

thought about her ridiculous vote and her bad behavior last week when she almost single handedly shut down the city of Lawrence with her vote against the emergency 30 day budget? For the record, I lobbied councilors hard to support the emergency measure to prevent an interruption in city services and to make sure city employees get paid after July 1st. So I say again, anyone who thinks that I or anyone else can "control" City Councilor Grisel Silva (including herself) obviously doesn't know her very well.

Political Stocks: Who's Up and Who's Down Since Our Last Edition

DOWN: Andover State Representative Barry Finegold. Barry was well on his way to chipping away at Niki Tsongas' double digit lead in the 5th congressional race when he was asked why, if he is pro-abortion, that he would sponsor a bill mandating women who are seeking an abortion receive medical information on the risks of the procedure. Instead of using the issue as a chance to distance himself from the other candidates and take a more moderate position

on the abortion issue Finegold balked and retreated from the bill.

Instead of explaining to the public that *anyone* who has *any* medical procedure should be informed of the risks, he said he didn't know how his name was added to the list of sponsors. Then, to prove how pro-abortion he really is, Finegold had his name removed as a sponsor of the bill, thereby denying critical medical information to women who are struggling with their choice. My only question to Finegold and the rest of the pro "abortion on demand" crowd is this: isn't "choice" irrelevant when you do not have all the information about the choice you are about to make? Just wondering.

UP: Lowell City Councilor Eileen Donoghue. You would think that Finegold's blunder on the abortion issue would benefit the front runner Niki Tsongas, but according to internal polling figures leaked to the Valley Patriot it is Eileen Donoghue who is picking up support among voters. In the end, the abortion issue is completely irrelevant in this race because there is absolutely no difference between any of the candidates' positions except one: Jim Miceli, who is pro life ... and he can't win.

UP: Jennifer Kannan. Candidate for city council at large. Jennifer Kannan has been turning heads on the political scene in Methuen since she announced her intentions to run. Insiders are very excited by Kannan's candidacy and a quick poll of the movers and shakers in Methuen has me calling her the front runner in that race.

UP: Lawrence City Council President Patrick Blanchette. Blanchette was able to put aside his hatred for Mayor Michael Sullivan and fight for a 30 day emergency budget last week instead of continuing with the recent mantra of personal insults and obstruction tactics at the council table. Patrick is still not happy with the submitted FY08



Cartoon by David Sullivan of Dracut: Sull93@hotmail.com

budget and is sure to pick it apart piece by piece when it is discussed later in the month, but that's what he and his fellow councilors were elected to do. What I expect of Blanchette and the rest of the council is that, when it really counts and it's going to affect the lives of city workers (and residents), that they put aside personal feelings and do what is right for the people. It is sad that Councilor Grisel Silva could not do that.

UP: 5th District Congressional Candidate Niki Tsongas. Let's face facts, Tsongas is a pro and her campaign team is outstanding. The first television commercial touting Tsongas' commitment to American servicemen returning home from Iraq and Afghanistan was perhaps the most effective tv commercial any candidate for office has run in the last four years.

While I disagree with Tsongas on 90% of her issues, from a strategy standpoint, this commercial was hard hitting, it was positive, it was emotional and it grabbed your attention right away. The fact that her father survived the attack on Pearl Harbor and is featured prominently in the ad goes to show just how good her consultants are ... now if only we could get some of those advertising dollars!



Selectmen's Spin

Members of the North Andover Board of Selectmen were pretty upset by our lead story last month detailing how their property values went up while their tax bills went down. The story detailed how the majority of the pro-override selectmen would barely be affected by the

proposed override (which passed). So, they decided to put a hilarious "spin" on the story suggesting that the reporter (Paula Porten) who wrote the story was insinuating that there was some kind of wrongdoing or illegality going on, which was clearly not the case. The fact is, and cannot be disputed no matter how many times they cloud the issue, the majority of the pro-override selectmen had a decrease in their taxes while their property taxes went up. Shame on the selectmen for lying about what the article clearly stated "An investigation by the Valley Patriot has found no wrongdoing or illegality." For the record, Paula Porten supported the override and did not write the story to hurt the override effort.

Still Waiting for Sue Tucker

Andover State Senator Sue Tucker has yet to make an endorsement in the 5th congressional race. Tucker said back in March that she was going to endorse a "woman" because, she said, "We need a woman in congress." This is about as absurd as it gets. Using a person's gender as the main criteria as to who should or should not be elected is as prejudice as choosing someone because they are white, or male or Catholic. Since there are only three candidates without male appendages in the race for congress I am still wondering if she is going to support Eileen Donoghue, Niki Tsongas or Jamie Eldridge?

Tom Duggan is the president of Valley Patriot, Inc., a former Lawrence School Committeeman, and hosts the Paying Attention! Radio Program on WCAP, 980AM, every Saturday afternoon from noon-2pm. You can email your comments to Tdugjr@aol.com .

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Trump Apprentice Takes the Lead

Tarshi Project will contribute to the rebirth of Essex Street in Lawrence

Lawrence, MA (May 2007) – Lawrence native Michael S. Tarshi, former star of Donald Trump’s *Apprentice show* on NBC and President of Tarshi Development, has made quite a stir in both the real estate market and local government with his plans to revitalize the downtown Lawrence, MA area with the birth of his project, The Tarshi Building.

Learning from Donald Trump, America’s number one real-estate mogul, Tarshi is starting to build his own empire while giving back to the community he grew up in.

Michael Tarshi and the Tarshi family have substantial investments throughout the City of Lawrence.

From developing neighborhoods to investing in commercial and residential buildings as well as owning several successful businesses, this ex-Apprentice and Boston College Graduate has shown a tremendous amount of faith in the city. “The large investments my family has made in the city demonstrate that we believe in Lawrence and that we have never lost hope in the area.”

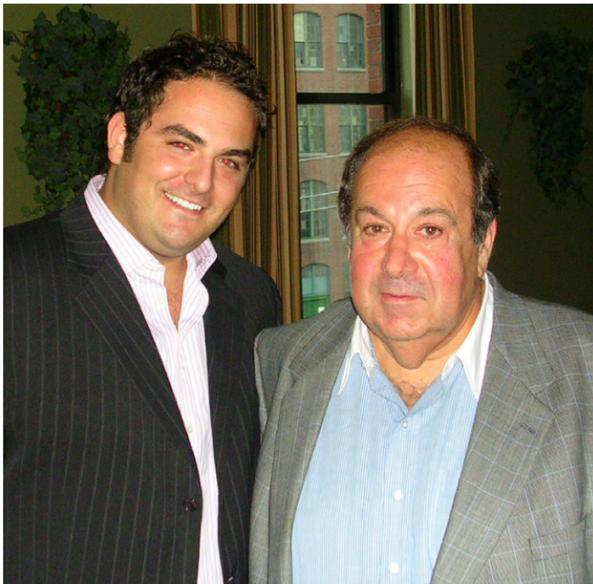
“Essex Street was once the finest street in Lawrence. Now it is time to bring it back to life. The goal is to attract both national and local merchants with this building, as the anchor, and then move forward with the larger plan of turning Lawrence into one of Massachusetts’ most successful cities,” says Tarshi.

Tarshi’s new project in downtown Lawrence is a parcel of land on Essex Street that he has owned for some time. In cooperation with the City of Lawrence, Tarshi will be developing a 15,000 square ft. commercial property that will be the keystone of a much larger plan to re-develop and revitalize the Essex Street area. Tarshi will be a vital part in revitalizing the downtown landscape, bring national companies back to Lawrence, generating new jobs and kick-starting the business buzz downtown.

Lawrence Mayor Michael J. Sullivan states, “The City of Lawrence appreciates the work that Michael and the Tarshi family are doing in the downtown area. It’s people like this that bring new business to our great city. The Tarshi Building will be a key ingredient in the revitalization of Essex Street.”

The Tarshi Building is in the planning stages and can be built to suit any prospective tenant. Tarshi Development is currently seeking out national tenants for building.

The building is slated to be completed by 2008. Northern Essex Community College is scheduled to be built directly across the street from the Tarshi development.



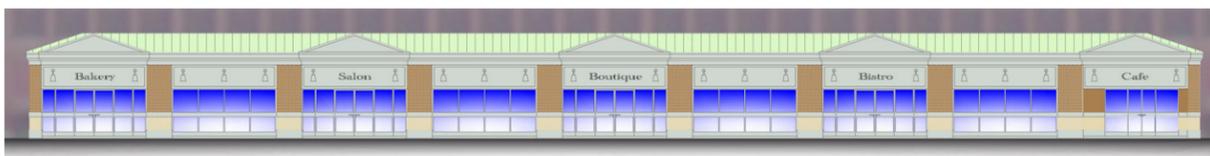
Michael Tarshi (l) of Donald Trump’s Apprentice is investing in Essex Street in Lawrence. Tarshi is seen here with his father Michael Tarshi, of the Tarshi Law Office on Essex Street in Lawrence.

The Tarshi family has been a part of the evolution of Lawrence since the 1950’s and Michael S. Tarshi wants to see the growing changes. The Tarshi Family is one of the largest holders of real estate on Essex St. and control the largest amount of frontage on this street. Michael’s father, Attorney Michael J. Tarshi, has had businesses on Essex Street since 1958 and is the longest lasting business owner on the street.

Currently, Michael along with his brothers, Steven and John Tarshi, are developing *St. Augusta Landing*, a 10 unit Townhouse development on Water Street in Lawrence as well as other projects in the works.

About Michael Tarshi and Tarshi Development & Properties:

At the age of 25 Michael S. Tarshi launched Tarshi Development and Properties, a real estate development and investment firm with residential and commercial projects throughout New England. Michael currently lives in Boston and is a graduate of The Pike School, The Pingree School and Boston College. Tarshi Development is located on 514 Essex St. in Lawrence MA. Tarshi is seeking new tenants for the Essex St. building. Interested parties should call (978) 686-3660. Or, for more information, please call Michael Tarshi Directly at 617-922-2171



The Tarshi Building
North Essex Street Elevation

83rd Anniversary Feast of the Three Saints Saints Alfio, Filadelfo & Cirino



Common & Union Street in Lawrence

Friday, September 1st

6:30 PM Opening Ceremonies of the Feast of the Three Saints. Streets are lined with vendors selling food and feast memorabilia. There are also games and rides for all ages. 8:00 PM National Anthem sung by Ayla Brown of American Idol fame. 8:05 PM FREE Concert by European Singing Sensation *Romina Arena* as the opening act, followed by American Tenor Michael Amante. Both Shows take place on the Lawrence Campagnone Memorial Common. 9:00 PM The Saint Alfio Society proudly presents: “An Evening of Romance with *American Tenor Michael Amante*”.

MIDNIGHT Feast Closes.

Saturday, September 2nd

Noon: Feast Opens. Amusements, Italian food, rides and games for children on Common Street. 7:30 PM Torchlight Parade honoring the Three Saints. Members of the Society march to Common & Newbury Streets with the St. Alfio Band, the Italian-American Band and the Sons of Italy Band. The parade culminates with fireworks and the playing of the *Cantata* by the Saint Alfio Band. 9:00 PM FREE Concert by Joey Dee & the Starlites featuring: David Brigati & Bob Valli on the Main Bandstand.

MIDNIGHT Feast Closes.

Sunday, September 3rd

10:00 AM Celebration Mass in honor of the Three Saints at Holy Rosary Church at Corpus Christi Parish. Noon Feast Opens. Amusements, Italian food, rides and games for children on Common Street. 3:00 PM Procession of the Three Saints from Holy Rosary Church, accompanied by St. Alfio Band and the Italian-American Band amidst fireworks and confetti. 4:15 PM Live entertainment on the Main Bandstand by The Reminisants – Boston’s Favorite “Oldies” Band. 7:00 PM Benediction in front of St. Alfio Society Hall on Common Street. 7:45 PM Saints Return to the Church. 8:00 PM FREE Concert by Italian Singer Franco Corso. 10:00 PM Feast Closes. Raffle drawing for \$5,000 Grand Prize & secondary prizes.

Grisel Silva



Lawrence

City Council

District “B”

Laboy Answers Charges of "Segregation" - From Page 1

believed as if we were holding classes for white privileged kids in a brand new building while excluding poor Latinos in a second class, dilapidated building. That's just not happening and as a Latino myself I resent the accusation."

According to the Massachusetts Department of Education more than 90% of the students attending Lawrence high School are Latino.

Racial Segregation is Different from Segregating Based on Need

"I don't think segregated is a good word to describe what we are doing here in the Lawrence Public Schools. We do categorize and differentiate individual children by their level of ability. That's a standard practice in any school system," Laboy said.

"In any community you have kids with special needs, whether it is Andover or North Andover, or anywhere else. Kids with special needs are 'segregated' in a separate room where they can be attended to. So the notion that we separate kids based on their needs is not new to the American educational landscape. It is really painful that people use this loaded word, 'segregation'. And they know what they're doing. They are using a word that goes to the heart of racial segregation which came out of Brown vs. Board of Education. They are using this word which, to newly arriving Latinos means racism. Those who say we are segregating are telling them that they are being discriminated against because of their race and that just isn't fair to anyone."

Laboy says the school system looks at the "educational profile of the individual student as they come in to our schools" and then places them accordingly. We are segregating, or separating if you will, based on individual need and, yes, the majority of our non English proficient immigrants are Latinos. But there are dozens of other countries being represented by our newly arrived students. We have children coming from Eastern Europe, the Middle East, South East Asian countries and elsewhere. So to suggest that there is an effort here to deprive Latinos of anything is blatantly false."

Exactly What Programs Will be Housed on Haverhill Street?

According to Superintendent Laboy there will be at least five programs housed at the "old" high school on Haverhill Street which will be called the High School Learning Center; Credit Recovery, the Newly Arrived Program, Diploma Plus, the Adult Learning Center, and the School for Exceptional Studies. The school will hold 600-650 students.

The Newly Arrived Program: "Normally we get between 120-150 newly arrived students from other countries. Of those, more than half stay for a year of transitional programming, about 1/4 of those kids make a mid year move.

The students are evaluated and moved to other program as they progress.

Diploma Plus: "This program is for kids with personal challenges in the system. They are between the ages of 16 and 22 who want a traditional MCAS diploma but can't be in a regular classroom because of the personal challenges they have. We only have 25 students in that program now but we are expanding it to 50 to 75 kids."

Laboy says that many new students are "out of age and out of grade. What that means," he explains, "is that we get about 25 or 30 kids each year who are seventeen or eighteen years old, but the last time they attended class in their native country was the third grade. Under the 14th amendment to the U.S. Constitution it states that it is the responsibility of the state to educate its citizens. So we have this thing called 'compulsory education.' From age 6 to age 16 we are charged with educating every child that comes through our doors. But we have many children who come to us at age seventeen or eighteen. We are not required under the law to put them in a day school program but, because we are a moral country and we have a moral obligation to help these young people, we take them in. We assess them, and we place them in the program that best suits their needs and that's a general education diploma. We certainly can't take a 17 year old and put them in the fourth grade, which might be their academic grade level."

Credit Recovery: This is a program for students in the tenth grade who don't have enough credits to graduate. Laboy says that these students are put into an accelerated course program designed to accommodate their workload with what is called flex scheduling. Some kids will stay there for the rest of their high school experience, some kids will recover the credits they lost or never took and get back on track within a short period of time."

The Rest of the Story/Dispelling the Myths

Laboy says that placing at risk students at the High School Learning Center on Haverhill Street is going to be a vast improvement for those currently enrolled in these programs. "People can complain and criticize what we are doing with at risk students, but look at where we are taking them out of? We are taking them out of trailers that are sitting on the playgrounds of a school and putting them into a building that has a library, a gymnasium, science labs, computer labs and all of the things they are not getting where they are right now. How come the people who are calling this 'segregation,' aren't telling the community that part of the story? When we say we are putting them in the old high school building, and then the nay-sayers paint a picture of a crumbling structure, lets look at where these kids are now and the real condition of that school."

"Now, there's another myth I would like to dispel," Laboy said emphatically. "And that is the notion that every single newly arriving immigrant is going to be stuck at the old high school forever. We have young people coming to

"People can complain and criticize what we are doing with at risk students, but look at where we are taking them out of? We are taking them out of trailers that are sitting on the playgrounds of a school and putting them into a building that has a library, a gymnasium, science labs, computer labs and all of the things they are not getting where they are right now. How come the people who are calling this 'segregation,' aren't telling the community that part of the story?"

us with basic native language skills, who got a formalized education in the country they come from, and are able to mainstream a lot faster than some of the other immigrant children, so they will be moved out of the program."

"Then we have other children who come in close to age and grade level, but they don't have the English skills they need to be in a regular classroom. I say we have a professional, moral and ethical responsibility not to house them in a place where they are going to fall further behind. I have an obligation as the Superintendent of this school system to make sure that these kids have the best possible chance to succeed. Now I ask you, is brick and mortar really the issue here? Is it really all that terrible that newly arriving students are being housed separately until they are fully prepared for a mainstream classroom? Or is this about something else completely?"

"It didn't seem to bother these same people who are complaining now when we had bilingual classes that segregated kids based on their language. They fought against ending 'segregated' bilingual classrooms. Some of the very same people calling this 'racism' were out there holding signs that said 'Vote No on Question #2' remember that? Just a few short years ago segregation was great, but somehow they see it differently when Wilfredo Laboy wants to separate students based on their individual needs and educational assessment."

"Sure, I could send these kids to that beautiful new campus in a regular classroom without the special attention they need and they will do what kids have been doing for years; nine out of ten of them are going to walk away ... just walk away. We can either pay now or we can pay later. We all know what happens to those kids who drop out and the price we pay as a society when they are out in the real world with no skills. They become delinquents, criminals, they become a social liability to society, and we pay far more in the end. I say we give them what they need now. Because the tragic reality is, for newly arriving non-English speaking students over a four year period of time, the dropout rate for Latinos is about 50%, and for at risk students it is closer to 80%."

"Instead of labeling people 'racist' and using divisive language in a debate like this we ought to be asking those who are complaining: what is your responsibility? And what is our collective responsibility as a community? I refuse, as the Superintendent of schools, to accept failure and mediocrity as an option. I believe the good people of Lawrence, those who really care about providing a quality education, agree with me. But for that handful of people who are using the race card, talking about our ill treatment and 'segregation' of our students, I have to ask; what solutions do you have? What kind of role model in this community have you been? What constructive engagement have you been involved in to help us educate these children properly. How are you promoting positive race relations? There is along way to go within certain pockets of this community. They have an agenda and they are going to promote hate and division in any way they can to achieve a political end. I say race politics is ruining this city, I have never seen anything like it and I came to this city from New York."

"It's really infuriating, Laboy concluded, "when you sit down and think about the fraud that is being perpetuated on our newest and most vulnerable students. We need to stop the politics of race, it is ruining this city. You know, I used to hear a phrase all the time when I first came here to Lawrence and it used to make me angry. The phrase was 'only in Lawrence'. Now I know exactly what they were saying."

Superintendent Laboy says he is moving forward with his plan to place at risk students at the High School Learning Center despite the criticism and harsh language used to derail his plans.

Lawrence Firefighter's Credit Union Awards Jay Toye Scholarships



The Lawrence Firefighter's Credit Union awarded James Bizeur Jr. and Michael Kenyon The Jay Toye Scholarship in the amount of \$500 on Tuesday 29, 2007. David Solomon/President Board, James Bizeur Jr., Michael Kenyon, Alan Jenne/CEO Manager, Rob Kimmett/Mass Credit Union and League VP of Business Development

The Genuine versus the Counterfeit

Peter Larocque, Lawrence School Committee

For the past several Lawrence School Committee meetings, during the public participation portion of the meeting, we, the citizens of Lawrence, have been exhorted by School Committee Member James Vittorioso, not to be fooled at the next election. I couldn't agree more. I would like to take a moment and respectfully add the following to his exhortation to help the wonderful citizens of Lawrence not to be fooled.



hostage. For example, some are still upset over the location and purpose of the new Lawrence High School campus. Others would even go to the extent of hoping that our new High School fails just so that they can say, "I told you so," to the administration! You can tell this just by listening to the tone of their voices or by reading their written word.

They would do themselves, along with everybody else, a lot of good if they would just let the hatred go!

Another characteristic of the counterfeit candidate is the fact that they have not been seen at school committee meetings or city council meetings because they only come out during election season. But somehow, somehow, they have what we, the citizens of Lawrence, need to make it through the dark days ahead.

Soon we will begin to see them around and they will be the ones complaining very loudly yet offering no real answers. They will use words like "We must be proactive". But they, themselves, haven't been active at all except to be negative.

On the other hand, the genuine candidates are easy to identify because they are here and working! They are the ones who have been showing up and are willing to give back to the city without any self-serving ambition. The genuine candidates put love for God, family and country first! They

At Lawrence's next election, there will be two types of candidates. I have affectionately called them the genuine and the counterfeit candidates along with their supporters. Both will be running for City Council as well as School Committee.

The counterfeit candidates will be like wolves in sheep's clothing. They will be the ones who will tell you that life as we know it is coming to an end! But do not worry, they are here to save us from all the corruption that plagues Lawrence.

Furthermore, some of the counterfeit candidates will be in the race for payback reasons. They believe that they have been wronged and want to get back at those who wronged them. To accomplish this they will try to use the voters to keep the politics of hatred and bitterness along with unforgiveness alive and well in Lawrence. Wonderful examples for our children, don't you think?

I believe that there is too much hatred in Lawrence politics. It's okay to disagree and to have debates and discussions, but for some the spirit of hatred holds them

Continued on Page 31

Re-Elect



**Lawrence
City
Councilor**



**Jorge
Gonzalez**



(District "C")

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RAISE 'EM RIGHT™ "Decorated Diapers"

Barbara Peary, M.Ed.



Boy, they certainly are trying to market products to our children at a younger age every year. We just had our third child and I've noticed that the diapers are decorated with all sorts of television characters. This

wasn't true when I had my other children. Do they think that by doing this that the children will like the shows, or what?

Rest assured that marketing studies have been done and manufacturers would not be doing this if they did not think it will raise profits. Guess they are supposed to appeal more to the parents than the plain ones do, and then subliminally affect the infants and toddlers wearing them. If people don't buy them, they will discontinue selling them.

My four year old daughter has been attending a nursery school program for three mornings a week for the past several months. I expected that when she went to preschool she would be doing "school work," that is, learning her letters and numbers so she will be prepared for kindergarten. It appears to me that most of the day is spent doing what the teacher calls "free play." The classroom has lots of nice toys and equipment, blocks, a slide, riding toys, a sand table, etc. The teachers are caring and have plenty of experience in the field, so I guess they know what they are doing. Still, I would like to be confident that my daughter is learning the alphabet.

Take the time to meet with the teachers and have them explain in detail the philosophy behind their program. In early childhood education the main goal for children beginning school is socialization. The classrooms are set up to encourage children to play cooperatively with one another. Also, group activities, such as circle time or story time, are conducted to teach the children the initials skills required when they go to kindergarten. These include the ability to listen to a teacher and to behave in a group setting. Educators believe that at this age children "learn through play," so interactive games and activities are set up where children are learning letters, numbers, seriating, classifying, etc. Have the teachers show you some of the materials used in the classroom and explain the concepts that the children are learning with them.

The programs shown on television about some of the activities that have gone on in child care centers and with nannies have frightened me. Shortly, I will need to start looking for child care for my toddler. How do I find one that is good?

As with any other issue, the negative side gets all the press attention. Who wants to read all about the child care center in town where children are happy, teachers are wonderful and parents are thankful to have found excellent care for their children? No one. Society feeds on negative news and usually the more bizarre the better. Start by finding out if your state requires child care centers to be licensed. If licensing is required, send for a list of certified centers in your area or look them up on the Internet. If licensing is not required, your best recourse is referrals from friends. When you visit centers ask for names of parents who are currently using the center to call as references. Be sure to contact them and share your concerns. Begin three months before care is needed. Checking out centers takes time and many have waiting lists. After paring down your possibilities to two or three centers, drop in unexpectedly on the pretense of asking another question. You will see what a normal day looks like. Once your child is enrolled in a facility, drop in mid-day to take in spare clothes, or a forgotten lunch box. Following these steps should allay some of your concerns.

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Sparks Fly at the Supreme Court

Mona Charen

When Crystal Meredith moved to Louisville, Ky., in August 2002, she attempted to enroll her son in the public kindergarten about a mile from her home. The local school was full. Officials assigned the boy to a school 10 miles distant. When Meredith asked whether her son could attend a different elementary school that was also 1 mile away and had space, she was informed that her son's assignment to that school would upset the "desegregation compliance" of the school. In other words, he was the wrong color.

Like Louisville, the Seattle, Wash., school board also maintained a "racial balance" policy and assigned students to popular public schools in part based upon skin color. Students received priority in applying to certain popular high schools based upon the presence of a sibling at that school and/or skin color. It was Seattle's goal to ensure that no oversubscribed public high school had fewer than 31 percent or more than 51 percent white students. Jefferson County, Ky. (Louisville's district), sought by racial placements to guarantee a black complement in each school of not less than 15 percent and not more than 50 percent.

This sort of social engineering will now end. In a 5-4 decision, the Supreme Court ruled that achieving "diversity" is too weak an argument to justify shuffling kids around on the basis of skin color. Though Chief Justice John Roberts's opinion is couched in language of precedent and respect for existing law, this case is a clean win for individualists — i.e., for those who oppose racial preferences or racial handicaps. Things might have gone very differently if Justice Sandra Day (prepare for 25 more years of affirmative action) O'Connor were still on the court.

Justice Breyer wrote the dissent and was joined by Justices Souter, Ginsberg and Stevens. Roberts answered the dissent in the majority opinion (a rare thing in Supreme Court opinions) and basically demolished Breyer's arguments. But Justice Thomas's separate concurrence was a tour de force.

Thomas began by distinguishing between racial imbalance, which is a fact of life based on housing patterns, and segregation, which is a state-imposed racial separation. Seattle had never engaged in de jure segregation and accordingly had nothing to remedy. Louisville had corrected its history of segregation and had been certified by a federal district court as having achieved "unitary" status, that is, no longer laboring under the cloud of past discrimination.

If a state is not acting to remedy past discrimination, Thomas and the majority argued, then the use of race as a criterion must be very narrowly tailored. Sure, Thomas conceded, the states may have had, or thought they had, impeccable motives for counting by race. But, Thomas countered, the effects may not be benign. "... Every time the government uses racial criteria to 'bring the races together' someone gets excluded, and the person excluded suffers an injury solely because of his or her race.

... This type of exclusion ... is precisely the sort of government action that pits the races against one another, exacerbates racial tension, and 'provokes resentment among those who believe that they have been wronged by the government's use of race.'"

Part of the dissent's argument focused on the presumed benefits to students of being educated in racially balanced classrooms. Thomas replied that the social science data is hardly conclusive. There is actually very little evidence that racial mixing improves test scores. Further, Thomas argued powerfully that racial discrimination of almost any kind violates the 14th Amendment and requires far more than social science surveys to buttress it.

But Thomas also detected and exposed the condescension inherent in that argument. He pointed to predominantly black schools both pre- and post-Brown v. Board of Education in which students have excelled, and noted the evidence that students in historically black colleges may do better than those who attend majority white schools. But here's the zinger: "The Seattle school board itself must believe that racial mixing is not necessary to black achievement. Seattle operates a K-8 'African-American Academy' which has a 'non-white' enrollment of 99 percent." The school, he noted dryly, was established as part of the school board's effort to improve African-American test scores (and it seems to be having success).

Clarence Thomas ended by proudly lining up with Justice John Marshall Harlan, who famously dissented from the unjust Plessy v. Ferguson decision, declaring, "Our Constitution is color-blind, and neither knows nor tolerates classes among citizens." Harlan is considered a civil rights hero. And Thomas? His greatness is not recognized by his own generation, but history will appreciate him.

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Paradigm-Shift: Free the Quranists

Dr. Charles Jacobs

At 2:30 a.m. on May 28th Egyptian police broke into Abdellatif Muhammad Said's Cairo apartment, blindfolded and arrested him, and seized his computer. At the same time, Said's three cousins were arrested in another apartment. No one knows where they are being held.

Arrests like this happen frequently in Egypt, which receives \$2 billion yearly in U.S. aid. Why Said? He works with the Quranists, a Muslim reform group, and is the half brother of the movement's leader, Sheikh Dr. Ahmed Subhy Mansour. (Full disclosure: Mansour is my friend).

Being a progressive Muslim is a dangerous business, whether in Cairo or Tehran. Although he has not been officially charged, Said's "crime" appears to have been the form of Islam he promoted — reformist, non-violent, and based exclusively on the Koran. The plot thickens: Said's cousin, Amr Tharwat, another Muslim reformer, worked for the Ibn Khaldun Center, headed by Egypt's most prominent democracy advocate, Saad Eddin Ibrahim. The Quranist movement was recently denounced as "non-Muslim" by a representative of Al-Azhar University, often referred to as "Islam's Vatican." Sheikh Mansour, once a faculty member at al-Azhar, was forced out because of his beliefs and imprisoned by the regime for the crime of wanting to reform Islam from within. He was eventually given asylum in the U.S., admitted to Harvard's "Scholars at Risk" program, and then sued by the Islamic Society of Boston when he complained about anti-Semitic and anti-Christian hate literature in the ISB's Cambridge mosque.

This week, Human Rights Watch (HRW) fired off a letter to Egyptian authorities protesting the disappearance of the Quranists. A good sign, as the HR establishment has mostly gone PC, and focuses mainly on the behavior of Westerners

while it protects the West's enemies: secret CIA prisons get more attention than Saddam's torture chambers ever did. Distracted and obsessed with 40 years of Israeli "occupation," "rights activists" have little or no time to defend women, apostates, atheists or dhimmis under Islamic rule. They abandoned the black Christian slaves of Sudan's jihad.

Both the "left" and "right" chatter about the need for reform to come from within Islam. But Muslim reformers who actually put their lives on the line don't seem to register with anyone.

What can we do? Call Amnesty International. Ask that Said and the Quranists be adopted as "prisoners of conscience." Encourage HRW to keep up the pressure. Call the State Department and ask them to intervene: billions of U.S. aid should count for something. Ask your elected representatives why the U.S. is continuing to support Egypt when it refuses to grant basic political and religious freedoms. Learn about the Quranists from Sheikh Mansour's Web sites. The only hope for peace in the world may rest with Islamic reform movements. Learn about them. Support them.

As of this writing, Abdellatif Muhammad Said and the Quranists are in a dark Egyptian prison. People like them may hold the only hopes for Islam's future and for world peace. Don't be a bystander. Do something.

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Dr. Charles Jacobs



Team Kannan!

At-Large, Methuen city council candidate Jennifer Aziz Kannan (wearing necklace) is surrounded by her family at a fundraiser held at Mike Condon's Sweetheart Inn. From left to right are: Jason Aziz, Ronald Bonanno, Richard Aziz, Cynthia Aziz, Jeff Smith, Marilyn Aziz, Jennifer Aziz Kannan, Bill Kannan, Sr., Brittany Kannan, and Bill Kannan, Jr.



Governor Deval Patrick with Lawrence Resident Rosemary Gil at the Lawrence Senior Center

Big Name Endorsements for Methuen Councilor Steve Zanni

While Most city council candidates in Methuen are scrambling for campaign support and endorsements from other officials, Methuen City Council President Steve Zanni (left) was endorsed last month by Methuen State Senator Steve Baddour, State Representative Linda Campbell and Methuen Mayor Billy Manzi.



Methuen at-large city council candidate Fadi "Fred" Chahine with his family at the Methuen VFW during a recent fundraiser.

This is Chahine's first run for public office in the city.

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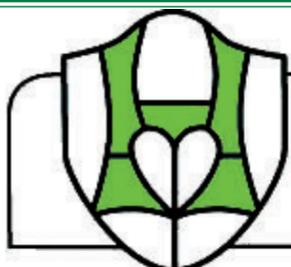
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