

# Obituaries

## Layna Bussiere-Nugent

A M H E R S T – Layna S. Bussiere-Nugent, 48 of Amherst passed away at in Florida on June 25, 2014. She was born on June 11, 1966 in Manchester, she is the daughter of Raymond and Sylvia (Soucy) Bussiere of Melbourne, Florida.



Beloved mother of Daniel Nugent, Shannon Nugent, Olivia Barry and step-mother of Shaunna Barry all of Amherst. Loving life partner of Ron Barry of Amherst, dear sister of Steven Bussiere of New Mexico and Scott Bussiere of Tilton.

Layna was a graduate of West High School, Class of 1984. She was the proprietor and general manager of Chapanga's Griddle and Grill in Milford. Layna worked for over 20 years in the restaurant industry, helping a number of establishments grow and succeed. Eventually, she asked, "Why not work for myself?" At that point, the idea of Chapanga's was born, and Layna has worked tirelessly toward its success since. She has always been known for her high energy personality, and that

truly showed in her ability to run around after a 3 year old at her age. Layna was artistic and made everything a work of art. She loved to throw parties for her friends and family, and worked endlessly to make sure every last detail was perfected. One of her favorite hobbies was running. Whether

she was on a treadmill or running a road race, she could go for miles. Her love and care for others showed in her persistence to make everyone happy. She loved her children more than anything, and that truly showed in her constant attempt to make their lives the best she could. Her happy-go-lucky attitude and contagious smile could put anyone in a good mood. She shined in every social setting and illuminated an aura of love and kindness that attracted everyone to her. Life will not be the same without this incredible woman, but her loving soul will live on forever.

Burial will be private. For more information and on-line guest book please visit [www.phaneuf.net](http://www.phaneuf.net)

## Ruth Jones Sammis

AMHERST – Ruth Jones Sammis, 88, passed away peacefully July 12, 2014 at Hunt Community in Nashua. Ruth was born on April 6, 1926 in Brooklyn, NY to Blanche (Hall) and Hubert Darrell Jones. As the daughter of a Methodist minister, she grew up in a number of different locations, including Bristol CT., Port Washington and Mount Vernon NY. She attended Northfield School for Girls, graduating in 1945, and Allegheny College, graduating in 1948.

Upon graduation, she married the love of her life, Henry (Hank) C. Sammis, and shortly thereafter they established a home in White Plains, NY. She devoted the first 15 years of their marriage to raising their three children while also being a supportive member of the Memorial United Methodist Church and the community, including the PEO Sisterhood.

She then pursued a career in social work, a calling close to her heart. When Hank was transferred to Dalton, GA, she continued her career as a patient representative at Hamilton Memorial Hospital. Five years later, Hank having passed away, she felt the pull of her roots and returned to White Plains. There she continued her career at the Dept. of Social Services as a Child Protective Supervisor. Concurrently she pursued a degree at Hunter College, graduating with a Masters in Social Work at age 65.

Ruth was the consummate entertainer, always gathering family and friends for meals and celebrations of any sort. Always busy, she managed to make everyone feel welcome and special and reached out to those in need. She was the glue that held everyone together.

Upon retirement, she moved to Amherst to be near family. She enjoyed five years of friendship in Amherst before moving to Hunt Community in Nashua in 2001. There she received loving care and support from the staff, for which the family is extremely grateful.

She was predeceased by her husband Hank. She is survived by her children, Susan (and Paul) Spiess and Clay Sammis of Amherst, Elizabeth (and Michael) Roberts of Dalton, Georgia; six grandchildren, Jennifer Spiess (and Raj) Gupta, Stephen Spiess, Rachel Sammis, Sasha Sammis, Andrew Pelfrey and Rebecca Pelfrey (and Justin) Hurst; four great grandchildren Owen, Parker and Molly Gupta and Kyran Hurst; her sister-in-law Cynthia Sammis; and three nieces and nephews.

A memorial service will be held at the Congregational Church of Amherst, UCC, 11 Church Street, Amherst at 10 am on Saturday, August 2. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Hunt Community Scholarship Fund, 10 Allds Street, Nashua, NH 03060.

## John Leonard

Late Father of Amherst Resident

FREMONT John F. "Jack" Leonard, 89 of Fremont died Monday June 30, 2014 surrounded by his 6 daughters. Jack was born in Boston, MA on September 25, 1924, son of the late John W. and Margaret (Buckley) Leonard. He spent his early years in Charlestown, MA. He had resided most recently at Poplin Way Assisted Living in Fremont. During the previous 12 years Jack lived in Windham. The majority of his life Jack lived in Billerica & Arlington, MA. Jack proudly served his country during WWII with the US Navy, continuing with the Naval Reserves from 1949-1982. He retired in the rank of Chief Petty Officer from the Navy aboard the USS Constitution with 37 years of service to his country. Jack was employed by General Electric in Lynn, MA for 35 years. He also worked for the US Post Office at the South Boston Postal Annex for 20 years.

Jack was a proud member of the VFW and the American Legion Post #0109. He was a life member of the Elks Lodge #2071 in Billerica. In recent years, Jack was honored to become a member of the Aviation Museum of NH. His proudest affiliation was with his air squadrons from the war. He looked forward to travelling the country to attend the



twice yearly reunions with his squadron mates. His greatest joy in life was spending time with his many daughters, grandchildren and great grandchildren.

He is survived by his six daughters; Lynda Leonard Olson and her husband Edwin of Lowell, MA, Kathleen Leavitt and her husband Philip of Windham, Bettyjane Walsh and her husband Edward of Amherst, NH, Judy Casey (wife of the late Edward J. Casey, Jr.) of Lowell, Jacqueline Johansen of Bedford, NH, and Brenda Caron and her husband David of Brentwood, NH, 20 grandchildren, 11 great-grandchildren, two sisters; Marjorie Simeone of Woburn, MA, and Barbara Sprague of Jupiter, FL, three brothers; Richard Leonard of Orchard Park, NY, Robert Leonard and William Leonard both of Burlington, MA. Jack leaves numerous nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by his wife, Genevieve (Jane) L. (Dockham) Leonard in 2002, and his infant son, John Scott Leonard in 1950, and by his four sisters, Louise, Marilyn, Patsy and Eleanor.

Burial with honors will follow at Cemetery on the Plain in Windham. To send a condolence or for more information, please visit [www.peabodyfuneralhome.com](http://www.peabodyfuneralhome.com)

## Ruth E. McGrath

AMHERST – Ruth E. McGrath, 91, longtime resident of Amherst died on July 17, 2014 at the Community Hospice House, Merrimack.

She was born in South Dartmouth, MA on April 17, 1923, a daughter of Ray V. and Marion (Blanchard) Comerford. She was raised in Bedford, NH and graduated from West High School, Manchester and the University of New Hampshire.

Mrs. McGrath was an elementary physical education teacher for the Nashua School District for 20 years.

She was fond of gardening, bird watching, horses and dogs. In addition, she and her late husband both had their pilot's license and enjoyed flying their small plane around New England. She loved spending time at her camp at Lake Skatutakee in Harrisville, NH where she entertained many friends and old classmates.

Mrs. McGrath attended the First Congregational Church of Milford, UCC and was active in the Wom-

en's Sewing Group and made many items for their annual Holly Berry Fair.

She was predeceased by her husband, Chester McGrath and a niece, Janet Lee Kenney.

Family members include two nephews, Edward "Pete" Comerford and his wife, Mary, Richard F. Comerford and his wife, Sharon, all of Keene, NH; three nieces, Susan Kosmo, Nancy Jo Krochmal and her husband, John, all of Westmoreland, NH and Sally McGraw of Milford, NH; many great nieces and great nephews.

In lieu of flowers, donations in her memory may be made to Animal Rescue League of New Hampshire, 545 Route 101, Bedford, NH 03110 or Amherst EMS, P.O. Box 126, Amherst, NH 03031. Arrangements are in the care of Smith & Heald Funeral Home, Milford. To share a memory or offer a condolence, please go to [www.smith-heald.com](http://www.smith-heald.com)

# Early Morning at Pond Parish, Part I

BY TOM SILEO  
JUNE 15, 2014

Each of our town conservation properties possesses its own characteristics, each offering a unique experience. And, while each season offers its unique floral display, on still another level, visiting a property in the morning, afternoon or evening exposes secrets that are exclusive to those times of day; one who is used to visiting a property in the afternoon will be surprised at what is revealed at dawn.

With this in mind, I decided to visit Pond Parish Conservation Land at 4:45 a.m. on June 15, 2014. The sun was due to rise at 5:06 a.m., and so the birds would be out searching for insects, many of which become more active as the sun warms the forest. And, in fact, not far along the main path off Pond Parish Road, I felt the morning temperature rise ever so slightly.

I heard a scarlet tanager singing to my right, its song like that of a hoarse robin – "phee-u-pheeu-phee-u-pheeu," but followed by the tanager's unique "fitz-beww" call. The ovenbird, a warbler that builds a dome-shaped nest on the ground that's shaped like an old fashioned outdoor oven, sang loudly as well: "tee-cher-tee-cher-tee-cher-tee-cher."



Mountain Laurel

As I continued past a stand of mountain laurel, the beautiful pink and white buds beginning to open,

the ovenbird and a black-capped chickadee became the prominent bird songs in this section of the woods.

Soon, the ovenbird stopped, but a nearby chickadee's plaintive "phee-beee" song was followed by a more distant echoed response: "phee-beee;" phee-beee," the beginning of a lovely duet as two chickadees communicated back and forth. "Never were purer tones heard on earth," noted Simeon Pease Cheney in Wood Notes Wild (1892). Cheney, by the way, writes the chickadee's song as "ear – ly."

I heard a red-eyed vireo singing from somewhere deep in the woods and then, to my left, the hermit thrush. There is no better setting for the hermit thrush's ethereal music than very early in the morning, when the sun is nigh, dew is still on the grass and a light fog still drifts over a pond or lake.



Maple-Leaved Viburnum

Maple-leaved viburnum was in bloom and abundant alongside this path. This shrub's height varies from knee-high to six feet tall. The thrice-pointed, maple-shaped leaves come in pairs and a shallow-dome-shaped cluster of white flowers rises from between them, sometimes on a stalk as high as six inches.

Whorled loosestrife grows closer to the path, but only the buds are showing. Four leaves are whorled around a twelve-to-twenty-four

inch stem, and projecting over each leaf is a flower on a stem the shape of a small up-curved wire. From its symmetrical appearance, I imagine some engineer created this plant; and, proud of his handiwork, he or she planted it here for all to appreciate.



Bluebird

As I listened to an eastern peewee singing its beautiful woodland song - "pee-a-weee" – I watched a couple blue jays dart across the tree canopy and tried to imagine what sort of mischief they were causing.

Continuing ahead, I noticed that both hayscented fern and New York fern line the path. One can easily learn to identify the common New York fern. The leaflets grow larger toward the middle of the stem like most ferns, but on this fern, they grow smaller again as they extend the full length down the main stem, so that the entire frond takes on the



Bunchberry

shape of a diamond.

Below a stand of maple-leaved viburnum is a small patch of bunchberry. Bunchberry is in the dogwood family, and the resemblance is apparent, except for the fact that this shrub grows to only about five inches tall. The four bright white bracts that take the place of petals suggest those of the flowering dogwood that was in bloom in May. While these "petals" still showed, the flowers were past their prime, and I noticed that the fruit was just beginning to form.

Small chestnut trees edge the path ahead along with bracken fern and royal fern. And, as I walked along the path, the sun still on the horizon, I heard a pine warbler from the tall, straight pine trees that dominate this forest.

Some logs are crudely laid on the path where a dried brook crosses it. New York fern and royal fern edge these logs, the attractive brown fertile fronds of the latter conspicuously rising above the attractive green leaves. The observation deck is a short distance down the path that turns to the right, but, I continued deeper into the woods, continuing straight on this path, passed cinnamon ferns.

And, still another fern creates a wide-spreading, dense patch ahead: spinulose woodfern. This is an interesting fern with many varieties. You might notice on one of the many fronds in this section, how the leaflets that make up the frond grow upward rather than straight out. This helps identify this fern as spinulose woodfern.

Ahead, I saw two signs: "To Spring Road" and "Pond Parish Loop." I turned left and walked toward Spring Road. Just ahead, I took another left toward the water and immediately heard the twang of green frogs. If you stretch a rubber band tightly and strum on it, you'll hear the sound of a green frog calling out from a marsh.

Before I approached the edge of the water, I saw a wide-spread-

### Amherst Bear Sighting



Liz Overholt found a bear tackling their bird feeder recently

## In Season Shopping at Amherst Farmers' Market

AMHERST – The Amherst Farmers' Market is in full swing and is bound to have something you will love. Open Thursdays from 3-6 at Bedford Fields, formerly known as Ponemah Farms, at 42 101A in Amherst. Come listen to live music while you browse our vendors.

Raspberries and blueberries are in season! We are also well stocked with a large variety of strait-from-the-garden vegetables. Country Dreams Farms, Holland Farms, and Trombly Gardens offer an abundance of tasty vegetables and fruits.

If you are a soup lover, you need look no more to find homemade hearty soups. Word of Mouth Chef sells a variety of soups such as Watermelon Gazpacho, Carrot Ginger, Corn and Clam chowders, and a Super Soup which, among other ingredients, contains lentil, chia, spelt, celery, carrot, onion, tomato, and 10 other beans and is very popular.

You can't beat the scones, cookies, and granola Simple Goodness makes fresh each week. She is also adding fudge to her product line. G3 Bakery offers delicious cookies, pastries, and breads. The Chocolate Fanatic sells their unique caramels and chocolates. Their flavored shaved ice is perfect on a warm day.

Need a special gift? Hemlock Springs Soaps offers a wide variety of wonderfully scented goat milk soaps, lotions, balms, and oils using local fresh-farm-the farm goat milk.

Another great gift idea are the award winning jams and jellies from Laurel Hill Jams who uses locally sourced ingredients. Among

her wide variety you will find wine jellies and Sunrise Tea Jelly which is a mint tea with calendula petals which she sourced from our herb vendor Bee Fields Farms. Bee Fields Farms sells a variety of herb products using only herbs grown on their farm. Stop by their booth and try the iced tea!

Parker House Coffee packages their locally roasted coffee in pretty mason jars which also make a nice gift or a treat for yourself! The smooth coffee taste impresses even non-coffee drinkers!

Valentine and Sons has added Real Tomato Catsup, Spiced Apple Mustard, and, Spiced Apple Marinade to their Farm to Pantry product line. They use only the freshest ingredients either grown at their farm or locally sourced. Stop by their booth and try some delicious fried apple rings or pickles.

Looking for a healthy treat for your dog? Gunther's Goodies uses only four ingredients in her popular dog treats.

Paradise Farms sell their own grass-fed beef and lamb, pasture raised pork, eggs, berries, fruits, honey, maple syrup, and more. They also sell, along with Milford Goat Dairy, goat milk which is "liquid gold" with its major health benefits.

We also have guest vendors among which include an acupuncturist and a massage therapist who offer free demonstrations. So come on down, enjoy the fun pretty atmosphere at Bedford Fields, and support your hard working neighbors!



Female Mallard

tween the forest and the boardwalk, is more densely filled with vegetation.

I stopped halfway across the boardwalk and looked left toward the marsh. Alder dominates this marsh along with sedges and red-winged blackbirds and grackles and song sparrows. A pretty yellow bladderwort with two blooms grew just below the boardwalk like a twin candles against the dark water.

Farther out, a strip of open water cuts through the vegetation from the marshy pond toward the boardwalk. A duck, from out of nowhere, landed within that strip of water and began to swim toward me, slowly. I thought it might be a black duck, but as it swam closer, I recognized it as a female mallard by its lighter color and darker bill (black ducks have yellow bills).

While watching the duck, a glare caught my eye. At the far end of the marsh, as if suddenly, the sun began to blossom over the distant trees, blurring their outlines against the sky. The yellow rays, like petals, slowly stretched above the highest trees to announce the beginning of the day.

It was already 5:43 a.m., well past official sunrise; but, as far as I was concerned, the sun was just beginning its rise over this beautiful place in Amherst.

A resident of Amherst, Tom Sileo is a Financial Advisor with a passion for the outdoors and local history. He has written hundreds of articles and columns on the outdoors and five books: The Great Spirit of Horn Pond, Historical Guide to Open Space in Lexington, The Lexington Battlegreen, Rambling Through a Secular Bear Market (on financial planning) and Time Present and Time Past (a novel). The photos used in this article were taken by the author at the properties mentioned.