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# News Bulletin

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Fairgoers at the 45th annual Hebron Harvest Fair can be seen from the top of the Ferris wheel last Sunday, as they wandered around enjoying the various vendors and exhibitions, the midway and live music, a plethora of fair food and entertainment such as the tractor pulls, which sent giant clouds of smoke billowing into the air.

## Hebron Harvest Fair Additions a Hit

by Geeta Schrayer

Although last weekend came with as much – if not more – rain as sun, Sept. 10-13 was still full with fun for those who ventured to the 45th annual Hebron Harvest Fair. The event returned to the Hebron Lions Fairgrounds with many of the usual favorites, but this year there were also some new additions that proved successful.

The 2015 fair slogan was “a country fair with a rodeo flair” – an ode to the addition of a professional rodeo. The Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association (PRCA) ProRodeo came to the fair Saturday and Sunday with seven different events: steer wrestling, saddle bronc riding, bull riding, bareback bronc riding, cattle roping, team roping and ladies barrel racing.

On Sunday, the stands surrounding the horse ring started filling up well before the rodeo was scheduled to start. And by the time it began with

bareback bronc riding, the seating area was full and more spectators stood against the fence surrounding the ring, watching as the first event got underway and the rodeo cowboys did their best to stay on the bucking horse for the bareback bronc riding.

As the competition begins, the rodeo cowboys must first “mark out” when they come out of the chute. This is when, according to the PRCA website prorodeo.com, “a cowboy’s feet must be above the point of the horse’s shoulders when the horse’s front feet hit the ground – if so, he ‘marked the horse out,’ but if not, he ‘missed the horse out’ and the ride is disqualified.”

If the rider marks out, he then needs to stay on the bucking horse for eight seconds, holding on with one hand and working to maintain proper form. Riders who complete the ride are

scored out of 50 points – the horse is also scored out of 50 possible points on its bucking ability.

After the ride, two “pickup men” help the rider dismount, release a bucking horse’s soft flank strap (the PRCA described this as “a soft sheepskin- or Neoprene-lined strap placed in the area where a human’s belt would go” that “encourages the animal to kick out behind itself rather than rear up, providing a safer, showier ride”), and escort the bucking horse to the exit gate.

From the get-go, it was clear the rodeo – which brought cowboys from all around the country including places such as Texas, Kansas, Montana, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania and even Connecticut – is no joke; the second rider of the day ended up injured and was taken away by ambulance.

But as the announcer stated Sunday, the com-

petitors were well aware of the risks that came with being a rodeo cowboy, and after the audience gave the injured cowboy some supportive applause when he was taken away, the show continued on.

Ray Dapkus of Colchester was watching the event unfold Sunday, and commented on the sights, sounds and smells that came with seeing a rodeo in person – which he said made it much better than viewing one on television. He added he had a feeling the event would become a regular part of the fair.

“I think this is going to fly,” he said of the rodeo. “There’s good attendance. It’s going to happen again next year.”

Heather Tolentino of Willimantic was also there Sunday to watch the rodeo with her family. She explained she’d lived down south for

See Harvest Fair Page 2



**A professional rodeo was a new addition to the Fair this year – and one that was well-received. There was a crowd both days, as fairgoers paused to watch the seven featured events – including the bareback bronc riding pictured above. And while next year's fair is still a ways out, Fair Superintendent Mike Tarbell said "early discussions" hinted that the rodeo would return again in 2016.**

#### Harvest Fair cont. from Front Page

a time, and had seen a number of rodeos in Georgia.

"It's great to have an authentic rodeo around," she said of Sunday's display. "It's very entertaining."

Her father Ronald Garthwait added, "I think more town fairs should host rodeos."

Also found in the stands Sunday was state Rep. Gayle Mulligan. She shared this week she thought the rodeo went "really well."

"One thing I really liked about that whole event was that there were women – and they were *really* good. They had [women's barrel racing], then bull riding – that's what I wanted to see – and nobody stayed on!" she shared. "They did a good job mixing it up and having different types of entertainment, little explanations and entertainment in between" by the rodeo clowns.

"So it seemed well-attended and well-accepted, and I would guess [the Hebron Lions] would bring it back," Mulligan stated.

Speaking on the addition this week, fair superintendent Mike Tarbell said "the rodeo was well-attended, in particular on Saturday. It was standing-room-only and five [rows] deep so it was well attended and a very good show. I've heard lots of positive comments about it."

And, just as Dapkus and Mulligan predicted, although this year's fair had yet to be thoroughly assessed, Tarbell said of the rodeo, "Early discussions are we'd bring them back next year."

Also new to this year's fair was a beer and wine pavilion sponsored by ROGO Distributors and Coors. The wine, meanwhile, came from nearby Crystal Ridge Winery in South Glastonbury.

Drinking was only allowed inside the fenced-off pavilion, and the set-up was organized and efficient; anyone who wanted a drink had their ID scanned for age compliance. They then received a bracelet and entered the pavilion where they ordered their drinks from one area before receiving a receipt and heading over to the bar. There, they handed in the receipt, had their bracelet scanned (a measure to ensure no one drank too much) and received their beverage.

Tarbell said of the new pavilion, "That was received very well. I spent some time Friday

and Saturday going to different tables and everyone enjoyed it."

He added he had also spoken with state police and was told "there wasn't one incident on the fairgrounds related to the beer and wine garden, so I'm very happy with how it went."

Mulligan felt similarly, adding "people seemed to enjoy the nice little set-up. They could go, sit and relax, and enjoy the music."

Regarding both the rodeo and the beer and wine pavilion, she said, "I thought they were two really nice additions to the fair to spice it up a little bit, which is always good."

But even beyond the rodeo and the chance to sip on an adult beverage, the fair came with lots of fun for the whole family.

Jodie Parent of Willimantic could be found in the small animal barn Sunday with her children, Joseph and Gina, and her dad, Chuck Potvin.

"We've been here before but this is the kids' first time," shared Parent. "They love it here – they love the animals."

Joseph said he was a particular fan of the rabbits, while Gina was excited about the cows.

"The whole way up she was saying, 'A cow! A cow!' Parent laughed, and similar enjoyment could be found all around last weekend, as fairgoers experienced all the fair had to offer, from exhibitions and competitions to live entertainment and plenty of food.

Speaking on the fair overall, Tarbell commented on the weather, explaining, "We lost Thursday because it rained – although some people still came out – and Sunday the prediction of rain also caused a drop in attendance."

However, he concluded, "In general it was well-attended. I've received positive comments and I was just on the phone with another [Lions Club] member who had received positive comments as well. So I think overall it went well and I'm very happy."

And while next year's fair is still a year off, those who are already excited for it – or were perhaps unable to make it this year – can go ahead and mark their calendars: the 46th annual Hebron Harvest Fair will take place Sept. 8-11, 2016.

#### From the Editor's Desk

## Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

As the old saying goes, there's no such thing as a free lunch. Or a free breakfast. Or a free breakfast-for-lunch.

McDonald's made headlines a couple weeks ago when it announced it was listening to much customer demand and would start serving breakfast all day, effective Oct. 6. For the record, I was not one of the customers demanding this, but many others were. So McDonald's – which was facing increased competition from Taco Bell breakfast anyway – caved, and decided to offer breakfast all day.

But, it turns out, there's a catch – an interesting, and pretty big, one.

McDonald's standard line of defense whenever people would clamor for all-day breakfast – apparently there's been a demand for this for quite some time – was that they simply didn't have enough grill space to cook breakfast items on top of their extensive lunch/dinner menu. And there still isn't enough space, so McDonald's has decided to limit the items you can choose from for all-day breakfast.

It'll be up to each individual McDonald's franchisee to decide if they want to serve McMuffins or biscuit sandwiches. Because they won't be able to do both. If they choose the McMuffin line, then they can sell Egg McMuffins, Sausage McMuffins with Egg, or Sausage McMuffins. If they opt for the biscuits, then they can offer Bacon, Egg and Cheese Biscuits, Sausage Biscuits with Egg, or Sausage Biscuit.

(Apparently, if you want the cholesterol double-whammy of an Egg McMuffin with a side of Sausage Biscuit, you're out of luck.)

At every McDonald's, customers can order hotcakes, hotcakes with sausage and a sausage burrito. They may or may not, depending on each particular McDonald's, be able to order hash browns as well. (In a press release, McDonald's also touted that you can get the fruit-and-yogurt parfait and the instant oatmeal all day now too, but I'm pretty sure you could do that before anyway.)

And that's it for the breakfast options. The McGiddle sandwiches, the Egg White Delight sandwiches, and the bagel sandwiches are out the door. One presumes they'll still be on the menu if you can actually drag your behind to McDonald's before 10:30 a.m., but I'm not sure.

So for everyone who wants to be able to sleep until 1 p.m. but still have fast-food breakfast, you're in luck. But, depending on what you like out of your fast-food breakfast, you may not be as much in luck as you think.

\* \* \*

Despite living in Connecticut for 30 years, and despite being a fan of the theater, I've never been to the Goodspeed Opera House. The place looks absolutely beautiful, and I love the history of it – 16 productions that originated there went onto Broadway, including classics like *Annie* and *Man of La Mancha* – but I've never been.

But this fall may change all that, thanks to some interesting news that floated across my desk this week.

One of my favorite movies has long been the Christmas classic *It's a Wonderful Life*, and this fall, a musical adaptation of it will make its bow at the Goodspeed.

Titled *A Wonderful Life*, the play is a tuneful re-imagining of the Frank Capra film about a suicidal man named George Bailey who gets a chance to see what life would have been like had he never been born. It's a terrific, terrific movie – required viewing every Christmas, really – and I'm pleased to see that, on top of this fantastic source material, the Goodspeed play has a very impressive pedigree. The books and lyrics are by Sheldon Harnick, a Broadway veteran who also wrote the book and lyrics for the wonderful *Fiddler on the Roof*.

The music for *A Wonderful Life* is by the late Joe Raposo. If you're of a certain age, you may not know Raposo's name, but you've probably known his music as long as you can remember. He wrote the music for *Sesame Street* for many years, penning not just the theme song for the show, but also classics like "(It's Not Easy) Bein' Green," "C is for Cookie" and "Sing," which actually became a hit single for The Carpenters in the 1970s. Raposo – who also wrote the theme song for the hit sitcom *Three's Company* – sadly died of cancer in 1989.

Since its debut in the mid-1980s, *A Wonderful Life* has seen a one-night-only staged performance on Broadway, as well as vari-

ous regional performances. The Goodspeed production will run from today, Sept. 18, through Nov. 29.

And here's some added local flavor for the production: East Hampton sisters Riley and Ella Briggs will play the Bailey sisters, Beth and Zuzu. Also, East Hampton native Brendan Oakley will understudy the role of Tommy Bailey.

If all of this sounds interesting, you definitely may want to swing over to the Goodspeed at some point over the next two months. Shows take place Wednesdays through Sundays. For tickets and more information, call the Goodspeed box office at 860-873-8668, or visit [goodspeed.org](http://goodspeed.org).

\* \* \*

Congratulations are in order for Hebron's Gayle Mulligan. Mulligan's currently in her first term as the state representative for the 55th Assembly District, which represents Andover, Bolton, Hebron and Marlborough.

I received a news release this week stating Mulligan notched a 100 percent voting record during the 2015 legislative session, casting votes on all 379 of the initiatives that came before the House of Representatives. Only one third of all state representatives could boast a 100 percent voting record.

"I was elected to fill very big shoes here in the Capitol," said Gayle, referring to longtime 55th District rep Pam Sawyer, who retired last year after more than 20 years in office, "and I take my responsibility to the residents of the 55th Legislative District extremely seriously. I'm here to be the voice of the people in our communities and towns, and to advocate for them on a daily basis. I will not lose sight of this in the years to come."

In next year's session, Gayle will continue serving on the appropriations, education and environment committees. She's also a member of the rural, sportsmen, IDD and women's caucuses.

\* \* \*

Lastly, there's a big gathering coming up next week in East Windsor some folks in the area may be interested in knowing about. Men from all across the country who worked in the Civilian Conservation Corps during the Great Depression are gathering at the Rodeway Inn from Sept. 24-26 to mark the 82nd anniversary of the founding of the CCC. During the gathering, they will visit many state parks, forests, and museums built by the CCC. They will also share their experiences of life and work in the CCC camps. The event is sponsored by the CCC Legacy Organization in VA.

What is the CCC? Well, the corps began in 1933 under President Franklin Roosevelt's "New Deal" to relieve the poverty and unemployment of the Depression. The US Army supervised the camps which had about 200 men each. The first year, 13 camps were set up in various Connecticut towns, state parks and forests, including Cobalt. Over the ensuing years, eight more camps would be added, including locations in East Hampton and Portland.

At the camps, men age 18-25 (with parents on relief) enrolled for six months, and worked a 40-hour week for \$30/month. The Army sent \$25 a month to the enrollee's parents, while the men themselves wound up with \$5 for spending money. They received food, uniforms and medical care. At first, the men lived in tents, and later in wooden buildings.

While at the camps, the men performed a variety of tasks. They built trails, roads, campsites and dams; stocked fish; built and maintained fire tower observer's cabins and telephone lines; fought fires; and planted millions of trees.

The camps ultimately disbanded in 1942, due to the need for men to be in World War II.

I've long found the CCC to be an interesting part of American history, and think it's really interesting there were so many of the camps here in Connecticut. I'm guessing survivors from that time period have some very interesting stories to share, and indeed, it could be quite interesting to be a fly on the wall of that inn in East Windsor next weekend.

If anyone from the area is interested in attending all or part of next week's activities, they should contact East Hampton resident Marty Podskoch at 860-267-2442 or [podskoch@comcast.net](mailto:podskoch@comcast.net).

\* \* \*

See you next week.

# New Store in Colchester Offers Rings and More

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

Suzanne Edwards has always had a love of jewelry.

When the Colchester resident graduated elementary school, all she wanted as a gift was a little ring. Flash forward a few years later, and Edwards took a job working in a jewelry store, upon her graduation from high school. It was only supposed to be a summer job, as she was supposed to head off to college to study nursing.

But she opted instead to stay in the jewelry business.

Now, 18 years later, Edwards has a jewelry store all her own, as earlier this month she opened Rings and Things at 44A Main St.

"It's like a dream to have a place of my own to grow and love," Edwards said. "It's something that I have wanted for so long and to have it in the town we live makes it even more exciting."

Edwards lives in Colchester with her husband, and her mother and sister also live in town.

Family-run, Rings and Things offers new, pre-owned and consignment jewelry, along with a variety of local and made-in-the-U.S.A. gifts. The store also sells custom-made jewelry, designed by Edwards herself.

"I'm still working out the kinks and getting product in," Edwards said.

After the extended-play summer job, Edwards found herself working in various jewelry stores in the Hartford area. She worked as a goldsmith, a manager, a bookkeeper, a salesperson; anything jewelry-related that she could do, she did.

"It's tricky about goldsmithing," Edwards said. "You do the work, put it in the envelope and don't get to see [the customer's] reactions."

Her most recent job had been at a store in Hartford, managing the store's online sales for eight years. It was a job that largely left her stuck at a desk – and again there was the lack of customer interaction.

Three months ago, though, Edwards left the store in Hartford. She began working exclusively in online retail, listing pieces on eBay to sell, but being at home was making her stir-

crazy.

"It's good to be designing things again," Edwards said. "It's a way to meet other people. Everyone has been great."

In the two weeks since opening, Edwards said she's seen a lot of people from town and from East Haddam. Many people have been remarking that this store is what the town needed, Edwards said.

Although her favorite gemstone is sapphires, Edwards offers a wide range of products with 600 pieces of jewelry listed online and even more in store. She also offers Silver Forest earrings from Vermont, pottery from New Hampshire and candles from here in Connecticut, along with everything in between. Edwards said keeping products local is important to her. Edwards' mom also sews and makes quilts, and her sister is an artist.

After working for other people for so long, Edwards said it's nice to finally have the say in what goes in the store window, and to have a shop of her very own.

And the store is not just family-owned; the values Edwards instills are also all about family. She said that while she buys scrap gold, she enjoys consigning pieces and selling them either in the store or online for people, giving them the fair price for the gold and the stones. Many times, stores only purchase the gold, but then sell the piece for much more, she explained.

Edwards stresses that she's also affordable.

"I'm always discounted and less than the mall or a chain store," Edwards said. "I have a lower overhead so I pass the savings onto the neighborhood."

For goldsmithing and diamonds, Edwards only uses top-notch people, "people I've known, and trust."

Since opening, she had an experience that really made her smile – and further drove home why she opened up the storefront.

"A woman came in the other day Christmas shopping," Edwards said. "It was so fun to watch her eyes light up as she found things for people."

And if there's a piece of jewelry a customer wants but isn't in stock, Edwards said she can get it – or have it made.



**Suzanne Edwards of Colchester is the owner of Rings and Things, a new jewelry and gift store that opened earlier this month at 44A Main St.**

"If you can draw it, they can make it," she said of her jewelry craftsmen.

Edwards said she has also been asking customers what they would like to see in terms of the "things" half of Rings and Things. Some of those products include more aromatherapy, more pottery, and more wool, especially for scarves for the winter months.

She has two goals for the shop; one, be able to expand next door into a currently-vacant piece of property, and to have more of her family at work with her. Edwards' mother already works at the store, but Edwards has designs on making it a true family affair.

"I keep telling [my husband] that wouldn't it be great if he could just come to work with me every day," Edwards said. "I'm not sure that's his dream, but it's mine!"

She also teases her sister about making her

leave her career to work at the shop with Edwards and her mom.

In all seriousness, though, Edwards added she couldn't have opened up the shop without her family's support.

"My family's the best," she said. "I really couldn't have pulled this off without their love and support."

Ultimately, Edwards said, "I want Rings and Things to be that place when people come in that they know us by name and they feel comfortable just stopping in even if it's just for a cup of tea and a chat. I don't want to go big and break records, I just want to be quality, local and make it the best family business that I can."

Rings and Things is located at 44A Main St. and is online at [ringsandthingsct.com](http://ringsandthingsct.com) and at [stores.ebay.com/ringsandthingsCT](http://stores.ebay.com/ringsandthingsCT). Edwards can also be reached at 860-537-0539.

## New Pastor Brings Old and New to Westchester

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

When the Rev. Ronald Thompson was chosen as the new pastor at Westchester Congregational Church, it was like coming home.

Thompson, 55, was born in Willimantic and grew up in Hebron, only a few miles away from Westchester Congregational. But he left home at age 18 to join the Navy in Groton – and he's been gone for 37 years.

A man with, as he put it, "a lot of experience in everything," Thompson was most recently a pastor in Naples, Fla. His call to ministry, though, came fairly late in life.

After his stint in the Navy, where he spent time in Hawaii, Thompson moved to Los Angeles to study for his undergraduate degree. While in college, he met his future wife, Kristy.

After college, Thompson stayed in California, and wound up working in banking. But he found the life – commuting an hour and a half to work every morning, just to sit in a cubicle – wasn't for him.

"I was sick Sunday nights thinking about the commute," Thompson said of living in L.A. "I dread being stuck in an office."

So in 2000, Thompson and his wife, and their daughter Katianne, moved to Naples, Fla., and the couple opened up their own restaurant. However, when the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001 occurred, people stopped traveling, and the eatery went under.

That was when Thompson found his faith.

Thompson said he always felt a calling to ministry, but never put "two and two together" until the restaurant failed. It was then, he said, that the time was right to pursue it.

In Florida, Thompson attended seminary and worked at a Presbyterian church, a United Church of Christ, and a congregational church. Although he had a Catholic background, Thompson felt connected to Protestant churches, as he found them less hierarchical than Catholic ones.

Thompson loved the Florida beach, not to mention his swimming pool, but he was tired of the 95 percent humidity and living in air conditioning. It was time, he felt, to come home to Connecticut.

"I missed the four seasons," Thompson said, noting that his daughter, now 26, not to mention his two grandchildren – Luke, 7 and Leia, 6 – had never seen snow. "I had a little voice and desire to come back."

He learned of the pastor vacancy at Westchester Congregational, and, after visiting the church a few times, decided to apply.

What drew him to Westchester Congregational was being close to his relatives and hometown, along with the immense amount of tradition at the church. Founded in 1728, the church was the town's main meeting house in the 1800s.

"They've kept so many old traditions," Thompson said. The pews and the doors to the pews are original, and the traditions even extend to how the service operates. He said the church uses very traditional hymns from a very old hymnbook.

Thompson was voted into the church in July, and began Aug. 15.

"It's been good," Thompson said, "and it's amazing in a small town how word gets around fast – they know I grew up around here already," Thompson said.

But there's been a hard part about going from Florida to Colchester: driving in the dark, due to the lack of streetlights, Thompson said jokingly.

Thompson said his philosophy is emphasizing spirituality over the structure of hierarchical religion, and he said that so far the congregation has been very open to embracing that.

Two of Thompson's main goals for Westchester are to involve the community more, and to introduce technology to the church.



**The Rev. Ronald Thompson, 55, a Hebron native, joined the Westchester Congregational Church in August as their new pastor.**

"My favorite thing is visitation when I visit assisted living homes, hospitals and nursing homes," he said. "The church wants to change and reach out more to the community."

Thompson added he wants to get involved in more conversations with local clergy and bringing the churches together. He said he also wants to volunteer with the school district with special education students, work he used to do in Florida, and perhaps volunteer for the town fire department.

On the technology side, he has used his

iPhone and Google Docs for his sermon notes and introduced a projector and screen, donated from Thompson's previous church. That church also donated a set of DVDs for Sunday School curriculum, as the church was no longer using them, opting instead to use online services for the curriculum. Thompson also introduced YouTube videos to Sunday School classes.

Thompson preaches at 10 a.m. on Sundays at the main service at Westchester Congregational, which is located at 449 Westchester Rd. He can be reached at 860-267-0480.

# Pastor with ALS Keeps Positive Spirit

by Chris Seymour

Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) may have taken the Rev. Nancy Butler's ability to walk, but she refuses to let it take her positive spirit and very strong faith.

Butler was diagnosed with ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig's Disease, in February. However, the Marlborough resident continues to be a key part of the church she founded, Riverfront Family Church in Glastonbury. She works in its offices on Hebron Avenue, and attends its weekly gathering service on Sundays at 10:30 a.m. at Riverfront Community Center, located at 300 Welles St.

"I really feel called by God to keep doing the church as long as I am able so I keep doing the church," Butler, 57, said recently.

"I just feel spiritually like God wants me to keep doing it and the funny thing, a good thing about ALS, is people pay attention to what you say. They know you're going to die; they listen more carefully," she joked.

It's Butler's strength and courage in the face of such a devastating neurological ailment – Butler noted most ALS patients die two to five years after being diagnosed – that has inspired the people around her.

"She has been so positive and nothing gets her down; it amazes me," said Riverfront Family Church administrator Ellen Cannon. "She isn't able to drive and is in a wheelchair but it just doesn't get her down and people are just flocking to be with her because she is just so positive and so inspirational; it is very moving."

Indeed, since her diagnosis earlier this year, Butler joked that ALS "has been a magnet" for her church, which has around 80 members and calls itself "the only inclusive evangelical church in New England."

"I don't know what it is, but more people are coming," she said. "I also think it's because we have other people preaching [now that she is sick], we have more people in our worship band, and I think the fact it's more of a community. ... People pick up on that when they visit, 'and, it's like, 'oh, I want to be part of a community where we all pitch in.'"

Riverfront Family Church's slogan is "Church. Just different." And it delivers on that tagline with lively services that include a "worship band" and a church mascot.

According to the ALS Association, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis is a progressive neurodegenerative disease that affects nerve cells in the brain and the spinal cord.

The progressive degeneration of the motor neurons in ALS eventually leads to death, according to the association; when the motor neurons die, the ability of the brain to initiate and control muscle movement is lost, continues the association, and with voluntary muscle action progressively affected, patients in the later stages of the disease may become totally paralyzed.

Butler first noticed something was wrong about two years ago, in October 2013, when she started tripping over her own toes.

"I would be walking and would just trip on

my toes so [doctors] thought it was a disc and they did all these MRIs on my back," she recalled. "Then I started limping and [was having] more trouble walking, and I started walking with a cane and then started walking with a walker."

A trip to the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn., in February confirmed Butler has ALS, and by March, she was in a wheelchair.

"It's been going really scary fast," said Butler of the disease's progression. While she is in no pain, and the ALS does not affect her brain, Butler noted that "what kills you is the diaphragm; the diaphragm goes and you can't breathe."

When asked if doctors have given her a time frame for how much time she has left to talk, Butler said that doctors usually don't give her an answer when she asks that question.

However, based on research she has done, "I would guess I have got about a year to live; that would be my guess."

Butler recently turned 57, and her five brothers and sisters visited her from all around the country.

And, as one might imagine, Butler's family – which includes her husband Greg and two adult daughters Sarah and Liza (who has three young children) – are "heartbroken."

"My husband was my high school sweetheart, so his heart is broken," she said. "And my girls – you lose your mom, you don't get another mom. I really do believe in an afterlife – I am not worried about death for myself – but when you love people, and we are a really close family, it's sad."

Butler said the "dirty little secret" of ALS is the financial crises it can cause families.

"Insurance doesn't pay for caregivers and it doesn't pay for ramps, so it costs your average family about \$150,000 a year," she said. "There's no medical cure so there's not a lot of insurance costs with ALS – they pay for your wheelchair and that's about it."

Butler – who noted ALS requires "24/7 heavy-duty care" – has a caregiver that helps her with many of her basic needs. "She lifts me out of bed, bathes me, dresses me, lifts me in the wheelchair, feeds me, drives me here [to church offices], itches my nose, brushes my hair," said Butler of her caregiver, whom she called her "motor neurons."

Butler and her husband are in the process of building a handicapped-friendly home in Marlborough. Their previous home was located in the Minnechaug area of Glastonbury, but was built on a slope and, as Butler put it, "there were steps, steps, steps."

As far as the church goes, Butler said she believes it will be just fine when she is gone. "It worked out really well for our church because we need to find a new pastor at this point so Liza said she would step in for me," Butler said of her daughter, who is a graduate of Yale Divinity School.

Being sick has also given Butler the chance to step back and let others do some of the heavy lifting for the church. Since her diagnosis, But-



Despite being diagnosed with ALS earlier this year, Rev. Nancy Butler of Marlborough, pastor of Riverfront Family Church in Glastonbury, has kept a positive attitude and remains involved with the faith community she founded.

ler estimates she has had to cut the amount of time she dedicates to the church from about 70 hours a week to around 35.

"My weakness as a pastor is that I do everything by myself, so I literally can't do anything anymore," she said. "I preach and I do a few other things, but it's been good for the church actually. We have a preaching team now; I preach less frequent, twice a month, and I try to build up other people in our church."

Even though Butler is trying to take it easy, Cannon said the pastor is still working hard and "still outworks all of us."

Butler said she has always had a "sunny personality" and she thinks that quality – along with her very strong faith – have helped her deal with having such a devastating ailment like ALS. "I do think that faith helps; it gives you a perspective to process it," she explained.

When asked if she has ever taken a "why me?" mentality toward being afflicted with ALS, Butler said that just isn't her style.

"I have been a pastor for years, so I have had children dying of diseases and I have seen bad things happen to good people over and over and over again," she said. "I think I am very aware that s— happens, so when s— happened to me I wasn't surprised. I think faith is true and if we live our lives well your legacy goes on in this world and I think there is an afterlife and it's all going to get straightened out then."

Having ALS obviously puts life in perspective, noted Butler. "It reminds us to not live our

lives blindly but to do something worthwhile with your life," she said.

Last summer's ALS Ice Bucket Challenge phenomenon – wherein participants dumped ice water on their heads and raised money for ALS research in the process – raised \$115 million for ALS research in the United States, according to the ALS Association, so more attention is seemingly being given to the issue than ever before.

The ALS Association also noted that the money from last year's challenge has helped to triple the amount that it spends on research each year.

"I certainly think it's great to raise money for ALS," said Butler. "I would be very happy if they figured out the cause and got rid of it."

In the meantime, Butler certainly has taken the time to smell the roses. "This spring and summer I was thinking it might be my last spring or even my last summer," she said.

"Or even if I am alive next year, I'm going to be not feeling great, so I have been like, 'Look at the sun on that leaf!' or, 'Look at that dog!' You kind of just savor things you took for granted before," she added. "And you slow down because I have had to slow down and kind of smell the roses a little more and notice how beautiful things are and how wonderful the world is."

Chris Seymour is a reporter for the River-east's sister paper, The Glastonbury Citizen. This story previously appeared in the Citizen.

# Sewer Phase III Construction Could Start Next Month in Marlborough

by Kaitlyn Schroyer

Pending state approval, construction on phase III of the town sewer project could begin next month.

The Board of Selectmen Tuesday reviewed the current status of the project.

The town received seven bids for the work, with Burlington-based Hubble Construction coming in as the low bidder. Bidding was a bit different from the usual process, First Selectwoman Cathi Gaudinski said, because the town offered the base bid along with the base plus alternate area A, and the base bid along with alternate areas A and B.

When phase III was designed, it only included half of Roberts Road. An extra 1,100 feet of the road was designated "alternate A," with the rest of the road beyond that – except for three homes near Route 66 – labeled "alternate B."

Hubble's bid came in low enough that the \$3.5 million the town had authorized spending can include both alternate areas. To include those other three homes on Roberts would cost approximately \$151,000, Peter Hughes, the

town's director of planning and development, said. He said that may occur if the project doesn't use its contingency.

The total came in at \$3,483,480, Hughes said. "They did the construction for phase II," Gaudinski said of Hubble. "They were under budget, dealt with residents and were a good company to work with."

The documents for the project are at the state Department of Energy and Environmental Protection and are awaiting approval. The town has also submitted the paperwork for the Clean Water Fund money for the project.

The \$3.5 million project was approved by voters last November, 1,418-1,060. Phase III includes Coleman Lane, North Main Street, Lafayette Road, Lake Road, Pettengill Road, Roberts Road and Walker Lane. With the two alternate areas added, the phase brings approximately 130-140 Equivalent Dwelling Units (EDUs) to the sewer project. Combined with phase I and phase II, the town EDUs will be just over 500 EDUs. The system was designed to handle up to 1,400 EDUs.

The town's sewer project was originally approved in 2002; however funding delays meant construction didn't begin until 2008. Phase I – covering the town center and a portion of east Lake Terramuggus – finished in 2010. Phase II was approved in 2012, covers the east portion of the lake, and recently was completed.

Phase III is partially paid for by \$848,750 of a Clean Water Fund grant and the remainder is paid through a loan by the Clean Water Fund. The Clean Water Fund is administered by the state DEEP. The town will repay the loan over a 20-year period, at a 2 percent interest rate.

"If we're lucky with the state review, we can start construction in mid-October," Hughes said. "We will have six to eight weeks before winter. It will finish a year from now if we start in October. Otherwise, we start in the spring."

Once the DEEP approves the documents, the town will receive a notice to award and can sign the contract with Hubble.

"I hope for quick approval and a long fall," selectman Dick Shea said.

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Gaudinski also presented a potential ordinance change to the selectmen regarding businesses and delinquent sewer and/or water bills.

With an amended state statute going into effect Oct. 1, the town can hold a business delinquent if it does not pay its sewer or water bill for a year or more.

"If they need a license, that could be withheld until the charges are paid to the town," Gaudinski explained.

The ordinance change will have to go to the residents to be approved.

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The next regular Board of Selectmen meeting is Tuesday, Oct. 6, at 7 p.m., at Town Hall. The board will also hold a special meeting next Tuesday, Sept. 22, at 7 p.m. at the Marlborough Elementary School media center to talk about economic development. There is also a meeting of all town boards and commissions Monday, Sept. 28, at 7 p.m. at the Marlborough Senior Center.

Portland ï East Hampton ï Portland ï East Hampton

## What Is The RiverCOG?

by John Tyczkowski

The Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments (RiverCOG) is an official entity that, while regularly mentioned in town government, doesn't usually get its moment in the spotlight outside of town hall.

The RiverCOG is a regional governing body created to help towns pool their resources and better solicit aid from the state to complete economic and infrastructure projects.

The RiverCOG was created in 2012 from two other regional planning agencies, the Midstate Regional Planning Agency based in Middletown and the Connecticut River Estuary Regional Planning Agency based in Old Saybrook.

The consolidation was voluntary and made possible by the towns themselves, and helped protect the region's uniqueness, said Sam Gold, the RiverCOG's executive director.

"This is its own place, and it's very distinct from its neighbors," he said. "It's very special; people come to the Lower Connecticut River Valley and live here because of its unique quality of life."

There are nine such entities in the state, and Gold called them "forums for regional cooperation." Each has a different focus, based upon towns' needs.

"For example, the RiverCOG focuses a lot on regional transportation, regional land use planning and regional economic development," Gold said.

It also receives both state and federal funding in areas including transportation planning and emergency management and disaster pre-

paredness.

Some town money is involved when individual towns implement initiatives, and from annual per capita dues, but "the vast majority of the RiverCOG's budget comes from those state and federal grants," Gold said.

The RiverCOG also hosts several regional collaborative initiatives as far-flung as household hazardous waste collection and helping to preserve views of the Connecticut River under a 1970s state law.

The RiverCOG is composed of 17 municipalities – 16 towns and the City of Middletown. Its board is made up of elected town officials, such as first selectmen.

And they meet "as equals," Gold said, which is conducive to productive discussion.

Another important distinction to make, Gold said, is "the COG works for the towns, not the other way around," and, as such, is different from county government.

"We can make recommendations, but ultimately, the towns decide whether to implement them, and how to implement them if they do," he said.

Jean Davies, the RiverCOG's deputy director, said the fact it does not include the political function of traditional county government is a "definite strength."

"It's a place where people can come together and talk freely about common goals and common solutions without a political umbrella," she said. "We're not regulatory, and we're not a taxing authority. We're basically an extension of the towns."

As such, the RiverCOG doesn't follow county lines; rather it includes 17 towns: the entirety of Middlesex County, and Lyme and Old Lyme in New London County.

It's also anchored culturally around Middletown and the Connecticut River, which is reflected in its main offices, located off Route 9 in Essex.

Davies said the region's shared culture and characteristics are a major part of what helps the RiverCOG meet its goals.

"The idea is to maximize regional efficiencies through those common threads," she said. "And when dealing with complex issues such as housing, energy and agriculture, working together is key, especially with so many small towns in the region."

In particular, one program the RiverCOG is preparing to roll out this year is its growSMART initiative, which focuses on regional economic development and using towns' limited land effectively for maximum economic impact.

It's a great way for people to see exactly what it is the RiverCOG does, and to get actively involved in and help influence the process, Davies said.

"The idea is to have the towns become better at marketing the region and themselves," she said. "This is a wonderful opportunity for getting a feel for what each town wants, and what their individual strengths are."

There will be an outreach event Tuesday, Sept. 22, from 10 a.m.-3 p.m., at The Riverhouse, 55 Bridge St., Haddam.

At the event, Davies said, there will be several stations where people will have the chance to show what they know about their region and their town, self-graded, and answer questions about the future of their region and town.

"We're also going to ask people to give feedback on what these see as the major strengths and weaknesses of the region, major opportunities and major threats to the region," she said. "We'll also give them words to respond to and ask them what they feel is most important to them in the region."

"There are a lot of challenges with how you grow a region while keeping the small-town character that everyone values, and we want to know what ideas people who live in the region have about that," she said.

Next Tuesday's outreach event will be the first in a series, Davies said. She said the RiverCOG will "eventually take this on the road with tents, and go to different places around the region."

"Residents of towns in the region are definitely encouraged to attend and offer their perspectives at this first event; it's our first attempt to market the region so comprehensively," Davies said. "Anyone can stop in, for even just 15 minutes, and have the potential to make a big impact."

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For more information about the RiverCOG, visit [rivercog.org](http://rivercog.org). Further details on the Sept. 22 event are available at [growSMARTregion.org](http://growSMARTregion.org).

# Elmcrest Site in Portland Remains Unchanged Despite Online Plans

by John Tyczkowski

Marketing concept plans for the Elmcrest campus listed online Monday appear to call for the removal of two historic homes on the property – which would be completely at odds with what the community has said it wants.

But the developer behind the project stresses these plans are not official, and are merely for marketing purposes.

Listed on LoopNet, a real estate aggregation website, plans for the newly-named Brainerd Place mixed-use development only show one historic structure, the Erastus Brainerd Jr. House (1851-1852). An entrance and retail space is shown where the other two buildings, the Hart-Jarvis House (1829-1830) and the Sage House (1884) stand.

First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield, however, said the town has not received any new site plan applications along those lines.

"It's not anything that has come in officially to the town," she said of the online marketing concept plans.

In August, the Board of Selectmen endorsed a report released by the Cecil Group, a market research firm aiding the town, and the Vibrant Community Initiative Steering Committee, which included members of the Elmcrest Campus Advisory Committee, the Portland Historical Society, the Economic Development Commission, Town Planner Deanna Rhodes and Bransfield.

The report included input from more than 75 residents who attended three public workshops on what they would and would not like to see in the development of the Elmcrest property.

Residents who attended specifically said historic preservation was a priority.

"The report includes the concept of having

housing and mixed-used development with retail," Bransfield said. "And we have also endorsed preserving the historical aspects of the property – specifically these three National Historic Register houses."

"They're very important to maintaining the integrity and beauty of the site," she said.

Bransfield said Dan Bertram, principal of BRT Corporation of Danbury, the property's developer, "has talked very sensibly about how he plans to renovate and preserve the Brainerd House specifically."

"The other details of the project have not been worked out yet, however," she said. "It's up to him, but I believe any plans would be concert with the Cecil Report, which has community input, owner input and developer input. It's what the selectmen endorsed, and it's what the public want."

"We all want this to work, and I personally believe the Cecil Report is excellent and marketable, and we have a tremendous amount of support from the community," she said.

Bransfield stressed the importance of marketing the property to attract interest as well.

"Developers need to get the word out and make sure they're recruiting, advertising and attracting tenants for the campus, and it's something [Dan Bertram] has been working diligently on," she said.

"I'm thrilled to work with a developer such as Bertram, and we look forward to working with him to make this a viable, marketable enhancement to the community," she said.

Bertram said this week "the core findings of the Cecil Report are a great thing."

"They show that there's market support for higher-density residential units, and that there's a way to respect the historic buildings while

attracting retail," he said. "And that's important because this is a very market-driven exercise."

"Everyone has the same goal – to develop this property," Bertram added. "The other component of it is paying tribute to the historically-significant buildings on the property. And the question is how to do that."

In particular, Bertram said, Brainerd Place is anchored on the titular house, an Italianate building designed by New Haven architect Henry Austin.

"It was an amazing structure when it was built and we think it can be fully restored to its former glory," he said. "It's an exceptional building, and should be treated as such."

Bertram said the internal configuration of the Brainerd House is the most-well suited to reuse out of the three historic houses. The three houses are being considered for adaptive reuse under the Cecil Report, which would entail restoring the outsides to their original appearances, but modernizing the interiors for uses such as office space.

In terms of its place within the marketing concept plans online, Bertram said he views the Brainerd House as a "common area amenity" for the apartments which helps naturally split the property between housing and retail space.

Brainerd Place calls for about 200 residential units, more than the 80 in the previously-approved Portland TownPlace plan from 2009,

and its less retail space is divided into smaller stores instead of "big box" retailers.

The 2009 plan, as approved, also called for the demolition of the Brainerd and Hart-Jarvis houses.

"But when I got up to the parcel, I said, 'Why wasn't everything designed around this?'" Bertram said, referring to the Brainerd House. "It's very important to the site."

Bertram also said the site process is ongoing and the online marketing concept plans do not strictly represent the final site plan – and that there is room to work.

"We're circulating the plans that we are because we're trying to get interest. You can't get it all worked out on the front side – you have to iterate through it," he said. "We're not taking a position right now – we're creating a context to start a conversation informed by market-driven forces.

"Once we start these conversations and attract interest, we can refine the site plan and see what can be accommodated," he continued. "If we put up plans that violate industry best practices from the start, we're not going to be successful."

Bertram also reaffirmed his commitment to making Brainerd Place a group effort.

"This all has to be managed together, working with the town, and all the area stakeholders," he said. "I do like the restoration aspect – we just have to have something that's usable."

## Kinsella Wins Portland Town Clerk Democratic Nomination

by John Tyczkowski



Turnout was slight Wednesday, but those who did show up at the polls Wednesday sent Kayleigh Kinsella to victory in the primary for the Democrats' nomination for town clerk.

Kinsella, the Democratic Town Committee-endorsed candidate, won with 94 votes (89 plus five absentee ballots), to challenger Lisa Mountain's 81 votes (77 plus three absentee ballots and one handwritten ballot).

Total voter turnout was 175, or about 9.3 percent of Portland's 1,884 registered Democratic voters.

Though she lost, Mountain said she was pleased with the support she received.

"I thought the numbers were very good for my first time running," she said. "And it shows voting is very important and that every number counts."

She also said she was glad to have participated in the race this year.

"It was a very good and positive experience," Mountain said. "I always said I was going to at least try, and I did."

While the next election cycle is "a long way off," Mountain said she might be open to another run at that time.

Kinsella called Mountain "a formidable opponent" and "well-qualified."

"She's made so many connections through her kids, and seems to know a lot of people in town," she said. "And we were very cordial [Wednesday]; she offered to buy me coffee and I offered to buy her water."

Wednesday was both candidates' first times meeting each other.

The two had spent the day stationed outside the Waverly Center at their respective tents, which Kinsella said was "very slow."

"Now it's time to work toward the general election and do what I have to do," Kinsella said. "I'm happy; I just gotta go out there and meet people now."

Kinsella will now face Republican candidate Ryan Curley for the town clerk seat. Curley currently serves on the Board of Selectmen.

After the votes came in Wednesday night, Curley said he wanted to congratulate Kinsella on her win, and said either candidate would have been "very qualified" for the position.

"Now, I'm looking forward to the general election," he said. "I also want to congratulate both Kayleigh and Lisa for their great race, which was especially a very positive race. I'm sure [Kinsella and I] can bring that to the general election as well."

This town clerk election marks the first time in 37 years that incumbent Bernie Dillion will not be running. She resigned from the position on Jan. 1 of this year.

In her stead, Mary Dickerson, formerly of the Economic Development Commission, has been serving as interim town clerk. She declined to run for a full term this November.

## Suspected Portland Car Thief Arrested in Glastonbury

by Shawn R. Dagle

Glastonbury Police helped apprehend a driver accused of stealing a vehicle from a gas station in Portland and engaging police in a pursuit late last month.

Samuel Guerard, 38, formerly of Portland but currently of no certain address, was arrested Aug. 30 after stealing a vehicle from a gas station in Portland and then leading officers in a pursuit down Route 17, according to Glastonbury Police.

At 9 a.m. Aug. 30, Portland Police notified Glastonbury Police a vehicle had been stolen from a gas station in Portland. Not long after the theft was reported, Glastonbury Police spotted the vehicle traveling north on Route 17 in South Glastonbury.

"An attempt was made to stop the vehicle," Glastonbury Police said. "However the suspect refused to stop, creating a hazard to the public, at which point the pursuit was terminated."

A short time later, the vehicle was located parked on Chestnut Hill Road in Glastonbury, and Guerard was observed walking in the area, police said. Officers took Guerard into custody and an investigation determined that he had stolen the vehicle in Portland.

Glastonbury Police said they charged Guerard with interfering with an officer, engaging police in a pursuit, reckless driving and passing in a no-passing zone – and then turned him over to Portland Police. For his role in

the Portland incident, Guerard was charged with larceny in the third degree, possession of narcotics, criminal mischief in the third degree and interfering with an officer/resisting, according to records available from the Connecticut Judicial Branch.

According to news reports, Middletown Police also subsequently arrested Guerard after being taken into custody by Portland Police for allegedly assaulting a pregnant woman in that city. On Aug. 29, the day before the alleged car theft, Guerard attacked a woman 15 weeks' pregnant in Middletown during a dispute, according to press reports. During the incident he allegedly shoved and grabbed the victim, according to reports. He also allegedly destroyed her computer, printer and two cell phones.

Last month's incidents were not Guerard's first encounters with the law. In 2007, the former Portland resident pled guilty to three counts of bank robbery after robbing a People's Bank in Glastonbury, a Sovereign Bank in West Hartford and a Bank of America Branch in Bristol in 2006, according to reports. He allegedly used a knife to rob all three banks, stealing more than \$13,000. He was sentenced to 57 months in prison.

*Shawn Dagle is a reporter for the River-east's sister newspaper, The Glastonbury Citizen. This story previously appeared in the Citizen.*

# 'Greatest Generation' Honored at Annual Event in East Hampton

by John Tyczkowski

Undaunted by clouds, wind and light rain, Pierre and Margaret Fabers' annual World War II veterans event continued on for a fifth year, taking place last Saturday, Sept. 12.

Around 40 veterans, accompanied by as many family and friends, gathered at the Fabers' home in Middle Haddam Saturday evening, continuing the tradition of honoring the achievements and sacrifices of those of the Greatest Generation who served in the military during World War II.

The event has come a long way since it began in 2011, with fewer than 10 veterans attending; it continued to grow until it reached a high point of 52 veterans last year, drawing from all over New England.

This year, the veterans in attendance were all around 90 years old, with a few were within spitting distance of 100. And while there were fewer veterans overall, there were several new faces including George Leahy of Portland, Maine.

Leahy served in the Army Air Corps and flew bomber missions in the Pacific in 1945 as the tail gunner in an 11-man B-29 flight crew out of an airbase in the Marianas.

"I flew seven missions, each 1,500 miles up to Japan and back, and we had some good experiences," he said. "Then they made us a lead crew because we were pretty squared away."

Leahy was about to be sent to California to go to lead crew school "but then, the war ended."

"I had enough points, so they sent me home right away," he said.

Leahy, who ended the war as a corporal, then went to college, married and worked at an insurance company for 38 years before retiring.

He added, as he reminisced about his service, that the flight engineer on his crew happened to be George Wallace, who later became a popular governor of Alabama, third-party presidential hopeful in 1968, and a Democratic presidential contender who survived an assassination attempt during his 1972 presidential campaign.

The two stayed in contact for Wallace's entire life.

Another first-timer this year was Peter Bitondo of Middletown, who served in the Navy in the Pacific Theatre from 1943 to 1945.

Bitondo served on a submarine as an assistant navigator during that time. He shared a variety of memories that brought with them an

array of emotions.

One story he told was that he and his crew were so efficient at their jobs, they were granted shore leave in Hawaii.

"We were so proficient, they gave us a reward: we stayed for three weeks at the Royal Hawaiian Hotel, the best," he said. "Not bad at all."

Bitondo also started to recount the time he went topside to assist in rescuing a nine-man bomber crew who had to ditch after being shot down, but couldn't continue through tears.

After the war, Bitondo, a Brooklyn native, served in the NYPD for 20 years at the Chinatown precinct.

Elinor Fisher of Old Lyme was also present at the Fabers' and was one of the first women to join the Naval Reserve during World War II under the Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service (WAVES) program.

She entered in 1942, and was sent to Jacksonville, Fla. to be a radio operator. Her job was to send and receive encrypted Morse Code messages.

"I had no idea what was happening but I was doing my thing to help save the world," she said. "We [WAVES] were treated very well, with great respect, wherever we went."

Though Fisher was stateside, she had her own taste of action courtesy of the weather one summer.

"From when the bus dropped me off and when I arrived, my little radio shack got hit by lightning," she said. "When I opened the door to go in, I saw this mess of jumbled-up stuff, in my radio shack, which was the size of two phone booths together."

Fisher said she "wouldn't give up [her service] for anything."

"It was a tremendous experience. I felt very proud of what I was doing, and of our country, for what we were doing," she said.

She finished the war as a radioman third class.

After the war, Fisher, who graduated from the Rhode Island School of Design after studying textile design, returned there to teach for a few years.

Alongside the new faces at this year's event were some familiar ones as well, including Charles Alex of New Britain, a career military man whose three decades of service, including Korea and Vietnam, started with World War II.

Alex began his career in the National Guard in 1940, but moved into the regular Army in



A table place is set for absent veteran John "Jack" Rice, featuring a photo of him in flight. Rice was an Army Air Corps flyer in the Pacific, rated for 26 different aircraft. He served for 32 years in the Air Force. Rice passed away unexpectedly this July. Korea veteran Dick Everett, an event volunteer and Rice's best friend, set up the tribute.

1942. He engaged in island hopping in the Pacific, participating in campaigns including Guadalcanal, New Guinea and the Philippines.

One story he recounted in particular was after the campaign in the Philippines, when he was asked to stay on for the invasion of Japan.

"I took a few minutes to think about it and I said 'no.' I thought I used up all of my good luck already," he said. "But I stayed in the Guard, and got called back in, and then made a career out of it."

When he retired in 1971, he had attained the rank of lieutenant colonel. Among numerous commendations, he had earned a Bronze Star for his actions on Guadalcanal.

Alex said he had "no complaints" despite "both hard times and good times" he saw across his years of service.

After an hour of cocktails alongside music provided by members of the Hartford Jazz Orchestra, which included four World War II veterans in their second year at the event, Pierre Faber spoke.

Faber, who was born in South Africa and

became an American citizen in 2004, said he considers this event a way to give back to those who helped make America great.

"Every year I get asked, 'Why do you do this, what's it all about?'" he said. "It's a thank you to people who participated in one of the most important events in world history, who helped stop two military dictatorships in Europe and Asia and who helped create a land of phenomenal opportunity."

"You people gave up the prime of your lives to make this sacrifice. The whole world owes you an enormous debt" he said last weekend, speaking to the veterans.

Following his remarks, everyone moved to the tables set up on the other side of the house to take the annual photograph of all the veterans in front of a large American flag, followed by dinner and dessert.

"So many people forget about the past, and I think it's remarkable that [Pierre] keeps bringing it up, so many years after the war was over," Alex said afterwards. "I'm very grateful for that."

## East Hampton Residents Concerned With School Bus Situation

by John Tyczkowski

Monday evening, the Board of Education voted unanimously to add one more bus and route to the town's current lineup to alleviate parents' concerns.

This bus brings the schools' total to 16, and replaces one that was cut during the crafting of the 2014-15 budget. However, the route itself will be a new one. The new bus will remain in effect for the rest of the 2015-16 school year.

The new bus route will combine portions of elementary student bus routes on Main Street (Bus 8), Route 66 (Bus 12) and streets east of Lake Pocotopaug (Bus 1).

School officials expect the new bus to allow Bus 8 to spend more time doing pick-ups at Spice Hill Drive, and to reduce the overall time of Bus 1 and Bus 12 routes.

Exact details on the new bus route are forthcoming in a letter to parents, interim schools superintendent Mark Winzler said, and the new route should take effect Tuesday, Sept. 22.

At the meeting, Winzler said the additional bus is projected to cost roughly \$50,000 for the remainder of the school year, and that the district "luckily" has funds to pay for it in the budget.

Specifically, since the district's new Interim Director of Curriculum and Instruction works part-time and an average of three days a week, those savings will be enough for an additional bus, he said.

The recommendation for a new bus and route came after a discussion last week by the board's Finance, Buildings, Grounds and Transporta-

tion Subcommittee in concert with several other officials from Central Services and East Hampton Police, subcommittee chair Chris Goff said.

And that discussion was prompted by an outcry of more than 600 phone calls and emails Central Services received from parents during the first week of school, referencing late bus pickups, late arrivals at school, and pick-ups and drop-offs that were simply forgotten.

The school system's business manager, Karen Asetta, gave a presentation before the board on specifics of the district's bus program with DATTCO, the New Britain-based bus company that Nichols Bus Services passed the torch to last year.

Buses in the district make 690 stops in the morning and afternoon, for a total of 1,380 stops daily, she said.

In addition, because only 50 parking spaces are available at the high school due to construction, and they are reserved for seniors, more high schoolers have started taking the bus, adding to stops and crowding, Asetta said.

Combine this with parents and drivers still getting used to new bus routes DATTCO implemented for the 2014-15 school year, and there is a "domino effect" of bus issues that the additional route should help with, Asetta said.

During public comment several residents spoke about specific bus route adjustments they wanted to see made.

Parents on both Whispering Woods Drive and Spice Hill Drive mentioned how children on their streets had to either stand in the road or

cross the road to be picked up, and said they wanted to board to consider safety as well as timeliness when revising bus routes, especially with winter weather on the way.

"I appreciate the additional bus and the effort the board is making with regard to the bus-sing issues," Spice Hill Drive resident William Dinunzio said. "But I urge the final decision-makers for rerouting buses that not only timeliness be a concern, but that safety be a parallel concern as well."

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A related bus concern came from the residents of Walnut Avenue, centered on concerns over a high volume of bus traffic compared to previous years.

Melinda Dumond, who has operated a daycare center on the street for the past 26 years, said simply, "Walnut Avenue is being used as a through-way."

Walnut Avenue can be used as a connector between Main Street, near Center School, and Smith Street, near Memorial School, as it is a straight route between the two. However, the road is highly residential.

There are also no sidewalks on Walnut, which underscores residents' safety concerns about the "bus convoys" on the street, Dumond said.

She also presented the board with a petition from the residents of that street.

One specific safety concern came from Mike Eremita, who is blind, and who frequently takes walks on Walnut with his guide dog.

"It's very difficult for me to walk on the street

as I have for years with the buses," he said. "I can feel the wind from them on me when they drive by."

DATTCO school bus division vice president Phil Johnson, who was at Monday's meeting, said using Walnut as a connector, in conjunction with the parallel Edgerton Street, was a way of relieving time pressure from other factors such as ongoing construction at the intersection of Routes 66 and 196, and natural gas line construction throughout town.

That construction can cause delays of around 20 minutes, he said.

Formerly, using Edgerton alone as a connector caused time delays of its own, stemming from having 15 buses on one street, Johnson said.

Also contributing to that time pressure is this year's greater number of stops and riders, as Asetta had mentioned earlier, which tighten timetables, Johnson said.

"At each stop it takes about one minute to open the door, get the student on the bus, have them sit down, close the door and get moving," he said. "If you have 25 stops, that's 25 minutes, and then there's time spent traveling between stops."

Johnson also said he didn't consider Walnut Avenue "a hazard," but said residents "had valid points and concerns."

The board said it would look into Walnut Avenue residents' concerns in the coming week through the relevant subcommittee along with Central Services, DATTCO and town police.



# Andover School Board Approves Roof Study Proposal

by Geeta Schrayer

The Board of Education Wednesday unanimously approved a proposal for a feasibility study on Andover Elementary School's roof.

The proposal came from DRA Architects of South Windsor, and will cost the district \$5,000. Senior project architect Richard Lawrence has worked with the school numerous times over the years through his company, The Lawrence Associates, which merged with DRA in July of last year. He was present Wednesday to talk about the proposal, which he also described in an Aug. 12 letter sent to Superintendent of Schools Sally Doyen.

The proposed services include preparing an overall comprehensive roof plan that shows the existing materials, drainage slopes and the age of different roof sections.

"If there are parts of the roof that are what we would call flat – basically with no pitch – we would want to find a way to get tapered insulation so that there's a pitch one way or the other" for drainage purposes, Lawrence ex-

plained.

"We will also look at and evaluate materials," he added. "There are many different roof products today and we would look at the ones generally used in this area, ones we feel would give you good long-term benefit, and we would try to give you a relative cost estimate between those."

In addition, DRA will review reports the school received from others in the roofing industry that were provided to the company, make notes of the conditions and areas identified as "suspect," document suspect conditions with photos and a written narrative, and provide recommendations for corrections, Lawrence said.

"Luckily our firm had done a lot of work on the [Andover Elementary School] roof over the years and we stole from your archives – borrowed back, I should say – a lot of drawings you had that we had prepared, which we can now assemble with the CAD drawings – the

automated drawings – still in our records to quickly get that part together," he told the board.

In addition, DRA will look into possible reimbursement from the state, based upon the age of the roof, the anticipated construction cost and Andover's reimbursement rate for school construction projects. Lawrence said the company will also consider alternative materials for replacement with their costs as well as the advantages and disadvantages of each.

DRA will also provide a written summary report and a project budget based on whatever materials the district chooses to go with, and will meet with the Board of Education to present the report, review the findings and answer any questions.

The study is expected to take about two months.

The school board voted unanimously to request funds to cover the cost of the study from an account for roof repairs held by the town.

Doyen explained the Board of Education had been contributing to this account, which is non-lapsing, and earmarked for roof repairs and work and currently contains about \$111,000.

\* \* \*

In addition Wednesday, the board voted unanimously to return approximately \$150,000 in unexpended funds from the 2014-15 budget to the town; the board also voted to request that the Board of Finance put 1 percent of the total 2014-15 budget, or approximately \$42,000 (to come from those unexpended funds) into the aforementioned school improvement account.

Board member Jay Lindy called that account "creative financing." He explained, "It makes it easier when there's half a million to a million [dollars] in future projects."

Board chair Christina Tamburro added, "And it might give us a head start on the roof project."

The board unanimously approved the motion.

## Andover Selectmen Reject Burbank's Request for a Hearing

by Geeta Schrayer

At a special meeting Monday afternoon, the Board of Selectmen nixed First Selectman Bob Burbank's plans to hold another public hearing on the proposed recreation field in town.

Burbank had told the *Rivereast* last week he wanted to schedule a public hearing to receive voter input on the proposed changes to the project.

At the Sept. 2 selectmen's meeting, the board directed Burbank to submit a letter to the state requesting the Small Town Economic Assistant Program (STEAP) grant funds the town was supposed to use for the construction of a new recreation field behind Andover Elementary School be used to instead change and improve the field on Long Hill Road.

Prior to submitting any letter, however, Burbank said he wanted more input from the

public. But on Wednesday, Jay Lindy and Julia Haverl – the only other selectmen in attendance – voted to have Burbank go forward with the letter as he had been instructed at the previous meeting.

Lindy said he didn't think another public hearing would help, explaining, "I think the parents have exhausted themselves."

He added, "My motion is to get on with it and we submit that draft letter to the state... the board voted on that. Let's get on with it."

But Burbank said, "Every public hearing we had was not to upgrade an existing field; it was on a new field. ... We're changing the whole scheme of what we got the STEAP grant for which was to build an additional field. Now we're saying we don't need an additional field but we want to take the dollars to upgrade an

existing field."

Burbank furthered, "I have dealt with the state on many grants – I know how particular they are and I'm just saying there's a good chance this could come back and bite us and we could possibly lose everything. That's the chance we're taking. But if you want me to take that chance, I'll be happy to do it."

The board voted 2-1 to have Burbank go ahead with the letter, with Burbank voting against.

\* \* \*

The main reason Monday's special meeting was called was to discuss an easement over town property voters decided to grant to two property owners at a July referendum. However, on Monday, Lindy and Haverl immediately motioned to schedule another meeting to

discuss the easement, since they hadn't had time to look over the draft that was provided at the beginning of the meeting.

In addition, Haverl mentioned the town attorney's office had yet to make any recommendations on the draft.

In response, the board voted 3-0 to schedule another meeting to discuss another draft of the easement, one that would include recommendations by the town attorney. The actual date of the meeting was to be determined at a later date, after the three selectmen consult with the rest of the board.

\* \* \*

The next regular Board of Selectmen's meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, Oct. 7, at 7 p.m. in the Andover town hall community room.

## Colchester Woman Injured After Early Morning Assault

by Kaitlyn Schrayer

State Police are on the lookout for two men on bicycles who allegedly assaulted a woman on Broadway Street early Tuesday morning.

A woman was transported to Backus Hospital for injuries, police said, after she was assaulted by the two men at around 1:13 a.m.

As of press time, state police had not released the identification of the woman.

Police reported troopers investigated the

area and searched for other victims, but none were located. The suspects have been described as two men, one white and one Hispanic, riding bicycles.

Detectives from the Eastern District Major Crime Squad responded to the scene and are investigating the assault. Anyone with information can contact Detective Sean McManaway at 860-465-5421. All calls will be kept confidential.

## East Hampton Man Dies in Tree-Cutting Accident

by John Tyczkowski

Last Wednesday, a local man died after a tree-cutting accident in his yard outside his home on Country Lane.

Kenneth White, 57, "sustained serious injuries while cutting down a tree with a chainsaw," according to police, and succumbed to his injuries on the scene.

Personnel from the police department, the fire department and ambulance services re-

sponded at around 5:18 p.m. that evening.

Jim Burke, the fire department's public information contact, said it appeared White "was injured by the tree itself," not the chainsaw, and that the incident "very definitely appeared to be an accident."

A preliminary investigation came to the same conclusion about the nature of the incident, police said.

White's obituary appears on page 32.

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## One Injured on Waterhole Road in Colchester

State Police said Brett Saunders, 25, of 99 Comstock Trail, East Hampton, was transported to the Marlborough Clinic with wrist pain after the car he was driving collided with

a tree on Waterhole Road.

Police reported the crash occurred Sept. 12, and Saunders was issued an infraction for failure to keep in the proper lane.

## One Woman Injured on Route 2 in Colchester

State Police said Sandra Lusa, 77, of 200 Pinney St., Ellington, was transported to St. Francis Hospital for minor injuries after a Sept. 8 crash.

Police reported Lusa rear-ended another vehicle on Route 2 east near exit 21. Police charged Lusa with following too closely after the crash.

## Two Injured on Route 149, Colchester

State Police said John Latino, 72, and Janet Latino, 66, both of 8 1st Ave., Old Saybrook, were transported to Backus Hospital for minor injuries after a one-car crash last week.

Police reported John Latino was driving on Route 149 Sept. 9 and lost control near 636 Westchester Rd. Police said he struck a stone wall and rolled over, hitting a telephone pole.

## Portland Police News

9/1: Larry Floyd, 33, of 54 Marlborough St., was charged with second-degree breach of peace, Portland Police said.

9/9: Alex Banning, 22, of 4 Smith St., East Hampton, was charged with reckless driving, failure to obey traffic signal and operating without a license, police said.

9/10: Paul LaRose, 32, of 35 Fern St., Rocky Hill, was charged with criminal violation of a restraining order, police said.

9/11: Kristen Chapone, 25, of 4 Depot Hill Rd., Cobalt, was charged with operating a motor vehicle under suspension, p

## Colchester Police News

9/9: Colchester Police said Jayme Ficara, 24, of 43 Neptune Ave., Moodus, was arrested and charged with second-degree harassment and violation of a protective order.

9/9: Colchester Police said Quanisha (Renee) Lowery, 23, of 426 Long Ln., Middletown, was arrested and charged with failure to appear.

9/9: State Police said Angelina Daddario, 21, of 306 Tuckie Rd., Windham, was arrested and charged with criminal violation of a protective order.

## Obituaries

### Portland

#### Violet P. Jackson

Violet P. (Hills) Jackson, 79, of Middletown, formerly of Portland, wife of the late Ronald Jackson Sr. passed away Saturday, Sept. 12. She was the daughter of the late Edward and Grace (Hill) Hills.



Born June 8, 1936, she was born and raised in Middletown, and moved to Portland in 1963. She enjoyed crocheting.

She leaves a son, Ronald Jackson Jr. and wife Janet of Middletown; daughter, Carolyn Dalton and husband Frank of Alexandria, Va.; sisters and brothers, Dorothy Culver of Middletown, Betty Dow and husband, Ronald of Las Vegas, Nev., Ruth Morin of Old Saybrook, Charles Trowbridge and wife, Virginia of Old Saybrook; sisters-in-law, Shirley Hills of Middletown, Joan Hale of Glastonbury; brother-in-law, Warren Thomson and wife Sheri of Gig Harbor, Wash.; eight grandchildren, Ryan, Jennifer, Jenna, Bryan, Rebecca, Cameron, Jaydis, Dakota; a great-granddaughter, Violet; and numerous nieces and nephews.

She was predeceased by her siblings, Earl, Edward, William and Evelyn.

Graveside services were held Thursday, Sept. 17, at Pine Grove Cemetery, 857 S. Main St., Middletown. Relatives and friends called Wednesday, Sept. 16, at Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to a charity of the donor's choice.

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

### Portland

#### Patricia A Smith

Patricia A. Smith, 46, of Middletown, formerly of Portland, passed away Wednesday, Sept. 10, at Middlesex Hospital. She leaves behind her husband Richard M. Smith and their children, Richard Jr. and fiancé Tatiana Williams, Joshua and Kailoni and two grandchildren.



Born Feb. 22, 1969, in Middletown, she was a dedicated teacher at CRT for 20-plus years in Middletown.

She is the daughter of Phyllis Bordonaro of Portland and the late Richard E. King. Besides her mother, she leaves her sisters Laura Emmons and Donna Kowalski. She leaves numerous nieces and nephews.

Memorial services will be held Saturday, Sept. 19, at 11 a.m., at Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland. There will be a private family burial.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Cystic Fibrosis Foundation ([cff.org](http://cff.org)).

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

### Amston

#### Michelle Renee Brodeur

Michelle Renee Brodeur, 56, of Middletown, passed away Friday, Sept. 11. She was born in Amston to the late Wally and Lillian (Morris) Brodeur.

Michelle was a kind and gentle person with a loving heart. She was a horse enthusiast, most recently donating to Rock Run Animal Rescue to save a horse named Clay. She loved crafts and received lots of hands-on knowledge from her grandmother, mother and aunts and her father.

She is survived by her sister, Donna Brodeur Carter; her niece, JoEllen Scarfo Simons and her husband Dean Nicholas; grandnieces Madison Simons and Rylee Simons. She will be missed by the "Sisters" of Valley Bible EFC and the other members of her church, her friends in New Hampshire, the community at Sojourns and many friends and family.

Michelle's memorial service will be held today, Sept. 18, at 11 a.m., at Valley Bible Evangelical Free Church, 220 Turkey Hill Rd., Haddam, CT 06438. There will be a sign language interpreter at the services. Burial will follow in Tylerville Cemetery.

To leave an online condolence, visit [glastonburyfuneral.com](http://glastonburyfuneral.com).

### East Hampton

#### Kenneth L. White

Kenneth L. White of East Hampton died unexpectedly at his home Wednesday, Sept. 9, at the age of 57. He was born Oct. 8, 1957, to the late Curtis L. White Sr. and Geneva Fuller White.

He had two brothers, Curtis L. White Jr. (deceased) and Ronald Everett.

Ken graduated from Robert E. Fitch Sr. High School, The United States Naval Academy and The University of Connecticut. Major White retired from Connecticut National Guard. Ken was currently employed by the State of Connecticut Department of Corrections in Niantic as plant facilities engineer.

He grew up in Groton, after several years on the move with his Naval family, and spent the last 20 years residing in East Hampton. He was an active member of the Connecticut River Valley BMW Motorcycle Rider Association and regular contender of their 'Iron Butt' award. He was an accomplished sailor and planned to broaden his experience with a bigger (and better) boat. He loved Mini Coopers and was working to restore an antique model. He constantly put his friends and family ahead of himself. Ken was able to find the humor in life, 'Talk Like a Pirate Day' was a favorite holiday.

He is survived by brother Ronald Everett of Roosevelt, N.Y.; sister-in-law Chrystal Ingram White and her four children, Alexi, Madison, Schuyler and Curtis III of Houston, Texas; his oldest and dearest friend Robert, along with his wife Patricia, and was 'Uncle Ken' to their children and grandchildren. He also leaves behind a host of friends, neighbors and co-workers who loved him.

There will be a graveside service Saturday, Sept. 19, at 11:30 a.m., at The Connecticut Veterans Cemetery in Middletown.

Please consider a contribution to The Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, P.O. Box 849168, Boston, MA 02284, in his honor.

A sincere thank you to the East Hampton Police Department, the East Hampton Fire Department and the First Responders.

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

### East Hampton

#### Robert Carl Trahan

Robert Carl Trahan, "Rob," lost his courageous two-year battle with melanoma Monday, Sept. 7, at Middlesex Hospital Hospice Care, with his wife Kim by his side.

Rob was born at Windham Hospital in Willimantic Feb. 15, 1974, to Carl and Marie (Robert) Trahan. He graduated from Windham High School where he was honored to be senior class president in 1992, attended the University of Tampa, and graduated from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte with a BA in history in 1996. Rob's love of outdoors led him to his profession as a land surveyor in Colorado and most recently for Fuss & O'Neill Engineering of Manchester.

Besides his parents, he is survived by his loving wife and care giver, Kim Ernst Trahan, and his two best pals – his sons, Zack and John Trahan. Rob leaves behind his sister, Julie Trahan Scaringella; her husband, Mike and children Jonathan, Madison and Jake; his aunts and uncles, including Dotty and Paul Kozelka of Mansfield, Cheryl and Lee Lowe of Coventry, Billy and Fern Darling of Ashford, and JoAnn Easton of Willimantic, and cousin Tom Krug of Essex Junction, Vt. Rob had three lifelong best friends, Doug Theriault, AJ Joslyn and Eric Hansen. Rob also leaves his in-laws, Bonnie and Steve Morris, Kelly Ernst, and sisters-in-law, Kara and Kristen Ernst.

Rob will be missed by his family and all the friends he made on life's journey. Rob enjoyed traveling, music, playing basketball with his sons, the great outdoors, and debating the issues of the day with anyone brave enough to challenge his theories.

A celebration of Rob's life was held at the Salmon River State Forest in Colchester Saturday, Sept. 12.

In lieu of flowers, make donations to Give Forward Rob Trahan's Cancer Fundraiser or Rob Trahan Benefit Fund c/o Liberty Bank, 2 West High St., East Hampton, CT 06424.

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

### East Hampton

#### Paul A. Harvey

Paul A. Harvey, 65, of East Hampton, beloved husband of Susan (Wilcox) Harvey, died Thursday, Sept. 3, at Hartford Hospital. Born April 8, 1950, in Southbridge, Mass., he was the son of the late Armand and Shirley (Anderson) Harvey.

Besides his wife Susan, he is survived by his children, Jason Fubler Harvey and Jaime Nerissa Harvey, as well as their mothers, Pamela Fubler and Peggy Ann Contos Harvey.

Paul, the eldest of five children, leaves his siblings Bernadette Welch and her husband Greg, Raymond Harvey and his wife Donna, Anne Doyon, James Harvey and his wife Lisa, and numerous nieces and nephews, grandnieces and grandnephews and several cousins. He also leaves Susan's family, her son Joshua Lewbel and fiancée Sasha, daughter Rebecca Bearden and husband Steve, grandsons Lucas and Zachary; Susan's brothers Wesley, Steven and his wife Christie; and two nephews.

Paul graduated from Putnam High School in 1968, and attended Berklee School (now College) of Music in Boston. His professional music career began in high school as a drummer where he played in several local bands. At that time, he was one of the youngest musicians to belong to the professional musicians union.

In college, he traded the drums for guitar, and later, with his wife Peggy Ann, founded Traver Hollow, a well-known bluegrass band that spanned two decades. Traver Hollow recorded five albums, performed from Canada to Florida, as far west as Indiana, and toured in Europe three times. Traver Hollow was the first bluegrass band to record a live TV show in Denmark, and Peggy was one of a small number of female bluegrass musicians. While in Europe, they also performed in Netherlands, Germany, Switzerland and Austria. Paul most recently performed as Harlan Jenkins, a solo act, with a repertoire of stories, bluegrass, ballads and blues.

Paul had a long, active and influential career in the field of Human Services in Connecticut, having been a strong advocate for persons with both mental and physical disabilities for over five decades. He worked in virtually every aspect of the field, from job coach to life skills instructor, director of training and development to patient's rights advocate. Some of his employers were The Institute for Human Resource Development, The State of Connecticut, United Cerebral Palsy, Easter Seals/Allen Institute for Innovative Learning, The ARC New London County and Connecticut Valley Hospital.

Additionally, Paul was a gifted public speaker, writer, artist, and poet; as well as also writing and performing in numerous radio plays with Radio Workshop Players. He was also a Little League and women's softball coach for several years in Willimantic. His talents, upbeat personality, and meaningful mentorship will be missed by many who have known him over the years; and will always be lovingly remembered by his family and friends.

A memorial celebration of Paul's life will be held Saturday, Oct. 24, at Easter Seals Camp Hemlocks, an Oak Hill Center, 85 Jones St. Hebron, from noon until 6 p.m. Luncheon will be served. Those who knew Paul are invited to participate at this "Open Mic" with musical performances, spoken tributes or shared memories. Please RSVP to Paul's family at [swhrv50@aol.com](mailto:swhrv50@aol.com) by Oct. 17 if you plan to attend.

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

### Amston

#### Donald Paul Reidy, Jr.

Donald Paul Reidy Jr., 55, of Amston, formerly of Seymour, beloved husband of Robin Zito Reidy, passed away unexpectedly of natural causes Friday, Aug. 21, at home.

Donald served proudly in the U.S. Army during the Lebanon Conflict and worked as a graphics designer for many years. He was also an avid Harley-Davidson enthusiast.

In addition to his loving wife of 17 years, he leaves behind many family members and numerous friends.

Those interested in making memorial donations, please consider Veterans of Foreign Wars.

A celebration of life will be scheduled at a later date.

### Marlborough

#### Leonard Nelson

Leonard J. Nelson, 63, of Manchester, died Saturday, Sept. 12, at Hartford Hospital after a two-year long struggle with cancer.

Len was born March 20, 1952, one of seven children of Delores A. (Kudron) Nelson of Norwich and the late Robert L. Nelson. He was raised in Marlborough and graduated from RHAM High School.

Len served in the Air Force during the mid-1970s and has lived in the Hartford area most of his life. Prior to his illness he had been employed by the General Cable Company in Willimantic, and had previously been employed for over twenty years at the Rockbestos Company in East Granby.

Len had many interests which included cars, motorcycles, NASCAR racing, fishing, hunting, bows and arrows, rifles, hiking and taking scenic trips.

Besides his mother, Len is survived by his son, Leonard Nelson Jr. and Tammy Lee of Colchester, and his son and daughter-in-law, Andrew and Lorraine Nelson of Manchester; six grandchildren, David, Dalton, Deryk, Mariah, Krista and Cole; his brother, Robert Nelson of Chaplin; four sisters, Yolanda Parmeter and Cheryl Kauffman, both of Manchester, Donna Mumm of Colchester, Lisa LeBlanc of Uncasville, and numerous nieces, nephews, and cousins. He also leaves behind his two best friends, Gordie and Mike, and his close friend, Debra Lewis.

Besides his father, Len was predeceased by a brother, Marc Nelson.

Funeral services will be held today, Sept. 18, at 10 a.m., at the Full Gospel Interdenominational Church, 745 Main Street, Manchester. Burial with military honors will follow at noon in the Marlboro Cemetery, 25 East Hampton Rd., (Route 66), Marlborough. Visiting hours for family and friends were Thursday, Sept. 17, at the Holmes Funeral Home, 400 Main St., Manchester.

Memorial contributions may be made to the John A. DeQuattro Community Cancer Center, 71 Haynes Street, Manchester, CT 06040.

To leave a message for his family, visit [holmeswatkinsfuneralhomes.com](http://holmeswatkinsfuneralhomes.com).

### Colchester

#### Marjorie Myers Zenowitz

Marjorie Myers Zenowitz, 93, of Colchester, passed away peacefully on July 16. She was married to the love of her life, Bill, from May 21, 1945, until his passing in 2007. Marge was born June 8, 1922, in Blooming Prairie, Minn., the eldest of eight siblings, with whom she shared a lifetime of love, wonderful humor and many happy memories.

Marge was gracious and kind, devoted to her family and to her work, especially having enjoyed her position in the personnel department of the former Connecticut General Life Insurance Company, from which she retired in 1983. Marge and Bill shared a lifetime enthusiasm for birdwatching and love of animals and nature, reflective of her quiet, generous and gentle spirit.

She is survived by her daughter, Judy Silvanic and son-in-law Bill Silvanic of Granby; daughter, Jane Murray and son-in-law Kevin Murray of Guilford; and five grandchildren and one great-grandchild, granddaughter Allison and her husband Jason and great-grandson Owen Sempey of Branford, grandson Sean and his wife Ashley Davis of Branford, grandson Michael Murray of Guilford, granddaughter Melissa and her husband Andrew Veale of West Simsbury and grandson Ben Silvanic of Miami, Florida. She is also survived by her sister Janet and husband Jim Guttormson of Austin, Minn.; her brother George and wife Ina Myers of Fergus Falls, Minn.; her brother Ron and wife Arlene Myers of Cottage Grove, Minn.; and her brother Doug and wife Judy Myers of Austin, Minn.; as well as many nieces and nephews.

Marge was predeceased by three of her sisters, Lois Dunker, Pat Peterson and Norma Betlach.

Marge's family would like to extend our thanks for all the wonderful help she received from Backus Home Health Care, Southeast Center for Hospice Care and especially to Ewa and Jacek Gazdzicki of Polish Caregivers LLC.

A memorial service will be held Saturday, Oct. 3 at 11 a.m., at Bethlehem Evangelical Lutheran Church, 1 East High St., East Hampton.

Donations in Marge's honor may be made to the Blooming Prairie, Minnesota Educational Fund, P.O. Box 521, Blooming Prairie, MN 55917, or to the National Audubon Society.

## Obituaries continued

### Hebron

#### Ryan J. O'Connell

Ryan J. O'Connell, 29, of Hebron, formerly of Franklin, left this earth to continue on his next journey as a CdLs Angel in eternal life. He no longer suffers and heaven has opened the gate to his arrival. Born in Farmington Sept. 11, 1985, he was the son of James O'Connell of Lisbon, and Shari and Maurice Drake of Windham.

Ryan attended numerous educational programs in Mystic, Canterbury, Franklin, Windham High, and graduated from the CREC High School Program in Plainville in 2007. Upon his graduation, he moved to the CIB Hebron House Group Home, where he met his second loving family. He attended the Sunrise Day Program in Coventry until his illness in March 2015.

Ryan was a special young man with a loving personality. He taught us the true meaning of patience and unconditional love. His favorite hobbies were watching his favorite DVDs, playing with his blocks, hanging out in his room with his family and CIB family, and going for rides in the van. Ryan touched many lives in his 29 years of life. He was our special gift from God.

Ryan leaves his parents, his special sister (Sissy) Shailyn O'Connell, and stepbrothers, Jon (Samantha and nephew Desmond), Jeff (Danielle) Drake. He leaves his grandparents, Sandra (M-Ma) and Robert Luppert, Wilfred Semmelrock, Lorraine Wisniewski; and great-grandparents Betty and Val Luppert. Ryan also leaves several special aunts, uncles, cousins, his second family at CIB Hebron House, his special friend Brian and staff at Sunrise.

Ryan is predeceased by his Bopsci (Dolores O'Connell), Margaret Bruce, Lynn O'Connell, his cat Shannon and dog Suzie, who were both always by Ry's side.

In celebration of Ryan's life, there will be a memorial service at Grace Episcopal Church, 4 Chapel Hill Rd., Yantic, Saturday, Sept. 19, at 10 a.m. A reception will follow from noon-4 p.m. at the VFW, 30 Connecticut Ave., Norwich.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Ryan's memory to Grace Episcopal Church.

Cummings-Gagne Funeral Home is entrusted with his arrangements. For a memorial guestbook, visit [cummings-gagnefh.com](http://cummings-gagnefh.com).

### Marlborough

#### Leonora McDevitt

Leonora (Ferry) McDevitt, 97, of Glastonbury, formerly of Florida, wife of the late Robert M. McDevitt, passed away peacefully at home Wednesday, Sept. 9, with her family by her side. Born March 11, 1918, in Pawtucket, R.I., she was the daughter of the late Thomas and Annie (O'Connor) Ferry.

Leonora lived in the Pawtucket area for many years before moving to Marlborough, Charlton, N.H., and then Florida. Prior to her retirement, she worked for Travelers Insurance Company for many years.

Leonora leaves her daughter, Maureen Rose and her husband Richard (with whom she made her home) of Glastonbury; her two sons, Robert McDevitt and Raymond McDevitt, both of The Villages, Fla.; 10 grandchildren; 18 great-grandchildren; and four great-great-grandchildren.

In addition to her parents, she was predeceased by her brothers, Edward, Thomas and Raymond Ferry, and her sisters, Helen Carr, Mary Lonergan and Elizabeth Ferry.

Friends called Monday, Sept. 14, at the Farley-Sullivan Funeral Home, 50 Naubuc Ave., Glastonbury. A Mass of Christian Burial followed that morning at St. Paul Church, 2577 Main St., Glastonbury. Burial was in Mount St. Mary Cemetery, 661 Prospect St., Pawtucket, R.I.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to St. Raymond Church, 1240 North Main St., Providence, RI 02904.

To extend online condolences, visit [Farleysullivan.com](http://farleysullivan.com).

### Portland

#### Linda Fae Neilander Memorial Service

Linda Fae Neilander of Ocala, Fla., formerly of Portland, died Wednesday, June 3. A memorial service in celebration of her life will be held at 11 a.m., Saturday, Sept. 19, at South Congregational Church, 9 Pleasant St., Middletown.

Family and friends are welcome at a reception following the service.

Linda is survived by her son Jeffrey Neilander and his wife Shelly, and their children Lauren, Dallis, and Linda's beloved Ryan; by her sister Diane Marley and her sister-in-law Maria Marley.

Linda was predeceased by her parents and her brother James Marley.

Prior to moving to Florida, Linda was a long-time resident of Portland and before that of Meriden. Linda was born in Bangor, Maine, and attended schools in Maine and Vermont before her family relocated to Connecticut. She graduated from the Oona Wilcox School of Nursing and began her career in nursing and the health care field.

Linda is best remembered by her extended family of friends for her warm hugs, her smile, her gracious parties, and for the strength of her faith. She has left her handprint on the hearts of friends from Maine to Florida, travelling north frequently to enjoy the camaraderie and color of New England in the fall.

The family has requested that, in lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to South Church in Linda's memory.

### Hebron

#### Rose Ann Morrison

Rose Ann Morrison, 81, a 38-year resident of Woodstock and most recently of Hebron, wife of the late Milton A. Morrison and daughter of the late Charles and Marie (Parizek) Wochomurka, passed away peacefully at home Tuesday, Sept. 15. She was born July 31, 1934, in Stafford Springs, and resided in eastern Connecticut her entire life.

Rose Ann attended Walnut Hill Preparatory School in Natick, MA and graduated with a bachelor's degree in mathematics in 1956 from Pembroke College, at the time the women's division of Brown University. She was married in August 1956 and went onto work in the computer department with Pratt & Whitney in East Hartford. She later served as the Woodstock town treasurer and worked several years as a supervisor within the Connecticut State Retiree division in Hartford.

She is survived by her two daughters, Sharon Morrison-Hoerman and her husband Donald of Hebron and Mary Ann Stagner and her husband Glen of Lamar, Colo.; her grandchildren Heidi Moskalik, Kacey Garrison and Karlee Stagner; her brother, Charles Wochomurka Jr. of Tennessee; and a host of other relatives and friends.

Besides her husband and parents, Rose Ann was predeceased by her brothers, Adolf (Bud) Wochomurka and Donald Wochomurka.

Rose Ann loved to play bridge and will be remembered as a lifelong Red Sox and UConn women's basketball fan. She was lucky enough to see her beloved Red Sox win the World Series three times during her life.

There are no calling hours. Friends and family are invited to a memorial celebration at Sharon and Don's home, 8 Deer Rock Rd. in Amston Saturday, Sept. 19, at 5 p.m.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the Lupus Foundation of America.

To leave a message for her family, visit [holmes-watkinsfuneralhomes.com](http://holmes-watkinsfuneralhomes.com).

### Marlborough

#### Cynthia Powell-Smith

Cynthia Powell-Smith passed away with God, peacefully, Saturday, Sept. 12. She was surrounded by loving family members, in a room filled with memories of her full life at The Marlborough Health and Rehab Center, where she had resided for this last part of her long illness.

Cindy was born Cynthia Jane Powell to Albert Powell and Lola Elliott (both deceased) on June 1, 1952, in Hartford. Her life took her to the Connecticut shoreline as a child, the rolling hills of Vermont as a student of Green Mountain College, and to the Pacific Island of Maui as a young woman, following and fulfilling her passions along the way.

Cindy loved people. She could fill a room with laughter, converse with anyone, and make any child become the center of the Universe... that was Cindy's way. She made her presence felt, lovingly and authentically, working for many years with the KinderCare Learning Center in Hartford County. She raised her children, Bruce Smith (of Arizona) and Elizabeth Smith (of Vermont) in Bloomfield, alongside her husband, Patrick Smith.

Cynthia's illness (progressive supranuclear palsy) took from her the ability to see, speak clearly, and her independent mobility. However, her strength of spirit and the Powell stubbornness did not stop her from getting around, seeing life and communicating ... that was her magic.

Besides Pat, Bruce and Elizabeth, Cindy leaves behind her granddaughter, Lola Ellen Hayes; her younger sister, Laurie Vogt and two nieces; Bella Vogt and Christa Weil as well as her in-laws, Carol and Tom Rowe and their children. She was predeceased by her older sister, Bella Powell of Guilford, who passed in 2012.

Cindy surrounded herself with loving cousins, nieces, nephews and close friends. She was always ready to celebrate life and was a true definition of the song "People Who Need People."

A celebration of Cynthia's life will be held privately at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be sent to Masonicare Partners Home Health and Hospice, 111 Founders Plaza, Suite 200, East Hartford, CT 06108.

### Portland

#### David M. Willard

David M. Willard, 53, of Portland, died Friday, Aug. 21. Born Nov. 27, 1960, he was the son of the late James F. Willard and Elizabeth (Rowlins) Willard of Bristol. Dave grew up in Bloomfield before settling in Portland.

He is survived by his daughter, Molly Willard of Middletown; his sister, Nancy Pirro of Bristol; and his brother, James Willard of Pennsylvania.

A memorial service was held Wednesday, Sept. 16, at Mount Olive Church of Christ, 695 South Main St., Middletown.