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August 1

Starks resident awarded Boston Post Cane

By Erin Rhoda erhoda@mainetoday.com
Staff Writer

STARKS -- A former town treasurer for 28 years, Beula Hebert was recognized yesterday as the oldest person in town.

Selectmen presented the Boston Post Cane to Hebert, 88, who was born in Starks and has lived there all her life.

She has been married 61 years to Carlton Hebert, who is three days younger than she.

One of her daughters, Vicki Stevens, described her as "hardworking, fair, very, very generous."

Hebert was a 4-H leader for many years and was treasurer of the water district, Stevens said. She graduated from high school in Madison and attended business school in Skowhegan. She then became a bookkeeper.

She raised five children, Errol Hebert, Kerry Hebert, Pegeen McConnell, Shawna Kelly and Stevens.

Her daughter-in-law, Town Clerk Jennifer Zweig Hebert, said she was known for her large garden and that she used to can much of the family's food. She now has health issues.

"She's a very giving, caring person who just adores her family," Zweig Hebert said.

Born July 14, 1922, Hebert was first elected treasurer of Starks in 1957. She served continuously until 1985.

Ellen Clark was the last person to hold the cane. She died at age 100 in October 2009, Zweig Hebert said. Arlene Gray then became the oldest, but she passed away at age 89 in June before selectmen presented the cane to her.

Barlow Nichols, born in 1855, held the cane from 1943 until his death at 106 in 1961. He is responsible for the damage to the gold tip of the cane because he used it as a stove poker, Zweig Hebert said.

Hebert is the first in her family to receive the cane. Her grandmother, Nellie Frederic, born in 1859, was the oldest woman in Starks for a number of years and had hoped to hold the cane but did not outlive Nichols' 106 years, Zweig Hebert said.

Leland Grey was supposed to receive the cane in 1984, but he refused to accept it, saying it was a death sentence, she said.

One other Starks citizen who has held the cane, Millia Taylor, also lived to be 106. She was born in 1896 and held the cane from 1988 to 2002.

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Beula Hebert, 88, received the Boston Post Cane in Starks on Saturday. One cane is the original, which remains at the town office for safekeeping, and the other stays with Hebert.

Contributed photo



Beula Hebert, 88, was surrounded by her family when she received the Boston Post Cane in Starks on Saturday. To her right is her husband, Carlton Hebert. Also pictured are their five children and their spouses, 10 grandchildren and two spouses, and four great-grandchildren.

Contributed photo

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