 31, at Marlborough Health Care Center. He was born in Deep River in 1924 to the late Elsie (Kromm) and William Boone.

John moved to Glastonbury in the 1950s, where he resided and raised his family. He was a devoted family man and had a passion for art. He was employed by Pratt & Whitney Aircraft for over 30 years. He was a proud veteran of World War II, serving in the US Navy aboard merchant marine vessels. He was a founding member of the Glastonbury Volunteer Ambulance Association and the Glastonbury Art Guild and was a member of the Glastonbury Auxiliary Police.

He was noted for his master craftsmanship, excellent sign paintings and artistic endeavors. He was also employed by the Wiley Gallery in Hartford, where he framed and restored paintings, among them the portraits of Connecticut Governors now displayed in our state capitol in Hartford. John will be dearly missed by his son, David W. Boone and his wife Deborah of Hebron; his daughters Bonita Baldwin and her husband Russell Stanton of Ohio, April Boone of Yonkers, N.Y.; his brother, William Boone of South Carolina; his grandchildren, Taylor, Andrew and Jonathan Baldwin, Samuel and Magdalene Boone, Sarah and Abigail Boone; his great grandchildren, Charlie Valentine, Bridget Bailey Baldwin; his sister-in-law, Alexandrina and her husband David Sergio.

Funeral services will begin at 9:30 a.m. Saturday, April 5, at Glastonbury Funeral Home, 450 New London Tpke., Glastonbury, followed by a funeral service at 10:30 a.m. at the funeral home. Burial will be private and at the convenience of the family.

To visit John's online tribute and leave an online condolence, visit glastonburyfuneral.com.



Colchester

Carol Blanchard

Carol (Rioux) Blanchard of Colchester, wife of Raymond Blanchard, passed away peacefully Tuesday, April 1, with her loving husband, Ray, by her side. She was born in Norwich, daughter of the late Lloyd and Evelyn Rioux. Carol married Ray in Biloxi, Miss., on Nov. 5, 1955.

Besides her husband, she leaves behind two sons and daughters in law; Michael and Maryellen (Casalino) Blanchard of Norwich, and David and Susan Blanchard of Colchester.

She was predeceased by her son, James Blanchard. She is also predeceased by her brothers, Leon and Donald Rioux.

Carol leaves behind her beloved six grandchildren, the loves of her life; Christopher, Caroline, Gabrielle, Elijah, Conoly, and Rylee.

Carol graduated from Griswold High School in 1954, where she was voted by her senior class as most popular, best looking, and most energetic. After she and Ray married, she raised her three sons, and then pursued a career as a judge for the Department of Special Revenue of the State of Connecticut at the Plainfield dog track. She retired in 1998. She later worked at the Mohegan Sun Casino in the security department.

Carolyn developed a passion for playing golf and became an avid golfer, winning the Norwich Golf Club woman's two ball championship twice. She acquired the nickname "CC" which stood for Crazy Carol from the golf course professional who gave her many golf lessons. Carol's hobbies included playing cards, volunteering, going to bingo with her late cousin Dodgee, and going to the casino. She had a great personality, an infectious laugh, and a smile which brought any room alive. Carol gave her unconditional love to the grandchildren, whom she adored. She loved and lived life to the fullest.

In 2000, Carol and Ray went on a new adventure, moving to Florida. She quickly met new friends and developed a special bond with a special friend, Sonee Miller. Carol and Ray enjoyed traveling and playing golf. She will be missed by all that knew her.

Family will receive relatives and friends on Sunday, April 6, from 5-8 p.m., at Leffler Funeral Home, 30 N. Main St., Jewett City. A Memorial Mass will be held on Monday, April 7, at 10 a.m., at St. Mary's Church, Jewett City. Interment to follow at Pachaug Cemetery, Griswold.

Donations in her memory can be made to the Connecticut chapter of the Alzheimer's Association.

For the online memorial or to leave a message of comfort, visit lefflerfuneralhome.com.

Colchester Police News

3/24: At approximately 9 p.m. Colchester Police responded to the Rockville Bank parking lot on Linwood Avenue for a reported disturbance. Police said a brief argument took place inside a vehicle and damage was done to the vehicle as well. A white male wearing a blue flannel shirt, work pants and work boots fled on foot across the Stop & Shop parking lot prior to police arrival. A state police K9 unit was utilized on scene to track the suspect but returned with negative results. Anyone with information is asked to contact Officer Jonathan Goss at 860-465-5455 ext. 4083.

3/26: Colchester Police said Christopher L. Whittle, 37, of 229 Blood St., Lyme, was arrested on an outstanding arrest warrant for sixth-degree larceny and credit card theft.

3/26: Colchester Police said Laura Lee Caronna, 31, of 139 Lebanon Ave., Apt. 6, was charged with second-degree failure to appear.

3/26: State Police said Vincent Rutchick, 31, of 109 Hebron Rd., Marlborough, was charged with second-degree failure to appear.

3/27: Colchester Police is investigating an incident reported by a citizen of Maclyn Drive who said an unknown person(s) utilized his Social Security number to file a fraudulent income tax return.

3/27: State Police said Johnpaul Fournier, 25, of 24 James St., Apt. A, was charged with possession of narcotics.

3/28: State Police said Michael Ciborowski, 55, of 239 Plains Rd., Haddam, turned himself in at Troop K for an active PRAWN warrant for second-degree failure to appear.

3/28: Colchester Police said Kristen G. Mosdale, 25, of 28 Hammond Ct., was charged with DUI and making an improper turn.

3/29: State Police said a one-car crash occurred at 11:05 p.m., three-tenths of a mile from Exit 18 on Route 2 west. Police said Kristin A. Oneil, 32, of 1 Peggy Ln., Norwich, was traveling in the left lane when she lost control of her vehicle. Police said Oneil's vehicle crossed over the right lane of travel into the shoulder

before rolling on its roof. Police said Oneil was transported to a hospital by the Colchester Hayward Fire Department for possible injury.

3/29: State Police said Frank R. Grabner, 32, of 6 Carolina Dr., Oakdale was arrested following a traffic stop investigation for improper parking, DUI and operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license.

3/30: State Police said Bryan M. St. John, 22, of 759 Norwich Ave., was traveling east on Norwich Avenue when he made an improper right turn and went off the roadway and struck a tree. Police said the Colchester Hayward Fire Department transported St. John to the Marlborough Clinic for possible injuries.

3/30: State Police said Jarrett C. Sartelle, 26, of 16C Mount Vernon Dr., Vernon, was charged with DUI and failure to drive in the proper lane.

3/30: Colchester Police responded to a domestic disturbance at 7:21 p.m. Police said an altercation took place and resulted in a 17-year-old juvenile being charged with third-degree assault.

3/31: State Police said Dana Phillip Morse, 40, of 83 Honey Hill Rd., East Haddam, was charged with DUI, two counts of operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license, improper use of marker, and two counts of insurance coverage fails to meet minimum requirements.

3/31: State Police said a two-car accident occurred at 10:04 a.m., two-tenths of a mile east of Exit 17 on Route 2 west. Police said Marc D. Hoffman, 27, of 45 Timms Hill Rd., Haddam, was traveling west, one mile prior to Exit 17, and Michael P. Blancato, 31, of 104 Hopyard Rd., East Haddam was traveling directly behind him. Blancato's vehicle subsequently collided into the rear of Hoffman's vehicle, which eventually came to an uncontrolled rest in the left shoulder. Police said Blancato came to a final rest in the right shoulder. Police said Hoffman sustained possible injury and was transported to the Marlborough Clinic by the Colchester EMS.

From the Editor's Desk

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

Winter saved perhaps its most unkind – and hopefully final? – blow for 10 days into spring, greeting us with that awful snow.....*thing*.....Monday morning.

This wasn't a storm; it was a few inches – tops – of snow. Channel 3 didn't even break out its dog-eared copy of The Big Book of Baby Names and attempt to give this one a moniker. So what made this snow event so bad? No one knew it was coming. Not even the state DOT. And that turned a nuisance into something incredibly dangerous.

Trust me on this one; I took Monday off of work because my sister and I had Opening Day Mets tickets (a game which the team would ultimately lose in typically-frustrating Metropolitan fashion, but that's a story for another day, I suppose). We planned to leave at 9 – which seemed, Sunday night, like a perfectly reasonable plan. Instead, snow was falling Monday morning in Manchester and unexpectedly accumulating – fast.

The road conditions in Manchester were rapidly deteriorating, but perhaps the highways wouldn't be that bad? Wrong. We spun out on I-384 in Manchester, got ourselves righted, moved on ahead toward I-91, only to find once we got there an ice-covered parking lot. We got off in Rocky Hill, discovered the side roads there were actually in better shape than the interstate was, and meandered our way to the Wilbur Cross Parkway – only to find it was not much better than I-91; an ice-covered mess that put the word "park" in "parkway."

It took – quite literally – hours for us just to get down to the New York line, by which point conditions had, thankfully, improved drastically. The sky was blue and dotted with just a few puffy clouds, the sun was shining bright and the roads were almost completely dry; it was like we had gone from one season to another, just in the course of a morning drive.

Of course, once were in New York it took us hours still to get to the game itself, but that was more the Mets' fault than Mother Nature's. The team had, somewhat bafflingly, decided to rent out a large chunk of its parking lot to the Cirque du Soleil folks, so they could mount a show there from mid-March to mid-May. I say "bafflingly" because included in that time period is Opening Day, an event that, even when the Mets are down on their luck, is a sellout. (People love to see the return of baseball.)

Why the Mets' brass decided to make it more difficult for the sellout crowd to actually find a place to park eludes my grasp somewhat. But they did, and as a result you had an hours-long backup, as frustrated drivers tried to find a place to park and weary lot attendants tried to find spots to jam in vehicles (for \$22 a pop, by the way).

By the time all was said and done, my sister and I were walking into the stadium in the top of the seventh inning. (And we were far from the only ones getting in at that late hour.) Winter's refusal to let the state go, combined with the Mets' apparent refusal to say 'no' to the Cirque du Soleil folks (I mean, really, how about starting the day *after* Opening Day?),

East Hampton Police News

3/17: Troy McIntosh, 32, of 28 Main St., Apt. 1, was issued a summons for operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license, East Hampton Police said.

3/18: Bryan Radigan, 39, of 36 Skinner St., Apt. 2, was issued a summons for misuse of plates and operating an unregistered and uninsured motor vehicle, police said.

3/26: Chapin M. Stickler, 31, of 15 Dziok Dr., was issued a summons for violation of emission standards and operating an unregistered and uninsured motor vehicle, police said.

rendered our time at Citi Field Monday much, much shorter than originally anticipated.

* * *

Of course, as I ruminated Tuesday over the ugliness of Monday and shook my tiny fist at winter for not knowing when it's time to call it a season (I read a comment online Monday stating that winter this year has been like that guest as a party who just won't go home, even though it's 4 a.m., everyone else has long since left, and the hosts just want to go to bed), I came across a story in the *Courant* telling me, essentially, to stop whining. This winter hasn't been as bad as all that.

As the *Courant* put it, in terms of snow-fall, this winter "wasn't even close" to the worst one ever. I guess the fact we had snow-storms seemingly every three days for a two- or three-week period in February made things seem worse than they were. In reality, March – at least up until Monday – had seen barely any snow at all. An average March brings us close to eight inches of the stuff.

In fact, as awful as February was, this winter has, as of Tuesday (and there better not be any snow between Tuesday and the time you all read this on Friday), brought almost 51 inches of snow – just six inches more than we see in a normal year. So, the *Courant* helpfully said, it was hardly one for the record books.

But, you may say, *it's not just the snow. It's been So. Freaking. Cold.* And here, even the *Courant* won't rain (snow?) on your parade. The average temperature in March was 31.2 degrees, six degrees colder than normal – making it the fifth-coldest March on record.

Still, while the cold has been awful, this has been far from the worst winter on record, the *Courant* reported. What was, you may wonder? The winter of 1955-56, which saw 76.3 inches of snow fall – 43.3 of them in March. Overall, it was the 10th snowiest winter on record, and the snowiest March. And while temperatures from December through February averaged 28 degrees – just half a degree colder than normal – the average March temperature was 30.3 degrees, nearly seven degrees colder than average.

So, I guess the moral of the *Courant*'s story was this winter wasn't that bad. It sure seemed that way, though – especially if you had Opening Day Mets tickets.

* * *

Lastly, as many may have already heard, Sunday's night of healing in Hebron for the RHAM community has shifted venues, from Gilead Congregational Church to the larger Church of the Holy Family. The decision to relocate was made after last Friday's heart-breaking news that Dawn Mallory, the middle school teacher struck by a car in the parking lot on March 14, had passed away.

I hope Sunday's event, which started at 7 p.m., proves at least somewhat edifying for all involved. As I wrote two weeks ago, the RHAM community has seen an almost-incomprehensible amount of tragedy in the past year. A night like this is probably sorely needed.

* * *

See you next week.