

Life Tributes

**Gremmo
2023**

Lily and Emma Fra and two step-grandchildren Bernie and Charlie Bachman. He also had 3 great-grandchildren Giannah Michelson, Adrienne Novitch and Emma Novitch. He is also survived by three of his late wife's siblings who were very dear to him, Dean Barney, Bristol, CT, Lisa (Sam) Faraclas, Bristol, CT and Ed (Selena) Barney, Wilmington, NC, and his beloved Pug, Marty.

He was predeceased in death by his mother Johanna (Gentilcore) Gremmo, his wife Nancy (Barney) Gremmo and his father, Felix Gremmo as well as his late wife's siblings Rhonda (Barney) Pagan and Joe Barney.

He was so loved and will be missed by his large extended family and so many friends in Connecticut and Idaho.

The funeral service will be held at John F. Tierney Funeral Home at 219 West Center Street, Manchester, CT 06040 on Thursday September 14, 2023, between 9:00 - 11:00 a.m. Burial will follow the funeral at East Cemetery, Manchester, CT. We will have a Celebration of Life for Fran at the Army Navy Club in Manchester following the burial.

As Fran was always over the top, you are welcome to come dressed in your favorite Red Sox attire or a swanky Hawaiian shirt!

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be given to Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation. For online condolences, please visit www.tierneyfuneralhome.com.

JOHN F.
Tierney
FUNERAL HOME INC.

Merle Carter Pyne

Merle Carter Pyne, beloved husband of Carole (Schneemann) Pyne, entered into eternal peace on Tuesday, August 22, 2023, at Johnson Memorial Hospital. Born in Malden, MA in 1939, he was the son of the late Kenneth C. and Gladys (Mitchell) Pyne. Merle attended the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center (DLI-FLC) of The Presidio of Monterey, California (POM). He was an army Russian linguist serving in Japan for three and a half years. He was discharged as a Specialist 5th class. He was employed with Morse Shoe, a retail career that took him to all 50 states and Puerto Rico. He enjoyed taking trips with his wife, and they toured many countries including Bermuda, England, Belgium, Germany, Austria, Italy, France, Hong Kong, and mainland China. One memorable trip was on the Orient Express. His passion for locomotives included being a model railroad hobbyist of HO trains. Merle appreciated music of all kinds, but most especially jazz. He would often play duets with his daughter on the family piano and took delight in singing in Christmas concerts at church during the holidays. His other favorite



activities included driving his 1990 red Miata with the top down, visiting with relatives and playing with the family's many rescue Bichon Frise dogs.

In addition to his wife Carole, Merle is survived by his daughter Carrie and her husband Peter of Somers, two grand-dogs, and many dear friends.

A memorial service will be held at a later date. Donations in Merle's memory may be made to Best Friends Animal Sanctuary, 5001 Angel Canyon Rd., Kanab, Utah 84741, or The Somers Historical Society, Inc., P.O. Box 652, Somers, CT 06071. For online condolences, please visit www.somersfuneralhome.com.

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Create an enduring memorial for a loved one

Memorials come in many different shapes and sizes. Here is just one way to create an enduring memorial.

Plant a tree. Trees have long symbolized life and wisdom. Trees can live for dozens of years, growing larger and more vibrant with each year that passes. Planting a tree in a loved one's name will create a beautiful respite that people can visit and enjoy. A small plaque or another type of sign can feature the name of the person being memorialized.

State election head pleads for new voting equipment

By John Moritz
STAFF WRITER

A planned overhaul of Connecticut's aging election infrastructure with the purchase of more than 3,000 new tabulators may not be ready in time for the 2024 elections unless officials move soon to approve borrowing for the machines, Secretary of the State Stephanie Thomas says.

A proposed \$24.5 million bond package to purchase new equipment and train poll workers — authorized by lawmakers in June — is awaiting final approval from the State Bond Commission, which has not met in over two months.

While records show that the commission rarely holds meetings in late summer, the decision

to cancel its meeting on Aug. 25 has left the state in a pinch when it comes to planning for the upcoming election year, Thomas warned.

"Time is not on our side," Thomas told CT Insider in a text message. "September may be possible, but it would take extraordinarily good fortune to implement in time for the 2024 presidential election after that date."

Thomas, a Democrat, explained in a subsequent interview last week that once the state receives the OK to borrow the money to purchase tabulators, it must solicit bids from the limited number of companies that manufacture election equipment. During the evaluation of those bids, Thomas said she will seek the input from lo-

cal election officials, giving them an opportunity to "see, touch and feel the machines."

Once an applicant is selected, Thomas said the timing of the rollout will depend on the winning company's ability to manufacture and deliver the machines throughout Connecticut. "I'm not exactly sure how many months that will take, but sooner is going to be better than later to allow for any glitches or any inventory issues that transpire," Thomas said.

The secretary added that her office hopes to introduce the machines during the state primary election next August, giving election workers an opportunity to work with the new equipment before the general election in November.

At this point, she said it is too

late to consider rolling out the new equipment in time for the presidential primary in April.

Speaking to reporters on Monday, Lamont said that he was not concerned about the Bond Commission's lack of action, adding that his chief of staff, Jonathan Dach, was engaged in discussions with Thomas' office about the planned upgrades.

"How many machines do we need? What's the timing on this?" said Lamont, who also serves as chairman of the Bond Commission. "They're old and creaky. We're going to get this right."

Connecticut's current stock of vote tabulators date back to the mid-2000s, and poll workers have complained that they are prone to problems such as paper

jams, which can slow the counting. The company that manufactured those machines is out of business, adding to the headache of getting them repaired.

The latest models of tabulators on the market offer digital touch screens that can immediately warn voters of a potential error, such as if they selected more than once choice for a particular race. Thomas said they are also equipped with additional security measures and scanning technology designed to streamline the vote-counting process.

The Bond Commission's next meeting is scheduled for Sept. 29, though the final agenda for the meeting has not been published.

Staff Writer Ken Dixon contributed to this article.

Transgender sorority suit dismissed

ASSOCIATED PRESS

transgender woman last year, Johnson ruled Friday.

With no definition of a woman in sorority bylaws, Johnson ruled that he could not impose the six sisters' definition of a woman in place of the sorority's more expansive definition provided in court. "With its inquiry beginning and ending there, the court will not define a 'woman' today," Johnson wrote.

Langford's attorney, Rachel Berkness, welcomed the ruling.

rumor," Berkness said.

An attorney for the sisters, Cassie Craven, said they disagreed with the ruling and the fundamental issue — the definition of a woman — remains undecided. "Women have a biological reality that deserves to be protected and recognized and we will continue to fight for that right just as women suffragists for decades have been told that their bodies, opinions, and safety doesn't matter," Craven

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Program, but emphasized the need to do more.

"The improvements in chronic absenteeism, as well as math and science scores, should encourage us to strengthen our collective resolve and to continue working together intensively to re-engage all students in education," Russell-Tucker said.

State officials, as well as a group of local educators who joined them Monday, expressed

attendance will continue to improve as COVID fades further into the past.

Somers superintendent Samuel Galloway said he has already observed the education experience gradually normalizing after a period of extreme disruption.

"The focus is on learning, for our staff, for our students for our families, as opposed to the everyday medical decisions that we might have been focusing on previously," Galloway said. "Each year is shifted more and more to the learning piece