

DEATH NOTICE

Gladys Sidford, 92, Executive Secretary; Member of Echo Lake Country Club

Gladys T. "Skeet" Sidford, 92, of Westfield died on Saturday, January 8, at her home.

Born in New York City, she was raised in Fanwood and moved to Westfield in 1941. She also maintained a summer residence in Brewster, Mass. and, for a time, a second home in South Yarmouth, Mass.

A graduate of the Katharine Gibbs School, Mrs. Sidford had worked briefly for the Baptist Missionary Services in New York City. She was an executive secretary for Kemper Insurance in Summit from 1961 to 1969.

She was a member of the Echo Lake Country Club in Westfield and was a past member of the Cummaquid Golf Club in Yarmouth Port, Mass.

Mrs. Sidford enjoyed golf and bowling and continued to be active with the Echo Lake bridge group. Her extensive travels took her to Alaska, Europe, Russia, the Middle East, China, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, Africa, the Amazon and Antarctica. She was an avid Red Sox fan and watched every inning of the playoff and the series.

She was predeceased by her husband of 54 years, Noel D. Sidford, Jr., in 1992.

Surviving are a daughter, Adair Shepherd of Wantage; a son, Gordon Sidford of Westfield; a sister, Marion "Mits" Keller of Naples, Fla.; a brother, Harold C. "Cam" Todd, Jr. of East Lyme, Conn.; 12 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

A memorial service will be held at 11 a.m. on Saturday, January 22, at the First Baptist Church of Westfield. Private arrangements were by the

Gray Funeral Home, 318 East Broad Street in Westfield.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Jimmy Fund.

Christopher Richey, 51

Christopher C. Richey, 51, of Bayonne died on Sunday, January 9, at his residence.

Born in Brooklyn, N.Y., he grew up in Scotch Plains and also had lived in Westfield before moving to Bayonne four years ago.

Mr. Johnson had been a Production Supervisor for Johnson & Johnson Pharmaceuticals in New Brunswick for 19 years, working until 1995.

He earned an Associate's degree in Public Administration from Union County College, and later graduated from Upsala College in East Orange with a bachelor's degree in marketing.

Surviving are a daughter, Melissa Richey of Westfield; his father, Robert Richey of New Brunswick; three brothers, David Richey and Noel Richey, both of Germantown, Md., and Chet Richey of Bayonne, and two sisters, Tara Roessle of Elizabeth and Amanda Richey of Bayonne.

There will be no visitation. A memorial service will be held at 11 a.m. tomorrow, Friday, January 14, at the First United Methodist Church of Westfield. Burial will be private.

Arrangements are by the Gray Funeral Home, 318 East Broad Street in Westfield.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the American Heart Association.

January 13, 2005

Obituaries

Margaret D. Brandsma, 82, Was Nurse; Active In Women's Clubs and Scouting

Margaret D. Brandsma, 82, died on Friday, December 31, at Evergreen Woods in Branford, Conn.

Born on December 19, 1922 in Newton Falls, N.Y., she was the daughter of Frederick J. and Elizabeth Martineau Duchano. She had lived there, Niagara Falls, N.Y., Delaware and in Westfield for 37 years before moving to Connecticut in 2000.

She graduated in 1940 from Newton Falls High School, where she was pitcher for the baseball team, and earned a degree in nursing in 1944 from Binghamton City Hospital in Binghamton, N.Y.

Mrs. Brandsma received the Anna Sabol Award in 1944 from the Humane Association, in recognition of her outstanding work in obstetrics and gynecology during her training period. After graduation, she worked for one year in Binghamton City Hospital's Maternity Division.

Mrs. Brandsma had been employed by the Niagara Falls Memorial Hospital from 1945 until 1947, and with Muhlenberg Hospital in Plainfield from 1969 to 1970. She volunteered at Muhlenberg Hospital for an additional two years.

In Westfield, Mrs. Brandsma was a member of the Junior Women's Club, Intermediate Women's Club and the Fortnightly Group. She also was active in the Girl Scouts and Cub Scouts in Westfield.

She was predeceased by her husband of 51 years, Walter C. Brandsma, in 1997. The couple was married on August 4, 1945.

Surviving are a daughter, Janet

Brandsma of Guilford, Conn.; a son, Peter Brandsma of Birmingham, Ala.; a sister, Marie Willette of Bradenton, Fla.; a brother, Thomas Duchano of Orlando, Fla., and three grandchildren.

A memorial service was held on January 4 at Evergreen Woods. The funeral took place on January 8 at the Wheatland Presbyterian Church in Breda, Iowa.

Memorial donations may be made to the Alzheimer's Association, 225 N. Michigan Avenue, Suite 1700, Chicago, Ill. 60601-7633, www.alz.org.

January 13, 2005

DEATH NOTICE

Marjorie M. Kane, 94

Marjorie M. Kane, 94, of Mountainside died on Saturday, January 8, at her home.

Born in New York City, she had lived in Elizabeth before moving to Mountainside over 40 years ago.

Mrs. Kane graduated from Douglass College and had worked for several years as a social worker.

She served for many years on the board of the Egenolf Early Childhood Center in Elizabeth; was a long-time member and Past President of the Elizabeth Garden Club, and was a Deacon of the Community Presbyterian Church in Mountainside.

She was the loving wife of Joseph R. Kane.

Surviving are a sister; two nephews; two great-nieces; a great-nephew, and many loving friends and neighbors. She was an inspiration to all who knew and loved her.

A memorial service will be held at 1 p.m. on Wednesday, January 19, at the Community Presbyterian Church of Mountainside.

In lieu of flowers, donations are requested in her memory to the Community Presbyterian Church of Mountainside, Meeting House Lane and Deer Path, Mountainside N.J. 07092.

January 13, 2005

Memorial Service Set For Wilfred O. Taff

WESTFIELD — A memorial service for Wilfred O. Taff will be held Saturday, January 22, at 11 a.m. at the First United Methodist Church, One East Broad Street in Westfield. In lieu of flowers, the family has requested that donations be made to a favorite charity.

Virginia Hitchcox, 89, Was Secretary To Social Services Commissioner

Virginia A. Goetz Hitchcox, 89, of South Yarmouth, Mass. died on Wednesday, December 29, at the Eagle Pond Nursing Home in South Yarmouth.

Born in Watervliet, N.Y., she was raised and educated in Philadelphia, Pa. and attended Temple University for a year. In 1934, she moved to Troy, N.Y., and began work as a secretary for Montgomery Ward. She later was employed as a secretary to the social services commissioner of New York State in Albany.

After marrying in 1939, she and her husband moved to Linden. When her husband entered the Army in 1942, she accompanied him, staying in

nearby towns in Kentucky, Arkansas and California.

When the war ended they returned to New Jersey, living in Cranford and Westfield. They came to South Yarmouth in 1998.

She was predeceased by a daughter, Joyce Helmstadter, in January of 2004.

Surviving are her husband of 65 years, Harold F. Hitchcox; two daughters, Judith H. Klasson of Belmont, Mass. and Jean M. Konta of Cobleskill, N.Y.; a granddaughter and four grandsons.

Private funeral services were arranged through the Morris Funeral Home of South Yarmouth.

January 13, 2005

CONTACT We Care to Begin Volunteer Training Classes

WESTFIELD — CONTACT We Care, the crisis hotline and listening center based in Westfield, will begin its spring training class on Saturday, February 5.

This orientation session, including basic instruction in active listening, will be held at the First Baptist Church of Westfield, located at 170 Elm Street.

It will be followed by eight week-day sessions at Congregation Beth Israel, 18 Shalom Way in Scotch Plains, and will conclude with a final Saturday session at the First Baptist Church on April 2.

Prospective volunteers interested in training to take crisis calls on the hotline should call Program Director Eileen Fitzmaurice at (908) 301-1899 for more information.

Every CONTACT volunteer goes

through 50 hours of training before going solo on the phones. Training includes classes in active empathetic listening, dealing with grief, mental illness, suicide and other topics related to supporting callers in distress.

CONTACT volunteers field nearly 10,000 calls annually and place reassurance calls to the homebound elderly and disabled in a primary service area that covers Union, Essex, Middlesex, Somerset and Morris Counties.

CONTACT, celebrating its 30th anniversary in Union County this year, is part of a nationwide network of crisis centers overseen by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration and coordinated by the Mental Health Association of New York. The network's new number is (800) 273-TALK.

DEATH NOTICE

Joseph P. O'Connor, 87, Grand Knight; Was Navy Seabee During World War II

Joseph P. O'Connor, 87, of Scotch Plains died on Monday, January 10, at home after a brief illness.

Born in Elizabeth, he lived in Scotch Plains for 55 years.

Mr. O'Connor retired from the New

Carl J. Lucchesi, 70

Carl Joseph Lucchesi, 70, a lifelong resident of Westfield, died on Sunday, January 9, at Overlook Hospital in Summit.

A 1953 graduate of Westfield High School, he served in the United States Navy from 1955 to 1957.

Mr. Lucchesi retired in 1999 after spending 42 years in the automobile business.

Surviving are his wife of 45 years, Shirley Critelli-Lucchesi; a son, Vincent Lucchesi of Sea Girt; a daughter, Anna Gahm; a sister, Ann Lucchesi, also of Westfield, and five grandchildren.

A Mass of Christian Burial was offered yesterday, Wednesday, January 12, at St. Anne's Roman Catholic Church in Garwood. Interment took place at St. Gertrude Cemetery in Colonia.

Arrangements were by the Dooley Colonial Home, 556 Westfield Avenue in Westfield.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Westfield Rescue Squad, P.O. Box 356, Westfield 07091.

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Jersey Bell Telephone Company in 1981 after 45 years of service.

During World War II, he served with the United States Navy Seabees as an EM2.

He was a Past Grand Knight and Past Columbian Club President of Monsignor Henry J. Watterson Council No. 1711 of the Knights of Columbus.

He also was a Past Faithful Navigator of the John Dawson Gilmary Shea Assembly Fourth Degree Knights of Columbus in Elizabeth. Mr. O'Connor later transferred to the Watchung General Assembly Fourth Degree Knights of Columbus in Plainfield.

His memberships also included American Legion Martin Wallberg Post No. 3 in Westfield and Plainfield Elks No. 885.

He was predeceased by his wife of 60 years, Emilie O'Connor, in 2002.

Surviving are a daughter, Barbara A. Verdic, and a grandson, Joseph T. Frame, and his wife, Lisa.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be offered for the repose of his soul at 11 a.m. today, Thursday, January 13, at St. Bartholomew the Apostle Roman Catholic Church in Scotch Plains. Entombment will be at Saint Gertrude Cemetery in Colonia.

Arrangements are by the Gray Funeral Home, 318 East Broad Street in Westfield.

January 13, 2005

Area/Community News

Beware of Unauthorized Access To Your Financial Accounts

By FRED LECOMTE

Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

Recently I, among many people, have been targeted by "phishing" scams directed at financial customers. Most of the scams involve the use of fraudulent e-mail messages, which appear to be from your bank or financial institution. The e-mail makes use of fraudulent websites to trick people into sharing personal financial information, such as account numbers, passwords, Social Security numbers and other data.

Upon contacting my financial institution, I was made aware that they were not compromised and do not forward e-mail messages or make phone calls asking for personal information.

The financial industry and law enforcement agencies are investigating them and are shutting down the fake websites.

Please remember to: Be suspicious of emails with urgent requests for personal financial information. Do not fill out forms in e-mail messages that ask for personal financial information. Do not reply to e-mail messages that ask for personal information. Avoid using links in e-mail to get to Web pages, especially if you suspect possible credit card theft or attempts to acquire sensitive information.

Regularly check your bank, credit and debit card statements to ensure that all transactions are legitimate.

Mobile Meals of WF Provides Volunteer Opportunities

By THE JUNIOR LEAGUE OF ELIZABETH-PLAINFIELD

Think of a favorite aunt who has broken her hip. A failing parent or grandparent determined to live at home. A widow who no longer can drive.

These are just a few of the 150 clients served — literally — by Mobile Meals of Westfield, a non-profit organization founded in 1968 and headquartered in a rented kitchen at the First Baptist Church on Elm Street.

Each week, Mobile Meals prepares, packages and delivers more than 500 nutritious meals to ill, elderly and handicapped clients living in the Westfield area.

Unlike Meals on Wheels, the organization serves anyone with a need, regardless of age or financial status. Clients pay a fee, which can be subsidized if needed, for the service. The organization employs just three people: a director, responsible for menu planning and ordering; a cook and a dishwasher. A pool of 150 volunteers performs the bulk of the labor.

To spend a morning volunteering at Mobile Meals is to witness efficiency in action. Volunteer packers gather at 8:30 a.m. Everyone has a specific role: vegetable chopper, salad tosser, dessert scooper, sandwich maker. The director makes certain that each client's needs — ranging from diabetic-friendly to a skim milk aversion — are met.

Next, the packers form an assembly line, led by the cook, that ensures that the meals stay hot. The process leaves little time for sitting, but plenty for conversation and camaraderie.

"We talk about movies, kids, plays, books. The time just flies. I enjoy the other volunteers and knowing that I'm a small part of easing the worries of families, especially caregivers," says Maribeth Hall, who shares a shift, volunteering alternate weeks with her sister-in-law.

The next group of volunteers, the

delivers, arrives at 10:30. They carry their route-coded, insulated coolers to their trucks and finish their deliveries by noon. According to driver Catherine Clifford, the Mobile Meals volunteer is often the only personal contact the client has that day.

"When I show up with a warm greeting and meal, it makes their day. I love bringing my daughter, letting her see me help others. It's a great experience for our entire family."

A volunteer board of directors oversees all operations, including recruiting volunteers, maintaining equipment and space, and securing funds. "While client payments are an income source, we also rely on private donations and grants. We've received generous assistance from the United Way of Westfield, the Westfield Foundation, the Women's Service League and the Junior League of Elizabeth-Plainfield," Marian McCarthy, board vice president, explains.

"We've also received capital improvement grants from foundations. And, we're working with the Westfield Community Players on a fundraising event to take place May 13," she adds.

An immediate need, according to Mrs. McCarthy, is volunteers. "We are desperate right now for drivers, which requires only about a one hour per week commitment. There is really a way for anyone, whether a young mom or a retiree, willing to volunteer for Mobile Meals."

To volunteer as either a driver or a packer, or to purchase tickets for the May 13 event, call Mobile Meals Director Sharon Goldner at (908) 233-6146.

The Junior League of Elizabeth-Plainfield is an organization of women committed to promoting volunteerism, developing the potential of women, and improving the community through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers. For information or to join, visit www.jlepnj.org or call (908) 709-1177.

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