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THE VALLEY PATRIOT

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"Congress shall make no law..."

A MONTHLY JOURNAL OF NEWS, COMMENTARY AND OPINIONS SERVING THE MERRIMACK VALLEY

Jimenez family has Tribune reporter thrown off military base

Family of hero soldier killed in Iraq says Eagle~Tribune Reporter had to be thrown out of wake and funeral as well.

Tom Duggan

VALLEY PATRIOT REPORTER

Slain soldier, Army Pfc. Alex Jimenez was captured by Al Qaeda and had been missing for 15 months before his remains were finally found in Iraq.

"As hard as it was for the Jimenez family," said Jim Wareing spokesman for the Jimenez and Duran Family "someone tipped off the Eagle Tribune that Alex had been found before the family was notified."

"And when we arrived to deliver the devastating news to Andy (Alex's father who lives in Lawrence), the Tribune was already in the house, snapping pictures as the family was told, breaking down in tears. It was total exploitation of this family who had been through so much. We were horrified by the picture they ran on the front page the next day. It was such an invasion of privacy," he said in a somber tone.

The mother of Alex Jimenez, Maria Del Rosario Duran, told the Valley Patriot in an exclusive interview that she was very hurt by the disrespect she and her family endured at the hands of the Eagle Tribune.

"First, what happened to Andy (Alex's father) was not right. They came to the house and took [a] picture during private time for the family. I wasn't there, so you should talk to him," she said, "but I know he was very sad about that and it should not have happened."

"We were crying together and trying to grieve," said Andy, Jr., Alex's brother. "I don't know why they were there, just to get a picture of us crying and embarrass us in their newspaper? It was such disrespect [sic]" he said.

But, Wareing, who runs New England Caring for our Military, a volunteer organization to help soldiers and their families, said that the invasion of privacy

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PHOTO: COURTESY

Lawrence hero Spc. Alex Jimenez was honored in Lawrence and Methuen last month after his remains were found in Iraq.

VALLEY PATRIOT OF THE MONTH: SPC. ALEX JIMENEZ

Valley Patriot Staff

HERO REPORTER

Since the very first edition of The Valley Patriot in March of 2004, this space has been reserved for honoring local veterans who have either performed heroically in battle or made a significant difference in their community.

This month we honor Spc. Alex Jimenez of Lawrence whose remains were found last month in Iraq after a 15 month search for the captured soldier.

Jimenez is the second veteran to be honored posthumously as a Valley Patriot of the Month. His bravery and his service

to the United States Army, his family and community are a model of patriotism for young people across the country.

The death of Alex Jimenez brought an entire community together in sorrow and healing.

We at The Valley Patriot continue to pray for the friends, family and fellow military men and women who served with Alex in Iraq.

He is a true American hero and we only hope that the cowards who took his life receive the justice they deserve.

For pictures from the funeral please see page 18.

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EDITORIAL



Hidden Agenda

The Democrats secretly want high energy prices

The Democrats are vacationing while the nation is suffering with gas prices near \$4 per gallon. We also face a cold winter with heating oil approaching \$5 per gallon. Yet, the Democrats won't permit increased access to economically viable oil deposits. Their arguments are so blatantly illogical that they can only be explained by deceit.

If Democrats want to maintain high energy prices, forcing us to switch to solar/wind power, they should be honest and say so. They shouldn't lie about their real intentions.

Congresswoman Tsongas' article (see page 24) provides a host of examples of Democrat deception. Here are just a few:

Speculators: Tsongas claims that speculators are the culprit and that their "speculation" raises oil prices \$20 - \$60 per barrel (an unsupported and unlikely claim). But speculation cuts both ways. Speculators bet on prices going down as well as up. Why does Tsongas think bets accumulated on the "up" side? And, why focus on oil and not sugar or pork bellies? Could it be that analysts foresee a pending oil shortage? Maybe we should increase drilling and supply instead of shooting the messengers!

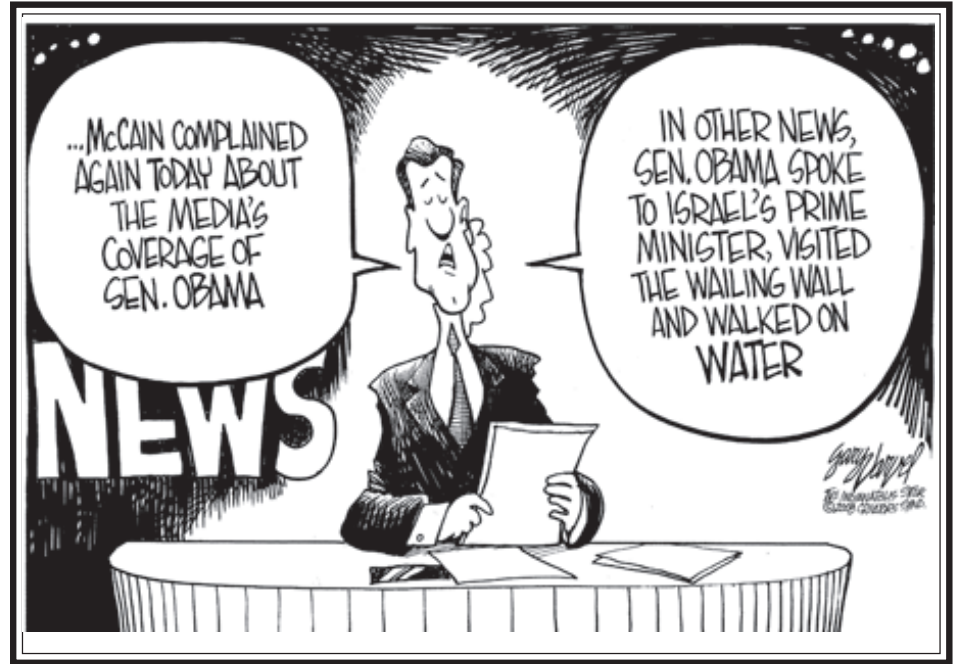
ANWR vs Alaska's National Petroleum Reserve – Tsongas argues that the oil companies should drill in Alaska's National Petroleum Reserve (ANPR) instead of ANWR. What she doesn't tell you is that ANPR's oil is spread out over more than 20 million acres while ANWR's proposed production site covers only 2,000 acres! Did she mention that ANPR is 250 miles from existing pipelines while the ANWR site is only 75 miles?

With environmental challenges sure to stop drilling over such a wide area, not to mention construction of such long pipelines, the Democrats know that ANPR oil production can and will be stopped in the courts.

Looney Toon Economics: Tsongas tells us that adding 70 thousand barrels of oil per day to the world market will reduce gas prices 25 cents. Later we're told we can't drill our way out of this shortage because any new production "would not reduce the cost of gas by more than a few pennies." But ANWR is projected to produce over 700 thousand barrels per day! By Tsongas' calculations, this should reduce the price by \$2.50 per gallon, not "a few pennies"!

The Deception is Unending: Tsongas stresses that not all current leases are being drilled (many are uneconomical) and that new production is ten years away (many potential leases could produce in 3 to 5 years). She says oil companies won't drill because there is "little incentive for them to take on the financial risks of increased drilling." But won't capitalist greed and \$130/barrel oil ensure drilling?

It is time stop the deception and come clean. Either Democrats want the productive resources of America to fix this problem or they want to permanently cripple us with high energy prices to serve their own global warming, big-government agenda. Just tell us the truth.



LETTERS

Democrats are no "Party of the People"

To the editor,

It's fascinating that the Democrats, who claim they are the "party of the people" and for the "little guy", have been the longest and most vociferous opponents of domestic drilling and additional nuclear power plants while the poor and disadvantaged, whom they claim to champion, are the ones who will pay the heaviest price in unrelenting increases in energy costs. U. S. Congressman Edward Markey's voting record on our energy needs speaks for itself (Congressman Tierney's voting record is virtually the same):

- * Voted YES on removing oil & gas exploration subsidies. (Jan 2007)
- * Voted YES on keeping moratorium on drilling for oil offshore. (Jun 2006)
- * Voted NO on scheduling permitting for new oil refineries. (Jun 2006)
- * Voted NO on authorizing construction of new oil refineries. (Oct 2005)
- * Voted NO on passage of the Bush Administration national energy policy. (Jun 2004)
- * Voted NO on implementing Bush-Cheney national energy policy. (Nov 2003)
- * Voted YES on prohibiting oil drilling & development in ANWR. (Aug 2001)
- * Voted to preserve a minute segment of Alaska's ANWR instead of drilling it. (Feb 2001)
- * Voted YES on barring a website promoting Yucca Mountain nuclear waste dump. (May 2006)

(SOURCE: On The Issues website (Record of Congressional Votes))

In 1987, Representative Markey sided with the anti-nuclear energy groups and sponsored a bill that would have effectively shut down the nation's nuclear power industry. Fortunately, his colleagues in the House of Representatives killed the measure by a 261-160 vote.

Arnold Koch - Melrose, Mass.

To the editor:

I am very impressed with the quality of the Valley Patriot. The quality includes: the printing, the concise articles and the overall presentation of The Valley Patriot.

My prime reason for writing though is to commend the members of the Lawrence Police Department who deal with the public's calls on their business line.

They dealt with my inquiry in a friendly, professional and helpful manner. The lady at the front desk who took my call asked me for my phone number and called me back within fifteen minutes.

I told the lady that I would write to Tommy Duggan and request you put my letter of appreciation in The Valley Patriot.

Best Wishes, Brian Pinch, Lowell

To the editor:

I want to take a brief moment to commend you on never getting anything right when it comes to Lawrence Community Works and the fine work they do in the City of Lawrence.

It has been my experience that Chet Sidel and Bill Traynor are deeply caring individuals who only want to do what is right for the city.

The fact that they are making a killing on my tax money along the way is of no consequence because they are making a difference.

I say, I would rather that money go to them than the corrupt sell-outs in congress or the pentagon.

If anyone is going to get my money it is far more important to let LCW and Chet Sidel have bongo concerts on Appleton Way than to pay for another police officer or teacher who will surely not give back to the community as much as LCW.

Carlos Gonzalez, Lawrence

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Letters to the editor and op/eds can be submitted to the address above or to valleypatriot@aol.com

Corrections

Please contact the editor at valleypatriot@aol.com

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The Valley Patriot is now being published by Fosters Daily Democrat, in Dover, NH.

Markey's

LOBSTER POOL

Route 286, Seabrook NH

See our ad on page 29

North Andover man gains national attention with second invention

Says advertising in *The Valley Patriot* was all he needed!

NORTH ANDOVER - George A. Peters Jr., is the founder & president of Lancer 1 Inc. a company he started just two years after filing for his first patent, Mosquito Mitt® in 1999. On April 1, 2003 Peters says that his dream came true when his safety applicator glove system and method was awarded a U.S. patent. During those four years, George developed partnerships with Hefty, Milliken, and Valley Forge Sports.

At that point, the Mosquito Mitt® (Patent # 6,539,549) became a real success. Peters has also developed and patented the What Now???®, Evacuation Training Aid (Patent # D546,391).

George has appeared as a guest speaker in many schools and businesses around New England, including Babson College, located in Wellesley, Massachusetts.

Next month, Peters will speak at the 13th annual Independent Inventors

Conference on the campus of the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) in Alexandria, Virginia. The event will take place on August 8th & 9th.

As part of the conference's guest speaker track, Peters was invited by the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) to discuss his difficulties and successes as an inventor, and offer advice to people who hope to one day get their products patented.

The Independent Inventors Conference also will include a presentation by Deputy Under Secretary of Commerce Margaret Peterlin and Commissioner for Patents John Doll. Also appearing this year will

be Louis Foreman, creator and executive producer of the Emmy award winning PBS series, *Everyday Edisons*.

Peters says that since putting his What Now??? Evacuation Training Aid on the market, advertising in *The Valley Patriot*

"I began putting half page color ads in *The Valley Patriot*," Peters said. "Within the first month of running the ad, I started getting calls from school systems, office managers and private companies all over the state. ...I had no idea the magnitude of responses I was going to get from this little monthly newspaper."

- George Peters, N. Andover inventor

was all he needed to launch a national campaign to market his product.

"I began putting half page color ads in *The Valley Patriot*," Peters said. "Within the first month of running the ad, I started getting calls from school systems, office managers, and private companies all over the state. We've now sold this product to Fidelity Investments, the US Marines, several school systems and several multi-national corporations. I had no idea the magnitude of responses I was going to get from this little monthly newspaper. It was the perfect fit at the perfect time," Peters concluded.

Lancer 1 Inc. develops products to make people's lives safe and easy, especially children's. The latest product, the WHAT NOW???® Evacuation

Training Aid, was awarded a patent in 2007. This product was developed after watching fire fighters and safety officials struggle with safely blocking exits during evacuation drills.

The WHAT NOW???® provides a safe and effective way to educate people about the critical importance to know multiple escape routes when an actual emergency occurs. WHAT NOW???® is being used by Raytheon, Fidelity Investments, the U.S. Marine Corps, the U.S. Army and hundreds of schools and business worldwide.

Lancer 1 Inc. is a privately held company headquartered in N. Andover, MA. For more information, visit www.Lancer1inc.com.





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IRS launches summer push to reach Massachusetts' retirees and *Disabled Veterans* who have yet to file for their economic stimulus payments

The Internal Revenue Service has announced a new summer campaign to reach those retirees and disabled veterans who qualify for the economic stimulus payment but have not filed to claim it. New statistics released today indicate about 74 percent in this group are accounted for in the stimulus payments currently being sent, leaving about 5.2 million potential recipients remaining.

In Massachusetts, 66% of the 443,000 potential retiree/disabled veterans' filers are accounted for, leaving about 151,000 potential recipients still need to file for their economic stimulus payments.

Of the top cities statewide with potential recipients who have not yet filed, Boston is number one (16,015 potential remaining filers), Worcester is number two (5,407), Springfield is number three (4,249) and Fall River is number four (3,780).

For all taxpayers, the IRS has issued 76.5 million payments worth \$63.8 billion based on 2007 tax returns processed so far. The agency expects to issue 124 million payments to Americans by year's end. Eligible individuals are receiving up to \$600 (\$1,200 for married couples filing joint returns) plus \$300 for eligible children younger than 17.

"The IRS has delivered. Only 70 days after the legislation became law, the IRS started putting the money in the hands of tens of millions of Americans. This

summer, we will go the extra mile to help the remaining retirees and disabled veterans get their payments," said Doug Shulman, IRS Commissioner.

A special stimulus category includes recipients of certain benefits from Social Security and Veterans Affairs who do not normally have a requirement to file a tax return. However, these individuals must file a tax return before Oct. 15 this year to receive their economic stimulus payments.

The IRS has accounted for 74 percent of Social Security and Veterans Affairs beneficiaries out of about 20 million initially identified as being potential stimulus recipients. All but 5.2 million of those have been accounted for as either having filed a return, having filed a joint return, or as not being eligible for a stimulus payment (for example, they were claimed as a dependent on another's return).

"Most people only need to file a tax return as they normally do," said Peggy Riley, IRS Spokesperson for New England.

"The IRS will calculate eligibility and the payment amount. However, many retirees and veterans do not normally file a tax return because their benefits are not taxable. This year, they must file in order to receive an economic stimulus payment," Riley said.

Riley also stressed to retirees that receiving the stimulus payment should have no impact on other federal benefits currently being received. The stimulus payment is not taxable. Absent any other filing requirements, filing a tax return to receive a stimulus payment does not mean that retirees will have to start filing tax returns again.

The IRS has identified 5.2 million retirees and veterans' beneficiaries who potentially are eligible for the stimulus payments. Later this summer, the agency will send them a special letter that explains stimulus payment eligibility and how to claim it. The letter will include a sample tax form and an actual tax form that people can complete and mail to the IRS. This will be the second special mailing to reach those individuals.

The IRS also is working with members of Congress, state and local officials and national partners such as AARP, the National Council on Aging, United Way of America, National Disability Institute and others to continue its extensive outreach efforts to the retiree and veterans' communities through the summer.

The IRS will take the lead in coordinating face-to-face free tax preparation sessions with the help of local community partners at locations where these individuals live, work and socialize such as senior housing, Veterans Affairs hospitals and assisted living facilities.

Riley also reminded people that it has more than 400 local Taxpayer Assistance Centers operating normal business hours Monday through Friday. These centers can provide assistance to retirees and veterans trying to receive their payments. A list for addresses and office hours can be found at "[Contact My Local IRS Office](#)" at www.irs.gov.

"Some retirees and others who normally do not file a tax return may be eligible and not know it. And, that's where we could use the public's help as well. If you know of a retiree or a disabled veteran who might qualify, please pass along the information to them," said Shulman.

The Economic Stimulus Act of 2008 generally provided for payments of \$600 (\$1,200 for married couples filing joint returns or the amount equal to the 2007 net income tax liability, whichever is less,), plus \$300 for each qualifying child. Payments also begin to phase out for individuals with adjusted gross incomes greater than \$75,000 (\$150,000 married couples filing jointly).

For people who have no tax liability or no tax filing requirement, there is a minimum payment of \$300 (\$600 for married couples), plus the \$300 for each qualifying child. To be eligible for the minimum payment, individuals must have at least \$3,000 in qualifying income.

IRS STIMULUS, page 36

Why are government employees more equal than you

Kamal Jain
GUEST COLUMNIST

Do you remember the novel "Animal Farm" by George Orwell?

In the story, animals on a farm join together, overthrow their human owners, and "liberate" all the animals.

The first thing the animals do is proclaim that "all animals are equal." They painted this credo on the barn in big letters for all to see.

Over time, some animals started taking charge of things at the farm, devising the rules and enforcing them. Order was necessary after all!

All this seemed innocent and harmless enough until the animals in charge started to get comfortable with their power. They had cushy jobs on the farm, as did their family and friends.

Other animals worked and worked, being punished if they questioned this arrangement. The governing animals produced nothing, but took more than an equal share of feed and water, claiming it

was necessary for maintaining order and productivity on the farm.

One night, without discussion or consent, the governing animals changed the credo on the barn to: "All animals are equal, but some are more equal than others."

You might say that's got nothing to do with us here in America - "Animal Farm" was about Marxist-Socialism and Communism. And you'd be right...sort of. Orwell did say that he wrote the novel as a cautionary tale about the virulent form of Socialism brewing in the Soviet Union, not against the Socialism he saw at home in England (a kinder, gentler Socialism).

But if you look around you today, you might think the animals' situation seems all too familiar, all too applicable to our lives today. And you'd be right...sort of. The key difference today is that our credo, borne out of the Declaration of Independence which states that "...all men are created equal...", has not been updated to reflect reality.

Modern politicians and bureaucrats have learned that it's best not to draw any attention to the privileged lives THEY lead - at OUR expense. But if you look back over the past few decades you'll notice something interesting: Some people are more equal than others. By law. The dividing line is the same as in Orwell's story.

Just the same as in "Animal Farm", we find today that government sector employees get higher wages and better benefits than workers in the private sector.

Why are government employees more equal than you? Why are most government employees exempt from Social Security taxes - while you and other private sector workers are taxed to fund Social Security and Medicare every year you work? Why are government employees able to retire at age 54 - while you and other private sector workers must keep working until age 65?

Why do average government employees get retirement pension paychecks of \$25,000 to \$45,000 a year, starting at age 54 - while you are forced

to squeak by on Social Security payments of \$1,600 a month, starting at age 65?

Why do government retirees also get high cost, high quality health insurance for life - while you are forced to make do with Medicare?

Why are government employees more equal than private sector employees? Why are government retirees more equal than private sector retirees? Why are the tax receivers more equal than the tax payers? Why are government employees more equal than you?

On November 4, 2008 the voters of Massachusetts will have the chance to end the state income tax forever, returning an average of three-thousand six-hundred dollars to over 3 million hard-working taxpayers in the state.

This question, if passed, will not take money out of the state, it will take it out of the hands of state government - and put it back in the hands, pockets and bank accounts of the people who earned it.

For more information, please go to www.SmallGovernmentAct.org.

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THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX

Fantasyland politics

Dr. Charles Ormsby
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

I’ve finally figured it out! Yes, after decades of research, I’ve finally figured out how liberals can believe so many things that are clearly and obviously false.

The answer? An ego-centric psychosis coupled with wishful thinking.

To begin our exploration of the fantasyland that liberals inhabit, let’s note the four underpinnings of liberalism:

1. The desire to enjoy the fruits of someone else’s labor,
2. An unjustified arrogance and sense of superiority,
3. The quest for power, and
4. A deep-seated envy and/or hate of those who are productive.

The last three are often combined and represent the best explanation of the motives and psychology of the liberal elite. Only a heavy dose of all three could possibly explain the behavior and careers of Hillary Clinton, Nancy Pelosi, Harry Reid, and their Hollywood supporters.

I would include Barrack Obama in this list, but he seems like such a pleasant young man! How could such evil reside in an immature individual like Mr. Obama unless he was exposed to a massive dose of hateful preaching during his formative years? On second thought, maybe I should reconsider.

The first item listed, coveting thy neighbor’s property, is certainly a powerful motivator and is the starting point for most liberals.

Thankfully, most people have some innate sense of right and wrong and an understanding that unadulterated theft, uncompromised by any fanciful explanation or excuse, would just not be morally right or acceptable. Therefore, most liberals – there are exceptions – would not respond to a direct appeal such as, “OK everyone, let’s go steal Bill Gate’s yacht!”

No, liberals need a plausible cover story – a story or excuse they can convince themselves has merit – so they can sleep at night and look at themselves in the mirror in the morning.

Typically, the justification involves a mental transference of the recipient of the booty from themselves to others who are less fortunate. A liberal will never say, “I want this government program for me.” Oh no, it is always for the poor, the less fortunate, the homeless, the children ...

If a liberal can be convinced that the loot he or she secretly desires is really

being stolen for the benefit of the needy, his or her conscience will be assuaged.

In fact, if this altruistic excuse is fully internalized, a liberal’s feelings of self-esteem and social superiority will be strengthened. After multiple repetitions of this self-deception, liberals graduate to a high level of self-congratulation and self-importance resulting in a blissful state of arrogance (see item #2).

Once arrogance sets in, it naturally follows that a liberal will want to acquire power (see item #3). For who else should wield power, if not the most insightful individuals having the most highly developed state of social consciousness? Liberals are convinced they know better than mere commoners and so, logically, they should be vested with the power to tell others what to do and when/how to do it.

After living in this fantasyland for a while, liberals are bound to note that the greatest benefactors of mankind are those

descent into liberalism can begin at any of the four steps.

For example, Hollywood liberals start with item number four. After amassing great wealth through good looks or scandalous behavior, they feel guilty because they know that others earned their wealth through more productive endeavors. To avoid confronting this painful truth, they demonize those who produce wealth thus re-enforcing their false sense of superiority and the cycle progresses.

This cycle of self-deception and personal aggrandizement is the first source of liberal fantasyland thinking. But liberal fantasyland is more than just a cover-up of their thieving, ego-centric ways. It is also a reflection of mental laziness and wishful thinking.

Instead of coming to grips with the real complexities of human society and the physical reality confronting mankind, liberals just want to wish away

“Wish I may, Wish I might,
Have the wish I wish tonight”
– Liberal Epistemology

who, through thought, great effort, and risk-taking, produce an abundance of goods and services needed by others. This is an affront to their feelings of self-importance and social consciousness. Could it be that others are more worthy than they? Could big business actually benefit the common man? Could entrepreneurs be the well-spring of innovation, economic growth, and a higher standard of living?

Such thoughts are an affront to self-absorbed liberals.

The result is a growing feeling of envy and hate for the productive members of society (see item #4). Liberals are compelled to attribute the material success of others to luck or inheritance (e.g., “the more fortunate”) ... anything but the just rewards of productive efforts. By doing so they bolster their convictions of superiority and they provide a moral justification for the expropriation of private property.

So you see, these four factors provide a self-reinforcing psychology that powers the liberal perspective: a desire to steal the property of others, justified by noble intentions, leading to arrogance, a desire for power, and eventually, envy of and hate towards the productive members of society.

We started the cycle of liberal depravity with the desire to abscond with the property of others. But the spiral

difficulties and make believe they don’t exist.

Have you ever noticed how liberals think that just passing another law will automatically solve a problem?

For example, liberals think that if we make it a crime to carry a gun near a school, that will eliminate future Columbine massacres. Is this wishful thinking?

A rational person might conclude that if a killer is not prevented from massacring innocent students based on moral considerations and is not dissuaded by a life sentence or the death penalty, an ordinance against guns near schools is unlikely to be an effective deterrent. Hey, a few guns in the hands of the good guys on campus might even prevent a tragedy, but that is a no-no to la la land liberals.

Some liberal legislation is akin to throwing a boulder in a stream; the water just runs around it.

A case in point is the liberals’ belief that if we just pass a law requiring a minimum wage, we will magically transform low-paying jobs into higher paying jobs with no negative consequences. Like the water in a stream, employers take the path of least resistance by eliminating some jobs entirely and increasing automation to avoid the need for others. Most affected workers are hurt, not just because they lose their income, but also because they lose a stepping stone to a better job.

More wishful thinking: Liberals believe that rent-control laws will ensure the availability of cheap housing for all. What results? Investors stop building new rental units, landlords stop investing in repairs, abandoned buildings multiply, the supply of decent rental units for the poor declines, and the intended beneficiary of the liberal philosophy become homeless or become dependent on government housing. Thanks for nothing!!



Dr. Charles Ormsby of the North Andover School Committee

The beat goes on: Now liberals are trying to tighten regulations on oil speculators and claim that doing so will lower the price of gasoline.

But can’t the speculators just take their speculation to the London commodities exchange? And where were the speculators when oil was \$20 per barrel? Haven’t liberals ever heard of supply and demand? Did they think a permanent ban on domestic drilling or intolerable barriers to building refineries and nuclear power plants would lead to plentiful, affordable energy?

Maybe, if liberals just wish hard enough, windmills and sunshine will eliminate the need for drilling or nuclear power. Sure ... when pigs fly.

Liberal wishful thinking also extends to foreign policy with potentially catastrophic consequences.

For example, liberals believed that sectarian violence between Sunnis and Shiites would magically diminish and Al Qaeda terrorists would fold their tents and go home if only we would abandon Iraq. Even after our troop surge resulted in dramatic reductions in sectarian violence and after tribal leaders testified that their “awakening” was a direct result of our increased commitment, liberals persisted in closing their eyes and just denying reality.

Worse still, liberals refuse to recognize the evil nature of many of our adversaries. They insist on decades-long negotiations with countries like Iran, Syria, and North Korea. They persist even though a school child can recognize that these countries despise America’s fundamental precepts, detest any notion of individual freedom and harbor evil intentions. It is clear that, despite liberal wishes, these governments have no intention of living in peace or becoming peaceful, productive nations.

This is the most dangerous form of liberal wishful thinking because it could lead to nuclear war.

So, be careful who you vote for. Barack Obama does seem like a nice guy ... although that might be wishful thinking.

If he’s elected, let’s all agree to wish – and wish real hard – that the consequence will not be an economic collapse or the incineration of several American cities.



Dr. Ormsby is a member of the North Andover School Committee. He is a graduate of Cornell and has a doctorate from MIT. You can contact Dr. Ormsby via email: cormsby@comcast.net

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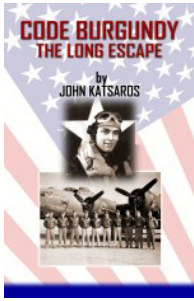
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Mayor Presents “Outstanding Citizen” award to John Katsaros for his bravery during WW II

Mayor James J. Fiorentini presented Haverhill's “Outstanding Citizen” award to Mr. John Katsaros last month, recognizing his heroism and sacrifice during World War II.

Mr. Katsaros has written a book called “Code Burgundy: The Long Escape” about his experiences during this war. He served in the US Army Air Force and in 1944, at the age of 20, he was shot down over Frankfurt, Germany. He was captured twice by the Germans and was rescued by the French Underground. Through his actions, he was able to bring back vital information to Britain.

In 1972, the French Government recognized Mr. Katsaros' great courage and valor. 36 years later, Mayor Fiorentini said he felt that it was time for the United States and the City of Haverhill to recognize him as well.



The Mayor said he commends the extraordinary actions undertaken by Mr. Katsaros in the European theatre and presents him with this award for his outstanding bravery and service to our country.

“Haverhill native John Katsaros answered our country's call for brave men and women to serve in the Armed Forces when we entered World War II,” Mayor Fiorentini said.

“In his service to our country, he was shot down over Germany and then was rescued by the French Resistance. Since this Great War, we have read and seen, though Hollywood's movies, accounts of great bravery and heroism. But right here in Haverhill we have a hero whose story could give any Hollywood script a run for its money.”

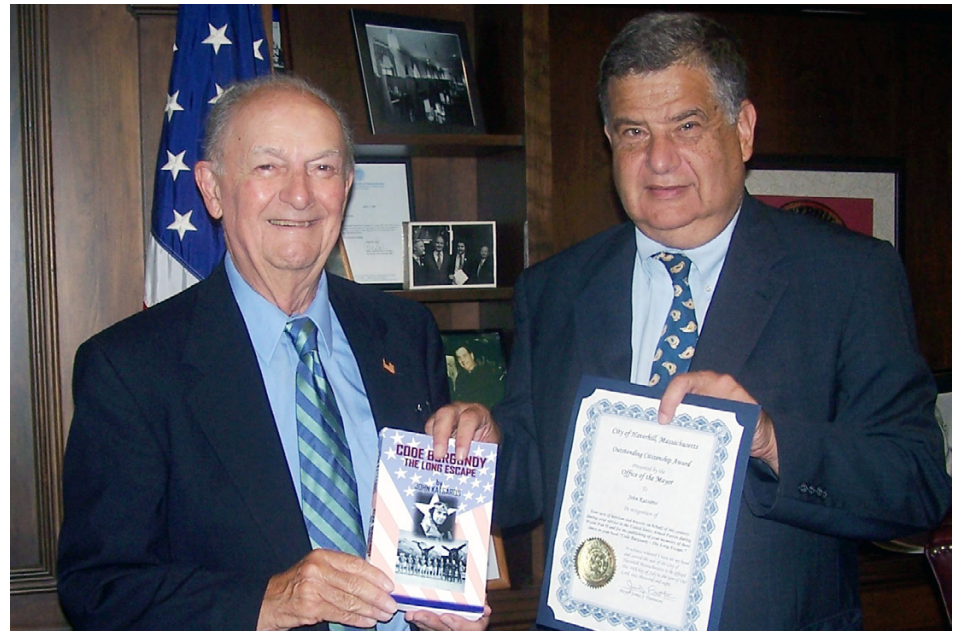


PHOTO: COURTESY

WW II hero S/Sgt. USAAF Ret. John Katsaros, author of “Code Burgundy: The Long Escape” with Mayor James Fiorentini presenting him the Outstanding Citizen Award.

Brooks Brothers suits to be made in city; brings over 200 manufacturing Jobs

Mayor James J. Fiorentini announced that Retail Brand Alliance, which makes the famous Brooks Brothers suits and clothing, would be moving its manufacturing operations to Haverhill. Retail Brand Alliance has recently acquired the former Southwick Clothing Company in Lawrence and will be relocating these current and additional employees to 20 Computer Drive next to Magellan Aerospace. This is part of the industrial park off Route 97.

“Landing Retail Brand Alliance and their jobs is a major coup for the City,” proclaimed the Mayor. “I have been working on this personally, as has

Economic Development and Planning Director Bill Pillsbury, for the past several months. We have met numerous times with officials from both Southwick and then Retail Brand Alliance,” noted the Mayor.

“Recruiting this company took a tremendous team effort along with a number of economic incentives working with the State and City to persuade these clothiers, who have a great local tradition, to maintain their manufacturing facilities here in the United States rather than move overseas,” state the Mayor.



BROOKS BROTHERS

Southwick Clothing was started as Grieco Brothers by two Italian immigrants who started in Brooklyn and then relocated to mills in Lawrence. Grieco Brothers was acquired by Southwick some time ago. Now part of Retail Brands Alliance, the operation will be a part of the renowned Brooks Brothers line.

“I wish to thank some people who really stood out on this issue, notably Governor Patrick and Lieutenant Governor Murray, Greg Bialecki, the Governor's Undersecretary for Business

Development, and Peter Milano from the Massachusetts Office of Business Development. Greg and Peter traveled repeatedly to Haverhill to meet with us about this,” listed the Mayor.

“Most of all, from my administration, our own Bill Pillsbury worked tirelessly with these State officials to put together a series of economic incentives to persuade this great American company to remain in America. Retail Brand Alliance and the Southwick employees wanted to be here in Haverhill, and working together, we got it done!”

Plaistow Lions Club donates \$10,000 to the Merrimack Valley Hospice House Campaign

LAWRENCE - With the foundation for the Merrimack Valley Hospice House poured and ready for the next stage of construction, more and more local organizations have been supporting the project.

Just recently, the Lions Club in Plaistow, New Hampshire supported the project with a donation of \$10,000.

“This is the largest donation the Plaistow Lions Club has made in its 59 year history,” said Plaistow Lions Club President Paul Waring. “I felt very strongly about this project, because this hospice took care of my mother when she was dying - allowing her to die with dignity.”

Waring and Plaistow Lions Club Board Member Jack McSheehy met up with Home Health Foundation President / CEO Joan Stygles Hull, RN, MBA on July 7th to check out the progress of the project. There they presented her with the check for \$10,000.

“This is an impressive project, and we are really proud to support it,” said McSheehy. “This Hospice House is going to help a lot of members of this community.”

The Merrimack Valley Hospice House is a fourteen bed Hospice House dedicated to providing care for terminally ill patients and their families.

This project will mark the first of its kind in the Merrimack Valley, even providing rooms dedicated to the special needs of the pediatric hospice patient. The Campaign Committee is in the process of wrapping up the quiet phase of the campaign.

The public phase of the campaign will kick off with a ceremony slated for the fall.

“Our agency has been so pleased with the community support we have received to this point,” said Joan Stygles Hull, RN, MBA, President / CEO. “This is a dream



PHOTO: COURTESY

Jack McSheehy (Plaistow resident and Board Member of the Plaistow Lions), Joan Stygles Hull, RN, MBA, President/CEO of Home Health Foundation, and Paul Waring (Plaistow resident and President of the Plaistow Lions Club).

realized for our entire organization and the families we serve. This Hospice House will provide the most comprehensive end of life care to residents of this region and their families.”

Merrimack Valley Hospice is a not-for-profit agency affiliated with Home Health VNA and HomeCare, Inc.

The three agencies make up the Home Health Foundation Family of Agencies and serve more than 80 communities throughout the Merrimack Valley, Northeastern Massachusetts and Southern New Hampshire.

For more information on the Merrimack Valley Hospice House visit www.merrimackvalleyhospice.org.



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Andover Surgery Center expands facility, services

Tom Duggan

VALLEY PATRIOT REPORTER

Walking into the lobby of the newly renovated Andover Surgery Center, patients arriving for surgery with their friends and families find themselves in a quieter and more convenient environment than day surgery at a local hospital.

A friendly and relaxing atmosphere, complete with reading material, a giant fish tank and a staff to help answer questions and ease concerns, the Andover Surgery Center is one of only two stand alone surgical facilities licensed by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Dr. Crawford Campbell, who has been with Essex Orthopaedics since 1995, says that the surgery center is now expanding the range of the specialty services offered to patients.

"In Andover, for example, there's an eye center, there are places that just do GI or GU," Campbell said, "but this facility has always had multiple specialties. So, we can offer orthopedics, gynecology, urology, pediatrics, and now, even general surgery, plastics, podiatry, and so on. It's unique in that respect."

Prior to completing a multi-million dollar renovation earlier this year, the surgery center was treating 200-250 patients per month. But, since the expansion there is now room to service 350-400 patients per month, something that Dr. Campbell says keeps patient costs low while improving the quality of care.

"It used to be that only minor procedures were done in a facility like

this. But now, we can handle all day surgeries. We have a great anesthesia team. We do general anesthesia. It's a complete facility. If something happens and you get sick here it's just like being in the hospital. We have everything we need to take care of you."

Plus, Campbell says, "A facility like this, where the turnover is fast, I can literally do twice as much surgery here in a day as I do in hospital. The nurses are great here. They know my procedures and we all work very well together."

Campbell says the convenience for his patients and the time saving he experiences is invaluable to patient care. "I'm not waiting 40 minutes between cases, I get one case done, the new carts are moved in, and we are ready to go again. It is very efficient and very user friendly. A lot of patients don't like to go to the hospital; particularly now, with all these special bacteria that grow in the hospital setting, in the ICU, and places like that. This is a much healthier place to be, which has tremendous advantages for our patients."

The center now has brand new recovery areas and private pediatric recovery rooms that allow a child's family members to stay with them throughout their visit. The center has also increased office space for physicians, making it easier for doctors to see patients when they are not performing surgery.

"Many things we used to do in the hospital have transitioned to outpatient



PHOTO: TOM DUGGAN

A quiet, relaxing environment in the lobby of the Andover Surgery Center

facilities like ours," Campbell continued. "Things are so expensive in a hospital, you have to support intensive care units, a large infrastructure, an emergency department, etc. But the cost of having surgery in a facility like ours costs any insurer so much less, because we just don't have the overhead of a Hospital."

"I had cervical spine surgery a number of years ago," he recounted. "I was in the hospital for not even a day and the total bill was more than \$10,000. Today, in a facility like this, doing cervical discectomies as an outpatient, costs about two to three thousand dollars. So it is much less expensive and much more convenient for the patient."

Dr. Nitzberg, P.C. (a Gastroenterologist who specializes in colonoscopies and endoscopies) agrees. "We give people who come to our offices a choice between having day surgery here or in a hospital and overwhelmingly, our patients prefer to be here. It's more private, and is a much better setting than a hospital, especially when you are nervous about having a procedure. I already did nine surgeries today and between surgeries I can see other patients. It really is the convenience and cost that make coming here so preferable for our patients but there is something to be said for easing the anxiety for a patient or their family by providing an area that is less stressful."

Patients visiting the surgery center today may remember it as the old walk-in clinic run by the Lawrence General Hospital. While the Andover Surgery Center no longer accepts walk-in's, patients can call and make an appointment with their doctor at the

facility and they will be seen much more quickly than they could in a hospital."

**Dr. Crawford Campbell is an upper extremity surgeon with Essex Orthopedics and just moved his practice to Salem, NH. He is the first upper extremity specialist in The Valley and graduated from Harvard Medical School in 1987 and then interned in General Surgery at Massachusetts General Hospital and the Harvard Combined Residency in Orthopedic Surgery.*

Dr. Campbell also served as Chief Resident at Children's Hospital in Boston. He then trained as the Rowe Shoulder Fellow at MGH, and spent one year for additional subspecialty training in Hand Surgery at Brigham & Women's Hospital and Children's Hospital. He is board certified in Orthopedic Surgery, is a fellow in the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgery and a member of the American Society for Surgery of the Hand. Dr. Campbell achieved a Certificate of Added Qualifications in Surgery of the Hand.

**Dr. Nitzberg has been a gastroenterologist for 15 years, and established his solo practice, Mark C. Nitzberg, P.C., in 2001. He is a member of the medical staffs of Caritas Holy Family Hospital and Lawrence General Hospital, as well as the Andover Surgery Center. A 1989 graduate of the University of Massachusetts Medical School, Dr. Nitzberg served his residency there, followed by a gastroenterology fellowship at the University of Connecticut Medical Center. Dr. Nitzberg is board certified in internal medicine and gastroenterology, and is a member of the Massachusetts Medical Society and the American Medical Association.*

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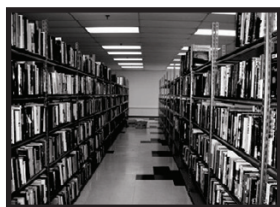
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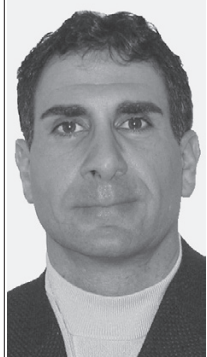
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Ansin: \$55 Mil. investment means Monarch back on track by November



PHOTO: TOM DUGGAN

Bob Ansin, owner of the \$200 million Monarch on the Merrimack project says he lost \$40 million in funding after the Eagle-Tribune printed a bogus story which claimed men were seen removing asbestos from the building. The Tribune eventually retracted the story, but by then it was too late, causing a shut down of the project for 10 months. Now, Ansin says he has secured a \$55Mil investment and the project is expected to be back on track by November, 2008.

Tom Duggan

VALLEY PATRIOT REPORTER

In an exclusive interview on WCAP radio (980AM) in Lowell, multi-millionaire developer Bob Ansin announced for the first time that he has secured a \$55 million investment for his Monarch on the Merrimack project after a ten month shut down caused by a bogus story in the Eagle-Tribune claiming one of their reporters witnessed "men in tyvek suits" removing asbestos from the building.

"I'm not the kind of guy who holds a grudge," Ansin said, adding that as far as he's concerned the bogus Trib story is in the past. "But it's been a rough ten months," he admits. "We had to lay everyone off and stop construction until we could find another investor who would not be influenced by the story."

The Monarch project, called 'a city within a city' is located on Merrimack St.

in Lawrence in the old Wood Mill building, once considered the longest building in the world.

After spending more than 4 million out of pocket for the building, and sinking millions more into construction and rehab, Ansin's \$200 million project was well under way last October with more than a dozen people putting a down deposit on luxury penthouse lofts and a California bank committing more than \$40 million more to help Ansin begin phase two of the project.

According to Ansin, phase two would have included finishing the luxury penthouse lofts and renovating the rest of the mill to sustain local businesses, office space, a movie theater, a bowling alley, night clubs and retail stores.

Ansin hired local contractors from Lawrence, Andover, Methuen and surrounding communities to do the work on Monarch. Local people he says bore the brunt of the ten month shutdown. "I felt so bad," he recalled. "All of these local workers have been out of work since the shutdown. I'm just thrilled to be able to announce that we will be back on track within 90 days and people can start moving into Monarch by January."

Lawrence Mayor Mike Sullivan said Ansin's announcement was "very good news for the city."

"I never doubted for one minute that Bob Ansin was going to find a way to get this project back up and running. I know Bob, and I know what happened last year was a terrible injustice to him and everyone who worked at Monarch.

Now, the project will start back up and you will start to see tremendous progress in a very short period of time. Bob Ansin is more committed to this city than just about anyone I have every met and Lawrence is very lucky Bob didn't just thrown his hands up and give up on the

MONARCH, page 23

Wayne Newton to perform in Lawrence again

Sal Lupoli, President and CEO of Sal's Pizza Retail and Wholesale Divisions, Salvatore's Restaurants and Riverwalk Properties, says he is proud to announce that singing and performing legend Wayne Newton is coming back to Lawrence on Monday September 15th for an encore performance.

Lupoli is working in conjunction with world renowned author and therapist Dr. Rene Thomas of the New Hope Health Center to host Wayne Newton's fundraising concert to benefit the Adopt-A-Patient Foundation.

"It's an honor to have Wayne Newton coming back to Lawrence," Lupoli said of the entertainers return. "It's an honor to have Wayne Newton coming back to Lawrence," said Lupoli.

"Mr. Newton was so impressed with the Adopt-A-Patient Foundation and of

course the City of Lawrence that he actually asked when he could come back!" said Dr. Thomas. Tickets will go on sale through Ticketmaster starting Monday, July 28th. Ticket prices will range from \$50 - \$150 dollars. Tickets will be available online through Ticketmaster.Com or by calling 617-931-2000 or 603-868-7300.

Some special select seating tickets will be made available by Joseph Bevilacqua, president of the Merrimack Valley Chamber of Commerce. All proceeds will benefit the Adopt-A-Patient Foundation.

Sal's Pizza has corporate-owned properties in New Hampshire and Massachusetts.



PHOTO: COURTESY

The business with over 35 locations has become a large retail franchise and wholesale operation serving all of New England with additional locations in California, Florida and opening soon in Virginia.

Today Sal's Pizza and Salvatore's Restaurants make thousands of pizzas a week! Riverwalk Properties is one of the largest pieces of office and retail space in all of

Massachusetts.

All proceeds will benefit the Adopt-A-Patient Foundation and ticket sales will be announced at the beginning of August and will be available for sale at Salvatore's Restaurant in Lawrence.

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Wind power testing at Sal's Riverwalk

LAWRENCE – Sal Lupoli, President/CEO of Sal's Pizza Retail and Wholesale Divisions, Salvatore's Restaurants and Riverwalk Properties, announces that Lupoli Companies is erecting a 70 foot tall metrological tower on the roof of 350 Merrimack Street to collect data on wind speed and direction.

The data collected will be used to assess the viability of placing one or more wind turbine generators at the Riverwalk complex.

By being placed on the roof, the tower will be able to collect data at 150 feet above ground level – providing an accurate picture of the potential wind resource available to a commercial-scale wind turbine. The tower is made by Climatronics Corp. and will be installed by Boreal Renewable Energy Development – a leading systems integrator based in Arlington, Massachusetts. Sal Lupoli is committed to doing the right things for his tenants and Lawrence. As we all know, energy rates have risen substantially in the past few years and all indications are that they will keep rising.

Electricity from the wind is free and can be used to displace purchases from National Grid, saving the complex and



PHOTO: TOM DUGGAN

Sal's Riverwalk facility on Merrimack Street in Lawrence is now testing wind power.

the tenant's significant amounts of money. In addition, wind generated electricity does not emit pollution. Sal is continuing to take a leadership role in the new clean economy: From recycling old industrial buildings into vibrant commercial districts at the heart of an historic city, to owning and operating one of the largest photovoltaic arrays in New England (127 kW).

Lupoli Companies retained PowerHouse Enterprises, Inc. to facilitate a series of sensible investments in energy-related upgrades. Previously, PowerHouse helped Lupoli procure a long-term electric supply contract at favor-able rates and served as the project

manager for the photovoltaic procurement and installation. "It has been great working with Quincy Vale from PowerHouse over the past few years. He has helped us to take greater control of our energy costs, which are a major part of our budget, by step-wise leading us through all the complexities associated with planning, financing and owning advanced energy generating technologies," said Lupoli.

About PowerHouse Enterprises, Inc. PowerHouse is an integrated clean energy, design-build facilitator located in Lawrence, Massachusetts. PowerHouse's projects range from LEED Platinum certified houses that slash utility costs, to

consulting on the re-powering and adaptive reuse of existing buildings, to power procurement and emissions trading.

Sal's Pizza has corporate-owned properties in New Hampshire and Massachusetts. The business with over 35 locations has become a large retail franchise and wholesale operation serving all of New England with additional locations in California, Florida and opening soon in Virginia. Today Sal's Pizza and Salvatore's Restaurants make thousands of pizzas a week! Riverwalk Properties is one of the largest pieces of office and retail space in all of Massachusetts.

Lawrence Firefighters Federal Credit Union to merge with NESFC Federal Credit Union

The Board of Directors of Lawrence Firefighters Federal Credit Union, Lawrence, Massachusetts, announced their vote to merge with NESFC Federal Credit Union of Methuen, Massachusetts.

Both credit unions have a long history of serving local select employment groups in the Merrimack Valley area as authorized by their charters from the National Credit Union Administration.

For 58 years, Lawrence Firefighters Federal Credit Union has predominately served City of Lawrence, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and Essex County employees who work in Lawrence. NESFC Federal Credit Union was originally chartered 50 years ago to serve employees of the Internal Revenue

Service, including those employed in Andover, Fitchburg, Lawrence, Lowell, Methuen, and Stoneham. In addition to employees, credit union membership at both entities is extended to their families.

Lawrence Firefighters Federal Credit Union staff and management will be retained, and representation from its Board of Directors will be present on the NESFC Board of Directors. The Lawrence Firefighters' location at 14 Amesbury Street, Lawrence, will remain open and named Lawrence Firefighters Branch of NESFC Federal Credit Union.

Elaine Sullivan, Chief Executive Officer of NESFC Federal Credit Union, has more than 35 years experience in the credit union industry and will remain in

her role following merger completion. Alan L. Jenne, Chief Executive Officer of Lawrence Firefighters Federal Credit Union, who has more than 30 years of banking and credit union experience, will assume the role of Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer.

"This merger presents many opportunities for the membership of both credit unions and will have a positive impact on the local financial services industry. I look forward to working with the Lawrence Firefighter's management team and staff as we maintain current services and also initiate new programs. The combined credit union will have assets of nearly \$80 million and serve 12,000 members," Sullivan said.

Jenne commented that, "Once the merger is approved and completed, members will benefit from also having three locations to conduct financial transactions: 14 Amesbury Street, Lawrence, MA; 248 Pleasant Street, Methuen, MA; and 310 Lowell Street, Andover, MA, while there will be a network of seven local ATMs. This merger also allows us to reach out to potential members as we apply for additional charter amendments."

The proposed merger is pending National Credit Union Administration's approval and a vote from the general membership of Lawrence Firefighters Federal Credit Union. The merger is expected to be completed by the end of 2008.



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Peter Larocque
LAWRENCE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

I would like to use my August and September columns to share my thoughts and opinions of how to go about moving the City of Lawrence forward and the lessons learned from the good (and the not so good) things that took place during the FY09 Lawrence City budget process.

In moving the city of Lawrence forward, we must take the lessons learned from the FY09 budget process and have an open and honest discussion about them without finger pointing and assigning blame.

How do we avoid the situation that we found ourselves in when we, as a School Committee, took our time (along with the Superintendent and his staff) to bring a balanced budget to the table? By the way, we had more budget workshops this year than I have ever experienced or heard about before.

Which goes to show that the School Committee took this process quite seriously and just did not take the Administrations point of view or turn a blind eye to the process! So, in April of 2008 the Lawrence School Committee adopted the Lawrence Public School’s FY09 budget. But the Lawrence School Department’s budget bottom line presented to the Lawrence City Council (in May of 2008) by Mayor Sullivan was not the same. Sullivan is also the Chairman of the Lawrence School Committee.

The Mayor and his Budget and Finance Director took it upon themselves to present to the Lawrence City Council a Lawrence Public School Department budget that was different from what was



Lawrence School Committee members Peter Larocque and Sam Reyes with Lawrence Mayor Michael Sullivan and Superintendent of Schools, Wilfredo Laboy

adopted by the Lawrence School Committee.

The Lawrence School Committee, elected by the citizens, was never notified about this change to their FY09 Budget before it was presented to the City Council. Why this happened and how to avoid this from happening again is what I would like to address. I want to say, and make clear to all, that I do not believe this was done maliciously or spitefully to undermined the ELECTED City Officials, on The Lawrence School Committee.

I do believe this was done with the intent to save money for the city in these trying financial times.

During the FY09 budget process, where the Lawrence City Budget and Finance Sub-Committee conducted many hours of interviews with various department heads (as well as the Mayor’s office), there was talk of changing the Lawrence City Charter. I believe if any discussion on the changing of the City Charter ever takes place, the discussion needs to include changing the section that involves the make up and the election process for the Lawrence School Committee.

I have written my views on this before and, taking into consideration the constructive input from others, I have made changes to my thinking of how the Lawrence School Committee should be structured and elected. Personally, I do not believe districts should elect the School Committee, the only time districts come into play is election time. But I have been told that the Federal Government got involved with our city business and forced the city to change from electing our School Committee Members At-large to choosing district representatives on the committee. Right now we have 6 elected School Committee members representing the districts of Lawrence with the Mayor as the Committee Chairperson giving us a 7 Member School Committee.

To avoid the situation I described earlier that took place with the FY09 budget, I believe the following must happen to alleviate any appearance of impropriety.

First, I believe the Lawrence School Committee should mirror the Lawrence City Council. There should be, at most, nine members on the Lawrence School Committee just like the Lawrence City

Council. The Mayor of the City of Lawrence should not be one of the nine. Therefore the Lawrence School Committee should be structured as follows:

Six seats on the committee elected to represent each of the six districts in the city and three seats to be elected At - Large, all for a term of two years. Once elected, the nine members elect their own Chairman and Vice-Chairman among themselves.

Once this new structure for the school committee is in place and they adopt future budgets and present them to the mayor of the city, the Mayor and his staff can make any cuts that they feel necessary, as they do with other city department budgets.

Then the City Council would have presented to them a budget that comes from the mayor of the city, who is responsible to present a balanced fiscal budget for approval. At this point there would be no appearance of impropriety,.

Next month, I would like to discuss the issue of School Transportation. This is

LAROCQUE, page 28

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FROM PAGE ONE: Trib reporter escorted off military base, thrown out of wake and funeral

the Jimenez family endured at the hands of the Eagle Tribune was just beginning.

Wareing and Lawrence's Veteran's services director Francisco Urena were partners in planning the massive funeral for the military hero. Urena was in charge of the military aspect of the services and Wareing was in charge of the funeral services, scheduling, and media relations.

The Jimenez family made their wishes well known to the Eagle Tribune, Wareing said, when they got wind that the newspaper was going to publish the location of where Alex's body was being flown in to before the funeral.

"I got wind that, not only was the Tribune going to publish that he was being flown into Hanscom, but that they were planning to have a reporter in the procession from Lawrence to the base. So I called Sheryl Rock (Eagle Tribune Editor) and told her that we were purposefully not releasing the location where his body was being flown in to because both Maria and Andy (Alex's mom and dad) wanted the family to have some privacy. They were clearly told the media was not welcome and that we didn't want the location published to avoid any problems."

But Wareing said he was screamed at by the Tribune's editor who told him to mind his own business and stop telling her how to do her job. "The next day it was in the Tribune that Alex was being flown into Hanscom and I can't tell you how upset the rest of the family was. So, when the procession began I made sure to check and make sure there were no reporters' cars following or trying to sneak into the parade of cars going to Hanscom," he explained. "I even had a conversation with Yadira (the Eagle Tribune reporter). I personally told her not to come to the base; that this was a private event."

"It was a very sad Friday morning. I had to take this family to pick up their dead son who had served his country in Iraq. I was aggravated that I had to take so many precautions to make sure their privacy was protected from the local newspaper who thought nothing of invading their home and snapping pictures of them while they were being notified, but it was my job and I was just glad that they didn't have to deal with any more intrusions."

Wareing said the procession included two limos with the family inside as well as Lawrence Police motorcycle cops and two police auxiliary police cars that were joined by other departments and state

police as they made their way from Lawrence to Hanscom.

"When we arrived at Hanscom Air Force Base, they waived us in and we proceeded to the hanger area where I explained the procedure of what was going to happen next and, within a few minutes, I saw Yadira Betances from the Eagle Tribune right there on the base. I

was fuming. All I could think about is that Alex's family is having one of the worst days of their lives and at the time they need privacy the most, on a military base no less, they are being stalked by this woman who keeps telling us she is a friend of the family but keeps acting like a vulture."

"The Tribune was clear on the instruction. Clear instructions were given to everyone in the motorcade as well. Maria and Andy did

not want any press at the base. We didn't even want the press to publish where the body was being flown into. But there she was. She snuck on the base against the wishes of the family."

Wareing says that only Alex's mother had the legal right to remove the Trib reporter from the military base "since she was the legal next of kin."

"She said she didn't want her (Betances) there," Wareing continued, tears welling up in his eyes and his voice shaking. "She had to take time from grieving with her family to order the MP's to throw a Trib reporter off the base. I can't even tell you the pain this woman caused. My heart was breaking for them as it was, but to have to deal with this on top of what was happening was just unspeakable."

Alex's mother said that she didn't see Betances on the base, but that her son noticed her getting out of a police car and was so upset. "They (military personnel) asked if we wanted her to be there and we all said no. Father, brothers, everyone in the family agreed before that there would be no reporters and we all wanted her to leave. She is not a friend when she disrespects the body like that; when she disrespects our wishes like that," she said through her son Andy who interpreted.

Wareing said that he was puzzled as to how a reporter from the Eagle Tribune could have snuck onto a secure military base to either snap pictures or take notes, so he began to ask those in the motorcade. "One of the auxiliary police officers finally admitted that Chief Romero had ordered him to take her in his police cruiser before the motorcade began. I didn't think I had to search all the police cars before we left, but

apparently Chief Romero is in bed with them and I suspect, though I can't prove it yet, that Romero was the one who tipped them off about Alex's body being found before the family even knew. That does explain why Trib reporters were in the Jimenez house *before* the notification was made."

Thrown out of Wake and Funeral

But Wareing said the harassment of the Jimenez family didn't end there. "On the day of the wake, Yadira came into the church and immediately confronts me for throwing her off the base. She was swearing and yelling at me right in the middle of the church saying she is a friend of the family and she 'deserves' to be there. She was crying and she was all upset, so I explained to her again that it was Maria who had her thrown off the base and, if she was really a friend of the family, she would be there for them, not as a reporter.

That's when, Wareing says, the reporter threatened to "destroy" him.

"She yelled, 'You are finished! You are through! You are ruined. You're done. I work for the Eagle Tribune!'"

"I told her she obviously had no respect for the Jimenez family, and you are no friend of Alex. You are just one of the slime reporter that people hate. You can't pretend you're a friend to someone and then start acting like a reporter. If you are a reporter more than you are a friend, we don't want you here."

Wareing said she was then thrown out of the wake, but started crying and begging to talk to Alex's father so she could get back in. "This woman had no shame at all, she was going to do whatever it took to get a story and worm her way back in, but I think Andy felt bad at that point and just didn't want any more incidents so the family said that if she wanted to stay as a friend and promised not to do any reporting she could come back in."

Within half an hour Betances was seen by family members trying to interview one of Alex's former colleagues and then disappeared with the colleague outside the church.



PHOTO: ANDY JIMENEZ

Photo of Eagle Tribune reporter Yadira Betances taken by Andy Jimenez, brother of slain Army Pfc. Alex Jimenez who was killed in Iraq. Here, Betances is seen interviewing a former colleague of Jimenez after being thrown out of the church and then let back in under the promise that she would stop reporting.

"So we went outside to see her with a pen and notepad outside the church, interviewing the woman she only had access to because she was let back in the church to grieve with the family. Alex's brother Andy had his cell phone with him that has a camera built in, so he took a picture of her so we could show the rest of the family that this woman was playing everyone to get her story."

"I lost so much respect for the Tribune, and I know it goes back to the editors. This was not some rogue reporter doing something she wasn't supposed to do. She was doing what her editors wanted her to do: sneak around, violate the privacy of Alex's friends and family, and get the story by any means possible ... no matter who they hurt."

More dishonor at hero's funeral

Wareing says it would have been bad enough if their problems with the Tribune had ended there. But, on the day of the

TRIBUNE, page 36

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Friday, August 29th

6:00PM Opening ceremony and
parade to Holy Rosary Church

8:00PM Stephen Savio sings the
National Anthem Concert~opening
act Code 51 featuring D.D. Martin on
the Campagnone Common

9:00PM Concert on the
Campagnone Common starring
Michael Amante's the "Best of
Times Concert"

Saturday, August 30th

Noon Feast opens with
amusements, Italian foods and
pastries, entertainment and
souvenirs.

5:00PM *Next Food Network Star*,
Tommy Grella Jr. Cooking Demo.
Italian Tent -

5:45PM Nikki DelliColli's DC2
dance troupe - Bandstand

6:00PM Two Cousins - Russ &
Joe, Singing Italian Favorites -
Common Street Stage - Busty Faro
on Accordion -Italian Tent

7:30PM Torchlight Parade
honoring the Three Saints with the
St. Alfio Band, and the Sons of Italy
Band ending with fireworks and

playing of the Cantata by the Saint
Alfio Band.

8:30PM The Reminisants -
Common St. Stage.

9:00PM Joey Grieve sings the
National Anthem followed by: B
Street Bombers - Bandstand

Sunday, August 31st

10:00AM Solemn Mass in honor of
the Three Saints at Holy Rosary
Church

3:00PM Procession of the Statues
of the Three Saints through the
Feast neighborhood with the St. Alfio
Band (to 8:00PM)

3:45PM Stephen Savio - Stage at
Saint Alfio Villa Concert by Rico Barr
& the Jumpin' Jive Review -
Common St. Stage

5:00PM Carissa Scuderi performs
Bandstand

7:00PM Traditional "Moment of
Glory" with outdoor Benediction and
playing of the Cantata amidst
fireworks and showers of confetti

8:00PM Saints return to Holy
Rosary Church

8:15PM The Connection performs
Bandstand

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feta cheese, capers, kalamata olives, croutons \$6.95

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boiled egg, avocado, radicchio, crumbled gorgonzola, black olives,
croutons \$7.50

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celery sticks, tomato, crumbled gorgonzola, croutons, black olives, blue
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Orange Walnut Salad- Romaine, iceberg, sliced oranges, walnuts, tomato,
cucumber, red onion, radicchio, crumbled gorgonzola cheese, black olives,
croutons \$7.50

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TOM DUGGAN'S NOTEBOOK

CORRECTION: Valley Patriot loses a hero

Last month, The Valley Patriot honored Jerry Sullivan of Lawrence posthumously as our Valley Patriot of the Month after receiving word that he had passed away in 2007. It was the first time we had lost a Valley Patriot hero since we started the newspaper and wanted to remind people of his heroism and dedication to his country and community. Unfortunately, due an oversight, we never noted at the end of the republished article that Jerry had left us and that he was being honored posthumously. We apologize to Jerry's friends and family for the mistake.

LAWRENCE: Those Pesky Non-Profits

Last month, instead of writing a story about how much money non-profits make in the city of Lawrence and how much they own in non-taxable assets, we decided to let the facts speak for themselves and printed a list of non-profits, what they own, and how much they make. Almost immediately our phones started ringing off the hook from people working in non-profits, baiting us with the question "why are you attacking us". One advocate for Lawrence Community Works actually tried to convince me that because they are "called" non-profit "they actually don't make money." But, according to the State of Massachusetts LCW's "reported income amount" was \$7.9 million last year. Their reported *asset* amount was \$6.4 million. Though we didn't provide any commentary as to which non-profits we thought were good or bad, there were an awful lot of non-profit workers upset with us for publishing their financial information. Yet, while many of the non-profit organizations in Lawrence are shady, self-serving and try to con the public to get government dollars, there are an awful lot of non-profits that do incredible work making people's lives better. But that was not the subject of what

we published, and for those who work in non-profits and were offended by our listing, you should not get so upset about us publishing public information. Our only point in publishing this information, which apparently our regular readers got loud and clear, is that Lawrence has a \$240 million operating budget of which only about \$40 million comes from Lawrence taxpayers. When you consider the fact that non-profits own \$427 million in non taxable assets ... well you can see why the city of Lawrence is on welfare.

METHUEN: Muslim misperception

Almost two months after printing our interview with the Muslims in Methuen we are still getting reader responses. In last month's edition one letter writer asked why the Methuen Muslims did not give their last names alleging that they had something to hide. For the record I want to apologize to the Muslims in Methuen for not making this point clear last month or in the June edition when the original piece ran. It was my decision not to use the last names of the Muslims I interviewed for fear that they may be targeted or harassed. Each of the Muslims I interviewed willingly offered their first and last name either during the interview or before we started. As a side note, the VP has received more response from the Methuen Muslim story than any other story we have published. We look forward to continuing this in future editions.

GEORGETOWN: Summer Concert Series

Summer in Georgetown means it's time to say hi to your friends and neighbors and wander down to American Legion Park and enjoy a nice concert each Sunday night, 5 - 7 p.m. Food is typically provided for sale by local non-profits. All kinds of gifts and such are typically given out or available at low cost. The bands are great and the local fun is too. Susan Madigan directs the magic behind the scenes, joined by 2008

Concert Committee members Patty Durkee, John Murphy, Steve Frary, Luann Graffum, Bob Cacciola, and others. Contact Ms. Madigan at 978-352-8396 for more details or to help out or sponsor an event! Aug 10 - Rte. 97 North, a Beatles cover band will play along with others to be added. For more information please see www.GeorgetownToday.com.

NORTH SHORE: Musicians wanted

The North Shore Youth Symphony Orchestra (NYSO) is currently accepting musicians for their ensembles for the 2008-2009 season beginning in the fall. Auditions will take place over the summer by appointment. Symphony Orchestra, NYSO's advanced orchestra, is open to advanced violinists, violists, cellists and double bass players. Intermediate string players will be considered for Intermezzo Orchestra, the intermediate orchestral ensemble. All orchestral ensembles and the NYSO Wind Ensemble have openings for the following wind instruments: trumpet, bassoon, French horn and trombone. In addition, Flute Choir and Clarinet Choir also have several openings. NYSO Chorale invites any advanced vocalist, grades 8 - 12 to audition. Young strings players may audition for Prelude Strings (an ensemble of intermediate beginning players who read well in first position) or for Overture, (an ensemble of more advanced beginners playing at the end of Book 2 and beginning Book 3 Suzuki repertoire or equivalent). To audition, or for more information about NYSO, see our website at www.nysorchestra.org or call (978) 578-6353.

AROUND THE VALLEY: Valley Patriot Reaches Yet Another Milestone - 20,000 copies

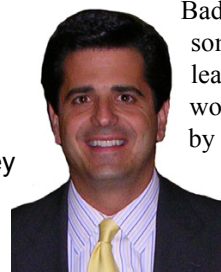
In March of 2004, a mere 2,000 copies of The Valley Patriot rolled off the print-ing presses and were distributed to four communities in the Merrimack Valley. Last month, 20,000 copies were printed and distributed throughout 22 communities in The Valley. I want to thank our advertisers, contributors, readers, sources, groupies, and everyone else who has contributed to the success of our monthly newspaper over the last four years. Next month we will have a pull-out, health and fitness section planned. Anyone interested in

writing or advertising in the special section can email us at valleypatriot@aol.com

METHUEN: Baddour: I am not supporting Linda Campbell

Methuen State Senator Steve Baddour is no longer supporting State Representative Linda Dean Campbell (D), Methuen as he did two years ago. This, despite the fact that Baddour told a crowd of people just a few months ago that "Linda Dean Campbell is one of the hardest working members of the Legislature," and "someone I am proud to work with on Beacon Hill." But now, Baddour has done a 180 on Campbell saying he is "staying neutral" now that his "friend" Chris DiBella has entered the race, something that Campbell supporters say is just Baddour's way of knocking their candidate. Baddour called us to complain last month because I wrote a notebook item saying he had endorsed Campbell (which he did prior to DiBella getting in the race). "But I haven't endorsed anyone since Chris got in the race" Baddour protested. And since he didn't hold a press conference or say publicly that he had changed his mind, I was going on the last known accurate state-ment by Baddour. But our sources at Methuen Life say he also called them to whine about his coverage and friends close to Baddour say he is so angry over the whole thing that he is considering endorsing Chris DiBella. Quite frankly, I don't care who wins the Methuen election for State Representative as I have no dog in this race, but given the political hits

Baddour is taking on Beacon Hill by some of his colleagues in the leadership, I would say Baddour would do both candidates a favor by endorsing Joe Leone.



GEORGETOWN/BOXFORD: Chicken BBQ

St. Mary's Catholic Family Parish serving Boxford, Byfield, Georgetown, and Rowley will be holding its Annual Family Chicken Barbecue. All are welcome to enjoy food, fun and fellowship. The BBQ will be held on Sunday, Sept 7th on the Rowley Common from 12-3 p.m. (Rain location will be St. Mary's Parish—Rowley Hall). Dinner includes: BBQ chicken OR hot dog, baked potato, corn on the cob, tossed salad, fresh fruit & beverages. Take out will be available. Advance ticket prices are: \$10 adults, \$6 seniors and \$5



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LAWRENCE: Cigar Night at Sal's Riverwalk

Tom Grella of Food Network fame will be hosting a cigar night on Wednesday, September 24th at 6pm. Tom will feature some of his favorite cigars selected from Two Guys Smoke Shop in Salem New Hampshire. In addition a Tom Grella Special Recipe Dinner will be served...Grella Style! The dinner will be hosted by Tom on Salvatore's famous outside deck along the shores of the Merrimack River in Lawrence. Tickets will go on sale at Salvatore's Restaurant on Monday August 11th. Ticket prices are \$75.00 for general admission. Tickets can be purchased by calling 978-291-0267 or by stopping by Salvatore's Restaurant in Lawrence.

NOTEBOOK: Cont.

children (12 & under). A limited number of tickets will be available at the door at the following prices: \$15 adults, \$10 seniors and \$8 children. Please contact Anna McGrath (978) 948-8484 or Laurie Kosciuszek (978) 352-6173 to purchase tickets.

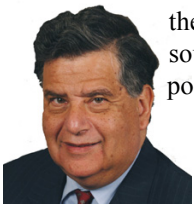
NORTH ANDOVER: Be careful what you blog

Perhaps without realizing the Eagle Tribune tipped off their readers as to just how anonymous your blog posting are when you blog on the Trib website. In a shoddy attempt to promote their blog in the newspaper, the geniuses at the Trib outed both Haverhill Mayor Jim Fiorentini and City Councilor Donahue for posting anonymous messages on the Tribune's blog. But before they had to reveal how they knew the postings were by the two Haverhill officials they fessed up knowing that they were caught anyway. You see, when you leave a message on a blog or internet newsgroup (or send an email), your computer's IP address (a unique serial number given to every computer) is recorded by the webmaster of that blog, website or email recipient. So, let's say that you are a city employee and you leave a newstip on the Tribune's blog. They know instantly that the message was posted from a computer owned by the City of Haverhill, City of Lawrence or Town of North Andover. They can narrow it down to which department and even which office the message was sent from. From there, it's just matter of a little leg work and few phone calls and viola, you have your poster/e-mailer. So let this be a lesson, NOTHING you post on-line is ever truly anonymous. Every

NEWS ITEM: Trib reporter thrown out of wake and funeral by Jimenez family



website you visit records your IP address and is traceable back to you. So just remember, the next time you think about participating in the Trib's blog, you run the risk of not only losing your anonymity, but being humiliated on the front page of the paper as the source of whatever messages you post. HAPPY BLOGGING!



METHUEN: DiBella: I'm not tied to Solomon

In last month's notebook, I ran an item about former Chief Solomon and his supporters endorsing Chris DiBella for State Representative. Within days of the paper coming out, however, Mr. DiBella called to dispute the item saying that in no way is he tied to Chief Solomon and then told the listeners on the Paying Attention radio program that it was Linda Dean Campbell that has ties to Solomon as she has taken donations from Solomon in past elections. Campbell says she enjoyed support from both police and fire officials in previous campaigns, but that she has no affiliation to the former chief since being a state representative.



BILLERICA: Nuvera Fuel Cell Demonstrations

Join Nuvera Fuel Cells as they unveil the first hydrogen re-fueler in Massachusetts on Monday, August 11, 2008 (11:30am-1:30pm) as part of the coast-to-coast Hydrogen Road Tour. The ribbon cutting event will take place at our headquarters in Billerica, MA (129 Concord Road, Billerica) and will feature re-fueling demonstrations involving 9 hydrogen-powered vehicles from leading automotive companies that are traveling from Portland, ME to Los Angeles, CA. The vehicles will be on hand for public viewing after the event. Spend a few hours learning about hydrogen as a transportation fuel from the people who are working on the vehicles and infrastructure. Refreshments will be available!

LAWRENCE: Harassment suit coming for Blanchette?

The Valley Patriot has been told that within the next 60 days, City Council President Patrick Blanchette will be served with a lawsuit for workplace harassment by a city employee. The employee planning on filing the suit says he has ample documentation to prove a harassment

claim and that his lawyers have already begun drafting the complaint. "I've brought the problem to the attention of the city attorney's office several times, but they only seem interested in protecting the council president, not resolving the situation or ending the harassment," the employee said. For his part, Blanchette is running for mayor in 2009 and is a likely target for political enemies. Innocent or guilty, the Valley Patriot will follow this case closely and report on it fairly. And remember, just because someone is sued or charged with a crime does not mean they are guilty.

BILLERICA/METHUEN: Health concerns for power plant proposal

According to the website billerica powerplant.org, a proposal for a new power plant in Billerica may pose a health problem for residents of Billerica and Methuen as well as, possibly, Lawrence. The website states: "A very large power plant has been proposed for Billerica. At 348 Megawatts, the plant would be Massachusetts' 13th largest of 154 power plants according to the Department of Environmental Resources. The power plant is designed to run on natural gas, with diesel as a backup. **High-Level Concerns** - Based entirely on

NOTEBOOK, page 28

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

Government's view of the economy could be summed up in a few short phrases: If it moves, tax it. If it keeps moving, regulate it. And if it stops moving, subsidize it.

-Ronald Reagan (1986)

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Sitting in the waiting room

The Answer Man

Some of this week's quiz is on name changes during various global times. Let's see how you do.

1. What current country was Persia in the past?
2. What current country was formerly known as Mesopotamia?
3. The famed movie "The King and I" involved Siam. What country is the current land once called Siam?
4. What U.S. city was once called New Amsterdam?
5. Istanbul is the largest city in Turkey. What was its former name?
6. Terminus was once in what is now a U.S. state capital. Can you name the current capital?
7. What city now named in honor of a Union Civil War general was formerly Lakes Crossing, Nevada?
8. Portuguese visitors named this land Formosa. What is its current name?
9. What is the former name of Myanmar? The past name is still most often used in reference to the land.
10. What are the three largest islands that comprise the Virgin Islands?

Answers

1. Iran was once known as Persia.
2. Iraq bore that title for the country.
3. Siam is now named Thailand.
4. New Amsterdam was where New York City now is.
5. Istanbul was Constantinople. Now it's Istanbul not Constantinople.

Sudoku

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Puzzle by websudoku.com

Answer on page 38

6. Atlanta, Ga., was once titled Terminus.
7. Reno bears the name of Gen. Marcus Reno.
8. Formosa is now known as Taiwan or the Republic of China.
9. Myanmar is properly titled as Burma
10. With about 50 small islands, the three that comprise the largest part of the Virgin Islands are St. Croix, St. Johns and St. Thomas.

Take "The Answer Man" to work or to school. Challenge your friends for "Bragging Rights." Send your questions and answers to: The Answer Man,

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Newsday Crossword

- ACROSS
- 1 Pedigree alternative
- 5 Glaswegian, for one
- 9 Kept one's fingers crossed
- 14 Turkish coin
- 15 Profits, informally
- 16 Worship
- 17 Battling
- 18 Kew carriage
- 19 Neighbor of India
- 20 Old children's game
- 23 Penultimate
- 24 Greek letter
- 25 Mans
- 25 July birthstone
- 27 Affirm
- 28 Where Truro is
- 31 Egret relative
- 34 Pipeline contents
- 35 Elapse
- 36 French article
- 37 Products of erosion
- 41 '80s Olympian runner
- 42 ABM component
- 44 Hypotenuse neighbor
- 45 Got to
- 47 Trash
- 49 Sting
- 51 Embarrassing defeat
- 52 Nat King Cole tune
- 56 Diamond stat
- 58 Hamlet character
- 60 Congressional divider
- 62 "That's awful!"
- 63 OAS member
- 64 Kids around
- 65 Checkout-line unit
- 66 Stimulate
- 67 Plus, so to speak
- 68 Keeping everyone waiting
- 69 Major ending
- DOWN
- 1 Budget alternative
- 2 Beamed
- 3 Highest-quality
- 4 Cholesterol reducer
- 5 Fla. city
- 6 2002 Nobel laureate
- 7 Green-lights
- 8 Weather-report word
- 9 End a call
- 10 Enthusiastic verse
- 11 Baloney

- PLOT STARTERS
- by Shirley Soloway
- Edited by Stanley Newman
- www.stanxwords.com
- 12 Ages
- 13 Where heros are bought
- 21 Two-time Grand Slam winner
- 22 Get rid of
- 26 Word to Fido
- 28 One in a six-pack
- 29 Where reeds are found
- 30 Worked on one's locks, maybe
- 31 Covered with metal
- 32 Philosopher
- 33 Stars of typography
- 34 Work for a combo
- 38 Newest Supreme Court member
- 39 Annoy
- 40 Eastern strings
- 43 Wall St. event
- 46 Backslide of a sort
- 48 Most reliable
- 49 Easter accessory
- 50 Taxing subject
- 52 Conductor from Mumbai
- 53 Like Inspector Clouseau
- 54 Swagger
- 55 Mediterranean color
- 56 Subcontinental potentate
- 57 Tell-alls, e.g.
- 59 Potter's purchase
- 61 Brokeback Mountain director

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Tips for 401(k) in a down market

Gregory Loosigian

SERVICE PROFESSIONAL
NEW YORK LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY

During uncertain economic times, participants in defined contribution retirement savings plans—such as 401(k) or 403(b) accounts—may feel tempted to make immediate and drastic adjustments to their portfolio accounts. Such knee-jerk reactions are understandable—few things can invoke panic like the thought of losing everything you’ve worked to build.

Be Patient—These Are Long-term Growth Vehicles

But the truth is, defined benefit plans are designed for long-term, tax-deferred accumulation. And with many companies providing a “company match” percentage of what you contribute, such plans can be an ideal vehicle for retirement savings. And, generally, being in the market pays off. According to market historians, the stock market has registered twice as many positive return years as negative, and in the 57 positive years since 1926, 47 have yielded double-digit returns for investors.¹

In addition, defined benefit contribution plans have built in features—such as asset allocation and diversification capabilities—that can help

ride out market waves and maximize many savings opportunities.

Dollar Cost Averaging May Help Reduce Overall Risk

Since automatic pre-tax withdrawals are paid into your 401(k) accounts on a regular basis—usually with each check—you are already enjoying dollar cost averaging. Dollar cost averaging is a systematic, disciplined approach, whereby you invest the same amount of money at regular intervals, rather than trying to time the market. When the market is down—along with stock prices—your money will buy more shares. When the market is up, you buy less. The bottom line: with dollar cost

averaging, you are never “out of the action.” And over time, the purchase of shares at regular intervals can help smooth out the impact of short-term market fluctuations.

Keep in mind, however, dollar cost averaging does not assure a profit, nor does it protect against loss in a declining market. To be effective, there must be a continuous investment regardless of fluctuating price levels. Investors should consider their financial ability to make purchases through periods of low price levels.

Know Your Risk Tolerance

FUTURE, page 26

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Alternative treatments for back pain II

Rami Rustum, M.D.
VALLEY PATRIOT MEDICAL COLUMNIST

We continue our discussion about alternative treatments to back pain by looking at Physical Therapy (PT) and Acupuncture.

To make the presentation simple and clear, we will focus on lower back pain (LBP).

Physical Therapy (PT):

As discussed in previous months, the back is surrounded and supported by muscles, the goal of which is to provide stability and function.

Theses muscles may fatigue as a result of repetitive use or injury.

Current research has reported that in most cases of LBP, certain muscles of the back are reflexively inhibited (shutdown) after injury.

These muscles do not spontaneously recover even if patients are pain free and return to normal activity levels. It is obvious that these structures will need to undergo a rehabilitation process to maintain their function and purpose.

Physical therapy treatment for LBP often involves a wide range of techniques including heat therapy, ultrasound, massage, mobilization, exercise, and education about posture and body mechanics. Stabilizing and strengthening the lumbar spine is usually carried out through a *lumbar stabilization program*.

The treatment is provided by specialized and trained team of people with extensive knowledge about body mechanics, anatomy, muscle function, etc.

The team could be supervised by a specialized doctor helped by certified physical therapists and assistants.

The team will first evaluate the patient and then design a comprehensive rehabilitation program with the above listed techniques.

What constitutes a lumbar stabilization program?

A lumbar stabilization program is a program of back exercises designed to teach patients strengthening and flexibility in a pain-free range.

It not only improves the patient’s physical condition and symptoms but also helps the patient with efficient movement. It provides the patient with movement awareness, knowledge of safe postures, and functional strength and coordination that promotes management of lower back pain.

During the treatment, the patient may be given something called (TENS unit treatment) which stand for: Transcutaneous Electrical Nerve Stimulator.

With the use of this unit, the patient doesn’t feel any pain but only the sensations that the stimulator induces in his nerves. If this treatment produces positive results, the patient is given a unit to use as his needs dictate in the convenience of his home.

Another treatment is called: Ultrasound Stimulation. This process generates heat in the lower back region which, along with lessening the pain, also quickens the healing process.

Physical therapy is also employed in treating joint pain (as in arthritis to maintain the joint function), chronic abdominal pain, and other severe pain conditions.

In summary, Physical Therapy has been proven to be a major factor in treating back pain and helping in regaining almost complete muscle function.

I can’t emphasis enough its role in improving most pain conditions in conjunction with other treatments like medications or injections.

Acupuncture:

Don’t worry!! You don’t have to speak Chinese to know it.

The term “acupuncture” describes a family of procedures involving the stimulation of anatomical points on the body using a variety of techniques. The acupuncture technique that has been most often studied scientifically involves penetrating the skin with thin, solid, metallic needles that are manipulated by the hands or by electrical stimulation.

Practiced in China and other Asian countries for thousands of years, acupuncture is one of the key components of traditional Chinese medicine. In traditional Chinese medicine (TCM), the body is seen as a delicate balance of two opposing and inseparable forces: yin and yang.

The concept of two opposing yet complementary forces is described in traditional Chinese medicine. Yin represents cold, slow, or passive aspects of the person, while yang represents hot, excited, or active aspects.

A major theory is that health is achieved through balancing yin and yang and disease is caused by an imbalance leading to a blockage in the flow of qi (vital energy) along pathways known as



PHOTO: TOM DUGGAN

Rami R. Rustum, M.D. is the director of the Pain Management Center at Lawrence General Hospital. For any questions or concerns, please email Dr. Rustum at: ramirustum@comcast.net

meridians. Qi can be unblocked, according to TCM, by using acupuncture at certain points on the body that connect with these meridians. Sources vary on the number of meridians, with numbers ranging from 14 to 20. One commonly cited source describes meridians as 14 main channels “connecting the body in a web like interconnecting matrix” of at least 2,000 acupuncture points.

Acupuncture became better known in the United States in 1971, when New York Times reporter James Reston wrote about how doctors in China used needles to ease his pain after surgery. American practices of acupuncture incorporate medical traditions from China, Japan, Korea, and other countries.

Who is acupuncture for?

Acupuncture seems to be useful as a stand-alone treatment for some conditions, but it’s also increasingly being used in conjunction with more conventional Western medical treatments. For example, doctors may combine acupuncture and drugs to control pain and nausea after surgery.

Scientific studies generally test treatments against placebos, such as sugar pills. It’s difficult to conduct valid scientific studies of acupuncture, because it’s difficult to devise sham versions of acupuncture. In fact, several studies have indicated that sham acupuncture works as well or almost as well as real acupuncture.

This makes it hard to create a definitive list of the conditions for which acupuncture might be helpful. However, preliminary studies indicate that acupuncture may offer symptomatic relief for a variety of diseases and conditions, including low back pain, headaches, fibromyalgia, migraines and osteoarthritis.

In addition, research shows that acupuncture can help manage post-operative dental pain and alleviate chemotherapy-induced nausea and vomiting. It also appears to offer relief for chronic menstrual cramps and tennis elbow.

Pros and cons?

As with most medical therapies, acupuncture has both benefits and risks. Consider the benefits:

- § Acupuncture is safe when performed properly.
- § It has few side effects.
- § It can be useful as a complement to other treatment methods.
- § It’s becoming more available in conventional medical settings.
- § It helps control certain types of pain.
- § It may be an alternative if you don’t respond to or don’t want to take pain medications.

Acupuncture may not be safe if you have a bleeding disorder or if you’re taking blood thinners. The most common side effects of acupuncture are soreness, bleeding or bruising at the needle sites. Rarely, a needle may break or an internal organ might be injured. If needles are reused, infectious diseases may be accidentally transmitted. However, these risks are low in the hands of a competent, certified acupuncture practitioner.

If you’re considering acupuncture, do the same things you would do if you were choosing a doctor!!

Next month, will begin discussing medication treatment for pain.

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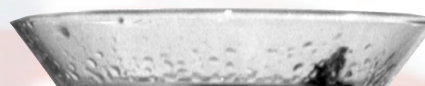
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PHOTO: TOM DUGGAN

Got Books President Bob Ticehurst stands with the millions of books for sale for \$1 each. **Got Books** is located on Glen Street in Lawrence and donated half of all profits for the month of July to a very worthy non profit organization American Training (also located on Glenn Street). See their ad on page 7.



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It is **NO ACCIDENT** that our new **STATE REPRESENTATIVE** is assigned to the following Key Committees by the House Leadership — Committees which produced legislation of great importance for our Commonwealth during this past session.

The Committee on Energy, Telecommunication & Utilities: Sponsored a nation-leading Energy Package signed into law which encourages homeowner & tenant purchase of renewable energy products without up front costs; provides state financing for renewable energy projects by our cities and towns; and mandates that the Commonwealth's electric companies purchase the most cost-effective energy, including that produced from alternative sources. This legislation has already helped create hundreds of jobs and will yield millions in cost savings for the citizens and businesses of the Commonwealth.

The Committee on Revenue: Worked with the Governor and sponsored legislation which prevents corporations from reporting Massachusetts income "out-of-state" — returning millions in previously lost revenue.

The Committee on Veterans & Federal Affairs: Linda, a Veteran herself and the wife of a Gulf War Veteran, serves on this committee which passed 14 pieces of legislation helping all of the state's Veterans, especially those most vulnerable and returning from our latest conflicts. Linda was recently selected to serve on a 19 member State "Special Commission to Study the Hidden Wounds of War" whose goal is to provide the best care in the nation for soldiers suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Traumatic Brain Injury.

Integrity, Leadership, Results

*I ask you for your vote in the Democratic Primary on
Tuesday, 16 September.*

Linda





PHOTO: TOM DUGGAN

A Winning Smile, A Winning Team

Susan Ledger Ferraro, owner of Little Sprouts and Imagine That, with Community Outreach Specialist Jessica Todisco. The two women were all smiles during the One Love benefit concert with Between the Lions and The Fundamentals last month to raise awareness of homeless children in the community. See story page 31.



PHOTO: TOM DUGGAN

Members of the dance troupe **WRUSH** were practicing at Sal's Riverwalk when they were surprised by a few VIP visitors: Congressman Niki Tsongas, Methuen Mayor Billy Manzi and State Rep. Linda Dean Campbell



PHOTO: MSP MEDIA RELATIONS

Hector I. Ruiz, Patrick Roque, Trooper Angie Guerrero and Juan Rodriguez, all of Lawrence, graduated from the State Trooper Police Academy last month. The Massachusetts Minority State Police Officers' Association in conjunction with the William E. Carter American Legion Post 16 of Mattapan covered the \$225.00 per child, application fee; and in addition, approximately \$600.00 dollars worth of needed equipment was given by the Massachusetts State Police Headquarters Recruitment Unit and the Massachusetts State Academy.

WHEN IN ROME ...

International clothing model Jade Perkins from Lawrence takes a break from her shoot in Rome to check out the July edition of The Valley Patriot atop the Foro Romano e Palatino, the highest point of the ancient city ruins. In the background is the Colosseum.



PHOTO: COURTESY



PHOTO: PAUL PORTEN

Mass. American Legion awards Valley Patriot President

Valley Patriot president Tom Duggan was presented an award by the Massachusetts American Legion in appreciation for all the work he has done to promote veterans and the Legion in the newspaper. Above is Tom Duggan with Legion commander John Lenotte at the Korean War Memorial in Downtown Haverhill.



PHOTO: TOM DUGGAN

Rosemary Smedile, North Andover Selectman and chairman of the N.A. Republican Town Committee, Missy Banks Chairman of the Boxford GOP committee, and John Moffitt head of the Andover Republican Town Committee were on hand to receive an award for public service at a fundraiser for Lonnie Breannan, candidate for State Representative.

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Corporate relocation saves big by going Green

Amy Bauman
VALLEY PATRIOT GUEST COLUMNISTS

[This month's Innovation Valley column is by guest writer Amy Bauman, Project Manager for greenGoat, and company working with contractors, architects and building owners to fully realize the value of outgoing building materials (through salvage and recycling). - sji]

In the middle of its biggest year yet, non-profit greenGoat sets its sights on the largest waste stream it can imagine: corporate relocation. In a recent collaboration with Cubellis, CBD Companies, Office Environments of NE, and Genzyme, 28 tons of office furniture was kept from landfill. The project reworked and relocated Cubellis' 65 cubicles to Genzyme's new offices in Framingham, where they will be used in "swing space" accommodating workers while offices are being finished.

In its history, greenGoat has saved 189 tons of materials in our recovery programs, but to save 28 tons in a single project is significant. Many of those tons have flowed through the company's warehouse located in Lawrence, but greenGoat tries to "pre-place" as much material as possible. In this case, the extra deep Steel Case work surfaces used by Cubellis for almost a decade, was exactly what Genzyme needed.

Cynthia Donnelly, Senior Planner for bio-tech giant Genzyme didn't hesitate a moment when asked what the motivation was to buy used furniture: expanding Genzyme's green legacy.

An added bonus: the firm got a better quality product than the one they normally specify... at half the price.

finished product, and sees opportunity ahead for similar companies hoping to

and selling it to small to mid-sized clients. The market is changing, though, and Genzyme is a great example of savvy corporations finding new ways to operate sustainably," Lawson says, as he plans to expand his operations while building a plant this year in Canton, MA.

Each firm in the project saw the value in the recovery. Noted Steve Leone, AIA, LEED AP, Principal, and Director of Sustainable Design at Cubellis, "this is a most simple and clear example of sustainable market transformation. "Forward thinking companies searching for synergies and partnerships to reduce waste and energy while finding higher quality products at lower costs is what it's all about. It's a beautiful solution that required only a little more research and thought. For us at Cubellis exploring these strategies is one of many ways to act sustainably as a firm and reinforce our sustainable mission. greenGoat was a great partner in making that happen!" Cubellis cut the moving and disposal costs for the systems furniture by more than half.

Donnelly sees the same picture, noting that they will consider used furniture more seriously in the future. Adds Donnelly, "if you want it back in a few years, let us know."

For more information, contact greenGoat, thegoat@greengoat.org To blog on this article, please visit www.ivalley.org



PHOTO: COURTESY

Steel Case furniture was removed from Cubellis, then cut to fit the new space at Genzyme by CBD Companies, a furniture refurbisher contacted by greenGoat. Jeff Lawson, founder, was happy with the

save money while upgrading to a better product.

"I used to see myself as Robin Hood ... taking furniture from high end companies



John Michitson was a Haverhill city councilor for 10 years; the last 2 as president. He is a manager and electrical engineer at the MITRE Corporation in Bedford, Mass. John and his wife, Heidi, are enjoying the childhood of their 7-year-old daughter and 9 year-old son. email: michitson@mitre.org



Seth Itzkan is president of Planet-TECH Associates, a consulting agency identifying innovations in economic development. Recently, Mr. Itzkan helped The Boston Foundation to conceptualize and implement its Hub of Innovations tool. You can email him at seth.itzkan@gmail.com

The Innovation Valley initiative seeks to help stimulate economic growth and quality-of-life enhancements in the Merrimack Valley. Every month we will report on innovative businesses, practices, and ideas that are helping to make Merrimack Valley the place to be. Look for our article in print media and online at www.ivalley.org.

The Ibrahim El-Hefni Technical Training Foundation offers landmark Challenge Grant in support of facilities renovation at Notre Dame High School

LAWRENCE - Notre Dame High School of Lawrence is delighted to announce that it has received a generous challenge grant from a local foundation with a history of supporting schools in Lawrence.

The Technical Training Foundation, established by longtime North Andover resident Ibrahim El-Hefni, has continued its support of Notre Dame by offering to match any new contributions to the school's *Making History* Capital Campaign up to \$500,000.

The campaign launched its public phase in October 2007 and has received commitments of more than \$3 million to fund the renovation of the school's nearly 100 year-old school building, the former Saint Mary High School.

Major renovations that began in July 2008 will include new science facilities, new classrooms, a technology resource center and vital updates to the building's infrastructure.

In order to be considered for the match, gifts must be made to the school by August 31st, 2008. Campaign gifts made

out to "Notre Dame High School" may be mailed to: *Making History* Capital Campaign, Notre Dame High School, 207 Hampshire Street, Lawrence, MA 01841.

The grant comes during a milestone year at Notre Dame; the school, established in 2004, graduated its first class of seniors in June and all 51 were accepted to four-year colleges and universities, including Emmanuel College, Boston College, and Northeastern University.

Notre Dame's mission is to provide excellent college-preparatory education in the Catholic tradition to economically disadvantaged youth throughout Greater Lawrence.

Notre Dame is part of the nationally known Cristo Rey Network of schools, and provides a comprehensive learning experience for its students by combining a rigorous college-preparatory curriculum with an innovative work-study program through which each student earns a majority of his or her tuition.

While Notre Dame currently partners with over 60 regional businesses to implement the work-study program, the

need for additional placements grows with the school's growing enrollment.

With placements as far south as Woburn and Burlington and as far north as Amesbury and Southern New Hampshire, businesses in need of entry-level office help are encouraged to learn more about the innovative Hire4Ed Program which trains, provides transportation for, and reviews the performance of each of its student workers.

"We are thrilled to support such a worthy organization, whose commitment to achievement though hard work is inspiring," said Suzanne Wright, daughter of the late Ibrahim El-Hefni and Foundation Trustee. Wright says that the foundation will continue to provide scholarships for students requiring financial aid, in addition to support for specialized reading instruction, curriculum enhancement, SAT preparation and professional development.

The late Ibrahim El-Hefni began his charitable foundation in order to provide education for needy children

throughout the world. Dr. El-Hefni was born in rural Egypt and immigrated to the United States in the early 1960s after earning a Ph.D. in Electrical Engineering in England.

He attributed his success as a scientist and inventor in the U.S. to the opportunities available to him here and to his education. He sought to provide others with the educational opportunities that would allow them to achieve the American dream. A resident of North Andover for many years, he focused much of his energy and funding on Lawrence, which he saw as a community of hard-working immigrants in need of access to excellent education.

The foundation supports schools throughout the United States and the world, including a secondary school in rural Kenya.

The Ibrahim El-Hefni Foundation also supports medical research in a variety of areas throughout the world. His family continues to manage the foundation in his honor since his death in 2005.

Finest cuisine at Merrimack Valley Restaurant Week

Jen Garfinkel
DRINKWATER PRODUCTIONS

NEWBURYPORT – Whatever your taste, you’ll find it with the Greater Merrimack Valley Restaurant Week underway. Produced by Drinkwater Productions and sponsored by The River 92.5 FM, the promotional weeks will run from Sunday, July 27 – Saturday, August 2 and Sunday, August 3 – Saturday, August 9. Already underway and going strong, Newburyport boasts two different restaurant options for these promotional weeks with **The Grog** and **Mission Oak Grill** proudly taking part in this exciting first annual event for the Greater Merrimack Valley Region!

After hosting a successful kick-off party for the promotional weeks last



Audrey Haggard of Trattorian Al Forno on Washington St. in Haverhill



Jen Garfinkel, PR Specialist for Drinkwater Productions, Wellington Augusto, Manager Mission Oak, Max Stein, Billy Costa from KISS 108FM and TV Diner, Lisa Knight (owner) Drinkwater Productions, Lisa Coutrior (sales Coordinator) Drinkwater, Laureen Pressler from the Street Team Teddy Panos, manager of Athenian Corner.

Tuesday, the **Mission Oak Grill** was rearing and ready to go. After receiving praise for their Sesame Crusted Ahi from event-goers and TV Diner’s Billy Costa, Manager, Wellington Augusto and head chef, David Buckley, expressed great excitement for the weeks to come, ready to please everyone’s palate.

Mission Oak Grill, nestled in the heart of historic downtown Newburyport, never fails to satisfy steak lovers’ palates and those intrigued by boldly creative side dishes.

Of course with such a reputation to uphold, their promotional menu is anything but sub par. In addition to the Sesame Crusted Ahi, guests can also enjoy Scallops, Shortribs, Sirloin, and Swordfish, in addition to mouth-watering desserts; a three-course dinner fit for a king for only \$33.08!

Then there is **The Grog**, who joined the promotional weeks just last week! A

sure-hit, **The Grog** will be offering lunch and dinner promotional menus (for \$20.08 and \$33.08 respectively) that include favorites from Clam Chowder Soup, salad, and Sirloin steak to a classic Clambake for dinner that includes 2 pounds worth of Lobster, Steamers, and corn on the cob, with Strawberry Shortcake or Peach Cobbler for dessert.

So whether its’ steak or seafood you’re craving, you can find both in a variety of preparations practically in your own backyard. What are you waiting for Newburyport? Go treat your taste buds, they deserve it!

Mission Oak Grill is located at 26 Green Street and **The Grog** is located at 13 Middle Street. Reservations are strongly recommended for both restaurants and can be made by calling the locations. Please note that the event excludes reservations after 7 PM on Saturdays.



Kate Richards and Cassis owner Sally Carney of Andover. Cassis is located on Post Office Ave and serves French cuisine.

Salisbury Beach activities for August

- AUGUST 2008**
- Friday, August 8th** - Music Performance: R.B. - Entertainment, Master Entertainer, Time: 7 PM & 8:30 PM
- Saturday, August 9th** - Saturday Night Sock Hop with Gary Francis, Time: 7 PM, sponsored by Coca Cola Bottling
- Friday, August 15th** - Music Performance: Reminisants, Time: 7 PM & 8:30 PM.
- Saturday, August 16th** - Saturday Night Sock Hop with Gary Francis - Time: 7 PM - sponsored by Coca Cola Bottling
- Friday, August 22nd (TBA)** -

- Saturday, August 23rd** - Saturday Night Sock Hop with Gary Francis - Time: 7 PM - sponsored by Coca Cola Bottling
- Saturday, August 23rd** - Sunday, August 24th - Nelson's Ride
- Friday, August 29th** - Music Performance: Reminisants- Time: 7 PM & 8:30 PM
- Saturday, August 30th** - Saturday Night Sock Hop with Gary Francis - Time: 7 PM sponsored by Coca Cola Bottling
- Saturday, September 6th** - Saturday Night Sock Hop with Gary Francis - Time: 7 PM - sponsored by Coca Cola Bottling



MONARCH: from page 8

city like so many others have over the years.”

Ansin also announced that, although he and Sal Lupoli of Sal’s Riverwalk (Sal’s Pizza) are not partners (as previously reported in another newspaper), Lupoli has purchased one third of the Monarch building paying more than \$6 million for business development within the mill. “It’s like buying a condo within a housing complex, you are not buying the building

itself, but the space inside the building,” Ansin explained.

“So, when you consider that I paid a little over 4 million for the entire building, sold a third of the building for more than \$6 million to Sal, and with the \$55 million commitment we now have from the bank I am happy to say that Monarch on the Mrrimack is going to be a reality after all.”

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From the desk of Congressman Niki Tsongas

Alternative energy solutions for the nation's future

Niki Tsongas

5th DISTRICT CONGRESSMAN

Whether I'm in Washington, DC, or at home in Massachusetts, I hear about and see the challenges that we are all facing as a result of the skyrocketing cost of gas every single day. This should not be an issue used to score political points - we need solutions. For some, high gas prices mean postponing a planned vacation or changing the way they commute to work. For many others, it means making unacceptable decisions between paying for gas or having to forgo basic necessities such as food or medicine.

The escalation of gas prices also threatens our national security as we continue to rely on many of the least politically stable regions of the world to supply our energy.

We face a serious and lasting challenge: the world's demand for energy will increase at a greater rate than what oil can supply. We must address current high prices, mitigate the costs that are inevitable as we transition to alternative energy sources, and provide a long term, comprehensive solution for American energy independence that relies upon America's ingenuity and resources.

Some of the components of this comprehensive energy strategy can be found in our backyard. Local employers are developing alternative energy technologies reliant upon the hydrogen fuel cell or solar power. Fuel cell technology being advanced in the Merrimack Valley has the potential to power everything from home appliances to cars with far greater efficiency than traditional power sources, while simultaneously creating jobs.

Other technologies such as plug-in hybrids vehicles, which will soon be coming to the market, can help ease the pain at the pump. Due to the tremendous benefits these technologies hold and how close they are to fruition, we should help

these emerging industries bridge the final hurdles to being competitive so that their products can become broadly available.

I was proud to cosponsor legislation passed by the House earlier this year that will greatly expand tax incentives for renewable electricity, energy and fuel, as well as for plug-in hybrid vehicles. Unfortunately, the President has threatened to veto these commonsense measures. Research and development incentives are critical to helping alternative technologies grow and allowing the American consumer to access them. They should be made available immediately.

It is also important that we advance measures that encourage greater fuel efficacy and conservation. Last year, the Congress passed and the President signed into law the first increase in the miles per gallon standard for automobiles in 32 years. While increased fuel efficiency standards are a good start they won't help Americans at the pump for many years.

In the short term there are several steps that should be taken to help families bear high fuel costs. The first involves curtailing excessive speculation on oil futures which has increased the cost of oil by as much as \$20 - \$60 per barrel. Since 2003, this practice has increased 425 percent and prevents millions of barrels of oil from coming to market.

Congress recently approved legislation that was signed into law to temporarily suspend purchases for our Strategic Petroleum Reserve. Such a move will allow more than 70,000 barrels of oil to remain on the world market each day, helping decrease the cost of gasoline by up to .25 cents per gallon.

Urgent effort is also needed to construct effective safety nets for those who are truly put in danger by the high cost of fuel. Last week, I joined with the majority of my colleagues from the New England Delegation in requesting that

Congress triple the amount of funding for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), a program which helps low-income families pay to heat their homes in winter. Eligibility for the LIHEAP program should also be expanded, as increasing numbers of families will need assistance this winter.

One thing we should not do is assume that we can end our foreign oil dependence by simply increasing domestic oil drilling. The President has recently proposed lifting the moratorium on oil drilling off our coasts, claiming that it will allow us to achieve energy independence. The unfortunate reality is that we can't drill our way to lower gas prices when we use a quarter of the world's oil, but sit atop less than 2% of the world's supply.

Additionally, it would take more than a decade to bring oil in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and on our coasts to market. Even then it would not reduce the cost of gas by more than a few pennies according to Energy Information Administration at the Department of Energy.

Those who advocate for more drilling should know that it is not Congress or the President who has the power to increase domestic production. Oil companies currently lease more than 68 million acres of public lands. Another 20 million acres of land in the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska are ready for development now, and contain more oil than ANWR.

Oil companies have thus far been unwilling to drill on this leased land and will give no assurances that they will do so on the additional federal land if it is opened to them. With oil trading at more than \$130 per barrel and oil companies setting record profits, there is little



PHOTO: COURTESY

Mars Ice island, Beaufort Sea Alaska. A 60 day exploratory well built offshore, 8 km off Cape Halkut near NPR-A.

incentive for them to take on the financial risks of increased drilling. Our energy policy must include more solutions than simply drilling for a limited supply of oil that will have a small impact on price for a short period of time.

Our current and future demand for energy will increase at a greater rate than what fossil fuels can supply. We need a comprehensive solution to overcome this challenge that includes a broad portfolio of energy options.

The development of alternative energy technologies, relying on clean, renewable sources here in the United States and on American ingenuity, is the long term solution we need. Unlike increased dependence on oil, this strategy has the benefit of being sustainable, enhancing national security, and producing American jobs and growing the American economy.



Niki Tsongas is in her first term in the United States Congress. She was elected to fill the term of Congressman Marty Meehan who resigned between terms. Tsongas is seeking reelection in November. E-mail Congressman Tsongas' office at: tsongas.house.gov

First ever Mass. Poetry Festival to be held in October

Featured readers include Robert Pinsky, Andre Dubus III, Lucie Brock-Broido & More

LOWELL - An extensive and diverse group of partner organizations will come together to present the first-ever Massachusetts Poetry Festival in various locations in Lowell, Mass., Oct. 10 - 12, 2008. The event will feature readings by well-known poets such as Robert Pinsky, Lucie Brock-Broido, Andre Dubus III,

Martin Espada, Rhina Espiaillat, Reggie Gibson and many more, as well as workshops for writers and educators, symposia, small press fair, teen poetry, literary heritage tours, children's programs and street poetry. Some events are free, and others have a nominal entrance fee.

A complete lineup, with schedule and locations, will be available in the coming weeks. For more information, visit www.masspoetry.com/festival or call (978) 275-1831.

The Massachusetts Poetry festival is a celebration of the rich literary heritage and vital contemporary poetry community of the Commonwealth.

The organizers hope to create new opportunities for poets to showcase their work, by increasing public awareness about all of the wonderful poetry being created in Massachusetts. In addition, they hope that providing broad access to the wealth of work available will help bring poetry back into everyday culture. Organizers plan to make the festival a biennial event.

"Lowell is thrilled to host this inaugural event," said Paul Marion, Executive Director of Outreach for University of Massachusetts Lowell.

"We think it's a fitting place to start, because the Greater Merrimack Valley area gave us such profoundly influential poets as Anne Bradstreet, Ralph Waldo

Emerson, John Greenleaf Whittier, Robert Frost, and Jack Kerouac. "

Hotel and travel information is available from the Greater Merrimack Valley Convention and Visitors Bureau at <http://www.merrimackvalley.org/>.

Partners in the Massachusetts Poetry Festival include Bootstrap Press, Concord Poetry Center, Grub Street, Haverhill Poets, Lowell Celebrates Kerouac, Lowell Poetry Network, PoemWorks, Powow River Poets, and the Robert Frost Foundation.

The Massachusetts Poetry Festival is sponsored by the City of Lowell, Cultural Organization of Lowell, Greater Merrimack Valley Convention and Visitors Bureau, Lowell National Historical Park, Mass POP, Massachusetts Cultural Council, Massachusetts Foundation for the Humanities, Merrimack Valley Economic Development Council, Moses Greeley Parker Lectures, Patrick J. Mogan Cultural Center, Pollard Memorial Library and University of Massachusetts, Lowell.



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Valley Patriot’s “Puppy Girl” markets multi-national company to help your golf *SwingRite!*

Tom Duggan
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

While Boxford resident Kate Whitey may be best known as the author of our Puppy Love column, what most people may not know is that the 24 year old UNH graduate runs the SwingRite Corporation, marketing, manufacturing and shipping golf training aids all over the world.

Her product, the SwingRite, was invented by a fighter pilot in Great Britain in 1960 and was purchased by Whitney’s father Charles, who owns and operates Whitney Development.

“When my dad bought the SwingRite company, we bought the rights, the corporation and all the former owner’s inventory,” Kate says. “So for about 11 years my dad sold them, filling on line orders until we finally sent out his entire inventory. Last year I started running the company and when we ran out of inventory we were at a crossroads with the company. We had to decide whether to manufacture SwingRite ourselves or get out of the business so, I told my dad to go for it and we started manufacturing the product in Salisbury.”

Whitney says that SwingRite is an invaluable tool for golfers to improve their swing and achieve a better golf game. “It tells you when your hands release and instructs you with a clicking

sound that should happen at the ‘impact zone,’ or bottom of the swing, where the imaginary ball would be. Lots of golfers release too soon or too late, SwingRite helps you determine your swing and lets you adjust your release for a better golf game. The SwingRite club has settings for Easy or difficult and you can use it all year long. You can use it indoors, when you travel, in hotel rooms, and you can continue to work on your golf swing in the wintertime because there is no club on the end. It really is the perfect warm up tool and training aid.”

Whitney says that when she and her father began to manufacture SwingRite they decided to make a few improvements to the original design. The new and improved SwingRite is custom made with different grips choices available. Customers can choose the standard grip, training grip, junior version, or WINN grips.

“Before then, we weren’t in any retail stores,” Kate continued. Now we’ve landed the national golf chain, Edwin Watts Golf. We are now one of the official training aids for the USGTF (United States Golf Teachers Federation), a golf teachers’ certification course. Since the instructors use this, after their students graduate many of



PHOTO: TOM DUGGAN

Kate Whitney of the SwingRite corporation in Boxford shows off her golfing aid at the Groveland Fairways. SwingRite makes a clicking sound at the exact moment your club should be hitting the ball to improve your swing. At left, Kate demonstrates Swingrite.

them want one of their own so they buy one as well. “I get emails all the time from students and former students saying how much they love this product and we even have people emailing us from all over the world. It’s great to hear from our customers!”

Kate says SwingRite is also sold on line at swingrite.com and is shipped all over the world. “We are not only expanding in the U.S. but overseas as well. We fill orders in the Netherlands, Brazil, Australia, all over. In China and Japan they don’t have the type of training aids we have here in the US so we are capitalizing on that market which is very exciting.”

Whitney says manufacturing SwingRite is “very expensive. It’s all custom made in Massachusetts, if we were to make these in China it would be much cheaper in every way. SwingRite is assembled by hand and all of our printing, packaging

and machined parts are from companies in Massachusetts with a few exceptions. We really believe in helping out local companies but when we can’t find a local company we make sure all of our products are produced in the U.S. Supporting companies in the United States is something that is very important to us.”

“Considering SwingRite is a product that’s been around since the 60’s, which proves what a great product it is, I am really excited to see its continued success. It’s so great to have some of the original customers ordering the new product and helping us expand it to new customers.” Kate concluded.

Asked how she finds time to rescue puppies, write a column and run an international company in Boxford, Kate replied “when you love what you do, you make time.”

The Candidate: Why Running?





Veterans Day

“I have a passion to help out in the best way that I know how: serving as an elected official, being responsive to my community.”

– Lonnie Brennan



Library Groundbreaking



Community Events



Longview Fire



Town Meeting

Attacks on our elders

Lonnie Brennan
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

So the other day my mother, now well into her 70s, got a call. The anonymous friendly lady on the other end of the phone chatted about moms three sons and her three daughters, typical stuff easily found in public records, and then asked my mom for her social security number, and bank account number. Mom was born at night, but not last night. She hung up.

A few days later, another friendly voice called to strike up a conversation with her. This time mom said “I’m sorry, this is the maid, Mrs. Brennan is not home.” She hung up and had a good laugh. The maid! But the best was the friendly war-buddy calling to check up on my dad. He too asked for a bank account number. “He’s dead” mom replied, and hung up.

Every day we read about scams on our seniors, but I never thought it would strike at my home. Locally, our council on aging, like many others, has in the past run a TRIAD program which is a cooperative program between the seniors and law enforcement to help alert, educate, and protect sometimes otherwise vulnerable members of our community from a variety of potential issues. More recently, the front pages of each of our “A Few Gray Hairs” council on aging newsletter has warned of cyber crimes and false mailings.

Bottom line: there’s no need to be polite to anonymous letters and phone callers. Just say no.

RiverBank's grand re-opening of West Methuen Branch

METHUEN - RiverBank held a free community cookout on Saturday June 7th to celebrate the grand re-opening of the West Methuen branch located at 148 Lowell Street, Methuen, MA. RiverBank recently completed a six-month long total renovation of this office, which originally opened in 1979.

The celebration started with a ribbon cutting ceremony attended by Councilor John Cronin, Councilor Stephen Zanni, Councilor Jeanne Papalardo, Councilor Jennifer Kannan and Councilor Joseph Leone who joined RiverBank's President and CEO, Gerald T. Mulligan, along with Veronica Calixto, Vice President and Branch Manager who did the honors of cutting the ribbon. The State Senate and the House of Representatives presented RiverBank with an official citation in recognition of its grand re-opening and many years of providing quality financial services to the Merrimack Valley.

"RiverBank is very grateful to its customers and the residents of Methuen for their patience and perseverance during construction. We are both proud and appreciative of our long relationship with the residents and Town of Methuen. We believe this branch will not only enable us to provide better service, but it will also provide a more attractive and convenient banking facility that our customers and this neighborhood deserve." - Comments Mr. Mulligan



PHOTO: COURTESY

Ribbon Cutting Ceremony: Left to Right: Councilor John Cronin, VP & Branch Manager Veronica Calixto, Councilor Stephen Zanni, Councilor Jeanne Papalardo, President & CEO Gerald Mulligan, Councilor Jennifer Kannan, Councilor Joseph Leone

Following the ceremony, as a token of appreciation for their patience during the construction of the branch, there was a community cookout for the Bank's customers. Along with hamburgers and hotdogs, there was a clown making balloon animals for children, giveaways for children and adults, and an ice cream

truck distributing free ice cream for everyone to enjoy. Despite the hot weather, the event was a huge success with over 350 attendees.

RiverBank offers a range of commercial and consumer loan and deposit products in southern New

Hampshire and northern Massachusetts. RiverBank operates 6 full-service banking offices in Andover, Lawrence, Methuen (2) and North Andover, Massachusetts and Salem, New Hampshire. The Bank will be opening its Derry, New Hampshire branch office in the late fall of 2008.

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September may be too late.

House Approves Mental Health Parity Legislation

BOSTON- The House of Representatives today overwhelmingly voted to pass landmark mental health parity legislation that will require health plans to cover mental health and substance abuse disorders to the same extent as all other medical conditions.

"This legislation will allow individuals who need mental health services to receive treatment through their health plans, said Representative Linda Dean Campbell (D-Methuen), a proponent of the bill. "Given the costs that mental illness has on our society in terms of reduced productivity, workplace absence, and violence, this legislation is not only necessary from a human perspective but it will benefit the taxpayers as well."

The bill is the next step in health care reform. Not only will all Massachusetts residents be required to have insurance coverage, but this legislation ensures that

it is comprehensive, fully covering both mental illness and addictions.

This bill seeks to complete what the Legislation began in 2000 when it passed legislation that expanded health insurance coverage of mental health service, but it stopped short of full parity by granting to a limited number of so-called "biologically based disorders" while setting limits on coverage of all other mental disorders.

Examples of disorders that were not fully covered by the earlier statute are eating disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder, and substance abuse disorders.



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PHOTOS: TOM DUGGAN

Lawrence Revolutionary War Reenactors march behind the VFW, Jim Wareing of New England Caring for our Military in Methuen with Francisco Urena the Lawrence Veteran’s Services Director, and active military personnel all marched in honor of Alex Jimenez.

Lawrence man raises \$6k for MethuenVFW repairs

Tom Duggan
VALLEY PATRIOT REPORTER

Lawrence resident Dave Goulet may not be a veteran or a Methuen resident but the 41 year old Lawrence High School graduate said that when he heard about the \$60,000 repair bill for the roof at the Methuen VFW, he had to do something.

Goulet, who organized the first Methuen VFW Bike Run last year, decided that the proceeds of the Second Annual Bike Run last month would go to help offset the cost of repairs to the VFW which was built in the late 40’s and has been leaking for months, staining the ceiling tiles and ruining equipment.

“A lot of the veterans who spend their time at the VFW are getting on in years and aren’t capable of paying for the repairs or run a fundraiser so, I decided to take on the task and donate the proceeds of the bike run for roof repairs.”

Goulet’s father, Arthur Goulet was a Navy CB who served 33 years and saw action at the Bay of Pigs in Cuba.

“We invited bike organizations from all over the Valley and all over New England and they came,” Goulet said with a surprised look on his face.

“They came from as far away as Maine, the Cape, and Vermont to participate in our Motorcycle Run throughout The Valley. Last year 120 bikers came to Methuen for the Run but this year we had 180 bikers attend the service and ride in the event.”

Goulet said he handed out fliers, worked the phones and even attended the Motorcycle night in Lowell to raise money for the event, “the guy who runs the Lowell Motorcycle Night let me take the microphone and at his event and make a plea to help out our Methuen Veterans and a lot of those guys came to help out, it was really nice to see the number of people who pitched in that weren’t even from Methuen.”

Two days before the Bike run was to take place, the news media reported that the remains of missing Army soldier Spc. Alex Jimenez of Lawrence had been found in Iraq so Goulet worked it into his program and held the very first memorial service in his honor of Jimenez during the event.

Outgoing VFW commander and former Valley Patriot of the Month (October, 2005) Frank Shimko raised the flag at the VFW during the service. The new commander Ebb Morris was then asked to lower the flag as taps played in the background followed by a recording of Amazing Grace in honor of Jimenez.

Goulet said that he had a CD donated to him from Edward Murphy, a retired fire Lieutenant in Lawrence who put out a release called the “Maltese Cross.”

“After that I had all the firing squads fire a 21 gun salute, we had the North Andover VFW firing squad, New England Patriots Militia Men, the Lawrence Civil War Reenactment Team, the Methuen Firefighter Color Guard and



PHOTO: TOM DUGGAN

Lawrence resident Dave Goulet takes the microphone outside the VFW in Methuen. Over his right shoulder is Sara Payne Hayden a former Valley Patriot of the Month.

the Methuen Ladies Auxiliary to hold colors. We even had the Coast Guard do a fly over, as they came over the Run they tipped his wings in show of support. It was an amazing event,” he concluded.

Bike participants paid \$20 each to ride in the event which snaked its way through The Valley, Police in each community blocked off the streets as the Run began.

“We went down Broadway, from Methuen to Lawrence and stopped at Manchester Street. We traveled down Manchester and Broadway in remembrance of Alex [Jimenez] and then

to Manchester and Barker St. in honor of past fallen vets.

We then rode down Rt.113 into Methuen through the back wood of Methuen and Pelham New Hampshire where the Pelham Fire Department was stationed at corner of Rt. 38 and Rollins way. They had three engines, a fire truck and an ambulance. They held flags and stood at attention as we came by.”

From there we rode to Salem NH where the Salem Fire Department was in front of their old fire station in N. Salem. As we drove through Salem we came

VFW, page 28

Home loan program for Massachusetts veterans

“Home for the Brave” program will provide safe, affordable mortgages and special services for qualified veterans

BOSTON - The Patrick-Murray Administration announced “Home for the Brave” today, a new mortgage program that will offer safe, affordable home loans for Massachusetts veterans. The program will include mortgage insurance that will pay a veteran’s monthly mortgage payment for up to six months in the event he or she becomes unemployed or is deployed on active duty. Closing cost assistance will be provided through a grant by Fannie Mae (FNM/NYSE).

“For all the sacrifices they make on our behalf, it is critical that we do everything we can to help Massachusetts’ veterans reach the dream of home ownership,” said Lieutenant Governor Tim Murray, who chairs the Governor’s Advisory Committee on Veterans Services.

The “Home for the Brave” program was developed by MassHousing, the state’s affordable housing bank, in consultation with the Veterans Housing Sub-Committee of the Governor’s

Advisory Committee on Veterans Services.

Veterans will have access to a low- or no-down payment mortgages from participating banks and credit unions. So far forty-two lending institutions have committed \$187 million in private funding to the program. Fannie Mae has provided a \$300,000 grant to assist with closing costs for the first 200 veterans who take advantage of the program.

The “Home for the Brave” program mortgage offers qualified veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces living in Massachusetts:

- * 100-percent financing with no down payment required for single-family homes or condominiums, 97-percent financing for two, three and four-family properties.

- * Discounted interest rates fixed for a minimum of 10 years.

- * Loans come with MassHousing’s MI Plus™ mortgage insurance, which will pay the principal and interest on a veteran’s mortgage for up to six months in the event of a job loss or deployment.

- * Disabled veterans can access funds from the U.S. Veterans Administration for accessibility upgrades to their homes.

- * Borrowers can earn up to 135 percent of the median income for the city or town in which they are purchasing a home. Income limits vary, but may be as high as \$111,240.

MassHousing will also insure veterans’ loans with its MI Plus™ mortgage insurance, which will allow veterans to receive 100-percent financing with no down payment for single-family homes and condominiums. MI Plus™ will also pay the principal and interest on a veteran’s mortgage for up to six months in the event of a job loss or deployment.

To be eligible for a Home for the Brave mortgage, one must be a veteran as

defined under M.G.L. c. 4, sec. 7, cl. 43rd as amended by the Acts of 2005, ch. 130. Borrowers must also have good credit and meet other underwriting standards. There are an estimated 400,000 veterans in Massachusetts, according to the Department of Veterans Services.

“Taking the burden of worry from the shoulders of the service men and women who are serving this great nation of ours is the right thing to do. We’ve read about military families losing their homes because they can’t make their mortgage payments. This program will lessen the chance that it will happen here in Massachusetts. We welcome the Home for the Brave mortgage program as another state benefit in this great Commonwealth,” said Secretary Tom Kelley of the Department of Veterans’ Services.

Our veterans are the backbone of our state and our nation,” said MassHousing Executive Director Thomas R. Gleason.

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NOTEBOOK: from page 15

publicly available information including the Draft Environmental Impact Report (dated September 11th, 2007), an independent Air Quality and Health Evaluation Report (prepared by Environmental Health and Engineering, Inc. dated June 24th, 2008), and health-related data from the American Lung Association, I believe there will be health impacts to those living within five miles of the Billerica power plant. This is due to the air pollution generated by the power plant's six 80-foot stacks. There are concerns with potential contamination of the drinking water supply. There are also several real safety issues, each of which has different consequences depending on where you live relative to the power plant location in Billerica."

AROUND THE VALLEY: Volunteer with homeless children

"Horizons for Homeless Children" is looking for volunteers to play with great children for 2 hours a week. Several shelters are located on the North Shore, including Lynn, Revere, Malden, Lowell, Lawrence, Tewksbury, Peabody, Salem and Gloucester. A commitment of six months and attendance at a training session are required. Boston, August 11 and 12 from 6 - 9 PM (both nights) - Northeast Region, October 18, 2008. For more info, visit horizonsforhomelesschildren.org, or Call 978-557-2182 northeast@horizonsforhomelesschildren.org.

VFW: from page 27

back into Methuen through Hampstead to Howe Streets.

At the Howe Street fire station the firefighters hung the American flag and the POW flag more than 30 feet in the air. Then we drove down Howe St. to Pleasant, made our way back to the VFW passing the main fire station on Lowell St. in Lawrence where deputy Steven Buote had every truck outside, sirens blaring, holding flags, and one fireman slowly ringing the bell in remembrance of fallen firefighters." Goulet said he is not sure he will organize the run next year

N. Andover: Rape and incest on summer reading list

The level I and Level II summer reading agenda for the North Andover High School 11th grade students has many parents up in arms, but the teachers have the support of Superintendent Marini. The two assigned summer reading books are: *The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison and *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* by Stephen Chbosky. Parents are upset and questioning the appropriateness of these books in light of the adult themes and graphic details on topics of drugs, rape, suicide, masturbation, and incest to name a few. Specifically, in *The Bluest Eye*, the main character, an 11 year old black girl named Pecola Breedlove is raped and impregnated by her own father. She then yearns to be white with blue eyes. There is also a rape scene in *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* during an alcohol party involving 15 year olds and both rape scenes are quite explicit, disgusting and disturbing to read. There are also no criminal consequences with these rapists, which would have at least sent to the high school readers some positive message. With so many wonderful classic books out there for our young people to read, I wonder what the teachers at the North Andover High School were thinking and what kind of class discussions they have planned. Maybe the press, school committee members and parents will be invited to these discussions.

but added that the greatest honor he received throughout the entire event was when a World War II veteran came over to him after the event.

"He had a tear in his eye and shook my hand and said 'thank you'.

There I was, just a Lawrence kid who never served in the military and this guy who put on the uniform and went off to war was thanking me? It was really heart warming. For all the time, effort and aggravation it took to get this event planned and organized, him taking a moment to thank me really meant the most."

From the Desk of: Methuen Mayor Bill Manzi

Bill Manzi's Notebook

Methuen Master Plan Passed

Culminating a two year process the Methuen City Council voted 8-1 in favor of passing a new Master Plan for Methuen, and adopting a new city wide zoning plan that was the result of our master planning process. The zoning rewrite was the first one in Methuen for over twenty years. I would like to thank Economic and Community Development Director Karen Sawyer and her staff, who worked very hard on this project.

I do not wish to review the overall plan through this posting, but I will say that modernizing our zoning to recognize important new concepts in land use was imperative. Our attempt to do so created some discomfort, and we made changes based on input from the public. Our work with the neighborhoods of the city produced a better plan. My thanks to the City Councilors who worked with me to produce positive results for Methuen, and I appreciate the fact that most City Councilors were about compromising to achieve real gains for Methuen.

Methuen adds lacrosse

I have had numerous requests in the past year to add the sport of lacrosse to the outstanding menu of youth sports activities in Methuen. With a group of persistent residents nipping at my heels I have promulgated an executive order creating a Methuen Lacrosse Committee to gauge resident interest and create a lacrosse program for our city.

The program would initially be run under the auspices of our Recreation Department, with the goal of creating an independent association similar to the other youth groups running sport specific programs in Methuen. My thanks to Caroline Hamel, who put the idea forward at a neighborhood gathering, as

well as Ernie Difiore and Wayne Puglisi. We will try to get started with a lacrosse clinic in September that the new committee will set up. As always we are fortunate to have a great Recreation Director in Bill Pare, who has helped to coordinate all of this effort.

As a UMASS Amherst graduate I remember the glory days of the UMASS program run by coach Dick Garber. "Garbers Gorillas" were a nationally ranked team playing at the very top echelon of national lacrosse, so we have a rich history of lacrosse in Massachusetts. Hopefully we will soon have something similar in Methuen.

Legislature Removes Municipal Retiree Cola

The legislative budget conference committee removed the provision that had been inserted in the Senate version of the budget that raised the base for calculating municipal retiree cost of living increases from \$12,000 to \$16,000. This prospective change, made without the benefit of additional state funding, had been widely criticized by the MMA and other local officials (including myself). See my post "Pension Pile On" The legislature agreed to further study the state and local pension systems by creating a commission to do so and including a representative from the MMA. It was a wise decision made by the legislative leadership, in spite of the fact that retirees at that level could use an increase. Funding sources must be identified for future benefit increases or the house of cards that exists today will be made worse.



Bill Manzi is in his second, two year term as the Mayor of Methuen. You can read his blog at billmanzi.com or email him at billmanzi1@comcast.net

LAROCQUE: from page 10

the line item that was left out of the FY09 School Department's budget that was presented to the Lawrence City Council in May of 2008 by the Mayor and his Finance Director ... even though it was included in the original Lawrence School Department's FY09 budget adopted by the Lawrence School Committee in April 2008.

To fix this unfortunate situation, there had to be an additional appropriation given to the City Council for approval that returned the transportation line item funds to the FY09 School budget. It was approved along with the FY09 city budget and all is well in Lawrence, for now.

On a side note: I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mr. Duggan and The Valley Patriot for allowing me every month to put my thoughts in writing and then have them printed, unedited for content.

In the past I've tried to send articles to other local papers, but after the editors have had their way with it, it looked nothing like the original or was printed in the back section as an afterthought. There was one local paper that printed an open letter addressed to me in their front section (complete with racial overtones) and then printed my response on the back page as a letter to the editor.

So to Mr. Duggan and his staff I say; thank you.

God Bless you all and thank you for reading. Peter Larocque is a member of the Lawrence School Committee. He was originally elected by the Lawrence City Council to fill the unexpired term of Amy McGovern in 2006 and then elected in his own right last month. You can email him at peterlarocque@hotmail.com



Jeanne Pappalardo West District Councilor

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RONNIE’S RANTS

Black gold, black beards, blackmail, what are they doing to us?

Ronnie Ford
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

First there was the “supply and demand” excuse that the oil companies claimed was the reason for sky- high prices, and oh yes, record profits for the ‘black gold people.’

Someone with a little gray matter then pointed out that the product is non-elastic that is supply and demand does not apply. That is because the oil industry is an oligarchy. That is, controlled buy a few in the interest of a few. Then after that wouldn’t sell, blame went to OPEC, the Arabs, Central and North Americans, and finally the good old USA that was responsible for needing a mortgage to pay for your fill-up.

That didn’t fly either. So now we go to blaming the lack of refineries, saying,

that they can’t refine the crude, so how can we use it as fuel for cars and heating?

Now after all these reasons were given for high gas prices, why are we still getting choked with price gouging at the pump? We found out too many people are buying oil. Speculators buy futures. That is, they speculate on prices going up and when they do this, the demand for oil increases. Because of the large amount of buying, profit is great that more people speculate, driving prices higher and it never ends.

Well, after all these reasons and blaming one another, lets look at the President of the USA ... an oilman. Now if the price of crude goes up so much a barrel, the posted price is up within minutes. But, when the price of crude goes down, well, the last time it took

them a week before they moved the posted price down at the pump.

This means the oil companies made mucho dineros more than usual. Who is really raping us? OPEC? The oil companies? Skull and Bones?

Who knows?

In the days of Teddy Roosevelt, a set of laws were made called the anti trust laws. They prohibited the economic atrocities that are happening today. Yet, since the Rockefeller standard oil trust was knocked down, it has gotten worse. At least John D. didn’t clobber the people and gave some of it back. He was no angel, but next to these leaches today, he was a Prince!

What we need today are some stand up politicians willing to take it on the chin; to represent the people as they should.

You would be surprised at what some guts can do. The unequal distribution of goods, services and income of all types is what got us into the depression of ’29. I say lets not do it again! The cuffs have to be put on, the strap tightened. Start praying.

There is a lot of hot local stuff brewing and I will get you some good stories for next month. ‘Till then, may the good Lord take a liking to you. Do something nice for someone today. And we wish you enough.

Ronnie Ford is a Methuen resident, the former host of the “Hot Line” radio program, a former Methuen police officer and a former member of the Methuen school committee and city council. You can email Ronnie at Radiotalk@comcast.net



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Citizens for a Better Government

Kathleen Corey Rahme
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

There is a group of citizens in Methuen who have organized to form Citizens for a Better Government Group. This organization is a positive group, made up of a diverse group of residents who would like to look at the Charter of the City of Methuen. All too often people are accused of not participating in their community and their government. This group defies that accusation.

MISSION STATEMENT: Citizens for a Better Government is a diverse, volunteer non-profit citizens advocacy group aspiring to review the Charter of Methuen Municipal Government on a regular basis. We support accountability and transparency in Municipal Government. We recommend citizen initiated and citizen approved changes to the Municipal Charter in an all-inclusive positive atmosphere via an elected Citizen Charter Commission.

Who are the folks in this organization? This group represents citizens from every district in Methuen, ages ranging from teenagers to octogenarians, and everybody in between. There are anywhere between 45-60 people at every meeting. Some of the participants are current and former elected officials.

Some of the members and attendees with experience in elected office both current and past include Patricia Uliano, Joseph Pappalardo, Maureen Donovan, Dorothy Khalil, Chairman Phil Lahey, Councilor Jeanne Pappalardo, Councilor

Jennifer Kannan, Councilor Ken Willette, Councilor Larry Giordanno, Councilor Deborah Quinn and me.

The current Executive Board of CBGG is as follows:

President- Patricia Uliano ,
Vice President- Jack Burke
Treasurer- Alexander Vannett
Secretary- Sharon Ployer
Clerk- Kathleen Corey Rahme

Others who regularly attend the meeting include several lifelong residents and some new comers. These people all share the same ambition. They want to make this community a better place to live. One thing that I would like to stress is that this is a positive group. No one ever personalizes anything and no names are ever dogged. They are all inclusive and everyone gets a vote on every issue even if they have not formally joined the membership. A small, one-time, voluntary dues of \$25 was initiated.

Why does this group need money? There is a need for this legally established 501 c(4) group to fundraise to cover the expenses of mailings, stationary, legal services, photocopying. A successful fundraiser was held at the VFW last month with about 150 in attendance.

When people attend the meetings, they are always welcomed by the group and they are all asked the same questions. “Would you like to see a charter commission study group? Why are you here? Are you satisfied with your

government structure that exists here in Methuen?”

What is the Charter? The Charter is the city’s constitution. It contains rules and procedures for governance. Our charter has not been thoroughly reviewed since 1993. As member Steve Devan said, “Our government’s health depends on a regular review of the charter.”

Vice President Jack Burke said it best: “A city charter is the constitution governing the municipal government that defines the powers the citizens agree to give their city government and how the government is to be structured. Our existing charter should have this same type of review; by the people.”

What is our mission? The CBGG’s (Citizens for a Better Government Group) mission is to gather 4500+ signatures for an initiative petition to place a ballot question- *Do you want a Charter Review Commission?* and a list of names for an elected charter review commission on the ballot for the 2009 Municipal Election.

The members of CFGG do not believe that the charter should be changed haphazardly at the whim of politicians to serve their personal needs. Looking at the charter in its entirety is essential. They are not interested in cherry picking through it to tweak certain issues like term limits to satisfy politicians.

They believe our charter should only be changed by the people. If successful in their endeavors, the citizens of Methuen would be the only ones who are able to change the charter and only by voting on

those changes. Several communities in Massachusetts are actively reviewing their own charters.

The thought process is that our charter should be a living document and it should be looked at on a regular basis and reviewed so it meets the needs of the people it serves. In other words, the review will dictate whether or not change is necessary.

What is the process? We have been in contact with various entities during this process. We have been working closely with Secretary of State Galvin’s office. After much discussion and lengthy research, we decided to proceed with this initiative petition by gathering the necessary signatures to place our agenda on the 2009 municipal ballot.

The alternative would have been to petition our city council to put forth a Home Rule Petition that would require the signature of the mayor and the assistance of our local legislators. We decided that it could end up in committee study and be bogged down in the legislative process in Boston so this was not a good option.

This was evidence by the attempt to have a Charter Review Subcommittee of the City Council back in 2005. Appointed by then chairman of the city council William Manzi, he appointed as chair then Councilor Linda Dean Campbell. For months, there was an effort by her committee to change the mayor’s salary, amend the term of the mayor, and to eliminate term limits for the city council and the school committee. It was a failed effort. It went nowhere.

They were cautioned about picking apart certain issues by then Mayor Pollard. She advised the committee to examine the charter in its entirety. The committee did not heed her advice. At the end of the day, consensus could not even be reached among the subcommittee members let alone the council.

Whatever individual opinions on term limits may be, or what the salary of elected officials should be, the CBGG all agree that it should be voted on by the people. It does have a familiar ring to it doesn’t it? Please visit the web site for the CBGG at <http://www.mymethuen.org>.



Kathleen Corey Rahme is the former City Councilor in Methuen, is the founder of the Methuen Youth Corps., and hosts “Call to Serve.” You can email her at kcoryerahme@comcast.net or call 978-686-0008

LOANS: from page 26

“Home for the Brave is another example of the affordable housing leadership Massachusetts residents have come to expect from the Patrick Administration. Providing our veterans with access to affordable homeownership opportunities isn’t just good business, it’s the right thing to do for people who’ve made huge sacrifices for our country.” said Jeff Hayward, SVP of Fannie Mae’s Community Lending group.

“Fannie Mae commends Governor Patrick and MassHousing for developing such a unique and comprehensive program, combining preferred financing and mortgage terms with additional benefits from key banking partners. We are honored to participate.”

For more information, go to www.masshousing.com

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Crescent Credit Union
Danvers Bank
Dedham Savings Bank
East Boston Savings Bank
Fall River Five Cents Savings Bank
Fidelity Cooperative Bank
First Citizen’s Federal Credit Union
Greenfield Cooperative Bank
Greylock Federal Credit Union
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Metropolitan Credit Union
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Peoples Bank of Holyoke
Randolph Savings Bank
Rollstone Bank and Trust
Saugus Bank
Scituate Federal Savings Bank
South Shore Bank
St. Mary’s Credit Union
Stoneham Bank
Watertown Savings Bank
Webster Five Cents Saving Bank
Weymouth Bank
Winter Hill Federal Savings Bank

401(k) investments: from page 30

Knowing your financial risk tolerance is crucial when assessing how to manage your money. Regardless of how the market performs, some people are more comfortable with risk than others. Regardless, it is prudent to review your portfolio once or twice a year. Making changes to your account in response to a specific market turn is not necessarily advisable, but a balanced 401(k) requires a balanced, informed perspective.

Asset Allocation Is Key

In addition to knowing risk tolerance, a balanced 401(k) includes a mix of stock and bond funds. And within stock funds, you’ll want to combine growth, value and large cap funds with some mid cap and smaller funds. This way, you spread risk

amongst a variety of investment categories, which can help to safeguard against being hit too hard if one fund doesn’t perform as hoped.

The “Age Percentage Equivalent”—A Strategy that Can Grow with You

Here’s a general approach: consider allocating the percentage equivalent of your current age into more conservative vehicles. In other words, a 25 year-old with the time to ride out market fluctuations can consider investing 75% in riskier funds, thus allocating 25% (the equivalent percentage of his/her age) into more conservative choices. As that person nears age 50 s/he could equally split the risk between more growth-oriented funds and bond-type funds.

By the time that person is 65, it may be a good idea to have 65% of assets in safer vehicles, while still leaving 35% to achieve potentially higher returns in riskier vehicles. By following a strategy similar to this, you can enjoy the benefits of diversification while adjusting your portfolio to suit your age, goals and current situation. It’s also a way to help ensure that your assets aren’t all invested in a down market just as you’re preparing to retire.

It’s Your Future

Defined benefit plans are a wonderful way to save for retirement and benefit from stock market potential simultaneously. But as with any investment, you want to make the right

choices. By understanding your risk tolerance, taking advantage of dollar cost averaging, making careful diversification choices and adjusting those choices as needed, you can help ensure that the funds you’ve worked so hard for will be working just as hard to give you a comfortable retirement.

For more information on 401(k) choices and diversification, please contact Gregory J. Loosigian Registered Representative, NYLIFE Securities LLC, Waltham, Ma. At telephone # 781-398-9823. G68 SMRU 00338404CV - (Footnotes) - www.aiminvestments.com/portal/site/aim/template.DETAIL, September 26, 2006.



Above left: Leo and Cleo from PBS’s kid show “Between the Lions” entertain the crowd of children at Little Sprouts/Imagine That at Sal’s Riverwalk in Lawrence. Above right: Susan Ledger Ferraro, Methuen Mayor Bill Manzi, 5th District Congressman Niki Tsongas, Cleo, Methuen State Rep. Linda Dean Campbell and Leo. Front Row: Mr. and Mrs D’lorio, Maxine Harvey, Talia Harvey, and Anna McCabe.

Little Sprouts concert benefits homeless children

Jessica Todisco
LITTLE SPROUTS COMMUNITY OUTREACH SPECIALIST

Little Sprouts and Imagine That are happy to announce the success of their **ONE LOVE Benefit Concert**, that was held on Sunday July 27th at Imagine That in Lawrence.

The ONE Love concert was to help create awareness of homelessness in Massachusetts.

To help ensure parents who are in transition are able to attend daily classes at Middlesex Community College and Roxbury Community College, Little Sprouts is educating the children of the COMPASS for Homeless families program at their Westford, Lowell and Roxbury centers.

To show their love and support for these families, Little Sprouts, in conjunction with Imagine That, are going to be donating proceeds earned from the ONE LOVE Benefit Concert to the families of the COMPASS program.

Between the Lions, WGBH’s award winning PBS KIDS television series, production team brought two of their main characters, Cleo and Lionel. They put on two interactive shows for the children that day. Aaron Nigel Smith, the creator of the California-based *FUNDamentals of Music and Movement*, with his band presented two shows for the children to rock out as well!

Thanks to the generosity of local businesses such as Next Street Financial,

Sals Pizza, and Stonyfield Farm this event was able to feature entertainment and refreshments for all.

State Representative Linda D. Campbell and Congresswoman Niki Tsongas presented Little Sprouts with a Congressional Proclamation in recognition of providing educational advancement of our nation’s youth. Representative from John Kerry’s office presented Little Sprouts with a recognition award to honor Little Sprouts in the effort to help stop homelessness in Massachusetts.

“It was a great honor to receive these awards,” stated Susan Leger Ferraro, President and Founder of Little Sprouts. “Our number one commitment is to educating all children within our communities, no matter what their demographic and economic status maybe.”

About Little Sprouts Inc.: Little Sprouts has been a leader in providing award winning early education since 1982. A group of humanitarians that believe in the power of literacy to change the world; social, emotional, intellectual and physical literacy for children, youth, teachers and families.

Little Sprouts believes in the commonality in humanity. We embrace that unity is best achieved by celebrating diversity. Little Sprouts has 7 schools in Massachusetts supporting families that reflect 32 cultures speaking 23 languages from all walks of social, economic,



Anthony and Theresa D’lorio received an award posthumously in the name of their daughter Debbie who was dedicated to children of the Merrimack Valley. She was honored for her benevolence in helping everyone regardless of race, religion class or age. The award was presented by Congressman Niki Tsongas and Methuen State Rep. Linda Dean Campbell on behalf of Senator John Kerry who was unable to attend the event at Sal’s Riverwalk. Debbie’s Treasure Chest is an organization established in memory of Debbie D’lorio and provides toys, books, toiletries, and clothes to children at risk in the Merrimack Valley, specifically children receiving services from the Department of Social Services. “What the children have done in the name of Debbie is to get 2,000 square feet of warehouse space donated by Sal Lupoli. To make a donation or volunteer write to; Debbie’s Treasure Chest, Inc. 184 Pleasant Valley Street, Methuen, MA 01844 or Email: info@debbiestreasurechest.org

religious and ethnic backgrounds. To learn more about how you can join us in making the world a better place, visit us at www.littlesprouts.com

About Imagine That: Imagine That is a first of its kind family and child interactive playspace where human potential has no boundaries. Its unique 12,000 square foot playspace offers an

environment where families can create and learn together in a safe and educational way. Imagine That’s “Imagination Stations” include a child-sized grocery store, a stuffed animal hospital, a HUGE dinosaur climbing structure, and an arts and crafts area, just to name a few! To find out more about this playspace, please visit www.imaginethat.com.

Huntington Learning Center now offering one-on-one high school exam prep instruction.

(Grassroots Newswire) - With private high schools becoming increasingly selective, admission tests have taken on the importance and anxiety of college entrance exams. Students seeking entry to private or parochial schools in the Merrimack Valley are often required to take the Secondary School Admission Test (SSAT), the Independent School

Entrance Exam (ISEE), or the Catholic High School Placement Test of the Archdiocese of Boston.

These tests are designed to evaluate a student’s academic aptitude and ability, and are typically an important component of the admissions process.

To assist students in preparing for high school admission tests, the Huntington Learning Center in Methuen is now offering one-to-one exam prep instruction.

“Our program features an intensive diagnostic evaluation and a personalized program of one-to-one instruction that covers material specific to the test the student is taking,” says Frank Markiewicz, the Center Director of Huntington Learning Center in Methuen. “SAT and ACT college exam preparation has always been an important part of our full-service instructional program.

Now we are pleased to add exam prep for private schools to that program. We are constantly looking for ways to meet the needs of parents and children in the communities we serve. And as competition for admission to selective

schools becomes more challenging, parents can look to Huntington Learning Center to give their children an Educational Edge.”

The Huntington Learning Center in Methuen is offering free introductory seminars on the use of high school entrance exams in area private and parochial schools and how the new program can help students gain entrance to the schools of their choice.

The seminars are offered on two afternoons: August 19, 1-2 pm, and August 26, 1-2 pm. The Center is located at 126 Merrimack Street in Methuen, one block from Exit 46 northbound on I-495.

To register for the seminar or for more information on the Huntington program please contact Frank Markiewicz or Monica Harty at 978-689-1880.



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RAISE 'EM RIGHT

“Love ‘em and leave ‘em!”

Barbara Peary, M.Ed.
VALLEY PATRIOT PARENTING SPECIALIST

As a first year preschool teacher, I need some ideas as to how to help parents get over their separation problems. The children are fine and enjoying school, it's the parents who are getting upset having to leave their “babies” for the first time. Several of the moms drag out their dropping off so long, that by the time they do get around to saying goodbye, the children who were ok are no longer.

First, you need to recognize that the feelings of ambivalence these parents are having as valid. Parents can be extremely wary about leaving their young children in the care of others. Take the situation in hand and work with the parents to establish a routine for drop off time. For example, as they enter the classroom walk them and their child over to an activity-block area, easels, playdough-help the child start playing and then say, “Tell your mom you’ll see her later.” and steer the mom back out the door. Be firm as you do this, telling mom you’ll call her, if the child has problems.

When did the importance of knowing how to spell correctly go out of style? As a parent of six and eight year old girls, I disagree with the trend of anything goes and am making sure that they learn how to spell.

For many, dependence on the spell check ability of computers has made basic spelling ability go the way of fundamental math skills. Bucking the trend will certainly no be pleasant or easy at times, but your girls will thank you down the road.

Does tooth care of a three year old really matter? I just don’t see where it is worth the effort arguing with my young son, who is just not interested in brushing. Even if these get cavities, he will grow new teeth and by then he will

be old enough to brush without arguing.

Caring of the baby teeth is important for establishing a life long routine of good dental hygiene. Who says that as your son gets older he will be any more interested in the task?

It is your job to get him into the habit now, remembering you are the parent. Do not send him into the bathroom expecting him to brush on his own. Let him pick out a new brush and maybe a special flavor of toothpaste, but then go in and do it with him. It would be great also if he sees you brushing and flossing. Children model what they see. Telling them what to do and then not doing the same makes words fall on deaf ears.

We have two sons, ages eight and ten, and do not have guns in our home, nor have our boys been exposed to guns. Hearing about so many people having guns in their houses, makes me concerned about the odds of my children playing with friends and someone bringing out a dad’s gun. Should I bring this possibility up or will it just make my children more curious?

Because of the quantity of guns that are out there, you are wise to address this issue with your children at an early age. Keep it extremely simple. Tell them that if they are ever playing with friends and a gun is brought out to not touch it at all and leave the room immediately and go into another area to call you or walk home right away. Too many times gun that were being touched and “just looked at” have gone off accidentally. Stress this with your children and repeat that they are not to touch it and are to leave the area as quickly as possible.



Please send questions to RAISE 'EM RIGHT™, P. O. Box 831., Carlisle, MA 01741 or ask online at www.RAISEEMRIGHT@aol.com.



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STAY AT HOME DADS

First conversation

Pete Baylies

VALLEY PATRIOT CONTRIBUTOR

“Aather gooose,” my then eighteen-month old son, John, said to me impatiently. I thought he was just trying to get attention and continued to read the paper. He had been saying this for a few days and I didn’t know what it meant, if anything.

“AATHER GOOSE,” he said, much louder now, bordering on a cry. It seemed like he would just whine for no apparent reason. Now, after being home with him for several months as an at-home dad, I finally figured out that he was actually trying to say something but he just wasn’t able to articulate the words yet.

“AATHER GOOSE!” John yelled, now in full hysteric mode. I scanned the house again for anything or anyone that might be called “aather goose” by a two-year old child.

Then I got it. I proudly reached over to one of John’s books and showed it to him..... “Mother Goose?”

“NOOOOOO, AAAAAATHER GOOSE!!!” he screamed with tears streaming down his cheeks, his lips

quivering and shaking his head at how his own father could be so stupid. After taking a few deep breaths myself, I decided to take a new tactic and approach the situation just as I would have dealt with a difficult “crybaby” client I had just a few months ago.

I got on the floor to his level. “What do you want?”

I asked in as calm a manner as I could manage. After a few more “AATHER GOOSE” wails from my son, and a few relationships with my now-two sons in way that would not have been possible had I been at work. After spending the last 15 years as a stay-at-home dad I now know that it is these little moments of challenges and then breakthroughs that show what being an at-home dad is all about.



Peter Baylies is the author of the At-Home Dad Handbook and lives in North Andover. You can visit his website for stay-at-home dads at

athomedad.com. E-mail: athomedad@aol.com for more information.



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Merrimack Valley Hospice hosts “Summer Break” Day Long Bereavement Program for Children Experiencing a loss

Lawrence and North Andover, Mass. – Walking into “Summer Break” you would never guess the common thread among the children working on mosaics or having their faces painted – not sports or personal interests, but instead they have all lost a loved one.

More than 25 children gathered in Cascia Hall on the campus of Merrimack College on July 16th to participate in Merrimack Valley Hospice’s “Summer Break” day long session – a place for these children to connect with others experiencing a similar circumstance. The program ran from 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. and was open to children ages 6 to 14. Three years ago Merrimack Valley Hospice initiated the “Summer Break” program to direct bereavement services to children who had experienced the loss of a loved one.

At the program children had an opportunity to take part in a number of activities from creating memory books, sharing experiences, and creating a group mosaic project. In addition to the creative, structured activities they had a chance to just be kids and enjoy face painting, balloon creations and bubble machines.

“We were looking for way to connect with children who were experiencing

grief in a creative and comfortable way,” said Pam Saucier, Vice President of Merrimack Valley Hospice. “Often children have a difficult time expressing grief when they have lost a loved one. Our counselors developed this day long program where children could connect with peers who were going through the same thing.”

This marks the third year of the program, and every year it has grown. Parents and guardians are invited to stay for the day as well, and many took advantage of the opportunity to find support from other parents of grieving children.

“The parents and guardians also had a chance to make some connections with others who are dealing with children who are grieving,” said Lois Marra, Bereavement Counselor for Merrimack Valley Hospice. “One of our counselors, Nancy Thornton, hosted informal discussions with these parents – giving them a place to air their concerns and receive support from others.”

The mood in Cascia Hall was uplifting throughout the day as children shared their memories of grandparents, parents and siblings who they had lost. Many felt like they had found a place where others



PHOTO: COURTESY

Mary Cortes, 9, of Tewksbury, Felicia McCarthy, 9, of Billerica, Grace Linskey, 7, of Chelmsford, and in back is James Linskey, 10, of Chelmsford

knew exactly what they were going through. “This day was a lot of fun,” commented 9 year old Felicia McCarthy from Billerica, who had recently lost her beloved grandfather. “I’ve done a lot of neat things and I made a new friend. We already exchanged numbers!”

Merrimack Valley Hospice is a not for profit agency dedicated to providing the

medical, emotional and spiritual support to terminally ill patients and their families. Together with their affiliate agencies, Home Health VNA and HomeCare, Inc. they serve more than 80 communities throughout the Merrimack Valley, Northeastern Massachusetts and Southern New Hampshire. Learn more about them at www.merrimackvalleyhospice.org

Little Sprouts participates in international internship program

Merrimack Valley, MA. July 22, 2008 – Little Sprouts is happy to welcome students from abroad into their Little Sprouts schools. Sibowang, an intern from Beijing, China, will be working with Jessica Todisco, the Community Outreach Specialist for Little Sprouts. Sibowang is apart of the Cultural Homestay International internship program which is working with Little Sprouts to help enrich the lives of students abroad.

During her time in America, Sibowang will have the opportunity to learn firsthand how an early education center is run effectively as well as have the chance to participate in the planning, and marketing stages of a wide variety of events for Little Sprouts families and members of the community.

This will be an opportunity where both parties can learn a variety of knowledge from one another. “I am looking forward to this experience,” noted Sibowang. “I am excited to learn about Little Sprouts and the involvement that they have within their communities.”

Susan Leger Ferraro (left), Founder and President of Little Sprouts; Sibowang (right), exchange student from Beijing, China

About Little Sprouts Inc.: Little Sprouts has been a leader in providing award winning early education since 1982. A group of humanitarians that believe in the power of literacy to change the world; social, emotional, intellectual and physical literacy for children, youth, teachers and families. Little Sprouts believes in the commonality in humanity. We embrace that unity is best achieved by celebrating diversity. Little Sprouts has 7 schools in Massachusetts supporting families that reflect 32 cultures speaking 23 languages from all walks of social, economic, religious and ethnic backgrounds. To learn more about how you can join us in making the world a better place, visit us at www.littlesprouts.com

About Cultural Homestay International: Cultural Homestay International (CHI) is a non-profit, public benefit, educational organization. For 25 years, CHI’s mission is to bring people of diverse cultures together so those who participate gain a greater knowledge



and understanding of one another. CHI believes that the best way to learn about the cultures languages and customs of other countries is through international work exchanges and homestay programs. To learn more about how you can participate, please visit www.chinet.org

IRS EMPLOYEES RAISE MONEY FOR PREVENTION OF CHILD ABUSE



In one month, employees at the IRS raised \$16,397 for the prevention of child abuse in Lawrence. IRS employees held several fundraisers throughout the month holding movie nights, pancake breakfasts, cookie walks, and a SHAVE YOUR HEAD contest (which was won by a woman) and dozens of other activities. Proceeds go to the Michael B. Christensen Family Support

Live the WOW!

Discover WHO you are. Discover the REAL YOU. Discover the person people see when they look at you. Then ask yourself. WHO do YOU see when you look in your mirror each morning? Living the WOW! can provide you with some real life-changing answers.

Thomas Connors
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

WHO are you? That's one of Life's Greatest Questions! And your answer ... stripped of all the garbage and all the self-denial will give you crystal clear insight and peace-of-mind that will forever change the way you live and look at life.

Living the **WOW!** gives you the unique opportunity to contemplate just who you are. It forces you to choose those aspects of life that truly excite you into action.

Discovering WHO you are has challenged human beings since the beginning of time. It wasn't easy then and it certainly isn't easier now. Except, you have one gigantic, strategic advantage. You know the game plan that works. You know the WOW! can give you invaluable insight into the person you really are.

For thousands of years people of all races, religions and nationalities have struggled to find the answer to Life's Greatest Question. From the very beginning of time, Adam and Eve battled their conscience when they embarrassed themselves by letting that darn snake shape their behavior and who they were. Even our Lord, Jesus, when asked who He was, referred to himself as, "I Am Who Am!"

Be forewarned. Often, the answers we arrive at are not some of our proudest moments. Sometimes we wish we could relive our past. Keep in mind that the process of asking questions and going through the process in an honest and open manner can be eye-opening. The real reward is a new found realization of who we are and why we do the things we do. Then, by knowing ourselves much better we can call our own shots instead of being subject some stranger's opinion or the environment in which we live. It makes life much more enjoyable when you are the *director* of your life rather than the *directed*.

Do you yearn to be seen as someone else and remembered for so much more? Then YOU need to take control! The effort is worth it.

Discover answers to the Greatest Question in life and you will not believe how your life will soar beyond your wildest imagination! Sure, it involves breaking free from those chains that are holding you back. Sure, it takes effort and maybe some skill. And yes, it may even be a bit uncomfortable stepping into uncharted territory. But, the rewards, the potential gold mine of opportunities and success that become available to you,

make it all worth while. The process will have you loving the person God made you to be.

Look into a mirror. WHO do you see? Is it the real you? Or have you become some person other people and circumstances have molded you into?

Are you known as that *lawyer*? Or as that *person with a disability*? Or have you become known as the person who *drives that low-rider Toyota*? Or are you seen as that *grumpy senior citizen* who constantly complains? Are you identified as that *lazy, good-for-nothing* person on welfare? Or as that *workaholic, greedy salesperson*? Worse, have you let yourself live up to those labels and expectations ... all at the expense of letting the world see and experience the REAL YOU!

I have seen first hand at American Training how debilitating these labels can be. I have seen people with relatively minor disabilities in our Starworks Division let it define who they are. Their entire focus and those around them center on the issues of that disability, at the expense of promoting and utilizing the unique talents they already have. I have seen great kids in our LARE Training Center, raised in the inner city, allow their lives to be totally sculptured into a punk-kid lifestyle in complete and total contradiction to whom they really are. I have seen mothers struggling on welfare abandon any semblance of self-esteem by letting estranged husbands and disrespectful boyfriends dictate who they are.

Don't get suckered into following the herd and letting others define who you are. Don't allow yourself to be defined by WHAT you do or WHAT you drive.

Fight it at every turn. Once you get into that rut it is so hard to get out of it.

Living your life as others see you, ALWAYS brings you out of balance. It is unavoidable no matter how hard you try to ignore or deny it. Only by Living the **WOW!** will you project and be in sync with the person you are and were meant to be. Only by Living the **WOW!** will you be able to fully fulfill your Purpose here on earth. And that ultimate balance and self-satisfaction will give you the greatest level of satisfaction and accomplishment any life can bring.

Take inventory of 3 Basic Areas of Life that influence how you Live the WOW! THINK ... then identify the WOW! you can generate in your Work, Spiritual and Personal Life. This process forces to the surface exactly WHAT is important to you and why.



PHOTO: COURTESY

Tom Connors is President/CEO of American Training, a diverse collection of companies committed to "Bringing Out the Best in Everyone They Touch". He believes in living life to the fullest by making the **WOW!** a regular part of your personal, spiritual and working life.

You will begin to shape your life for the first time. By contemplating exactly what moves you emotionally, intellectually and spiritually you can create your own motivational machine. Contemplating, identifying and creating *events* and *experiences* specific to your life and likes guarantees you a day to look forward to each morning. And people you come in contact with will not only see the REAL you but you will be projecting a genuine and accurate *face* for all to see and experience. Your life will be in balance and you will be attracting all the gifts meant just for you. Life will no longer present challenges but rather satisfying experiences for you to finally enjoy.

Living the **WOW!** also gives you a much more important and meaningful reward. YOU, the REAL YOU, get to let the world fall in love with the person you really are and YOU get to make your mark for eternity!

Now, *that's a WOW!*

Tom Connors is President/CEO of American Training, a diverse collection of companies committed to "Bringing Out the Best in Everyone They Touch." He believes in living life to the fullest by making the **WOW!** a regular part of your personal, spiritual and working life. You can reach Tom at Tom@AmericanTrainingInc.com or by writing to him at Tom Connors, American Training, 102 Glenn Street, Lawrence, MA 01843 © 2008

SIMPLE WISDOM

Being on the right road

Gail Van Kleeck
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

I probably wouldn't have painted my home dark purple if we hadn't taken the wrong road last spring. If we'd been on the right road, I'd never have seen the magnificent Victorian house, so resplendently garbed in a shade of deep plum that it took my breath away. Sometimes in life what seems to be the wrong road, turns out to be the absolute right road for us instead.

This was one of those times.

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I moved into the small gray cape I named "Little Dove" more than twenty years ago. At a time when life was filled with painful challenges, she offered me a sense of peacefulness and safety. Even after all these years, I still pull into her driveway with an unending sense of gratitude.

Sheltered by her gentle presence I learned to laugh and love and celebrate life in a way I had never imagined possible. The fork in life's road that once brought me to this place was clearly the one I needed to take.

It took a while to choose the just the right shade of purple. It would have been easier and safer to paint Little Dove grey again. It had always been a nice, unobtrusive color. Somehow though, it just didn't feel right any more. "It's only paint," I told myself. "If I don't have the courage to do this now I'll be disappointed later on."

At first the neighbors seemed understandably nervous. We live in a wonderful neighborhood. I didn't want anyone to feel uncomfortable. Sometimes though we just need to trust the little voice inside us that challenges us to move beyond the limits of what feels predictable and safe.... I kept on painting.

The more purple Little Dove became the less nervous the neighbors seemed.

They admired the way the trim related to her roof color. They appreciated how beautiful her flowers and foliage looked against their new background. While they teased us about it, they also said they liked it. Many of them told us they admired our courage. A purple home is not the right road for everyone. Perhaps though, our willingness to take this small risk may inspire others to take different risks of their own.

Not long ago, thinking I was lost, I pulled into a gas station to ask directions. The attendant leaned toward my car, looking solemn for a moment. "You're already on the right road lady," he said, the area around his eyes slipping into a smile. "You just haven't gone far enough."

I wonder sometimes if life isn't like that for most of us. Although we may sometimes feel confused or frightened, the road we are on is often the right road for now. Sometimes though, we need to trust ourselves to risk going a just a little further.

WHAT WE FOCUS ON IS TRULY WHAT WE SEE



To E-mail International inspirational author and motivational story teller, Gail Van Kleeck gail@simplewisdom.com



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CARING FOR OUR VETERANS

Updated Benefits & The New GI Bill

John Lenotte

VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

Finally, Congress and the President have given our latest generation of veterans an updated GI Bill. It was long coming and well deserved. We just hope this focus will continue with the VA budget.

Just a little history of the "GI Bill".

The Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 was crafted by The American Legion, led by American Legion Past National Commander Harry W. Colmery.

He wrote the original draft for a bill that was introduced in Congress on Jan. 10, 1944. Deadlocked in a House committee vote, the GI Bill almost died. To break the tie, the Legion tracked down Rep. John Gibson of Georgia, drove him through a rainstorm, and flew him to Washington just in time to cast his "yes" vote on June 10, 1944, as the Normandy invasion raged across the Atlantic. On June 22, 1944, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the bill into law.

When he signed the bill, FDR noted that "With the signing of this bill a well-rounded program of special veterans' benefits is nearly completed. It gives emphatic notice to the men and women in our armed forces that the American people do not intend to let them down." And here we are, 64 years later, and this statement is as true today as it was then. Given that there is no draft and all our troops are performing under voluntary service, these benefits are even more important today.

The sacrifices that our men and women and as importantly, their families endure for our freedoms, is oft forgotten. And yes, we must remember, this is all for US.

How can we do less?

Some of the details are available in the American Legion magazine, August 2008 edition (as noted below), the Legion website, www.legion.org and at www.gibill.va.gov. Key points are as follows:

Currently, veterans get a maximum annual benefit of \$9,901 for tuition and housing. Under the new Post-9/11 GI Bill, veterans will receive a maximum amount of \$22,094.

New benefit payments are based on the cost of the most expensive public college/university in a veteran's home state, plus regional averages for housing and living expenses.

Henceforth, as tuition and cost of living increase, so will benefits. The new GI Bill can be applied to private schools as well, and

benefits are good for 15 years after separation from service, rather than the current 10 years.

The new GI Bill's transferability option allows veterans who have served for 10 years to assign their educational benefits to their spouses or children. Transferred benefits only cover the cost of tuition, but families are free to "divvy up" the payments any way they choose, as long as they don't exceed the cost for 36 months of full-time college enrollment. For example, a veteran could complete a two-year degree program, then give a family member the remain-ing two years of educational benefits.

In 2006 dollars, the federal government spent about \$51 billion to send about 8 million veterans to school. What was the return on that investment? \$260 billion.

Average incomes and buying power for those college-educated GIs were greater. Those incomes generated another \$93 billion in taxes, for a gross profit of \$353 billion. Seven bucks earned for each buck spent. With the new GI Bill, who knows what the long-term benefits will be for the U.S. economy?

The GI Bill of 1944 and its versions for Korean and Vietnam veterans allowed our country to grow and prosper after WWII. Seven current members of Congress went to school on benefits earned and include Senators John Warner (VA), Chuck Hagel (NE), Frank Lautenberg (NJ) and Jim Webb (VA).

Another great source of information about the GI Bill and other veterans benefits is your local city or town veterans agents. Do not overlook this valuable resource.

We have some great folks, as I have noted in the past, in Haverhill's Mike Ingham, Methuen's Tom Hargreaves and Lawrence's Francesco Urena. And many kudos to Francesco for being named Veterans Agent of the Year and for the great work he has done working with the Jimenez family in Lawrence with their difficult times.

A brief note on a different topic, congratulations to Haverhill's VFW Post 29 in getting their facility reopened for business.

It was a long process but they are now open and get-ting back on their feet. Stop in to see them if you are in the area.



John Lenotte is the American Legion, Commander, Wilbur M. Comeau Post 4 Haverhill and Vice Commander, Dept. of Massachusetts. You can Email him at JohnLDistrict8@verizon.net

IRS STIMULUS: from page 4

Qualifying income includes any combination of earned income, nontaxable combat pay and certain benefit payments from Social Security, Veterans Affairs and Railroad Retirement.

People not otherwise required to file an income tax return should file Form 1040A with basic information to ensure they receive the economic stimulus payment. This information includes name; address; dependents, if any; amount of qualifying income (which must be \$3,000 or more); direct deposit information and signatures. Forms 1040A and instructions are available at www.irs.gov.

Although, your payment can be made by check, the IRS urges people to use direct deposit to ensure a speedy delivery.

The types of Social Security benefits that are considered qualifying income

include retirement, disability and survivor payments. Supplemental Security Income (SSI) is not qualifying income.

The types of Veterans Affairs benefits that are considered qualifying income include disability compensation, disability pension and survivor payments. Qualifying Railroad Retirement payments include the social security equivalent portion of Tier 1 benefits.

Eligible individuals including their qualifying children, must have valid Social Security numbers.

Also, people cannot be claimed or be eligible to be claimed as a dependent on someone else's tax return. People with Individual Taxpayer Identification Numbers, except for the spouses and qualifying children of military personnel, are not eligible.

VETERANS' SERVICES

Eagle Tribune: from page 12

funeral for the hero soldier, Pfc. Alex Jimenez, Betances showed up again.

"The day of the funeral, she was in church before I was. She must have gotten there really early. I walked in and was talking to father Jorge about the funeral and there was Yadira Betances interviewing people inside the church. Inside the church!" he repeated incredulously. "It was a public event at that point so, as disgusted as I was, I had no plans on asking her to leave. We just wanted to get through this day without anymore problems," he recalled.

"So, I tried to get her attention, just to ask her not to interview anyone inside the church, but she walked away when she saw me coming. You know, she had the nerve to go and sit in the front row like she was a family member just to try and get information? I tried to be cordial to her, but she became disruptive and had to be thrown out of the church by the military public affairs officers in the church."

Wareing said he originally planned on letting the incident go once the funeral was over and he had no intention on going public with his story, but he had second thoughts when he realized "more heroes from the Merrimack Valley are in harms way right now as we speak and, God forbid, one of those men and women lose their lives.

I don't want this to happen to the next Alex Jimenez. If the Eagle Tribune gets away with this and they are not exposed, I am horrified to think of how they will treat the next military family in their time of grief."

Wareing is best known for his activism in supporting military families and sending care packages to the troops in Iraq and Afghanistan. He has spent thousands of dollars out of his own pocket to pay for postage and items needed by our military personnel overseas. Wareing said that he is contemplating leaving the organization he started four years ago, called New

England Caring for Our Military, because of the threats he received by the tribune.

"What I plan to do is turn over New England Caring for Our Military (NECFOM) to someone else, because of the personal threats I received from the Tribune. I know how they operate and how they treat people they don't like. They dig up anything they can, true or not, to humiliate you in the community, and I just don't think I'm ready for that. I am a human being and I have faults like everyone else and as long as I am affiliated with NECFOM, I know that every time we do something in public it gives them a chance to throw rocks at me."

Wareing says the final insult came when he saw the picture on the front page of the Eagle Tribune the day after the funeral showing the casket inside the church. "We told them they could take pictures in the church but not during the mass. Do you think they could have at least respected the family's wishes after everything they had been through? No way. I got calls from military people in Washington the next day before I even had a chance to see the paper.

They were very upset because they thought I had arranged for the paper to take pictures during the mass. I just can't tell you how traumatic this whole situation was even without the Tribune's harassment of the family.

It was even more tragic that while Andy and Maria were preparing to bury their son they had to keep being interrupted with this foolishness, so the Trib can try to win another Pulitzer by exploiting the family of a dead soldier."



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.

Don't worry.
There's still time to file for your
economic stimulus payment.

Are you one of the many people who normally do not have to file federal income taxes because your income is quite low? This year it's different.

To receive an Economic Stimulus Payment, you should file Form 1040A with the IRS by October 15, 2008. This includes people who receive at least \$3,000 in earnings and/or benefits from Social Security, VA disability or a Retired Railroad Worker's pension.

Visit IRS.gov for details. Or ask a friend or relative for help going online. Don't let a little paperwork keep you from getting your stimulus payment.



Visit irs.gov for the official word on the



Get free help at an IRS Taxpayer Assistance Center. For a list of local centers, plus hours of operation, visit IRS.gov and click on "Contact IRS." Then click on "Contact your local office."

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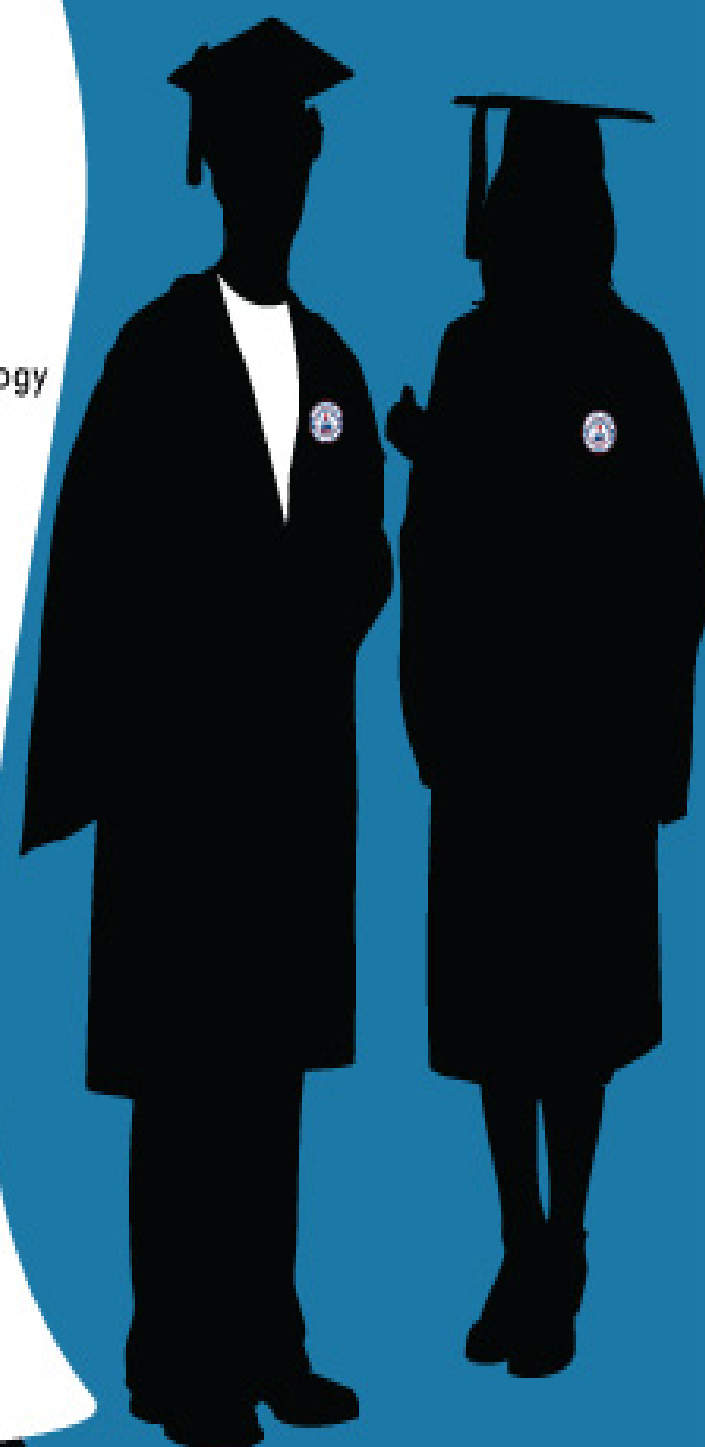
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Qualifications: Must possess license and knowledge of specialized equipment used in performance of job.

Appointing Authority: Michael J. Sullivan, Mayor


Posting Date: 6-30-08 Deadline: Until Filled

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Qualifications: Duties require journeyman skills equivalent to five years in applicable trade.

Appointing Authority: Michael J. Sullivan, Mayor

Posting Date: 6-30-08 Deadline: Until Filled

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