

Hundreds attend Memorial for Ray Burton

By BRIAN TILTON

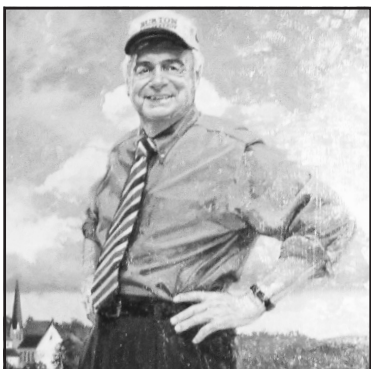
PLYMOUTH – Several hundred people gathered at Plymouth State University last Saturday to honor the late Executive Councilor Ray Burton at a public memorial service.

Burton, who passed away last month after a battle with kidney cancer, was honored by a number of dignitaries, citizens and colleagues at his alma mater. This was Burton's 36th year serving on the Executive Council.

Burton's district of 108 towns and four cities included a number of towns in the *InterTown RECORD's* coverage area including: Andover, Croydon, Danbury, Grantham, New London, Newport, Springfield, Sunapee and Wilmot.

Among those in attendance representing portions of the InterTown's area past and present were Sen. Bob Odell of Lempster, Merrimack County Sheriff Scott Hilliard, Sullivan County Sheriff Mike Prozzo, Congressman Ann McClane Kuster, former Executive Councilor Dan St. Hilaire, former Congressman Charlie Bass, and a number of statewide officer holders who spoke at the service.

The service opened with prayer, then a presentation of colors by the "Blended Honor Guard" consisting of a number of First Responders from state and local agencies. Every march step could be heard as the hundreds in attendance stood silently. Col. Robert Quinn, director of the Division of New Hampshire State Police, led the Pledge of Allegiance followed with remarks



A PORTRAIT of the late Executive Councilor Ray Burton was unveiled during the service.

(Brian Tilton Photo)

by a number of elected officials.

Governor Maggie Hassan led the list of speakers paying tribute and high honors to a true public servant.

"For nearly 40 years, Ray Burton stood up for and fought for the people and communities of the North Country with a passion that can never be matched," Hassan said. "I truly believe that in New Hampshire, we do democracy better than anywhere else on earth. But our democracy, our Founders' great vision, the American mission itself simply does not work without public servants like Ray Burton."

While Ray Burton was active in Republican party circles, he drew admiration and respect from many Democrats. Hassan admired the way

he went about his service, "always treating others with respect, courtesy and kindness even as he held his ground for his constituents," adding, "Because to Ray Burton, it was the citizens of the Granite State, the people who mattered and he never forgot that he worked for you."

Former Governor and now U.S. Senator Jeanne Shaheen recalled her whirlwind tour of the North Country shortly after being elected governor, something that Ray Burton was famous for taking a number of newly elected public officials on, remarked "Everywhere we went, Ray knew the history of the places, he knew everything there was to know about those places, and more importantly, he knew the people. He knew them by name, he knew their hopes and their aspirations."

The Plymouth State University Chamber Singers performed some stirring and inspiring musical tributes and a portrait of Burton was unveiled. The portrait titled "Public Servant" was completed in 2010 and recently donated by Burton to the State House and will permanently hang over Councilor Burton's desk in the Executive Council office.

In recalling Burton's common refrain for public officials that "there's life north of Concord," former New Hampshire Governor John Lynch of Hopkinton concluded his remarks, "Ray undoubtedly is now with the Lord, urging the Lord to look north, look north."

New London Selectmen

(Continued from Page 1)

In the end, the board approved a three-month experimental period during which the parking lot will be a "No Long-Term Parking" zone, effective immediately. Cars parked in the lot will be able to stay for a maximum of 12 hours, regardless of the time of day. This experimental period will expire on Feb. 15, 2014, at which time the board will reassess the future of the lot's parking restrictions. The board also left Lee with the authority to make exceptions to this ruling as needed.

The board next gave Lee their blessing to try out a new type of road sealant on Hall Farm Road. Lee explained that the road surface, called chip sealing and provided by All States Material Group of Sunderland, Mass., will consist of 3/8 inch stone set in a 1/8 inch layer of oil and look similar to a loose gravel surface. Lee assured the board that he has found chip sealing to be durable and that it could prove to be a more cost-effective method of road sealing than more petroleum-intensive methods. The sealing operation will take place next spring and won't require any additional budget appropriations.

For its last major piece of business of the day, the board entertained Jeanie Plant, Terri Bingham and JL Tonner, who were representing the New London Emergency Animal Shelter (NLEAS). The NLEAS came to the board looking for, ideally, a trust fund to be set up specifically for the shelter. The board balked at this request, reasoning that a trust fund would be a complicated and clunky method of funding the NLEAS.

Selectman Tina Helm, chairman, explained that the most efficient way to fund the NLEAS would be out of the town's General Fund. The NLEAS representatives were reluctant to embrace this suggestion because donations intended for the animal shelter would have to be written to the Town of New London, jeopardizing the ability of donations to be claimed as tax write-offs since the NLEAS is a government entity.

Additionally, this method would effectively leave the NLEAS without an operating budget, and Plant expressed concerns over the shelter's ability to expediently acquire animal food in the event of an emergency. Since the NLEAS seemed intent on keeping its finances sovereign from the town, the board suggested that the NLEAS look into establishing a Friends of the New London Emergency Animal Shelter fund, which would essentially be a private trust fund. However, as Plant pointed out, the cost to establish such a fund as a 501(c)3 non-profit organization would outstrip the operation's entire budget.

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Thank You

Thank you to everyone who participated in our Services of Remembrance. Special thanks to

The First Baptist Church of New London and South Congregational Church in Newport for welcoming us and allowing us to share time together. The services give us a chance to reflect

on the past year and give love and support to families who have experienced a loss. It's a

wonderful opportunity to gather together for a common reason. No two situations are alike but

many people gather strength just by being together. If you would like more ornaments please

visit our websites or give us a call and we would be happy to order more for you.

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