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SEPTEMBER, 2008  
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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

## Eagle Tribune cuts 52 jobs

Circulation and subscription losses result in biggest downsizing in troubled newspapers' history

Tom Duggan

VALLEY PATRIOT REPORTER

The Eagle Tribune newspaper, head-quartered in North Andover and owned by Alabama-based Community Newspaper Holdings, Inc. announced last week that at least 52 employees have been laid off in the largest ever downsizing measure taken by the company.

In a memo to employees, publisher Al Getler, a puppet comedian prior to being hired by the daily newspaper, said the layoffs were "in response to difficult market conditions," and bragged in the newspaper that the Eagle Tribune was "the best source of news and information in the Merrimack Valley."

Sources within the newspaper say that the layoffs affect at least one news reporter and two copy editors at the North Andover facility as well as massive cuts in the newspapers' circulation department and layoffs in some of the Tribune's weekly newspapers such as the Derry News.

"This was a CYA situation," one Eagle Tribune employee told The Valley Patriot. "Al Getler is trying to save his own job

because his management of this newspaper has cost us millions and the only way he could show the company [in Alabama] that we could be financially viable was to immediately cut jobs to balance the books to meet the company's financial goals."

The Rogers family of North Andover had owned the newspaper since 1898. In 2002, the Eagle Tribune acquired other daily papers, including The Salem News, The Gloucester Daily Times and The Daily News in Newburyport.

Only a few short months after Chip Rogers sold The Eagle Tribune newspaper, employees of the daily paper became so angry and distrustful of new management and their lack of job security that they filed with the Federal Labor Relations Board to organize a union. That effort failed by a vote of 82-52 and employees at the paper say anyone connected with the union issue "were weeded out slowly or dealt with quietly."

Since the purchase of The Eagle Tribune on September 30, 2005 by the

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"Dash" is back from vacation



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**Don't miss our expanded Health and Fitness Section**

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## VALLEY PATRIOT OF THE MONTH: METHUEN'S JOE BELLA

Tech. Sgt. James F. Moore Jr.

VALLEY PATRIOT HERO REPORTER

There are many reasons that Joseph G. Bella of Methuen, is this month's Valley Patriot. He is a Vietnam Veteran, an advocate of Veteran's advancement, and a history buff.

According to the Vietnam service report of Corporal Joseph Bella:

'Corporal Joseph Bella served in Vietnam from 1966 to 1967, originally stationed at Dong Ha near the DMZ, with the 1st Battalion, 40th Artillery. He was transferred six months in country to the 3rd Battalion, 6th Artillery at Pleiku. The 1st

Battalion, 40th Artillery was one of the first mobile artillery units assigned to Vietnam. Joe was with them when they arrived.

While at Dong Ha with the 1st Battalion, 40th Artillery, Joe's unit took part in a support action that pinned the Viet Cong down for 14 hours so that a trapped Marine Recon Platoon could escape.'

The man that has an affinity for History itself has also contributed to ideals that make our nation Great! Joe's is single and happy. He is also glad that he has more time to devote to his hobbies, since he's

HERO, page 27



PHOTO: TOM DUGGAN

Methuen hero Joe Bella at the 2007 Methuen Board of Trade dinner at the Guesthouse Suites.

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# EDITORIAL



## Every Day is 9/12

September 11, 2001 was the worst attack on American soil in our nation's history.

On that day, those calling themselves Islamic jihadists declared war on America and flew two airplanes into the Twin Towers and the Pentagon killing over 3,000 Americans.

Today it seems that many Americans have forgotten the feelings we shared on that tragic day.

Feelings which, on 9-12, temporarily forced us to change our way of thinking about our own vulnerability, and the reality of the threats against us around the world.

We say that many Americans have forgotten the feelings (and lessons) of that day because, while watching both the Democrat and the Republican conventions, we notice that only the Republican convention speakers talked about that 9-11 tragedy and the real threat we continue to face in our war with self-identified Islamic terrorists.

While the Democrats barely uttered a word about 9-11 and global terrorism, here's what former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani had to say during his speech:

"For — for four days in Denver, the Democrats were afraid to use the words 'Islamic terrorism.' I imagine they believe it is politically incorrect to say it. I think they believe it will insult someone. Please tell me, who are they insulting if they say 'Islamic terrorism'? They are [afraid of] insulting terrorists! Of great concern to me during those same four days in Denver, they rarely mentioned the attacks of September 11, 2001. They are in a state of denial about the biggest threat that faces this country. And if you deny it, and you don't deal with it, you can't face it! John McCain can face the enemy. He can win, and he can bring victory for this country."

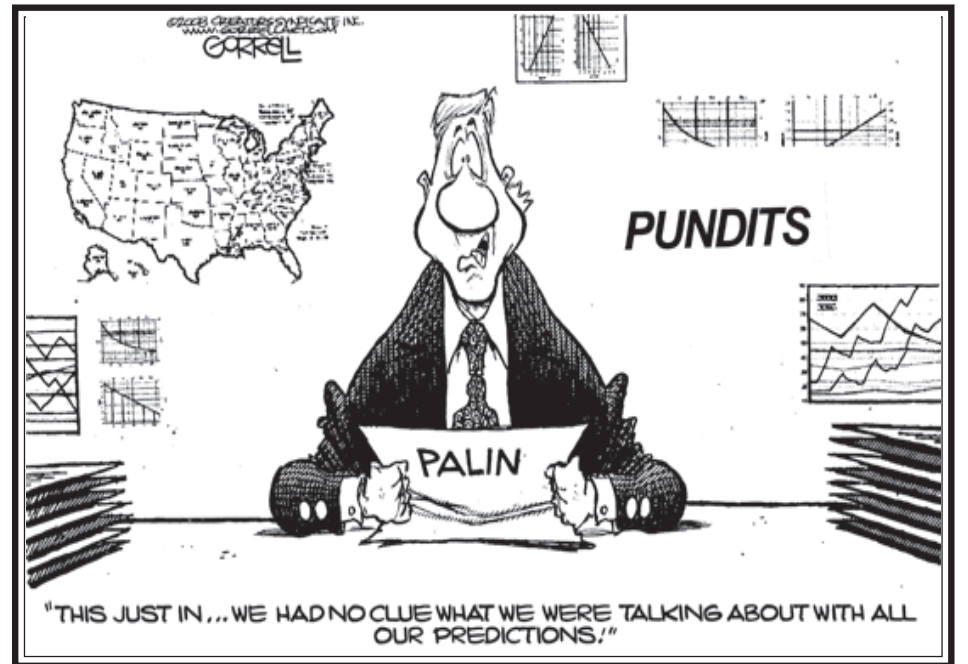
During the Saddleback Church debate last month, both Barak Obama and John McCain were asked to define evil.

While Obama focused on the evil that walks the streets of America, McCain clearly detailed the "axis of evil", 9-11, Osama Bin Ladin and fighting Islamic terrorism until it is defeated.

There is a clear difference in this presidential race when it comes to dealing with terrorism, identifying evil and calling evil by its name.

And while many American's have slipped back into the pre-9-11 mentality, believing that negotiating with evil men can keep us safe it is critical that the rest of us continue to remember the feelings we had and the resolve we were committed to on 9-12.

In fact, we are suicidal as a nation not to think of (and feel like) every day as 9-12, or forget how those 3,000 plus Americans lost their lives.



## LETTERS

To: Tom Duggan

In the July 2008 Issue (Volume 5, Issue7) of the Valley Patriot you published an article "Lawrence non-profits own \$427M". In this article you state that

"At a time when the city of Lawrence receives little more than \$40 million in property taxes to run a \$240 million municipality The Valley Patriot has found that the NON-taxable income of non-profits in Lawrence exceded \$515 million, while the property assets of non-profits in Lawrence (also NON-taxable) reached nearly \$428 million."

In regards to the Lawrence Rod and Gun Club your information is incorrect. While we do not pay an income tax we do pay property tax. The organizations property is made up of contiguous land in Lawrence and Andover, and paid in the year 2007 a combined property tax total of \$4,818.90. In the area of receipts taken in our income for the year 2007 was \$35,620.00, but what you fail to realize is our operating expenses of \$33,826.74, \$1,793.26 is a small margin from operating in the red.

Also, in other respects the organization offers services back to the community at no charge, to name a few:

1. A person does not have to be a member to shoot trap at the club, this

event (operating 4 times a week) is open to the public at a flat rate to all, reference the attached link:  
[lawrencerodandgunclub.org/gctrap.html](http://lawrencerodandgunclub.org/gctrap.html).

2. The club sponsors Hunter Safety Courses free to the public administered by MassWildlife (the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, [http://www.mass.gov/dfwele/dfw/education/hed/hed\\_home.htm](http://www.mass.gov/dfwele/dfw/education/hed/hed_home.htm)) in the areas of Basic Hunter Education, Bow Hunter Education, and Black Powder Education. The instructors for these classes which last from two to six evenings (depending on the subject matter) are MassWildlife certified Master Instructors who donate their time and are Lawrence Rod and Gun Club members.

3. Every year the Lawrence Rod and Gun Club closes its pistol/rifle range for three weeks to allow the Lawrence Police Department the use of the range, so that they can annually qualify each of their officers in the use of firearms.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me.

Charles W. Chory, Treasurer –  
Lawrence Rod and Gun Club,  
[cwctreasurer@earthlink.net](mailto:cwctreasurer@earthlink.net) - 978 687 9504 Ext. 7

To the Editor:

Over 2,000 homeless children in Massachusetts have the opportunity to play, learn and grow through Playspace Programs located in over 140 homeless shelters throughout the state.

For the past two years, the Commonwealth has provided about half the funding to run the Playspace Programs.

Thanks to state legislators such as Representatives Campbell and Golden, who lobbied for continued funding in the Budget recently signed by Governor Deval Patrick, as well as the strong support of the Patrick-Murray Administration and the

leadership of the Massachusetts House and Senate, the Commonwealth will continue to make this investment.

We would like to take this opportunity to publicly thank these elected officials for going to bat for homeless children and their families.

Readers interested in more information about the Playspace Programs and volunteer opportunities with Horizons for Homeless Children can visit our website at [www.horizonsforhomelesschildren.org](http://www.horizonsforhomelesschildren.org).

Susan Whitthead  
Board Chair  
Horizons for Homeless Children

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### News tips

Phone in news tips to (978) 557-5413, or you may email tips to us at [valleypatriot@aol.com](mailto:valleypatriot@aol.com). We respect the anonymity of our sources, if requested.

**Letters to the editor and op/eds** can be submitted to the address above or to [valleypatriot@aol.com](mailto:valleypatriot@aol.com)

### Corrections

Please contact the editor at [valleypatriot@aol.com](mailto:valleypatriot@aol.com)

**Advertising Director:** Dennis Corrigan

### Editorial Board:

**President:** Tom Duggan, Jr.

**VP/Director:** Ralph Wilbur

**Editor:** Dr. Charles Ormsby  
The Valley Patriot is now being published by Fosters Daily Democrat, in Dover, NH.

# Markey's

## LOBSTER POOL

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To the Editor,

Thank you for taking the time to write the Jimenez article in the Valley Patriot. You are right about other military families being out there. Our son is currently on his second tour in Iraq and even our Lowell Sun paper was in their faces taking pics of crying families just getting info. I cannot remember their names but it is absolutely shameful and disgraceful. I told my husband that everyone had better stay the hell away from us if this happens to us. I am not having some phony politicians saying stuff to me when they are against the war and some stupid reporter trying to get a story when my heart is being ripped out of me.

The reporter you wrote about was totally exploiting the family. I am so angry about this.

Vanessa Nocella proud mother of LCPL Michael A Nocella USMC

To the Editor:

Both the content and tone of the Valley Patriot’s August editorial entitled “Hidden Agenda, The Democrats secretly want higher energy prices,” was way off base. There is certainly plenty of room for debate about how best to achieve American energy independence.

But accusing Congresswoman Niki Tsongas of wanting higher gas prices and being deceptive towards her constituents by advocating for diversification of our energy portfolio certainly does not advance the dialogue around this critical issue.

Many of the conclusions that the Valley Patriot draws are simply false. The paper says Tsongas’ assertion that excessive speculation has played a role in the dramatic rise in gasoline costs is “unsupported and unlikely.” Even John McCain has said, “When you have enough speculators betting on the rising price of oil, that itself can cause oil prices

to keep on rising. And while a few reckless speculators are counting their paper profits, most Americans are coming up on the short end.”

Furthermore, in the paper’s eagerness to defend oil companies and their stratospheric profits, they fail to mention that our own Department of Energy has recently stated that oil drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge will decrease the cost of a barrel of oil by about \$1 - in the year 2030.

We need real relief at the pump. Our energy policy should be much more than recycling the failed policies of the past.

I applaud Congresswoman Tsongas for advocating for a broad portfolio of alternative forms of energy in addition to increased domestic oil production, as a means to curb our dependence on foreign oil.

Linda Harvey, Methuen

To the Editor,

A Great Loss

I extend my condolences to the family of Sgt. Alex Jimenez as well as to the families of the other 4100+ Americans who have died as a result of the Iraq War. I also extend my condolences to the families of the more than 200,000 (by conservative estimates) Iraqi civilians who have died as a result of the Iraq War. I just have one question for the flag waving "patriots" who have supported this President and this war; exactly what is it that these people died for?

Ken Hajjar - Londonderry, NH (Lawrence born and bred)

**EDITORS NOTE: they died freeing 50 million Arabs from the oppression of Saddam Hussein and the Taliban. As Martin Luther King once stated; injustice anywhere is injustice everywhere.**

# A Rational American Energy Policy

Now is the time for innovative solutions to America’s energy problems. In the past three years the cost of gasoline has risen from \$1.89 per gallon to more than \$4.00 per gallon. Three years ago my commute to Marlborough cost me \$2000 a year in gasoline, and this year the commute would cost close to \$5000 without the savings I get from carpooling.

We need someone representing us in Congress who understands the impact of our nation’s approach to energy, someone who can propose viable, practical solutions to a rapidly increasing expense that is hurting everyone on the North Shore. The burdensome spike in oil costs is the result of complex factors that require a multi-pronged solution to effectively address our short term and long term needs.

It will take at least twenty years for America to migrate to alternative energy. The American infrastructure depends on oil. Nearly every family has at least one gasoline powered car, and most families’ homes are not within walking distance of public transportation. To weather the harsh New England winters, most of our homes are heated with oil or gas. Assuming that a cheaper energy solution suddenly became available, the

changeover costs would be prohibitive for most households: as much as \$40,000 per family to replace automobiles, and another \$10,000 per family to replace a home heating system.

For the short term, America’s highest priority is managing the price of gasoline and oil. The data (International Herald Tribune, May 14, 2008) is showing that our use of oil has dropped significantly since the price of oil has risen. We are carpooling, using public transportation, and driving slower to reduce costs. These consumer-based initiatives are helpful (and are happening without government edict), but conservation alone cannot keep pace with oil prices’ continuous rate of increase.

To begin bringing immediate relief, the United States Congress must use the strategic oil reserve to manage oil prices. The reserve contains 700 million barrels of oil, and was created during the 1974 oil crisis to provide America with the means to balance the oil markets during times of short supply.

With prices increasing rapidly in 2008, it is time to sell some of this reserve into the open market, adding to the supply of oil on the market. Since the reserves are

located close to US refineries, this oil will rapidly find its way into the US market. Congress should specify that the timing of these sales should be managed to disrupt the speculators of oil futures by releasing the large quantities of oil without warning into the market. Since speculators buy oil futures in anticipation of short supplies and high prices, an unexpected increase in supply will cause the price to drop. With the price drop, speculators will lose money on their investment, and look elsewhere for speculative investments.

Another short term solution is to repeal provisions of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 that require ethanol to be added to gasoline. This corn-based product is not an efficient fuel. It is expensive to process, reduces gas mileage and increases smog, while it boosts grocery prices by taking acreage away from food production.

The mid term solution is to increase the supply of oil on the market by the responsible drilling of oil in ANWR. It will take 3-7 years for newly drilled oil to arrive on the market. The United States Geological Survey estimates that there are 10 Billion barrels of oil in ANWR,

about 25% of the available oil in the United States. Hurricane Katrina’s path through the oil fields in the Gulf of Mexico without a single oil spill demonstrates that we have the technology to drill without environmental damage.

For the long term, America needs to develop alternative energy solutions. This current energy crisis is already propelling and accelerating innovative research. Even existing solutions that were not cost effective when compared to \$40 per barrel of oil are now viable alternatives compared to \$150 per barrel oil. For instance, solar and wind power are beginning to compete with oil at the current prices. The variety of solutions could increase phenomenally in the next few years, provided that we encourage innovation.

America’s free market must be ready to reward teams and individuals who develop cheaper, more efficient energy solutions. As such, we need to maintain a strong patent system to encourage inventors to investigate energy solutions. We need to minimize regulations and allow inventors and companies the freedom to innovate.

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## PONDERING WITH PAUL

## I was just thinking . . .

Paul Murano

VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

Why aren't the Olympics as exciting as they were when we were kids?

Remember how exciting the Democratic and Republican conventions were before they became scripted four-day infomercials?

What ever happened to Peking? Beijing seemed to displace it out of nowhere. Somewhere there must be a world of forgotten pronunciations where Peking, Shiite, and Uranus reign.

Isn't it poetic justice that words like Uranus and harassment remain awkward regardless of which syllable they try to accent?

I guess Manny will have to be Manny on a coast that doesn't seem to notice.

When quotas become the rule in the NBA will we finally achieve equality?

Would women even like men if they knew what they were involuntarily thinking 80% of the day?

Why is it that we don't trust machines to count votes but we entrust our lives to them at 30,000 ft. above the earth?

Is no one bothered that Oprah had the power to choose who could be the next president?

Why is it considered rude to ask the two simple questions, *Yes we can what?* And *Change what?*

Have you noticed that those who preach tolerance are the most intolerant among us?

Why would John McCain condemn Russia's invasion of Georgia by saying *nations don't occupy other nations in the 21<sup>st</sup> century* - while American troops occupy Iraq?

Can anyone imagine Walter Cronkite or Frank Reynolds stating on TV that they felt a chill running up their leg at the sound of a candidate's voice?

Cynics are certain that there can be certainty about anything.

Relativists claim it is wrong to say there is a right and wrong; and it is good to deny there is good and evil.

Since contemporary culture has rejected natural law it has become impossible to teach right and wrong.

Have you noticed that all those who are for abortion rights have already been born?

Isn't it curious that the richer the individual or nation is the more they are apt to choose suicide?

Why is it that when 40 became the new 30 average family size went from five children to 1.7?

As western countries depopulate to the point of cultural suicide, is there any

question that "the pill" is the *new* fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gn 2:17)?

Why all of a sudden do preteens and older women need to be sexy? Whatever happened to the iconic grey-haired plump grandmother that everyone loved for her matronliness and lack of ego?

Is it any coincidence that when women gave up their role of civilizing men society has become less civil?

When will western society wake up from its immature adolescence to realize once again that marriage untainted by premarital sex is the foundation of any healthy society?

Why is it that sitting in a classroom is valued more than playing in the woods? And why do we allow homework to stifle a child's natural creativity, wonder, and imagination?

When college became the new high school it got much *more* expensive.

Aren't you getting a little tired of offended people? Isn't it high time that an organization called *People Offended by Offended People*, or POOP, becomes the next watch dog interest group? Perhaps their slogan could be, *Don't whine or you'll be pooped on!*

Do rats ever give a human's ass about anything?

Why is it that most people who are up in arms about Obama not protecting human beings born alive from *failed* abortions would remain silent if those same human beings were killed a little earlier by *successful* abortions?

When independence is valued more than interdependence the weak and vulnerable become victims.

Why isn't it obvious anymore that the term *same-sex marriage* is an oxymoron like *round square* or *married bachelor*?

As pornography has displaced drugs as the addiction of our age, where is the government's *War on pornography*?

And why is porn called "adult" when it is the ultimate in immaturity regarding human sexuality?

When people of faith and people of reason become the same people - the world will be transformed.

And as nations compete for prominence in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, which of the enemies of love - fear, anger, or apathy - will crumble first: the fear of China, the anger of the Middle East, or the apathy of the West?



Paul Murano teaches theology and philosophy at Assumption College and Northshore Community College. He is also a co-host of *The Paying Attention! Radio Program* on WCAP. You can E-mail Paul at [PJDM@aol.com](mailto:PJDM@aol.com)

## ANOTHER POINT OF VIEW

## Remembering George Carlin

Mark Palermo

VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

I was thinking back over the past summer and the death of comedian George Carlin. In the 1960's, I first heard Carlin's routine, "*Seven Words You Aren't Allowed to Say on Television*," and I considered it boring and infantile. Carlin broke the barrier against cursing on television, which unfortunately contributed to the potty-mouthed coarseness and lowered standards that are now commonplace. I have mixed feelings about Carlin; he was crude and vulgar, but now I realize he was so much more.

I changed my opinion of Carlin, and the way it happened was mysterious- as it always is when the presence of the unconscious mind emerges to reveal the impostor inside me and you, the place where all our visions meet. The unconscious is a great trickster and manipulator of human beings, especially those smug humans who, in their egotism, think they have their world under control. (*If you want to make God laugh, tell him your plans for the future.*)

But back to Carlin. I was in the Haverhill library when I spotted a George Carlin CD on the shelf. I took it on impulse, although I had never borrowed a comedy CD in my entire life. Two days later, driving to Boston, I put it on, not expecting much. But I was surprised to find myself laughing out loud, and I realized then how funny the guy is.

I got home later, had supper and went to my office to check my email. The first thing that came up was "*George Carlin, dead at 71.*" Carlin had been in show business for 50 years, yet I discovered him the day he died.

The unconscious mind doesn't speak in words, but rather in dreams, intuitions, visions, memories, and meaningful - amazing-coincidences, which C.G. Jung termed synchronicity, one of the pillars of his life's work. I have been loaded down lately, and I had asked the Higher Power to show me how to carry the burdens of life more gracefully. And on the road to Boston, I received my answer.

I laughed so much at Carlin's jokes, I could actually feel the endorphin hormones releasing in my bloodstream. I felt lighter. How could I have not thought of it before? I made the decision then to seek laughter every day, even when there appears nothing to laugh about; not to seek to become a child again, but to cultivate humor in the face of all the storms of life. Carlin swore a lot in his performances, and it's too bad that for some, his name is associated with cursing. Nowadays, of course, almost all comedians overdo it. The problem with excessive cursing is that the public always requires a "rougher grade of sandpaper" to be entertained. With vulgarity, a little can go a long way, but maybe some people need rough sandpaper to blow off the world's contradictions. Carlin was so intelligent and clear thinking, his performances so

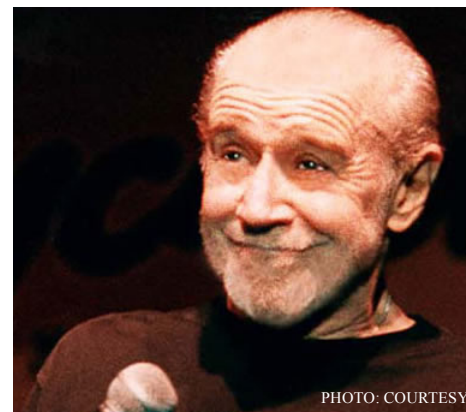


PHOTO: COURTESY

loaded with underlying truth and resonance that the curse words were only secondary component of his absurdist humor.

Carlin became more relevant as an old man, and continued to attract young people to his performances. What comes through after listening to his material, is the black humor of a sensitive, intelligent human being who was angry at institutional religion, mass media and government, and profoundly disappointed at the wasted potential and missed opportunities of the human race. Underneath the coarseness, Carlin had a lot going on in his performances.

Unlike Andrew Dice Clay, for example, where all you get is cursing and misanthropy -which is funny for about ten minutes- Carlin's persona could morph rapidly, almost imperceptibly from a gravelly voiced tavern blowhard, to a slick radio announcer, to a sober intellectual to a 1960's stoner to a raving maniac. He could challenge society's sacred cows, make you laugh, and come away seeing things from a different angle.

As to my mixed feelings about Carlin- the barrier he broke was not about mere words- as if words could ever be "mere." With the right words you can win love, advantages, friendship, money and more. And with the wrong words you can lose them in about five seconds.

The barrier Carlin broke had to do with the corruption of language- which leads to the degeneration of a culture. The danger is that some future generation may find their vocabulary reduced to only one angry four letter word- and people will have forgotten how to tell each other who they are and what they need and desire from each other.

And about those mysteries of the unconscious, which brought Carlin's humor into my orbit. I have heeded its promptings. I need to laugh more. We all do. It has been said that life is a tragedy to those who feel, and a comedy to those who think. I thank George Carlin for helping his generation think and- because everything, after all, is connected- for making me rediscover the value of humor.



Mark Palermo is a professor at Northern Essex Community College in Haverhill. You can email him at [markpalermo@gmail.com](mailto:markpalermo@gmail.com). Visit his website at <http://markpalermo.tripod.com>

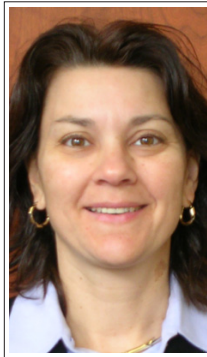
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THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX

Can America survive an Obama presidency?

Dr. Charles Ormsby  
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

Obama’s political philosophy places our lives, fortunes, prospects, and liberties in jeopardy. Obama is wrong on practically every aspect of economics, from tax policy to ubiquitous government intervention and regulation. And he embraces a “smiley face” foreign policy that disregards every basic, hard-earned lesson of history.

Is it possible that America can survive four years of radical, far-left, un-American policies with an inexperienced president who is both ignorant of history and naïve about foreign policy? Possibly, but we will almost certainly pay a very heavy price.

How Obama’s policies will undermine our economy

Low marginal tax rates and a minimum regulatory burden are key elements of a successful economic policy. This relationship is borne out in every economic study comparing tax/regulatory burdens and subsequent economic growth rates. It is not a claim – it is a fact.

**BIDEN ON OBAMA:** “I think he can be ready, but right now I don’t believe he is. The presidency is not something that lends itself to on-the-job training.” (August 2007 debate) When asked about this statement at a subsequent debate, Biden reiterated his view of Obama’s readiness, saying, “I stand by the statement.”

Governments do not create wealth themselves, as socialist experiments have consistently proven. But they can cause economic decline by increasing taxes and regulations, or they can accelerate economic growth by cutting taxes and regulations.

So how does Barack Obama measure up on an “encourage economic prosperity” scale? Does he support low taxes or seek to reduce the regulatory impediments to growth?

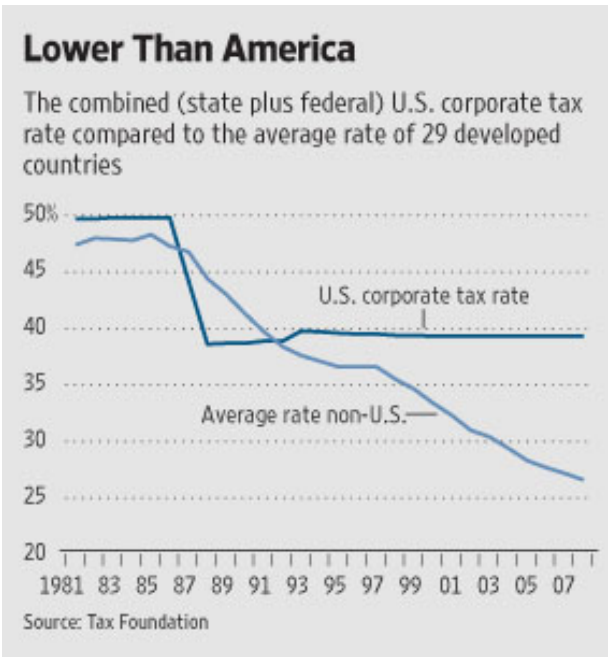
No, on all counts. Obama views government as little more than a mechanism to take property from some and give it to others – after the bureaucrats, of course, get their share of the spoils.

Compare our corporate tax rate with the average rate imposed by the 29 largest developed countries outside the U.S. Our tax rate (almost 40%) is 50 percent higher than the average of these other developed countries (see nearby figure from the Wall Street Journal) and is the second highest rate behind only Japan. Ireland, one of the fastest growing economies, has a corporate tax rate of only 12.5%.How will this impact the competitiveness of our economy? Will it lead to faster economic growth, or slower growth?

More, or fewer U.S. jobs? Will new investments and jobs come to America, or disappear overseas?

Other countries have figured this out. Over the last decade they have lowered tax rates and, as a result, their economies have taken off. From Ireland to the emerging economies of the Pacific Rim, perceptive leaders are reducing the burden of government on the private sector ... not increasing it.

Nine of the 29 developed countries have reduced corporate taxes in just the past 18 months. They want our capital, our jobs, and our growth.



Obama will see that they get them.

Obama also wants to raise personal tax rates to over 50 percent while returning the death tax in 2011 to the obscene levels that existed a decade before. But increased taxes are just part of the Obama economic disaster.

**Hillary on Obama:** “Voters will judge whether living in a foreign country at the age of ten prepares one to face the big, complex international challenges the next President will face. I think we need a President with more experience than that.” (November 20 in Shenandoah, Iowa)

For Obama, if a societal problem cannot be solved by raising taxes, then the answer must lie in new regulations, increased union power, or entitlements.

Don’t we have enough regulations? Economists understand that complex and expensive regulations smother small businesses ... the very sector of our economy that creates the greatest number of new jobs. But excessive regulations damage economic growth across the board, from healthcare to energy. Speaking of energy, try to drill for oil or build a refinery or a nuclear plant. Be serious!!

Will Obama’s devotion to teachers unions provide greater choice, competition or quality in education for your children? Will his unwavering support of trial lawyers lower the cost of products, healthcare, or insurance ... or just line their pockets at your expense?

Add Obama’s support of greater unionization (including taking away the right of workers to a secret ballot) and of government healthcare, not to mention the nightmare of a mandated carbon trading system, and it will be a miracle if our economy doesn’t grind to a halt.

But weakening the U.S. economically represents less than half the risk of an Obama presidency.

Why Obama risks our nation’s existence

We don’t just have economic competitors, we have real enemies. Evil regimes, tyrants and terrorists that seek to conquer or kill us.

Obama doesn’t grasp this or he believes that our enemies are just misguided and he can talk some sense into them.

**Hillary on Obama:** “Voters will judge whether living in a foreign country at the age of ten prepares one to face the big, complex international

challenges the next President will face. I think we need a President with more experience than that.” (November 20 in Shenandoah, Iowa)

The trouble with Obama’s perspective is that our enemies are not only evil, they often are much craftier than we are. They know we are a well-meaning people and they understand that we react badly to

American casualties and news reports of messy suicide bombings.

It is precisely these tactics that Al Qaeda and Iranian terrorists counted on to defeat us in Iraq. Obama pandered to the political forces that succumbed to these tactics. Had we followed his advice, our defeat would have been assured and Muslim extremists would have gained a stranglehold on the entire Gulf region and, in turn, on Europe. The future of western civilization hung in the balance and Obama failed the test. John McCain ignored political pressures and pointed the nation in the right direction. We are safer today because of McCain’s wisdom and courage.

Barack Obama thinks American foreign policy can be governed by “playground rules.” You know, play nice, hold hands, and no bullying. If you remember Jimmy Carter, you get the picture.

If elected, here are Obama’s new playmates: Osama bin Laden, Bashar Assad, Mamoud Ahmadinejad, Kim Jong-il, Vladimir Putin, Hugo Chavez, and Mul-lah Omar ... a bunch of really nasty thugs.



Dr. Charles Ormsby of the North Andover School Committee

We might as well elect Goldilocks to teach the Bloods and Crips to turn in their weapons and stop being such meanies.

Unfortunately, the stakes are much higher as evidenced by numerous recent events such as:

- \* Underground nuclear testing by North Korea
- \* The alliance between North Korea and Syria to develop nuclear weapons
- \* The dramatic acceleration of the Iranian nuclear program
- \* The testing by Iran of long range, nuclear-capable missiles and missile launches from cargo ships putting the U.S. mainland at risk
- \* The Russian invasion of U.S. ally Georgia and nuclear threats against NATO

We live in a very dangerous world and we cannot afford to place someone, who may be well intentioned but helplessly naïve, at America’s helm.

When our enemies strike, they will try for a knock-out punch. Radical Islamic regimes such as Iran and Syria - plus Stalinist regimes such as North Korea - must be denied nuclear weapons even if it means a pre-emptive strike by the U.S. or our allies. And Russia must fully understand that we will not sit idly by if they attack or try to intimidate our allies.

Americans are not aggressors by nature. We believe in fair play and economic competition. But our enemies are aggressors and they believe in the use of deception and force to get what they want. Our leaders need to understand these cold, hard realities and come ready to defend America’s legitimate interests.

Obama lacks experience and is critically deficient in both his understanding of economics and his appreciation of the threats we face abroad. If he is elected, the damage inflicted on our country could be immense and, most likely, irreversible.

Let’s not throw away the precious gifts of freedom and liberty that were handed down to us by the last dozen generations. We must preserve them for our children and future generations.

Remember this when you go to vote on November 4<sup>th</sup>.

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](mailto:cormsby@comcast.net)

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# All Things Sicilian brings a touch of Sicily to the Rest of the World

Tom Duggan

VALLEY PATRIOT REPORTER

With customers from all over The Valley and all over the world, All Things Sicilian has moved its operations from Union Street in North Lawrence to Sal's Riverwalk Properties on Merrimack St., in South Lawrence, just a few feet away from the Route 495(S) off-ramp at the North Andover line.

Owner, Al Zappala, says he and his partners first opened the store in North Lawrence but impending construction was about to severely hamper his customers ability to get to the store.

All Things Sicilian is actually three companies according to Zappala; the store at Riverwalk, a wholesale company and an internet company ([www.allthingsicilian.com](http://www.allthingsicilian.com)) where All Things Sicilian ships Italian food products to every single state in the U.S. and several foreign countries.

"As you know from the history of the sweat shops in Lawrence, they [Italian immigrants] were all exploited," Zappala said. "So, when we opened the first All Things Sicilian store we put it right there on Union Street because we felt it was an appropriate place; right in the heart of all the sweat shops. It took off right away and it captured the imagination of the people in the area."

"But, the reason we decided to move here to Riverwalk," he continued, "is because they're closing the Duck Bridge for repairs for two full years. With 95% of our business coming from Route 495 or from the Andovers, and since we get very little business from the city of Lawrence itself, we needed to make a move so that we could be conveniently located for our walk in customers. It just made



*"It's important for people to understand that not all Sicilians are Mafioso. What we are trying to do is show people the good side of Sicily and the Sicilian people."*

*-Al Zappala  
All Things Sicilian*



PHOTO: TOM DUGGAN

All Things Sicilian is now located at 500 A Merrimack Street in Lawrence, at the Riverwalk Complex. The store has moved from Union Street in North Lawrence because the Duck Bridge is scheduled to close for a two year renovation.

sense to take up space at Sal's [Riverwalk], it's closer to the highway, and Sal and I have been friends for a long time."

Zappala says that All Things Sicilian immediately took on "a life of its own."

"I have partners in The Valley who are of Sicilian ancestry," he said. "including Dr. Tom Torrisi with a Dental Practice in Methuen Dr. Steve Zappala whose office is in Andover. You see, our ancestors come from the same town in Sicily. My grandparents worked in these sweat shops for 50 years. Our ancestors did this in the early-mid 20th century to give the next generation a chance to succeed in life here in America.

"I'm a lawyer here and in Italy," he explained. "There are a lot of people who have family in Sicily whose ancestors die or have land in Italy that they want to buy, or have a legal issue over there. I partnered up with a man named Grimaldi whose wife was influential in economic development in Sicily and we targeted about 15 businesses and we negotiated

exclusive distribution agreements with them and began the process of developing their products. None of them had done business in America so, basically the nutritional fact information on the labels had to be translated and we had to get approvals from the FDA. It was a very lengthy process."

To get just one product up and operational takes a ton of dough. Just one product in terms of label development is very expensive and extremely time consuming. Now we have Marshalls and TJ Max are distributing our products nationally and we have become a reliable distributor of Italian food products that keep people coming back for more.

Zappala has about 6,000 subscribers to his newsletter and "literally thousands of people" from all over The Valley who come to the store for one reason or another. "But it's not just about food," Zappala added. "We try to enhance people culturally. Five years ago we started at our cooking demonstrations. We have them on the third Sunday of

every month. They're very popular, they always sell out. And my wife Olga coordinates our Italian language program which we do once a week and now we are starting Italian for kids. So it's a labor of love for my whole family and the families of my partners."

"Plus you have no idea how many emails and letters I get from people who have never made the trip to Italy and say reading my writings about the trips we take to Italy makes them feel like they took the trip with me which people really enjoy and for me is very gratifying."

Zappala says that his mission is not just to promote the food and culture of Sicily but to promote a positive message about Sicilians. "It's important for people to understand that not all Sicilians are Mafioso. What we are trying to do is show people the good side of Sicily and the Sicilian people."

"Over there it's 20% unemployment. There's been a critical drain, a mass exodus of kids because there aren't any jobs in Sicily, so we are creating jobs here and over there and it's something to really be proud of. Someday I will retire there."

Zappala says that shortly after 9-11 he was in Italy and went to one of the American military bases to show the men stationed there how proud he was of their service and wish them luck. "We made a lot of good friends there, and now every time we go back I make a special trip to the base to see the men and they are always grateful that one of their countrymen is so supportive.

All Things Sicilian also serves as a coffee house on weekend evenings for aspiring musicians and entertainers.

To order custom made Italian food, sign up for Italian language classes or learn more about the culture of the Sicilian people you can visit All Things Sicilian on line at [www.allthingsicilian.com](http://www.allthingsicilian.com).

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PHOTO: COURTESY

## Lawrence, UMass Lowell partner for \$2.7 Million Worker Safety Program

The City of Lawrence and UMass Lowell officials last month announced \$2.7 million in federal funding has been received to launch a new program to prevent workplace injuries and dangerous exposure to silica among Hispanic workers.

More than 900 Hispanic workers died last year on the job in the United States. While 12 percent of the total workforce is Hispanic, workers from that ethnic group accounted for 16 percent of on-the-job deaths, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The new program, Protección en Construcción: Lawrence Latino Safety Partnership, is a joint effort of the Mayor's Health Task Force, UMass Lowell, JSI Research and Training Institute Inc. of Boston and Laborers Union Local 175, which has more than 600 members locally.

Paul Marion, executive director of Outreach, represented UMass Lowell Chancellor Marty Meehan at yesterday's announcement and highlighted the project as an example of UML's commitment to the Lawrence community. "We have a responsibility to this whole section of Massachusetts," said Marion.

"The University is very proud to be a part of the project, Protección en Construcción: Lawrence Latino Safety Partnership, which will develop prevention strategies to decrease injuries and illness in Latino workers in Lawrence," said Prof. Rafael Moure-

Eraso, chair of UMass Lowell's Department of Work Environment.

One in four workers fatally injured at work in 2005 was born outside the United States. Falls are among the most common causes of workplace deaths among construction workers, and more than 20 percent of those who were killed in such accidents were Hispanic. Last year, a Lawrence man was killed when he fell from scaffolding at a construction site in Easton.

"The results of falls are tragic," said Prof. Lenore Azaroff of UMass Lowell's Department of Work and Environment, who applied for the funding from NIOSH for the partnership. "This project will address this human suffering."

The \$2.7 million in research funds awarded to UMass Lowell for the partnership came from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), a program of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention dedicated to researching the prevention of workplace injuries, illness and fatalities. One of NIOSH's research areas is preventing falls, the second leading cause of workplace deaths after motor vehicle crashes. Exposure to silica dust from grinding or cutting concrete is a major cause of potentially deadly conditions including silicosis, lung cancer, pulmonary tuberculosis and diseases of the airways.

"It's great that NIOSH recognized the issue and chose to fund the terrific

UMASS, page 33



PHOTO: COURTESY GEORGE PETERS

North Andover School Committee Members John Nobile and Barbara Whidden with John Sarro of Pentucket Medical and North Andover inventor George Peters at a North Andover School Committee meeting.

At the August 19 School Committee meeting the Athletic Subcommittee was authorized to solicit corporate sponsorships and signage at NAHS playing fields. Two of the six companies how have committed to the Sponsorship Partner Program. John Sarro, Executive Director of Pentucket Medical, has chosen the highest level of support as a Gold Sponsor.



to all high school athletes for free annual physicals during a series of "Healthy Athlete" sessions at their Riverwalk Offices this Fall.

George Peters, President of Lancer 1, is a Bronze Sponsor. In addition, he will be donating Evacuation Training Aids from his "What Now?" Program for each of the elementary schools.

His donation of \$5,000 is a tremendous statement of support and commitment to health and athletics for N.A. High School students. In addition, N.A. is finalizing a program, with Pentucket Medical, open

Furthermore, Lancer 1 will be donating \$5 to the Sponsorship Program for each "What Now" ETA sold to a school over the next 12 months, worldwide.

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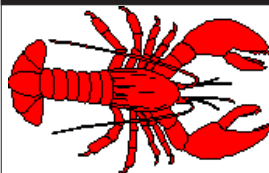
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# School transportation in Lawrence, yes or no?

Peter Larocque  
LAWRENCE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

In last month’s article I referred to the action taken by Lawrence City Officials that brought this issue of School Transportation to the front and center for major discussion in the FY09 Lawrence City Budget process.

This was the line item that was left out of the FY09 School Department’s Budget presented to the Lawrence City Council in May of 2008 by the Mayor and the Budget and Finance Director. But in the original Lawrence School Department’s FY09 Budget adopted by the Lawrence School Committee in April 2008 it was included.

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. Now I would like to proceed in this article regarding future budgets and whether or not they should include school transportation.

When we talk about Lawrence School Transportation we must first make it clear of what exactly we are talking about. There are several types of transportation services that are provided by the Lawrence Public School Department with each service having it’s own set of rules and guidelines which some are protected by State and Federal Laws that are not part of this discussion.

For instance, we provide transportation for our Special Education Needs Students, which is a door-to-door service, which is mandated by law, therefore is not part of this discussion. We also



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

provide transportation for our General Education Students who are eligible for this service according to district policy and state law. It is in this category of transportation that the City of Lawrence may make changes in its budget if it so desires. What state law protects is transportation for children in grades k to six and live outside of the two-mile range from the school they attend along with students classified as Homeless.

Our School District Policy has been to include transportation for High School Students and Parochial Students who fall under the provision of living outside the two-mile range for safety reasons. These services have been part of the Lawrence School Department Transportation for years. So to just eliminate these services by a stroke of the pen is in my opinion disrespectful to the parents or guardians of students who have come accustom to receiving these services. I do not believe that this was done maliciously, but it was done with a tremendous lack of forethought as to how this decision would impact the Citizens of Lawrence.

Having said that, I understand in these economic times that we as a city find ourselves in; all available ways that

we can save money should be on the table for discussion. If in the future those who are responsible to provide ways of saving money for the city want to cut transportation service to students who are not in the k-to sixth grade and live outside the two mile range and who are not in the Homeless Category, can do so if they go about it in a civil manner and provide enough time for parents or guardians to make other arrangements for their children.

For example, lets say by September, the beginning of the school year of 2011 –2012, the City of Lawrence will no longer provide transportation for High School Students and the others who are not covered by state law. Or another example would be in this same time period we would only provide transportation for the following months, which are: December, January, February, and March. The reason I suggest this is because of the condition of the roads and sidewalks in the winter months. For some reason property owners have a hard time shoveling their walkways and our children would be forced to walk the streets, which puts them in harms way. If this proposal were to become reality, then

the penalty for snow-covered walkways should be a hefty fine and it must be enforced. Then may I also suggest that the city use this money to keep our crosswalks well painted and employ more crossing guards for our major intersections. These conditions are not optional, they are a must if you want to have our children walk to school.

So, here we have Plan A which states that beginning the school year 2011 – 2012 the City of Lawrence will only be providing transportation for students who are in grades k-to six and live two miles or more from school and to students who are classified as homeless. Plan B states that only in the months of November, December, January and February will transportation be provided to those students not covered by plan A. Both of these plans allows for parents or guardians time to make adjustments to their schedule and make other arrangements for their children to get to school. This also provides time for the city of Lawrence to get their act together and make the changes necessary so that our streets and sidewalks are safe for our children to walk to school.

LAROCQUE, page 30

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# WCAP Radio to broadcast from Lawrence

Sal Lupoli teams up with WCAP Radio to introduce the WCAPizza

A new Relationship Between Sal Lupoli and WCAP 980AM local radio owners Clark Smidt and Sam Poulten means that once again, Lawrence has a local radio station broadcasting local news and commentary.

Lawrence hasn't had a legal radio station broadcasting within its borders for more than a decade when the now defunct WCCM/800AM was sold by Curt Gowdy to Costa-Eagle Enterprises and moved its station to Methuen.

Sal Lupoli, President and CEO of Sal's Pizza Retail and Wholesale Divisions, Salvatore's Restaurants and Riverwalk Properties in Lawrence, has officially announced that he is combining forces with WCAP Merrimack Valley Radio (AM 980) to broadcast WCAP's local programming from Salvatore's restaurant in Lawrence. "WCAP owners Clark Smidt and Sam Poulten's mission is to help promote the economy and quality of life in the Merrimack Valley mirroring

our own corporate mission and we are pleased to work with them in doing so," Lupoli said.

John McDonald, VP of Corporate Strategy and Communications appeared on the Paying Attention! Radio program to announce the new relationship between Sal's and WCAP. "This is a great fit for both Sal's and WCAP radio," he said. "Sal and I both know that Sam and Clark are committed to promoting the good things that are happening in the Merrimack Valley and using their radio station as a vehicle for helping small local businesses. I'm confident that this will be a great working relationship for both of us," he said.

*The new relationship will entail regular live broadcasts from Salvatore's Restaurants and Riverwalk Properties in Lawrence during special events and/or regular programming. WCAP and Sal Lupoli also announced as part of the WCAP/Sal's Pizza partnership; the*



PHOTO: COURTESY WCAP RADIO

WCAP co-owner, Colonel Sam Poulten, Valley Patriot president and host of Paying Attention! Tom Duggan, Sal Lupoli owner of Sal's Riverwalk, Sal's Pizza and Riverwalk Properties with Clark Smidt, also co-owner of WCAP radio 980AM.

launching of the "New Official Pizza of the Merrimack Valley and the home of the \$9.80 WCAPizza!"

"We are extremely excited that Sal has named a pizza after us. A 12" Pizza with double cheese and pepperoni...my favor-

ite, and Everybody Gets It!" said Clark Smidt oco-owner of WCAP 980 AM.

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.

## Eagle Tribune troubles cost 52 employees their jobs: From page 1

Alabama-based Community Newspaper Holdings, Inc., there have been several major changes at the paper.

Key changes in personnel stirred things up immediately at the Tribune including major managerial changes. Community Newspaper Holdings, Inc., replaced former publisher Irving "Chip" Rogers, III, and William Ketter, editor and vice president of news who was supposed to be given what they called "a new role" in the organization.

Several staffers, who did not want to be identified by name, confirmed at the time that several other issues had surfaced after the newspaper was purchased, such as Ken Johnson and Bryan McGonigle being suspended for three days (without pay) in July 2005 after an e-mail exchange about the use of racial identities in crime stories.

The daily newspaper has also been the subject of controversy since then, including an erroneous story on the front page of their Sunday edition claiming one

of their reporters witnessed "men in tyvek suits removing asbestos" from the Monarch on the Merrimack building in Lawrence. Despite the fact that they retracted the bogus story, multimillionaire developer and Monarch owner Bob Ansin said the story cost him a \$40 million investment effectively shutting down construction on the \$200 million revitalization project.

In the last two years readers of the Eagle Tribune have seen a significant decrease in news reporting in the Lawrence, Methuen and Haverhill area as coverage of communities in southern New Hampshire have dominated their front page and local reporting.

Last month, The Valley Patriot revealed that Eagle Tribune reporter Yadira Betances had to be forcibly removed from Hanscom Air Force Base when the

body of Sgt. Jimenez arrived for a wake and funeral service.

The following day Betances was also removed from the Jimenez wake at St. Mary's Church when she confronted

Jim Wareing of New England Caring for Our Military, who was tasked by the Jimenez family to handle the memorial and funeral services.

Circulation for the Eagle Tribune has dropped significantly in the Lawrence and Methuen area including decreases in subscriptions and distribution in North Andover and Haverhill area communities.

Last month, the Tribune ran a front page story revealing the identities and postings of two Haverhill elected officials who had anonymously written messages on the newspapers internet blog sparking outrage in the news publishing business.

"What they did was out a source who posted anonymous messages on their internet blog," said Haverhill City Councilor Jim Donahue who, along with Haverhill Mayor Jim Fiorentini had posted messages using pen names with the expectation of anonymity offered by the site.

"I don't see how this is any different than publishing the names and pictures of people who call them on the phone with anonymous tips for news stories," Councilor Donahue continued.

"What is really troubling is that they were able to, and quite willing to, investigate the blog postings, track the messages back to the people who posted on their website, and then publish that information in their newspaper. It ought to make people very nervous about visiting the site or posting any kind of messages on their blog whether it's a news tip or just their opinions about their coverage."

(photo insert of Al Getler with his monkey puppet from <http://algetler.com>)



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Just a note to tell you how pleased we are with the "What Now???" ETA. We have used it during several evacuation drills at various station locations and have received nothing but positive comments about this tool. Enclosed you will find an article we are submitting to our Navy Fire Service Newsletter entitled What's Happening. Please feel free to use this in advertising and maybe we can bring several more military installations on-board. Thanks for bringing us a great tool to use in educating everyone on the importance of fire safety.

Joseph A. Otterbine

Lead Fire Inspector

MCAS Structural Fire-Rescue Division

Fire Prevention Branch

COM: (843) 228-7854 DSN: 335-7854

[joseph.otterbine@usmc.mil](mailto:joseph.otterbine@usmc.mil)



MCAS Fire Inspector James Botelle explains purpose of "What Now???" to Middleton S. Elliott Elementary School Principal Barbara Hazzard.

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# Valley Early Reading Programs receive more than \$6.7 million in federal funds

WASHINGTON, DC - Congressman Niki Tsongas and representatives from the Department of Education presented more than \$6.7 million in federal funds last month to the Greater Lawrence Community Action Council (GLCAC) and Lowell's Community Teamwork Incorporated (CTI).

The funding will be used by each nonprofit organization to improve the school readiness of Merrimack Valley children, particularly those from low-income families, through the promotion of early childhood reading. Both organizations were among just 31 out of more than 350 applicants nationwide to receive funding for the Early Reading First program. They were the only two organizations to receive this grant funding in the state of Massachusetts.

GLCAC's Early Steps Towards Reading, Education, Language and Literacy Acquisition (ESRELLA) program received \$3,976,257 which will allow them to serve 235 low-income children at sites in the greater Lawrence area including the Methuen YMCA where the check presentation took place this afternoon.

The \$2,766,184 in federal funds received by CTI and their partner organization the Education Development Center will support Lowell's Enhanced Approach for Developing Early Readers (LEADER) program. The program aims to work in 10 classrooms, potentially

reaching 525 of Lowell's children during the 3 years of the project. LEADER will also implement an intensive professional development program for nearly 30 Lowell staff.

At today's check presentation ceremony Congresswoman Niki Tsongas said, "early childhood reading is a critically important component of childhood development and contributes greatly to a child's ability to arrive at school ready to learn and achieve. We are fortunate to have two outstanding programs here in the Merrimack Valley that are helping young children to read at an age appropriate level and I am so pleased that the Department of Education has provided this significant amount of federal funding to each."

GLCAC Associate Director Chick Lopiano added, "this grant is a milestone in advancing literacy among children in the greater Lawrence area. We are pleased to be one of the thirty-one national recipients for this grant, two of which are in the Fifth District, and the only ones granted to community action agencies in Massachusetts."

Karen Frederick, executive director of CTI said, "Community Teamwork, Inc. (CTI) is very pleased to be awarded the Federal Early Reading First Grant with our partner The Education Development Center, Inc. (EC) based in Newton. This



Pictured left to right: Maureen Mulcahy, GLCAC Planning & Development Director, Gayle Williams, Director, GLCAC Community Partnerships for Children, Charles "Chick" LoPiano, Assistant Executive Director GLCAC, Congresswoman Niki Tsongas, Philip Laverriere, Executive Director Greater Lawrence Community Action Council, Judith Yelle, President Board of Directors GLCAC, and children from the Methuen YMCA preschool

grant will enable CTI preschool teachers to focus on enhancing children's language, cognitive, and early reading skills so critical to school readiness and academic success. The grant will provide professional development for teachers, early language and reading development, instructional materials, and the opportunity to develop literature rich

environments. The Early Reading First Grant will also allow CTI to enhance our programming by integrating scientifically based reading research into all aspects of the program. And, the grant will allow CTI to expand family partnerships and involvement in the reading and learning process of their children, which are so critical to later school success."

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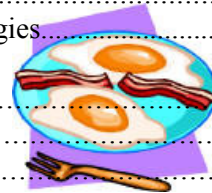
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# Extended Learning: An investment in helping all students reach the finish line

Wilfredo T. Laboy

LAWRENCE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Suppose I asked you to join me at our new Veterans Memorial Stadium for a little experiment — a race.

I'd ask all of you to line up at one end of the field to compete in a 100-yard dash. What's the prize for the winner? That would depend on who you are. If you're a working professional, the prize would be a promotion and a raise at your workplace. If you're an elected official, your prize would be re-election in your current office. If you're a student, your prize would be that you would move on to the next grade.

Ready. Set. Go!

Does this seem fair: Deciding your fate in such a performance-related, yet time-sensitive situation such as this? Some of you might not be good athletes, or might have a medical condition that limits your ability to perform. Those with limited English proficiency might not understand the instructions. Or perhaps, you excel in other aspects of sports, and speed is not your strength.

Now, what if I told you that some would be starting at the 50-yard line, while some of you would start 50-yards behind the starting line? Did I mention that one of your fellow competitors—one with a 50-yard lead—is a former Olympic track and field champion? Are you starting to feel uneasy about this challenge?

Given the pre-existing conditions that affect your ability to perform; given your starting point on the field; and given the pace set by the stronger performers, do you think it is fair to base such an important prize such as your promotion or re-election—on such an unfair contest? Even if you try your absolute hardest, there is still a significant chance that you will finish way behind the rest of the pack.

Welcome to the American education system. Schools across the country have set a similar unrealistic expectation for our children. We line-up children to run the race—the goal of that race is to achieve proficiency by the end of the year. However, students come to this challenge with varying levels of ability and a host of factors that affect their performances. Metaphorically, many have a head-start on this race, while others are starting way behind the starting line. Yet, for some reason, we expect all children to “run the race” in the same amount of time, with the same amount of resources, and we base their opportunity to progress in school and in society on this “race.”

Does this seem fair?

Extended learning is a program that addresses this situation, understanding that all children learn at a different pace, but all still run in the race. Some children progress very quickly, while some progress more slowly. However, all students will make it to the finish line if we give

them enough time and support. We need to extend instructional time in our schools to provide all students and all kinds of learners the opportunity to be successful. For, in this race, success is not determined by the speed at which one proceeds, but rather the destination one reaches at the conclusion of the race.

In Lawrence, we do not tell our students that they have a finite amount of time to learn. Research shows, very clearly, that all students have the ability to learn. Although they may not all learn in the same fashion and at the same pace and they may require different modalities and support structures, all students have the ability to learn and succeed in school. It is through our extended learning time strategies, after school programs, summer school and preschool programs that we can offer all students the opportunity to achieve their goals.

With such a robust set of programs provided in addition to the regular school day, some critics might ask whether the cost of providing these programs is too expensive. I suggest that we cannot afford to deprive our students of these resources. For every student who is held back another year, we must invest in that student another ten months of instruction. By adding another year to his or her education, we've created a 7% increase in the overall cost of educating and graduating that child. System wide, this can add up to a significant expense. Furthermore, in addition to creating a burden on the schools and taxpayers, retaining students for another year also has significant financial impact on the student and his or her family. Another year in school represents another year when the student is not earning money in a professional setting. Why not simply invest a bit more time during the initial instruction period to offer adequate support? Or, if the student doesn't master the concepts and skills initially, offer him or her second chance to master those skills rather than sending them back to the starting line. Extended learning provides these opportunities to children and invests in their success.

Understanding the rational and the operational cost of extended learning, some might ask whether the effectiveness of these programs is worthy of the investment. While our summer school passing rate is between 50-60%, this still has a tremendous positive effect on the community. Given the financial impact—not to mention the social impact on the students—if we can reduce the number of students that must be held back, we reclaim the potential losses associated with a full 10 months of instruction and the lost wages of students unable to enter the workforce.

I suggest that, although we are working diligently and urgently to improve our pass rates in summer school, a 60% reduction of the number of students held-back

**EXTENDED LEARNING, page 33**



PHOTO: TOM DUGGAN

Sue Mitchell of the Gr. Lawrence Community Action Council in Lawrence raises money for the Michael B. Christensen Family Support Center for the Prevention of Child Abuse at the Italian Feast in Lawrence.

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## HAVERHILL ON THE MOVE

## Haverhill Mayor Jim Fiorentini's notebook

**Jim Fiorentini**  
HAVERHILL MAYOR

Last month, we started with the legislature overriding the Governor's veto of State aid to Haverhill. Our parking garage is moving along and a designer has been selected.

The best news is that the transformation of Bradford College is complete to Zion Bible College. As we promised when we worked with Zion officials to persuade them to move here, our code of officials worked with the college non-stop to work through every problem and to make certain the college opened on time.

I also update you on a few school matters, and on my plans to make Haverhill a more bicycle friendly city. Most importantly, I ask for your help. I look around Haverhill, and I see a great city, a city I am so proud to lead.

But I also see so much that needs to be done. I believe strongly in volunteerism, in the concept that one person can make a difference. Around the city, I see areas that need to be cleaned, and not enough volunteers to clean them. I see a library that could use more volunteers. I see elderly who need transportation, houses that need to be weather stripped, parks

and trails that need cleaning, children that need to be mentored and read to. I see boards with vacancies, waiting for you. Take a moment at the email me and tell me how you can help.

#### Legislature Overrides Governor's Veto, \$2.4 Mil for Haverhill

In late July, the Massachusetts Legislature overrode Governor Patrick's veto, and restored the \$2.4 million in State aid for the city of Haverhill. This money allows us to go forward with the budget plans I submitted in April. That budget stresses my priorities—public education and police protection. My budget provides for two more police on the streets and \$1.5 million more for public education than was in last year's city budget. We thank our legislative delegation, led by Rep. Brian Dempsey and Senator Steve Baddour, for their help on this.

#### Making Haverhill More Bicycle Friendly

One of the best ways to save on gas and to protect the environment is to promote bicycling. One of my goals over the next year is to make Haverhill a more bicycle friendly city. Some local businesses have agreed to sponsor new

bicycle racks downtown, and I'll be sponsoring a bicycle day later this year. I have asked the MVRTA to make certain there are plenty of bicycle racks in the new parking garage downtown, and I intend to ask our new downtown developers, Beacon and Forest city, to make certain that they have bicycle racks and are bicycle friendly.

#### CEO Roundtable

I have assembled a "CEO Roundtable" of local CEO's to exchange ideas with the city on best practices in managing large groups of employees and to assist us in attracting new business. My first CEO roundtable was devoted to best management practices concerning sick time, and establishing ambassadors to help promote business. I got the idea of a CEO Roundtable from Pittsfield Mayor Jim Ruberto.

#### Proposal for New Downtown Docks to be named for Captain "Red" Slavitt

Downtown, our boardwalk plans have been approved, at last, by MassHighway. The project is out to bid, the bids open on September 2, and are then reviewed by MassHighway. If all goes well, we will start construction next spring on rebuilding the existing boardwalk behind

the Haverhill Bank and building a brand new boardwalk in behind the Tap.

The boardwalk project is paid with a State grant which can be used only for these types of projects.

Our harbormaster, Mike Vets, has secured a donation of large commercial docks for the new boardwalk. These new docks will allow commercial vessels and tour boats to pull up to the docks. I have proposed naming those docks after our former long-time harbormaster Red Slavitt. Red was a sometimes controversial, always colorful man, who served this city as harbormaster for over a quarter of a century and assisted in river rescues for a quarter century before that.

Red's tales of riverfront life made trips up and down the Merrimack a real pleasure for decades. Red has been featured throughout the country on radio and television, and has done a tremendous amount to promote travel on the Merrimack River.



*Jim Fiorentini is the mayor of Haverhill and is serving in his third term. You can email him at jimfior@aol.com*

## Little Sprouts builds their 2nd center in Haverhill

Due to high demand in early education, Little Sprouts has begun construction of what is going to be their 9<sup>th</sup> Little Sprouts School in Haverhill.

Little Sprouts currently has a school located at Northern Essex Community College in Haverhill. This new school is going to be a free standing building located on River Street in Haverhill, which is conveniently located right off of interstate 495. The new Little Sprouts will hold 3 In-fant rooms, 4 Toddler rooms, 3 Preschool rooms, 1 Kindergarten and 1 Before School and After School classroom. Little Sprouts will have the capacity to educate 157 children in this new facility.

"When opening new schools, we make sure our locations are convenient for all families," noted Susan Leger Ferraro, Founder and President of Little Sprouts. "We are excited about having the opportunity to continue to educate the children of the Haverhill and local communities in our new center." Keep your eyes open in the late fall for when this new center will be opening its doors!

*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](http://www.littlesprouts.com)

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# What could have been done to prevent North Andover’s Education failures?

Mary Anne Walters  
GUEST COLUMNIST

How does an upper middle class town like North Andover end up with a school on No Child Left Behind (NCLB) warning status? The story is one of corrupt leadership, failure of school committee members (past and present), and the failure of state and federal officials as well as our laws.

Title 1 is a program set up by the US Department of education to fund schools with a high percentage of low income students. Title 1 schools are regulated by federal legislation including NCLB. Title 1 schools that have not made state defined adequate yearly progress (AYP) for 2 consecutive years, must offer every student in that school the option to transfer to another school in the district.

So what really happened at the Thomson School?

A terrifying blight came upon the town in 2002. Briefly recall past school committee members Dan Murphy and Al Perry. Murphy, Perry and his pals made sure they influenced the Superintendent search committee to hire Harry K. Harutunian as Superintendent of Schools. HARRY was by far the greatest detriment to public education in North Andover in the last 20 years.

Soon after taking the reigns, HKH drove principals from the district. While some of them did need to retire, their leaving opened the door for new hires. These new hires would have to understand that all bowed to the mighty midget and his Napoleon complex.

The Thomson and Sargent schools would be the recipients of new principals. All looked to be on the up and up with the search committees but HKH’s friend, then Lynn Superintendent Nick Kostan, had a wife who was on shaky ground in her principal position in Peabody MA. Well, a friend in need will owe you down the road. (recall, Harry got a teaching job in Lynn with a fat salary after his disgrace in North Andover).

So, to the Thomson school went the greatest disaster in Thomson history, Kathleen Kostan. She was the most ineffective leader to darken the doorstep of a North Andover school. The joke among most parents at the time was that the custodian ran the school. Well, that joke must have been born of truth for when the custodian runs the school, the quality of education will go down the toilet.

The two year Kostan disaster impacted the already academically challenged Thomson like Hurricane Katrina battered New Orleans. But wait, we’re not done with the disasters yet. In an effort to get his paws on more taxpayer funds, Harry decided to redistrict. When all was said and done, kids that had been redistricted several times before were moved again. A large percentage of low income subgroups in town were now enrolled at the Thomson school. This triggered eligibility for federal Title 1 funds that were NEVER properly distributed to the Thomson school. Harry also closed the Bradstreet School and increased the Thomson enrollment from 275 to 425.

Now the perfect storm will hit. A principal who seemed not to care, needy kids without structure, a surge in enrollment, staff terrified to take one wrong step, a poor curriculum, an inept school

committee, horrified parents and a Superintendent off misappropriating Title 1 funds.

Fast forward to the Harry scandal, leaving the school department in the woefully inept hands of Dick Bergeron and Al Perry (Murphy had moved on by then). What more can be said? Someone should have called FEMA!

Soon after, Harry departed in a cloud of shame, his Thomson principal went out on medical leave and requested early retirement. What a shock! With the rumor mill in town was whirling, the real story is purported to be that some strong willed Thomson parents took the opportunity to take the rest of the trash to the dump. They had no chance of getting Kostan out during the Harry’s reign of terror despite efforts to bring her poor performance to the attention of the school committee. (Remember Al Perry was the SC chair!)

Now the district has no superintendent, no Thomson principal and a sham of a school committee. Enter one year interim Superintendent Dan O’Connor. He was far more interested in his EQA audits than the plight of an elementary school. To the Thomson went Principal John McAleer, a man moved twice before to meet district needs. Note too, that McAleer was on the retirement fast track. McAleer did not have the time, funds or resources to make much needed improvements. During his tenure class sizes soared to 30-37 in grades 3-5 due to “severe budget cuts.” This will result in cycle one of AYP failure.

Again in 2007, a Superintendent could not be hired. Jim Marini was offered a two-year interim position. His top priority was N.A. High’s accreditation. By the time he got around to paying attention to the Thomson, time had run out and the 2<sup>nd</sup> consecutive year of AYP failure triggered the school choice option for Thomson students. Of note, the Thomson was searching for a principal but no candidate would take the position. Can you blame them? It would be career suicide to walk into Hurricane Thomson with no support. Then, a one year interim principal, Gregg Gilligan of NAHS, was appointed to the Thomson school.

The big question. What could have been done to prevent these failures?

Some concerned parents had attempted to advocate for the Thomson at school committee meetings but they were treated like dirt by the holier than thou chair of the School Committee and her minions. Building a preschool that would primarily service 100 preschool aged special education students was more of a priority than the 425 elementary students at the failing Thomson school.

The students can’t be to blame. As Mr. Gilligan stated during the 8/19 School Committee meeting; the cornerstone of his educational belief is that all kids can learn, no matter what. That leaves leadership. There hasn’t been any at the Thomson. A few dedicated parents and teachers kept the lifeboat afloat but the Titanic was sinking in the face of adversity.

The answer? The School Committee needs to wake up, Dr. Marini must take serious action and seek answers from the ones who kept that school afloat despite the circumstances. They may have the insight so desperately needed to avoid leaving the Thomson children so far behind ... once again.

# North Andover events

**Patriot Day Program September 11, 2008**, at 8:00am sharp. A day to remember. Please join Veteran’s Services of North Andover, North Andover Fire Department and the North Andover Police Department in a commemorative celebration hosted by the North Andover Senior Center.

This is a day to remember the brave men and women who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the Global War on Terrorism. The ceremony will commence at 8:00 am sharp followed by breakfast at 8:30. **There is limited seating, reservations are required.**

**Registration for the fall session will be August 25-September 8.** This will be a 5-week mini session all classes will be \$20.00 for this session. Our newsletter should be in your mailbox by September 1. Check out page 6 & 7 for a complete list of classes and programs we offer at the Senior Center. Classes will start the week of September 8 and running through the week of October 10.

**Mystery Ride:** The next Mystery Ride is scheduled for September 11, leaving the Senior Center at 10:00, returning approximately 3:30. Sign up opens on Thursday, August 28. \$15.00 will get you a great adventure, lunch and an ice cream.

**Memoirs Writing Classes:** Held on Fridays, from 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. This class is facilitated by Edith Fenton and is called “Writing Your Life One Story at a Time.” This class is very informal, writers may choose to do the assignment or not. The papers are not corrected for spelling or punctuation so you can be yourself. Writers can choose to read what they wrote in class or not. Come in, try it, and decide if it is right for you. Donation requested.

**Computer Classes:** Every Friday morning at 9:00-10:00am. Learn how to Google, Surf the Net, or write your personal story. Call the reception desk for an appointment. Donations requested.

**Bridge Class for Beginners**, along with a Refresher Bridge Course, is held on Wednesdays from 1:00-4:00. There is a \$4.00 charge per class.

**Book Club:** The book club meets the first Friday of the month from 10:30 to 11:30. September’s book is Change of Heart, by Jodi Picoult and October’s choice is The Senator’s Wife, by Sue Miller.

**Mr. Fix It And Company** is in the building on the first and third Monday of every month. Bring in your broken lamps, watches that need batteries and small appliances that do not work. He will try to fix them! Cost is \$2.00/\$4.00 depending on the amount of work required, plus parts. All funds are given to the Senior Center to support programs and activities.

**Support Our Troops:** The North Andover Senior Center is collecting items for soldiers in Iraq and in Afghanistan. Each month we feature a different soldier and we are looking for names of soldiers throughout Massachusetts.

If you have a friend or loved one who is serving, please contact Veterans Agent Ed Mitchell at 978-682-6378 or Barbara Champigny at 978-688-9560. Suggested items are toiletries, stationery, snacks, socks and baby wipes. We appreciate your support and so do the soldiers. Thank you.

**TRANSPORTATION** is the number one unmet need in our community. It is one of the most difficult services to obtain for older adults in all communities. Volunteer drivers needed! Northern Essex Elder Transport meets an enormous need in the community by providing transportation for those who have no other way to get to and from medical appointments.

As a NEET driver, you can request the area you prefer to drive and the day or days and times, you would be available, whether it is once a week or once a month. We need drivers now more than ever. If you can help please call the North Andover Senior Center at 978-688-9560. All NEET drivers are provided with an orientation to the program, receive supplemental insurance for their vehicle, and will be reimbursed at 43 cents per mile driven. Set your own hours for availability.

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## TOM DUGGAN'S NOTEBOOK

### NORTH ANDOVER - Valley Patriot hires new Advertising Manager

The Valley Patriot is proud to announce that Dennis Corrigan of Boxford has been hired to be our new advertising manager. Corrigan has decades of advertising sales experience and has agreed to come on board full time representing The Valley Patriot with local and national advertising clients. Corrigan will oversee our sales force and is recruiting sales professionals to assist in growing the ever-expanding sales base we have built since 2004. Paula Porten, our advertising manager for the last four years, says she is excited about Corrigan joining The Valley Patriot family as it gives her more time to concentrate on researching, writing, and editing stories. You can reach Dennis at (978) 352-4435



conjunction with the Mayor's Pizza Challenge, Sal Lupoli will host the first Salvatore's Customer Appreciation Day, which will serve hotdogs, hamburgers and of course pizza.

### NATIONAL - June 1, 2009 Change in Travel Requirements

On June 1, 2009, the final phase of the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative will be implemented by the United States Government. This will require U.S. citizens to present a passport book, passport card, or other acceptable travel document to enter the United States at all sea or land points of entry. The United States passport is an internationally recognized travel document and the premiere proof of the bearer's U.S. citizenship and identity. The passport card is a new travel document option produced by the U.S. Department of State. It was created to facilitate the frequent travel of U.S. citizens living in border communities by expediting entry and document processing at U.S. land borders and ports of entry. It is a lower-cost alternative to the traditional passport book and is valid for international land and sea travel between the United States and Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean, and Bermuda *only*. The passport book will continue to be required for all international air travel. Between now and June 1, 2009, the goal of the U.S. Department of State is to continue to educate and encourage the U.S. traveling public to apply for and obtain the necessary travel documents that will allow them to comply with the new requirements. Applications for passport

books and passport cards are accepted by local acceptance facilities. There are now nearly than 9,400 designated post offices, clerks of court, and other government offices that accept passport applications nationwide. Your local acceptance facility can be found by accessing [www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov) or by calling 1-877-487-2778 (TDD/TTY: 1-888-874-7793).

### MERRIMAC - Old Home Days

The Merrimac Old Home Day Committee will be holding its first meeting to begin planning for Old Home Day 2009. Topics of discussion will center on fall fundraising and promoting further community involvement. The Committee welcomes new members and fresh ideas. The meeting will be held on Tues., October, 7, 2008 at 7pm. We'll meet in the Merrimac Town Hall. Please check us out on the web at: [www.merrimac01860.info](http://www.merrimac01860.info) or contact us directly at: [oldhomedays@gmail.com](mailto:oldhomedays@gmail.com)

### NORTH ANDOVER - Fifth Annual Prayer Shawl Tea in September

Communities Together, Inc., formerly The Greater Lawrence Council of Churches, will sponsor the Fifth Annual Prayer Shawl Tea at First-Calvary Baptist Church, 586 Massachusetts Avenue, N. Andover on Wednesday, September 24, 2008 from 2:00 to 3:30 p.m. Please join them for tea and pastry as they celebrate the Prayer Shawl Ministry in this area, offer shawls for a blessing by clergy, honor knitting groups, and share stories of how the shawls touch lives. Knitters, crocheters, clergy, shawl recipients, supporters, and those interested in learning more are all welcome. This event is free and open to the public. Please RSVP by Monday

morning, September 22 to Barbara at the Communities Together office at (978) 686-4012 or email Barbara at [CTstaff@conversent.net](mailto:CTstaff@conversent.net).

### METHUEN - Penny Social

Forest Street Union Church in Methuen is holding its annual PENNY SOCIAL on Saturday, September 20, 2008 at the VFW Post 8349, 26 River Street in Methuen. Join us for an evening of family fun, door prizes, a 50/50 and raffles. Tickets are 25 for \$1.00, with 125 items available. Pizza, hot dogs and other refreshments can also be purchased that evening. Ticket sales start at 4:00 PM and the drawings begin at 6:00 PM. For more information call 978-683-8523 or visit us at [www.foreststreetucc.org](http://www.foreststreetucc.org). See you there!

### LAWRENCE - Celebrate the Irish

Dr. William Mahon will discuss his most recent publication *Thomas Griffin and the Irish Speaking People of Lawrence* and the *Irish Manuscripts at Villanova University by the way of Lawrence*, sponsored by The Irish Foundation, Division 8 AOH and LAOH, The Friends of the Lawrence Public Library, The Friends of the Harvard University Celtic Dept. and The Cumann, na Gaeilge League of Boston. Supported by the White Fund and the Department of Foreign Affairs, Cultural Committee Office of the Council General of Ireland. INFO: Lecture and Book Signing- Sunday September 14, 2008 at 1:30PM at the Lawrence Heritage State Park Visitor's Center -1 Jackson Street, Lawrence, MA. Admission is free, Handicap Accessible - For information please contact the Lawrence Heritage State Park Visitor's Center 978-794-1655 Division 8

"I've been a life-long Democrat. Never have I switched parties seeking personal benefits. I want to serve you with dignity and justice in the State Legislature. To do that I need Your VOTE." *Marcos Devers*

#### EXPERIENCE

As Interim Mayor and City Council President Marcos Devers proved to be a **fair** and **transparent** leader.

#### SOME of DEVERS' ACHIEVEMENTS

- Was the first Mayor of Lawrence to publish the city budget, consisting of millions of dollars, on the city's web site
- Obtained funds to beautify parts of the City of Lawrence during the 2001 Christmas and following years
- Presented and voted for a proposal to approve the economical stimulus package to mayor investors, to attract more jobs for Lawrenceans
- Was a watchdog against corruption in the construction of the new water plant - and opposed its privatization
- Successfully proposed an ordinance to keep sex offenders away from schools, daycares and sport centers

**It's time for change... VOTE Devers!**

Paid for by the Committee to Elect Marcos Devers for State Representative. 16 woodland Street, Lawrence, Massachusetts

#### PLATFORM

- **Education for all.** I'll be a strong supporter of bills that improve education at state level - Will legislate for and protect the 1993 Education Reform Act which guarantees a per-capita equitable investment
- **Jobs.** I'll support legislation that protects jobs and benefits for workers
- **Workers Rights.** I will protect the rights of and benefits for temporary workers
- **Advocacy.** More benefits for the elderly and health plan for daycare providers
- **Watchdog.** I'll look out for the rightful use of state funds destined for the 16th district
- **Increased capitalization.** I will increase state moneys for community organizations
- **Protect our children.** I'll legislate against child abuse



**LAWRENCE:** Cigar Night at Sal’s Riverwalk

Tom Grella of Food Network fame will be hosting a cigar night on Wednesday, September 24<sup>th</sup> 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 11<sup>th</sup>. 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.**

AOH Website: [www.homestead.com/div8aoh](http://www.homestead.com/div8aoh)

**LAWRENCE - Siglo’s Big Announcement**

Last month we were shocked to learn from the Spanish language newspaper called Siglo 21 that Lawrence Superintendent of Schools Wilfredo Laboy had announced his impending resignation and was on his way out. The jubilation among the Laboy haters could be heard from one end of the city to the other and when the “news” broke it spread like wildfire through the Spanish speaking population with Spanish language radio stations fanning the flames and gleefully spreading the word. Problem is.... the entire story was completely made up.

**LAWRENCE - Siglo’s non-announcement**

Adrianna Reccia who has long been the head honcho at Siglo 21 was quietly replaced by none other than Santiago Mattias (husband of illegal alien Dirma Espada, AKA: Milagros Dominguez). For those of you who don’t remember, Mattias was one of the publishers of the now defunct “Latino News” and is part of an organization that gives people awards for just being born “Latino.” No wonder our reader-ship among Spanish speaking residents in the Valley has sky-rocketed! Though we’ve had some requests, there really is no need for us to start publishing in Spanish as the Spanish language newspapers in The Valley implode before our very eyes with a racist agenda and an inability to speak to Latinos who are Americanized. Of course, they will always have a plethora of “Immigration attorneys” advertising to help illegal aliens obtain government services but that’s not going to last long after John McCain becomes president and gives them all amnesty. Who would’ve thought four years ago that the Valley Patriot could become the paper of record for Latinos in the Valley? Certainly not me, but we’re thrilled to have so many Latinos Paying Attention!

**DRACUT, METHUEN - Valley Dispatch Another one bites the dust**

And so it goes,...they came into existence by trying to pilfer the format and saturate part of the distribution area

**FLIP-FLOPPERS UNITE: Sen. Steve Baddour and his flip-flopping hero Sen. John Kerry**



The Valley Patriot is always interested in reader suggestions for future, local, political cartoons (valleypatriot@aol.com)

of The Valley Patriot (thanks to Paul Sullivan) but The Valley Dispatch can no longer be found in those bright yellow boxes scattered throughout Methuen and Dracut. It seems the free weekly newspaper (owned by the Lowell Sun) just couldn’t make it on their own and has stopped distributing independently. Who could have predicted that? Well, I think we did, but don’t worry Dispatch fans you can still get the Valley Dispatch only now you have to pay for it as it’s only available as an insert on Wednesdays in the Lowell Sun. In the mean time, The Valley Patriot will continue to expand in the Lowell, Chelmsford, and Dracut area. And of course, we will always love Warren Shaw and hope he will come to the dark side!

**HAVERHILL - Vendors needed for the 6th Annual Italian Festival**

Ahhhhh, the smell of the sauce simmering, bread baking and the pizza cheese melting – just some of the delicious excitement right around the corner at Haverhill Downtown Association’s “North of the North End” 6th Annual Italian Festival. The festival will be held on Sun., September 28th from noon until 6:00 p.m. in Washington Square and along Washington Street in historic downtown Haverhill. The Downtown Association is currently looking for vendors to participate in this fun filled event. Vendor booths sized 6’x10’ can be secured for \$100. Vendors can include food, arts and crafts, jewelry, clothing, pottery, information, games, activities etc. All booths should have an Italian theme or be decorated to reflect the colors of Italy. To secure your space please contact committee member Officer Paul Malone at 978 360-3703. Last year more than 5,000 people attended this popular event. This year’s

festival features everything from authentic Italian cuisine to musical entertainment for all ages. The Miss Italy competition winner will take home a generous scholarship. This year the festival will feature a grand finale of the Rat Pack direct from Las Vegas with a tribute to Frank, Sammy, and Dean and the original sounds of the famous legions of the past. The festival is free.

**NORTH ANDOVER - Whidden Knew about accreditation warning**

Last month it was revealed that North Andover Superintendent Marini was notified in May that the high school was put back on accreditation warning. He and the high school principal met secretly with the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) claiming that the warning status was a “mistake” and that they were trying to have the warning removed before the public had to be told. But their meeting did not result in a warning “mistake” being removed from North Andover High School, instead the NEASC notified the superintendent that the school system would have to go through the official process of evaluation to have the warning removed. After a firestorm of press and parent complaints Marini finally admitted that “maybe” he should have notified the public and that he “Might” have been wrong not to do so.

School Committee members publicly attacked parents who spoke out about the issue during a school committee meeting, but last month at least one member of the board, chairman Barbara Whidden admitted publicly that she did, in fact, know about the warning back in May. Coincidentally, the School Committee meeting was not broadcast on cable access and was not video taped as all previous school committee meetings had been.

**LAWRENCE - We checked!**

Last month we were told by Lawrence DPW Director Frank McCann that the city parking garages were only in the black (to the tune of about \$80,000) because the health insurance payments for parking garage employees were being paid for by the DPW. “Why don’t you check it out?” McCann asked. So we did. According to Lynn Tran, Assistant Comptroller for the City of Lawrence, the budget for the city parking garages, now under the control of Planning Director Michael Sweeny, paid \$64,252.82 from July 1, 2007 to June 30, 2008 for employee health insurance. A Memo by Lynn Tran, (the most non-political employee in city hall) also states that for the current fiscal year the parking garage budget has already been used to pay a weekly deduction of \$1,201.48 for employee health insurance. Good thing we checked!

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PHOTO: COURTESY

## Pine Island Music Jam

Back row (Left to right): Chris Kuist (holding drum sticks) - drums (Byfield) Michael DiMambro - bass guitar (Georgetown) Chris Robertson - guitar (Haverhill), Nick Pantazi - guitar & vocals (Rowley), Seth Campbell (holding pan flute) keyboard, flutes, vocals & more - (Amesbury), Front row (l to r), Ben Stickney - guitar (Newbury), Daniel Alvarez de Toledo - keyboard & vocals (Newburyport), Sarah Faulkner - guitar & vocals (Rowley), Brendan Kuist - guitar (Byfield), Peder Franson - guitar (Byfield), Hannah Kelly - vocals (Georgetown), Evan Becht - drums (Plaistow, NH)



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# A tale of two venues in Lowell

Richard Howe

LOWELL COLUMNIST

The city of Lowell is the home of two professional sports franchises: The Lowell Devils of the American Hockey League and the Lowell Spinners, the Class A affiliate of the Boston Red Sox. During the decade of their mutual existence, the fortunes of the two teams could not have been more different. The Spinners have been wildly successful, selling out almost every game while the Devils are chronically last in league attendance. But the two teams have one thing in common. They are both embroiled in landlord-tenant disputes with the city of Lowell. The resolution of these controversies could lead to one or both teams leaving Lowell in the coming years.

One of the darkest days in Lowell's history was February 15, 1994. Late that morning, the Wang Towers, icons of Lowell's rebirth as a center of hi-tech manufacturing and assessed by the city at \$40 million, were sold at foreclosure auction for just \$525,000. Deep in the midst of the last real estate bust and with the city's finances still under the supervision of a state-appointed control board, the future looked bleak. But even as the city's fortunes hit bottom, plans for Lowell's resurgence were already underway.

When Paul Tsongas returned to Lowell from his unsuccessful quest for the Democratic nomination for the presidency in 1992, his focus turned inward to the city of his birth. Tsongas was convinced that without a vision, a shared goal to work towards, cities like Lowell would wither and die. Tsongas's vision for Lowell involved the construction of a multipurpose arena that would make the city a regional destination for family-oriented sports and entertainment while also serving as a catalyst for downtown revitalization. To achieve this goal, Tsongas formed a web of alliances, some very public, others known to but a few.

So it was on the same day that the mortgage on the Wang Towers was foreclosed, the University of Massachusetts Lowell agreed to join with the city of



PHOTO: RICHARD HOWE

The former Wang building in Lowell now called Cross Point Towers



PHOTO: RICHARD HOWE

The Tsongas Arena in Lowell: At its inception, the arena was intended to house only UMass Lowell's River Hawks and an assortment of concerts, trade shows and like events. But Paul Tsongas had other ideas.

Lowell in building a 6000 seat arena located not on the University's campus, but at Post Office Square, just at the edge of downtown Lowell. The earliest conception of the arena included an adjacent practice rink, multiple luxury boxes, and a state of the art video scoreboard, but that version's \$45 million price tag was deemed too expensive. After a year of bitter fights on the council floor, the practice rink, the luxury boxes and the elaborate scoreboard were all eliminated and the arena's price tag had slid to \$28 million. With a \$20 million contribution from the state and \$4 million each from the city and the university, the arena was built, opening in January 1998 and named for Paul Tsongas, who had passed away a year earlier.

At its inception, the arena was intended to house only UMass Lowell's River Hawks and an assortment of concerts, trade shows and like events. But Paul Tsongas had other ideas. Initially partnering with Boston Bruin's great Bobby Orr (who later dropped out of the picture), Tsongas persuaded the Board of Governors of the American Hockey League to locate an expansion team in Lowell for the 1997 season.

Paul Tsongas's vision for Lowell was a complex one that also involved professional baseball. Even as the fight for the arena was being waged, Tsongas brought together Clyde Smoll, the owner of the Elmira Pioneers, the Class A affiliate of the Florida Marlins and Dan Duquette, then the GM of the Boston Red Sox, who wanted all of the minor league affiliates of the Red Sox to be located in New England. Smoll, who was disappointed by the city of Elmira's refusal to refurbish the Pioneer's stadium, agreed to move his franchise to Lowell and Duquette agreed to supply the players. All that was left was to find a place to play. Using the same recipe that financed the arena, Tsongas orchestrated contributions from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, UMass Lowell and the city of Lowell to build a 5000 seat base-

ball field. Even though LeLachur Field was not completed until 1998, the new team, known as the Lowell Spinners, began playing at a renovated high school facility in Lowell in 1996. Combining inexpensive tickets, a family-friendly atmosphere, a short, mid-June to Labor Day schedule and the best prospects in the Red Sox organization, the Spinners have been a huge success.

Ironically, now that the lease on LeLachur Field is about to expire, the team's success is working against it. There are those in city government who harbor hostility towards the Spinners that manifests itself when city council discussions turn to the lease renewal. It appears that reason will prevail, however, with an equitable lease renewal that will keep the Spinners in Lowell the likely result.

Unfortunately, there is no cause for optimism when it comes to the city's American Hockey League franchise. Almost from its inception, the hockey team has struggled. Delays in the arena's construction schedule caused the new owners of the team, initially known as the Lowell Lock Monsters, to push back the team's unveiling from 1997 to 1998 which bled off important early momentum in the community. When the team did begin playing, ticket prices may have been reasonable by NHL standards, but were excessively pricey for Greater Lowell. Unlike the Spinners, whose best players eventually made their way to the home-town Red Sox, the stars of the Lock Monsters graduated to the New York Islanders. Revolving door affiliations that led from the Islanders to the LA Kings to the Carolina Hurricanes to the Calgary Flames to the Colorado Avalanche to the New Jersey Devils made it almost impossible for local fans to follow graduates of the Lowell hockey team in the NHL. This litany of bad decisions and bad breaks along with a communal ambivalence towards hockey combined to suppress attendance to embarrassingly low levels.

**LOWELL, page 33**

*From the desk of: Congressman Niki Tsongas*

## Tsongas introduces two bills to improve the quality of Veterans' health care

Congresswoman Niki Tsongas (MA-05) introduced two bipartisan pieces of legislation on July 31st, to address and improve the quality and continuum of mental health care available to veterans.

Recognizing the sharp increase in post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and other mental health wounds among veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan, Tsongas' legislation would help to improve diagnosis of these conditions by training counselors on college campuses to recognize their initial signs.

Accompanying legislation also introduced by Tsongas today would require the Department of Veterans Affairs to deliver quarterly reports to Congress on the number of mental health provider vacancies within the VA system in an effort to ensure that appropriate numbers of providers are available to veterans. Tsongas released the following statement regarding the legislation.

"The effects of PTSD and other mental health wounds are profound. Left untreated they can result in severe depression, an inability to function in society, and in the worst instances, suicide. Accordingly, our commitment to treating veterans with mental health wounds should be no less vigilant than our commitment to those who sustained physical injuries on the battlefield.

"I am pleased to introduce legislation today designed to improve the mental health care of veterans, especially those returning from Iraq and Afghanistan. Recent studies have shown that nearly 300,000 veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have exhibited signs of post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or other serious forms of depression. The fact that only about half of these veterans have sought care for their conditions exposes a glaring need to reach those additional veterans who may be affected.

"That is why the first piece of legislation I am introducing will aid the detection of

mental health wounds including PTSD among our newest generation of veterans. The bill will create a pilot program to train counselors at higher education facilities on how to effectively identify and address service related stressors unique to our veterans that may manifest after separation from the military.

"The new GI Bill that was recently passed by Congress and signed into law by the President will allow thousands of returning Iraq and Afghanistan veterans to access a college education. It is therefore highly appropriate that counselors on college campuses be trained to recognize the signs of PTSD or other mental wounds. These counselors may be the most easily accessible mental health professionals for veterans taking advantage of their GI Bill benefit and they should be trained and ready to provide appropriate assistance.

"When PTSD is properly recognized and diagnosed, veterans can be effectively treated through therapy, medication and

expert care. The key is that those involved in the lives of our veterans are able to recognize these seemingly invisible scars.

"It is also the job of Congress to ensure that there are appropriate numbers of mental health care professionals that veterans have access to. The second bill I am introducing requires the VA to provide quarterly reports to Congress on the number of vacancies for mental health professionals at VA facilities, so that we can effectively evaluate and address any shortages of these critically important providers."

Tsongas is joined by Congressman Michael Michaud (D-ME), Chairman of the Veterans Affairs Subcommittee on Health, and Jeff Miller (R-FL), who is the subcommittee's ranking member, in introducing the legislation.

"I believe that we owe all our veterans the opportunity to achieve the American dream that they fought to protect.

**TSONGAS, next page**



# The Farmtown lowdown: The Dracut news minute

A look at recent newsworthy developments and upcoming events from rural, old Dracut

George Papoulias

VALLEY PATRIOT DRACUT REPORTER

**The Entrepreneurial spirit of the Dracut School Department:** In an effort to generate revenue, the Dracut School Dept. is considering selling advertising banners to profitable businesses. The banners would be placed along the fences which revolve around athletic and recreational fields in Dracut. Another source of consideration would be reducing budgets by selling available space at the aforementioned fields to potential clients.

**Digital Dracut?** The Dracut Planning Department has decided to implement a digital version of the Town Zoning Map. This would be utilized to complement a recently created, town-used digital Geographic Information SystemTo make the system fully operational, zoning districts need to be transferred from paper form into a digital format. This entailed the town collaborating with Applied Geographics, Inc. for the transfer. Applied Geographics, Inc. is an organization which works with various clients to obtain and enhance top quality geographic information systems. The digital zoning map will assist in discovering town land boundaries and determining potential land improvements

**Dracut Access Television (DATV) to become preferred Dracut viewing over ABC, NBC, CBS & FOX?** That is one of many primary goals for new Executive Director of Dracut Cable Access viewing, Steven Russo. Russo, who was recently hired to oversee the access corporation’s fledgling operation, intends to draw more of a membership to the station at upcoming annual Dracut Old Home Day. DATV will be one of many organizations with a booth, consisting of information on becoming a member and being trained on operating the station’s TV production equipment. There will also be a camera stationed near the booth so Old Home Day attendees can be seen on Dracut’s TV station in any manner the person chooses.

**Dracut Roads Undergoing Face-Lift:** Have you encountered significant road construction while driving through Dracut recently? Well, the Public Works Department is working on drainage, curbing and

pavement on several roads in town, according to a recent memo by Public Works Director, Michael Buxton. This mission began in August and could extend into the spring of 2009. The streets undergoing construction include: Sunset Road, Rainbow Avenue, Westwood Road, Nancy Avenue, Bryan Avenue, Leonard Avenue, Harold Avenue, Victory Lane, Nashua Road, Mammoth Road and Tyngsboro Road. The Public Works Department says it will take a three-week period or less to improve each and every street to reduce potential traffic and driving difficulties.

**Volleyball Anyone?** If you’re between grades 5 thru 8 (ages 10-13) and feel like participating in volleyball, here’s your chance. Between now and September 15th, registration will be accepted at the Dracut Recreation Office. The location is 11 Springpark Avenue. Registration times are from 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon and 1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Call (978) 458-4478 for any inquiries.

**Eight Times the Charm:** The 8th Annual Dracut Old Home Day will emanate from the Dracut High School complex on 1580 Lakeview Ave. The event transpires on Saturday, September 6 from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. If you’re seeking a fun-filled, family oriented day, then Old Home Day is your solution. There will be various types of attractions featured from children’s rides to viewing the Dracut High band to state police helicopter landings to food to martial arts demonstrations.

**Library Lookout:** Lest we forget about the beautiful, recently constructed Moses Greeley Parker Memorial Library and their upcoming events: Friends of the Dracut Library & Washington Savings Bank Fundraiser Kick-Off. If you open a checking account with Washington Savings Bank, \$25 will be donated to the library’s Friends of the Dracut Library club. Furthermore, the Friends of the Dracut Library will receive 3 cents for every Washington Savings Bank debit card transaction. This fundraiser will commence on Monday, September 8 from 5:00pm to 6:00pm. Beverages and hors d’oeuvres will be provided by Lenzi’s Catering. The Friends club is a group of library members who associate to provide and offer other reading programs for children and adults. Also, the Moses Greeley Library offers some wonderful children’s

programs where kids of all ages can interact and be educated. Here are some of the programs:

**Tea for Twos:** Two year olds are invited to come dressed in their finest, learn how to read stories and then be treated to a “Tea Party” (white grape juice and teddy grahams.) Registration is required.

**Jr. Scrabble Club:** If your child is attending grades 4-6 and enjoys playing scrabble, this is a perfect fit. There will also be other like-minded children present, which would present a perfect opportunity to make some new friends. Snacks are usually available. The club commences meeting Wednesday, September 17 at 4:00pm and will continue every Wednesday. The location for sign-ups is in the children’s room of the library. For more details email Amanda at [ahogue@mvlc.org](mailto:ahogue@mvlc.org)

**Preschool Storytime:** If you would like your child to hear and read some stories, and they are between the ages 3 ½ to 5 and isn’t yet in kindergarten, then you can register them for Preschool Storytime. Tuesdays at 10:30am, Wednesday at 1:00pm and Thursday at 10:30am.

**Jr. Friends of the Library:** Members of the club are between the ages of ages 5 thru 12. Their goal is to organize monthly programs for younger children. The Junior Friends are scheduled for weekly meetings, every Thursday at 3:30pm.

**PJs & Popcorn:** A perfect activity for parents and their children. Parents and their children will read stories, sing songs and partake in snacks and drinks. Children must be between ages 2-7, wearing pajamas is optional. This program takes place on Wednesdays, October 9 and November 12 from 6:15pm to 7:00pm. Registration is required. For more details on these and other reading programs call the Moses Greeley Library at (978) 454-5474 or logo onto [www.dracutlibrary.org](http://www.dracutlibrary.org)

*George Papoulias, of Dracut is a graduate of Rivier College (B.A. in Communications is. currently a producer at WCAP for Merrimack Valley Afternoons, the Lowell Spinners and Paying Attention with Tom Duggan.*



## Tsongas: From Prev. Page

“This means ensuring they have the quality, consistent, accessible and affordable physical and mental health care they need and have earned. Our newest generation of veterans coming home from Iraq and Afghanistan have some of the highest rates of PTSD we’ve ever seen. This legislation will go a long way toward ensuring our veterans can pursue healthy

and active lives for many years to come,” Michaud said.



*Niki Tsongas was elected the 5th district congressman last October to fill the vacant seat left by Marty Meehan. Tsongas is seeking reelection this year. you can email the congressman’s office at [John.Noble@mail.house.gov](mailto:John.Noble@mail.house.gov)*

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## Be alert! Be informed!

### Radical Islam has America on its agenda

Tom Trento, Director of the Florida Security Council will be at the following area venues to present compelling evidence of the serious threat of radical Islam to our communities and to our values.

**Become informed. Attend a presentation.**

**Riveting and informative!**  
**Watch *Obsession*\***

**STAND with us in support of a terror-free America and Israel**  
\*Free copies of the DVD *Obsession* are available at each event.

**Director Tom Trento**  
Florida Security Council

**Wednesday, September 17 at 7:00 pm**  
Word of Life Christian Fellowship  
95 Old Loudon Road  
Concord, New Hampshire  
<http://www.wordoflifenh.org/index.htm>

**Thursday, September 18 at 7:00pm**  
Roger Williams University  
One Old Ferry Road, Bristol, RI 02809  
Marine and Natural Science Bldg. Room 200  
Topic: National Security Policy  
All welcome. Admission Free.  
[www.RWU.edu](http://www.RWU.edu)

**Friday, September 19 from 7:00pm -9:00pm**  
Leominster Assembly of God  
834 Main Street  
Leominster MA 01453  
Speakers: Tom Trento and Guest Nathan Bech, Candidate U.S. Congress  
For more info. Contact: Rev. Fumio Taku 603-557-0655

**Sunday, September 21**  
**3:00pm** CJUI Genesis Awards – Free admission  
**6:30pm** Special buffet with Tom Trento and Q & A session @6:30 in the Cohen auditorium, Temple Emeth, Cost \$20.  
For more information and to RSVP for the buffet, email [CJUI@hotmail.com](mailto:CJUI@hotmail.com) or call 617-233-8315  
Please send a \$20 check for the buffet no later than Sept. 12 to CJUI P.O. Box 320034 West Roxbury MA 02132

Temple Emeth  
South and Grove St.  
Chestnut Hill, MA 02467  
For more info. <http://www.cjui.org>

**Monday, September 22 at 7:30pm**  
The Brotherhood of Temple Israel hosts Tom Trento  
Temple Israel  
477 Longwood Ave.  
Boston MA 02215  
Please RSVP ([rerlaw@worldnet.att.net](mailto:rerlaw@worldnet.att.net)) or (617-524-8886).

**www.cjui.org**





# Ask Dog Lady with Monica Collins

Monica Collins  
SYNDICATED COLUMNIST

Dear Dog Lady,

I finally have the opportunity to share my life with a wonderful woman, Stephanie. She's pretty, kind, smart and claims to like dogs. She just doesn't want them in the bed — or in the bedroom. Unfortunately, this means Ruffles — my excitable Afghan/poodle mix — has to find somewhere else to sleep whenever Stephanie stays over. Because Ruffles and I have been sharing the covers for years before I met Stephanie, I find it hard to shut out the dog. Ruffles whines at the bedroom door. I don't want to be the man in the middle. Help! ...**Andy**

Andy, be a wise Alpha. Remember, your love for your dog is one of your most appealing qualities. You must be patient while pretty, kind, smart Stephanie gets more familiar with Ruffles. Andy is her top dog, not Ruffles. She's not used to snuggling with an animal — hmm, other than you, dear pet.

As she spends more time with Ruffles, she should become less ruffled when the dog is allowed to hang out for short periods in the bedroom while she is in residence. Get an old blanket, put it on the floor and make a nest for Ruffles — close enough so the dog can feel a part of the crowd, far enough away so Ruffles doesn't crowd Stephanie. Eventually, the three of you will settle into a new social hierarchy.

Dear Dog Lady,

At a recent dinner party, the hostess allowed her dog to lick our plates after

we ate. She called it the "Lucy Lab pre-rinse" and asked us to put our plates on the floor while the Labrador retriever licked them clean. I don't have a dog and am unused to such unsanitary behavior. Is this customary? ...**Dina**

Dina, usually the plate licking practice happens more discreetly. Your hostess lacked proper judgment when she allowed the pre-rinse to become part of the party. Understandably, this display was not the palate cleansing you had in mind.

Often dog keepers forget pet politesse. They just assume everyone will think it adorable when lovable Lucy, or whatever dog, laps up the remnants of the salmon remoulade, or whatever dish. Dog Lady has been guilty of this and cringes when she thinks of how it plays to the uninitiated. Your letter provides a good reminder that private rover rituals should not be flaunted when company comes.

Dear Dog Lady,

My dog, Zeus, watches TV intensely. He likes cartoons, babies and other animals (especially when those animals "speak" to him). I like to take Zeus on

weekend drives in the country but I noticed my dog did not enjoy the drives as much as I did. Since then I have installed a TV in the car so he has something to do. Am I rotting his brain? ...**Brendan**

Brendan, talk about bendin' to the comfort and convenience of a dog. No wonder your Zeus is the god of the heavens. Dog Lady has rarely heard of such indulgence, except for C-List celebrities who tote around their poochies in hobo bags and interior designers with clients rich enough to afford raffia dog beds from Italy.

Dogs have small brains, so rotting Zeus' frontal lobe is not a big problem. If your dog enjoys watching cartoons and shout-outs from his beastie boys, go ahead, although Dog Lady cannot imagine dogs enjoy country drives any more than toddlers in car seat lockdown. Make sure you give your glazed TV hound regular bathroom breaks and romps in fields of green away from the automobile.

Dear Dog Lady,

We have a poodle, and she seems to exhibit OCD (Obsessive-Compulsive

Disorder) behavior. Is this normal? When I brush my teeth, she flies up the stairs to stand next to me, no matter where she is or what she's doing. This is just one example of many.

We love our poodle, however I would never get another one because I don't want a dog smarter than me (just kidding). In the hierarchy of dog breed intelligence, where do poodles rank? ...**Bob**

Bob, your letter caused Dog Lady to erupt in a fit of giggles. Indeed, it sounds as if your tooth fairy is a bit daffy. Take heart because it is not a cause for worry — unless your dog is hurting herself, other dogs, or humans. Most dogs have OCD. They are obsessive about their people and their stuff. They are compulsive about their people and their stuff. Dog Lady's darling is possessed by a chewed-over frog whose fading squeaker plays a slo-mo version of "Jingle Bells." With dogs, it's always something.

You are fortunate to live under the same roof with an Einstein. Poodles are considered way above average on the canine intelligence scale. When your dental assistant grabs your floss and rigs up a cat's cradle, don't be surprised.

Listen to "Ask Dog Lady, a radio show about relationships, life, love and . . . dogs" on WCAP 980 AM every Wednesday from 1 to 3 p.m. You can call in your questions. Or visit [www.askdoglady.com](http://www.askdoglady.com) to read more and ask questions for the column and radio.



PHOTO: COURTESY DOG LADY

## Cheryl Richardson Headlines Merrimack River Feline Rescue Society's Annual Meeting on September 24th

Join Nationally-renowned author & regular guest on The Oprah Winfrey Show Cheryl Richardson as she shares her story on how adopting a cat changed her life and the lives of others at the Merrimack River Feline Rescue Society's (MRFRS) annual meeting.

Cheryl is the author of *The New York Times* bestselling books, *Take Time for Your Life*, *Life Makeovers*, *Stand Up for Your Life*, and *The Unmistakable Touch of Grace*. Cheryl is also among the many who adopted a loving kitty from MRFRS.

General tickets are \$50 per person and include a buffet dinner provided by Harborside Catering and a cash bar. Attendees will also have the opportunity to tour of MRFRS' new mobile spay/neuter clinic. Tickets for a private reception with Cheryl are \$100 and include admission to the regular event, dinner, open bar and a personalized gift from Cheryl. The private reception will be held from 5-6 p.m. Tickets must be reserved by September 17<sup>th</sup>. Please call 978-462-0760 or visit [www.mrfrs.org](http://www.mrfrs.org) to order tickets or for more information.

When: Wednesday, September 24th, 2008 – 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Where: The Phoenix Room of Newburyport, 19 Inn St, Newburyport, MA.

### About MRFRS

MRFRS is a nationally recognized, non-profit volunteer organization committed to ensuring the health and welfare of feral and domestic cats and kittens by promoting proactive, compassionate, no-kill programs



PHOTO: COURTESY



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PUPPY LOVE! with Kate Whitney

Dog Days of summer...fun things to do with your four-legged friends

**Kate Whitney**  
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

Well, it's about that time of year....a few weeks before Labor Day, to be exact. When this article comes out in the September Issue of the paper, Labor Day will already have come and gone.

It's at this point in the year that I look back over the past few months and think about the things I wish I had done. One of the biggest things on my list this summer was to bring my dogs into Boston for a fun filled day.

Of course I do fun things with them locally...bike rides, long walks, the beach, etc. but I really wanted to take them somewhere new and exciting. Somewhere that was filled with new smells, sounds, people, and most importantly, new dogs (very important for socialization!)

It was a beautiful Sunday morning in August and I decided to take Dash and Honey to Boston. My aunt and two best friends accompanied me as well; one of them brought her dog, a pug named Chubbz. Our first stop was at Polka Dog Bakery on Shawmut Ave.

I had read reviews about this cute dog bakery and finally I was able to check it out myself. When you first walk in, you are surrounded by colorful leashes, collars, toys, and lots of dogs!

The most amazing sight is the large selection of treats, chewies, and baked goodies for pooches. Faced with so many yummy treat selections I went to town picking things out. I grabbed a few handfuls of some homemade treats and also two cookies and cream dog ice cream cups from the freezer.

Then we were on our way to the next stop. The dog park. We took the dogs to Peters Park Dog Run on E. Berkeley and

Washington St. What a great place! It's large, clean, and well maintained.

There were rocks for climbing, a water station for hydrating, and lots of benches to sit on while watching the dogs happily play.

A few tips for the "new" dog park attendee: don't bring a bag full of yummy treats from Polka Dog Bakery (like I did) to the park unless you want to look like Cesar Milan and have a pack of 15 dogs following you constantly.

Along the same lines, if you bring a sandwich for yourself (like I did) expect to eat it while having dogs stare at you or continuously jump on you begging for a little taste. Also, try to figure out what way the wind is blowing and sit down-wind.

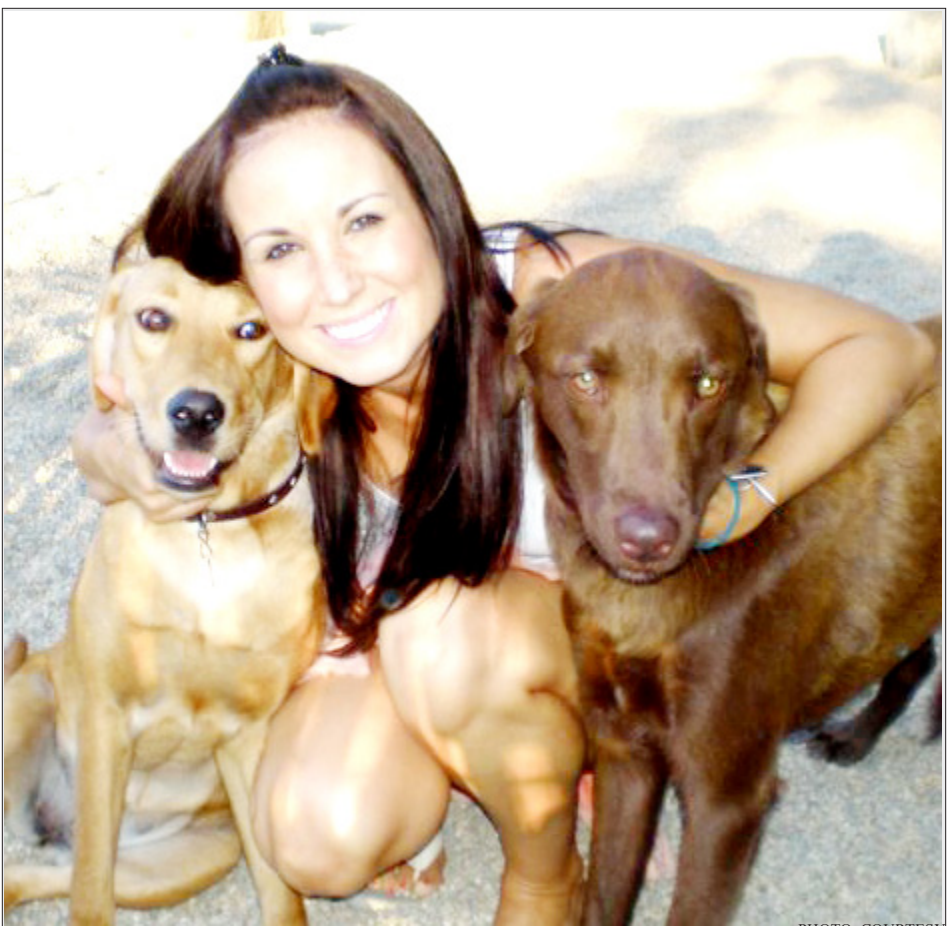
The dog park is a place for dogs to exercise and also relieve themselves, which in some cases can be stinky. So pick your spot to sit carefully! Also, remember to keep your eye on your dog at all times. Not only for the dog's safety, but also to monitor if you need to pick up poop or separate your dog from another dog if any aggression should occur.

If you see your dog get aggressive, immediately remove him from the park. Remember dog park etiquette!

I wanted to share the previous story with you in the hopes that it might prompt some of you to take your dogs somewhere new and exciting. Summer is almost over and that means only a few more weeks of warm weather...so take advantage of it!

There are some really great websites that have great ideas for fun things to do with your dog. To find out what, it's simple. Just Google "Dog Friendly places in MA" or "fun things to do with dogs in MA" and look at all the sites that come up!

There are listings for dog friendly hotels, beaches, restaurants, parks, and events. Speaking of events, I encourage everyone to attend the events that support local shelters and rescues. As you know, this is a cause close to my heart, and I intend to participate in every upcoming



Boxford resident Kate Whitney holds Patsy, a foster-puppy she took in temporarily last year while looking for a loving home to place her in.

walk/event that I can. Let's get together and raise money and awareness for those dogs and cats that have nothing!

On another note...I received an email from the President of Patriot Pet, Keith Cathey. Patriot Pet is a dog treat company located in Oklahoma. As a business owner myself, I really like to support other US companies. Patriot Pet sent me a few bags of their treats for me to test on my dogs. My dogs absolutely loved these treats!

I don't even think Honey chewed it; she pretty much just inhaled it. Dash and Camryn devoured them as well. Another point that I really liked, was that Patriot Pet has partnered with the USO, guaranteeing that a portion of the proceeds will go directly to support the troops.

I really like this company for a few reasons: the products are made with healthy, high quality ingredients, they

give back to our troops, everything- from the actual treat to the packaging- is made in the U.S.A., and unlike many other big food and treat companies, they do not test on animals.

I hope all of you get out and do something fun with your dogs!

They will be so happy to do something new and exciting with you. I'm always up for suggestions, so if anyone can recommend something fun that they have done, email me!!

And if anyone has questions about upcoming walks/events, email me as well. Enjoy the last weeks of summer!

*If you are interested in adopting a puppy or becoming a foster parent to a puppy waiting for a home you can email Kate at [Kwswingrite@aol.com](mailto:Kwswingrite@aol.com)*



**Don't miss Dave Sullivan's "The Adventures of Puppy Girl" Starting in October:** In the October edition of The Valley Patriot, Dracut cartoonist Dave Sullivan will begin our much anticipated feature; "The Adventures of Puppy Girl," inspired by our own Puppy Girl ,Kate Whitney of Boxford.

The dogs of C Kennel, by Mick Mastroianni



(c) Creators Syndicate, 2008



## CARING FOR OUR VETERANS

## September 11th, 2001 a date to remember

John Lenotte

VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

September 11, 2001. 9/11. 911.

How many ways do we remember this date that is emblazoned in our memories, in our history. A date more horrific perhaps than December 7, 1941.

It is certainly an event that changed our nation and the world.

We should also remember some of the events leading up to this date.

The attack on the Marine Barracks in Beirut on October 23, 1983. The first attack on the World Trade Center on February 26, 1993. The attacks on the US embassies in Tanzania and Kenya on August 7, 1998. The attack on the USS Cole on October 12, 2000.

These all have a common thread. Planned attacks by terrorists against the US. The assassination of Afghanistan General Ahmed Shah Massoud on September 10, 2001 is considered part of the 9/11 attacks, to throw opposition to the Taliban into turmoil.

Where were you that day? Those of us old enough to remember, it is as clear as remembering hearing about the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. The events that unfolded before our eyes, as we watched on TV, Internet or listened to the radio were horrific. And yet there were scores of heroes that day. Many perished and some acts of heroism, I am sure, went undocumented.

Then the fundraisers and the concerts began. And the feelings of rage turned into feelings of patriotism. Yes, we thought of how our government was going to react and ensure that this would



PHOTO: COURTESY

not happen again. But we also saw scores of men and women line up to serve their country. The nationally known, like Pat Tillman, and the local guys like David Vicente, Evan O'Neill, Derek Hines, Pierre Raymond, Nickolas Schiavone, Scott Procopio, Dimitrios Gavriel and Alex Jimenez.

And the sale of US flags went up as many, including me, rushed out to put out a flag at our home. And the speeches continued to raise patriotic fervor. And the sadness began as our troops went overseas to carry the battle to the terrorists. And the debates over whether we should or should not go into Iraq.

The Iraq issue is one I will leave to the politicians and the historians. And the sadness continues for those troops who have made the ultimate sacrifice, some of whose names I mentioned above.

Yet, have we forgotten what happened that September day in 2001? It is only 7 years ago, but in some ways it seems a lot more time has passed. And we have grown accustomed to the changes.

We all now get to the airport early and go through the security line and feel comfortable that we are safe. Are we safe? Why are we safe?

We are safe because of the many sacrifices our troops are making daily. And the sacrifices their families are making. And let us not forget our local public safety professionals who put their lives on the line daily. And yes, the politicians who provide them with the money and tools to get the job done.

But we cannot let our guard down. We must continue to fly our flag proudly and support our troops. And we must encourage our elected officials at ALL levels, local, state and national, to support our veterans. Americans are proud, as we should be, of the great country we live in. We do have a commitment to those who have and do wear the uniform of our nation.

The way to say thanks is to give the support that is needed. And it can't just be words. It needs to be shown in the actions of the general public and our public officials.

Again, I ask: do you truly remember the horrible day, September 11, 2001?

God Bless America and those who protect our way of life.



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

## Salute to Gold Star Mothers

The Merrimack Valley Military Family Support Group, a subcommittee of the American Red Cross Services to the Armed Forces Committee, will be coordinating a Salute to Gold Star Mother's Ceremony and Donation Drive. Proceeds from this event will benefit the Merrimack Valley Disabled Veteran's Home Ownership Program.

We cordially invite you and members of your organization to join us as we Salute our Fallen Heroes and refresh our commitment to never forget the sacrifice of our Gold Star Mother's and their families as they continue to perpetuate the noble principals for which their loved ones fought and died.

The event theme is "Fly For Freedom & Salute to Gold Star Mothers". Come & enjoy a family fun day of festivities, food and entertainment. Enjoy the freedom of flight for just .25 cents per pound of your body weight.

**When!** Sunday September 28th (National Gold Star Mother's Day)

From 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM

**Where!** Lawrence Airport located off Sutton Street in North Andover.

**(Salute to Gold Star Mothers Ceremony will starts at 9:00 am)**

On behalf of the Service to the Armed Forces Committee, I hope you are able to attend this special event. For additional information I can be reached at (978) 688-9525 or via email at veteranagent@comcast.net.

Chief Edward V. Mitchell, US Navy (Ret), Chairman, Service to the Armed Forces Committee

## Two Valley Patriots team up to help disabled veterans

Sue Piazza

VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

Recently a Committee Chairman of Chapter 2's gave me a newspaper article put out by King Features, titled "Veterans Post" (title appears next to a picture of the waving flag); the headline accompanying the article was "Problems With VA"? This article appeared useful for those dealing with the Veterans Administration. And it is, just not in the way one normally thinks.

A website for the Veterans Affairs Office of the Inspector General, and a hotline were listed. The newspaper piece stated that this hotline was set up to "either solve your problem, get the VA to respond to you, or direct you to a specific source of assistance."

It sounded really good, but there are some issues, as you will see. First I tried, unsuccessfully, to access the website, my internet provider informed me that the address may not be legal, and that the address/website may be trying to trick me. I called the telephone number on the article.

The telephone number on the article exists, and the woman answered the telephone "Office of the Inspector General." When asked about the website she explained that I had an incorrect address and she gave me another web address - but, I had problems with this loading as well. So far I have not been able to access their website. This makes me uncomfortable, and should make



PHOTO: SUE PIAZZA

Former Valley Patriots of the Month Francisco Urena, Lawrence Veterans Agent (I) and Harvey Gibeau, Commander DAV, Lawrence/Methuen Chapter 2. Urena dropped in to meet the new Commander and to drop off money recently collected from the employees at the Buckley Transportation Parking Garage in Lawrence.

anyone trying to access an unfamiliar address uncomfortable.

There is also another issue with this article - its misleading tenor.

It appears that this telephone number, website, and office are each designed to act as a resource for whistleblowers. The telephone number's recorded information states that this office is designed for

fraud, waste, abuse, mismanagement, criminal activities, etc. dealing with contractors doing VA work, VA employees not doing their job, etc. Those needing basic benefits information will not profit from the information in this article. To access timely accurate information regarding the Veterans Administration and/or benefits one should still go to the VA's official website

at [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov) or contact one's local veteran's agent.

This article does serve a purpose though - as a warning. If you find that you are having problems with a website, or that you call a person listed in an article and find that they are not who you thought they should be, be wary. Many people, especially in difficult economic times, try all kinds of innovative ways of accessing people's personal information.

I am not saying that this is what happened here, but what I am saying is that we must all be vigilant about information, what we think we are reading, hearing and/or seeing.

So, when in doubt, go to trusted officials. All our local veterans agents are insightful, dedicated people who are up to date on the latest benefit changes.

Or alternatively, if the computer is more your speed, the government's website (above), or one of the many veteran organization's websites (be it DAV, Am Legion, AMVETS, VFW, etc.) will help you.

Until next month I remain respectfully yours.



Susan Piazza is the past Commander, Chapter 2, Queen City, DAV and was the first female commander of the DAV in 75 years. She has been involved with the DAV for over twenty



# State launches new reverse mortgage web site for seniors

**BOSTON** – With the popularity of reverse mortgage loans on the rise among Massachusetts senior citizens, the Office of Consumer Affairs and Business Regulation (OCABR) and the Executive Office of Elder Affairs (EOEA) today launched a new web site, [www.mass.gov/reversemortgage](http://www.mass.gov/reversemortgage), to provide information and guidance to borrowers about these types of products.

Reverse mortgages are loans that enable senior homeowners, typically 62 years and older, to convert the equity in their home into income. Many seniors turn to these types of products to help supplement Social Security income or pay for unexpected expenses. A reverse mortgage lender typically lends the borrower money based on several factors, including the value of the property, the age of the borrower and the accumulated equity in the home. Borrowers have a choice of various payment options, including a lump sum payment at settlement, monthly installments or a line-of-credit that enables a borrower to draw money when he or she chooses, until the line of credit is exhausted. Repayment on the loan is generally not required until the borrower is deceased or does not permanently reside at the property.

“Reverse mortgages are extremely complicated products and consumers, beyond the required counseling, should make every effort to obtain independent legal and financial advice when considering one,” said Daniel C. Crane, Undersecretary of Consumer Affairs and Business Regulation. “It is important to appreciate the costs associated with these loans and that, over time, the loan will deplete the accumulated equity in your home.”

“There are many services available for Massachusetts elders who wish to continue to live in their homes. Seniors should contact their local elder service provider at 1-800-AGE-INFO to learn about what programs and services are available before entering into a complex and expensive reverse mortgage,” said Secretary of Elder Affairs Michael E. Festa. “We remind all consumers that, before they close on a reverse mortgage loan, they must get reverse mortgage counseling from an agency that is approved by the Executive Office of Elder Affairs.”

Consumers who are considering a reverse mortgage are strongly encouraged to:

- Review all aspects of the loan – lump sum, term loan, line of credit – to determine if any of these reverse mortgage options are well suited to their needs.
- Obtain independent legal and financial advice to understand the impact

of the transaction including any factors that may trigger repayment of the loan.

- Explore alternative products and resources with a reverse mortgage counselor and independent financial representatives. Often the availability of no-cost or low-cost programs and benefits for home repairs and energy assistance can reduce or eliminate the need for a reverse mortgage.
- Understand all obligations under the loan including the responsibility to pay homeowners insurance and property taxes.

Massachusetts Law provides seniors obtaining a reverse mortgage with some unique protections:

- **Mandatory Counseling:** All reverse mortgage borrowers must obtain counseling from a counselor approved by the Executive Office of Elder Affairs. Borrowers are strongly encouraged to participate in face-to-face counseling. “Comprehensive in-home or face-to-face counseling is invaluable to both borrowers and their families,” said Undersecretary Crane.
- **“Cooling off” Period:** Massachusetts law provides all reverse mortgage borrowers with a cooling off period which gives them the right not to proceed with the transaction for seven days after a loan commitment is issued by the mortgage lender.
- **Program Approval:** Massachusetts law requires all reverse mortgage programs to be approved by the Division of Banks. A list of approved reverse mortgage programs is available at [www.mass.gov/reversemortgage](http://www.mass.gov/reversemortgage). “It is important for all consumers who are considering obtaining a reverse mortgage to ensure that their mortgage lender’s program has been approved by the Division of Banks,” said Commissioner of Banks Steven L. Antonakes.

Len Raymond, Executive Director of Homeowner Options for Massachusetts Elders (H.O.M.E.), an approved reverse mortgage counseling agency in Massachusetts, stated, “A reverse mortgage should be the last resort for seniors. In-depth counseling is critical for any senior who is experiencing financial hardship. While all seniors can benefit by careful long-range planning, they should also be wary of high pressure sales tactics to obtain a reverse mortgage or to use the proceeds of a reverse mortgage to purchase annuities or other financial products.”

Additional information and resources can be found at the new web site [www.mass.gov/reversemortgage](http://www.mass.gov/reversemortgage).

Reverse mortgages are complicated products and Massachusetts consumers are encouraged to consult the web site or call the Division of Banks at (617) 956-1500 to address any questions they may have.

## Blaire House of Tewksbury

### A Continuum of Care Facility

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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.

Correction: Due to an editing mistake last month the above picture was incorrectly identified as an award granted by the Mass. VFW instead of the Mass. American Legion. We regret the error and humbly apologize to the great men and women of the American Legion.

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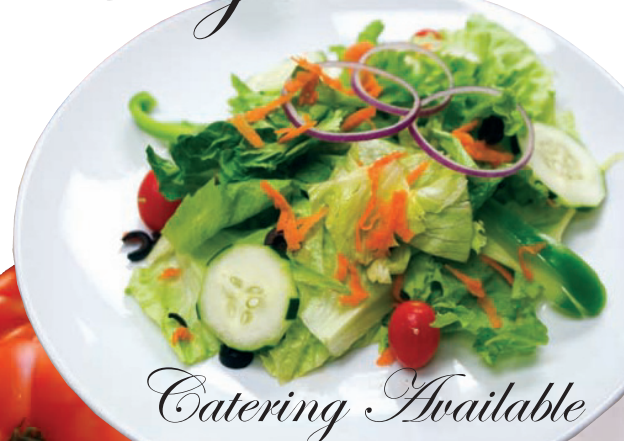
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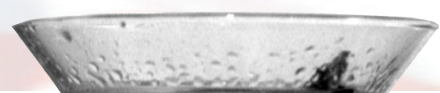
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# Hero in our Midst - Methuen's Joe Bella; From Page 1

retired and enjoying what he's doing and doing what he loves to do.

Today, his tireless public service continues, even on Labor Day, as his schedule was chock-full of places to go and people to see. Bella, originally from Lawrence, was born in 1946 to Alfred and Connie Bella. He has only one sibling, a sister, Angela. He was drafted into the United States Army on November 30, 1965 and at age 19, young and green, had never spent more than a week out of the New England area until he went to Basic Military Training at Fort Dix, NJ to begin his service in the Army.

He was then sent to Vietnam after Basic Military Training and training for his primary MOS in Field Artillery. His military service spanned almost 2 years, but he's been serving his country in many other ways since September 1967, when he returned to Methuen.

Returning to Methuen from Vietnam, he says he came back a completely different person. "I was changed for the better," He said, "The training I received was a healthy experience."

Bella was transformed from the young man of little experience to a marketable and able adult. He immediately took advantage of his Veteran's status to enter the civilian workforce enabling him to land a job at Craig Systems in North Andover, MA, a company that specializes

in the manufacturing of tankers, fuel oil trucks, fire trucks, buses, and containment shelters.

After about four years of employment there, he spent three years working for the Internal Revenue Service as a batching clerk. Afterward, he moved on to Western Electric out of North Andover and worked as a Reproduction Room Clerk and Stock Inventory Clerk for about seven years.

He then was hired and served as a Local Veteran's Employment Representative, through the Division of Employment and Training (DET). His position was to assist Veterans and to provide counsel for Veterans seeking employment and training. His professionalism and dedication to assisting Veterans was noticed by the American Legion, and as the result of his efforts Joe became a two time winner of the American Legion Local Veteran's Employment Representative of the Year award. This award is given to the individual that had placed the highest number of Veterans back in the workforce in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Bella served from 1975-2002 as a counselor and is now enjoying his retirement. He attended Northern Essex Community College and obtained his Associate's Degree in Liberal Arts with a Major in History, making the Dean's list twice.

Today, Bella is a man of many hats in the community. To name only a few, he served on the Immigrant City Archives as both President and Vice President; a board member of the Methuen Historical Society, serving as Vice President, and President; as Commissioner of the Methuen Historic Commission; and as president of the Friends of Lawrence Heritage State Park. Joe's collection of historical items can be seen and are often on display at the Heritage Park in Lawrence.

"I feel good about explaining stories of the past and it excites me to share them with others and I'm proud of this...it's a rewarding experience," he says. Also, noteworthy is

that some of Bella's photos have been used in local historical books.

Joe considers himself an "average Joe, no pun intended" he says. His awards with the American Legion are well deserved and you can sense this with his soft-spoken tone "Veterans (serving) are the most important part of our country's survival and we should try to honor them 24 - 7."

Besides being a history aficionado of sorts, Bella's labor of love is that of collecting newspapers, posters, post cards, and memorabilia - both old and new- of Lawrence, Methuen and American history in general. His love of photography allows him to immortalize those men and remind us of the mortality of the times and the risks they have taken to protect our way of life.

These historical mementos he collects reminds us of how our servicemen have paid the ultimate price for our freedom during the Civil War. Also known as the War Between the States, it is credited as the catalyst of social, political, economic and racial issues that continue to shape and reshape contemporary American thought.

Joe Bella is currently preparing to commemorate these fallen heroes from the 6 Regiment, "I" Company of the Union Army and has taken hundreds of photos of the soldiers' gravestones that served from the cities of Lawrence and Methuen, respectively.

He says that he is compelled to honor this specific group of American heroes in this "special project" of his, which will be his own publication. Joe is dedicated, he's preparing well in advance for the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Civil War, which will be 2011.

What's more, he is a Board member of the Lawrence Civil War Memorial Guard, a re-enactment group which memorializes the 6<sup>th</sup> Regiment, "I" Company from Lawrence.

Their claim to fame is that they marched through Baltimore on April 19, 1861, and were one of the 1<sup>st</sup> Regiments called up by President Lincoln to protect Washington D.C. a week after the first shots were fired at Fort Sumter, S.C.

If you would like more information regarding the 6<sup>th</sup> annual re-enactment, it will be held on September 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> at the Camp Campagnone Common in



PHOTO: CITY OF METHUEN  
L to R: Annie Harris, Executive Director of the ENHC, Historical Commission member Joe Bella and Methuen Historic Planner Lynn Smiledge at the grant awards event. July 8, 2006: The Methuen Historical Commission is awarded a \$4000 matching grant from the Essex National Heritage Commission (ENHC) to assist in preserving the City's invaluable museum collection and archives. The collection, which is housed temporarily in the John Hancock Masonic Hall, represents Methuen's single most important historical repository.

Lawrence, MA, contact Beth at 978-686-9881.

An elaborately choreographed re-enactment will be conducted at the place of its origin in Washington, D.C. in 2011.

His overall appreciation of the sacrifices of servicemen and women is evident in his words: "I like to show people that history should not be forgotten...the sacrifices of these men should not be forgotten," he continued. "I can relate...to having served in combat overseas and I feel like I'm a part of them and (I want to) bring history to the forefront."

On any given day, Joe Bella can be seen somewhere running around the Lawrence/Methuen area, serving veterans, volunteering in the community and reaching out to help the people of the Merrimack Valley.

Joe is this month's Valley Patriot and it is well deserved. Joe, the Valley Patriot salutes you. Thank you for your service to our great Nation and to our community, Sir!

*Tech. Sergeant James Moore is a recruiter for the United States Air Force and our Valley Patriot Hero Columnist. You can e-mail Sgt. Moore at James.Moore.73@us.af.mil or you can call him at 978-686-1464*

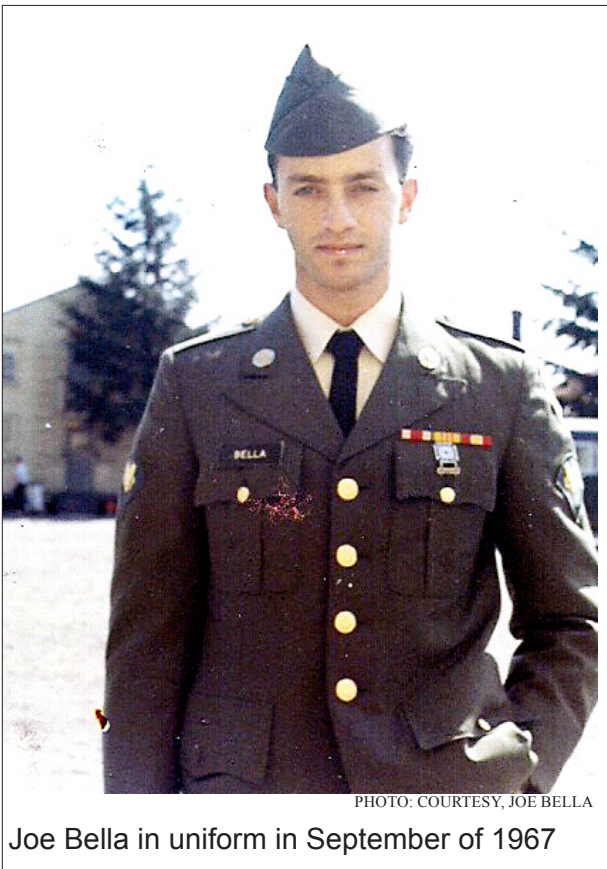


PHOTO: COURTESY, JOE BELLA  
Joe Bella in uniform in September of 1967

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Barbara Peary, M.Ed.  
VALLEY PATRIOT PARENTING SPECIALIST

**It seems that whenever I’m in the mall for any length of time I see my pet peeve, older children sitting in strollers with pacifiers in their mouths. We’re talking about children who look to be three or four. Ugh. Why do people do this?**

Beats me. Guess it goes back to the adage “children should be seen and not heard,” but it is ridiculous for a number of reasons. First, the child is learning that contentment is something in the mouth constantly. Secondly, the child can not talk about what he/she is seeing, hearing, smelling, or feeling. Perhaps parents do not want to hear the why, why, why questions that personify this age. Too bad, because the why, why, why shows the child is thinking. Something you suppose parents would want to encourage. Since children gain knowledge of the world by using their five senses, in this instance they are missing out of a lot of learning. Last of all, the parent pushing the carriage obviously has no interest in conversing with the child either. Major ugh!

**Am I selfish to need a break? My children are three and four years old and at this age they really keep me running. My husband suggested that I enroll them in some type of program for a few hours during the week, giving me some time to myself. I feel like this would be shirking my duties, as I have not gone back to work.**

You may feel more energetic when you are with your children and able to give them more of your full attention, if you occasionally take a break from them. Being so close in age to each other and so young, they are dependent on you for almost everything. Some days their needs must seem never ending.

Children normally love preschool programs that run for a few hours in the morning. Programs will have story time,

craft activities and free play inside and out. Centers often have unusual equipment; such as dramatic play areas and large blocks, that children would not have at home. You could sign them up for two mornings a week, which would give you a whopping six hours to yourself, minus travel time to and from. Don’t you deserve six hours in a week of one hundred and sixty-eight?

**At what age do you think young girls can start babysitting? My daughter is eleven.**

An eleven year old might start out as a parent helper, watching children while one of the parents is in the home. Most children this age are too young to be left alone with infants, toddlers, or preschoolers, but can gain experience by helping out in the presence of a responsible adult. It is not a question of lack of enthusiasm, but more of having the ability to make appropriate safety judgments. Check locally to see if a YMCA offers a babysitting course for youngsters so your child will have safety information and other practical tips given to her.

**My three teenagers clamor for fast food when we are traveling by car. I yak, yak, yak about the high fat content, lack of nutrition, etc. but it all seems to fall on deaf ears. Any other ideas as to how to get their attention?**

Rent Super Size Me a video/CD production by Morgan Spurlock. The storyline follows Mr. Spurlock as he eats all his meals for thirty days at a fast-food outlet. The consequences to his body are mind boggling. Should have more impact on your teenagers than your lectures.



Please send questions to  
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STAY AT HOME DADS

A day in the life of a stay at home dad

Pete Baylies  
VALLEY PATRIOT CONTRIBUTOR

*One morning when my David was five years-old and John was eight I penned a day in my life as an at-home dad... here goes!*

6:45 a.m. - John wakes up, everyone is sleeping, he’s waiting for 6:59 a.m.

6:59 a.m. - John runs into our bedroom and gets into the bed on my side and turns on the TV.

7:00 a.m. - I am woken up by the words of the Pokemon show. “I WANT TO BE THE VERY BEST, BUT NO ONE EVER CAN.... POKEMON!!” John cuddles on our bed to watch the show, I try to keep sleeping.

7:10 a.m. - Commercial comes on. John goes downstairs and gets his pet guinea pig. He brings it up, puts it on my head, this wakes me up.

7:15 a.m. - My son excitedly tells that the Pokemon characters, “Squirtle” “Diglett” “Poliwhirl” are evolving into something I also never heard of...well...I still don’t get it, I watch the TV trying to figure out this show.

7:20 a.m. - I give up and take a shower.

7:30 a.m. - My wife Susan, who has already gotten ready to go to her job, kisses me goodbye and leaves for her fourth grade teaching gig. Now it’s just John and David home with me.

7:40 a.m. - David wakes up and dragging his blankie comes to my bed like a zombie. I give John his clothes and he dresses. David is still in his favorite red pajamas.

7:50 a.m. – (Ten minutes until John has to get out the door for his 8 a.m. ride to school) John has a bowl of Frosted Wheaties, David wants his Frosted Wheaties mixed with “Magic Stars” cereal. The milk has to be just above the cereal so he can push the stars in the milk.

7:58 a.m. - If John’s lunch isn’t made, I throw in a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, water and a snack in his backpack and he is just out the door with minutes to spare for his ride.

8:00 a.m. - Now it is just David home with me, he is still in his favorite red pajamas.

8:00-10:00 a.m. - I set up a small play table for David and he cuts out pictures and draws while I clean the kitchen, empty (and fill) the dishwasher, do laundry (once a week). For a few hours the house is actually totally clean!! By five o’clock the house will look the same way it was before I cleaned it.

10:00 - 11:15 a.m.- David’s “belly hurts” I give him some water. I dress him. Today we decide to go to Toys R Us and buy John’s birthday present. We park my Buick Century in a crowd of huge SUVs. David goes bonkers as I rarely let him go into one of these conglomerate toy stores that look more like theme parks rather than stores. David decides that he wants everything in the store and heads towards a huge remote-control construction crane that retails for \$89.00. I grab a remote control car for John and steer David to a freezer filled with popsicles and he picks one out. Spending 99 cents for the pop-sicle, I get off easy. On the ride home he keeps telling me he wants the construc--tion crane. I explain that it cost too much money. He gives up asking for now, eat-ing his prize. The popsicle trick worked.

11:30 a.m. - We’re home, I feed David two burritos (his favorite lunch), dress him and tell him “it’s time to see your friend Allison” (his preschool teacher).

11:50 a.m.- I drive him to his preschool where he joins around 12 other four and five-year olds.

12:05 p.m. - Home alone for two-and-a-half hours! I work on my At-Home Dad newsletter and athomedad.com Web site. I check my e-mail from other at-home dad subscribers and also watch the stock market to check out any trades to make on my E\*Trade account. I check my “To-do” list and do the easiest thing on it. “Pay the bills.” The hours seem to pass buy in 10 minutes and its already time to pick up the kids again.

2:30 p.m. - Time to pick up the kids... I pick up David at 2:40 and in a crowd of 12 moms, I try to get David to stop play-ing in the playground and get in the car so I can make it to John’s school in time. David wants his shoes off in the car, I comply.

2:46 p.m.- I drive to John’s elementary school and wait in the “kids pick-up line.” While we are waiting, David reminds me that he still wants the construction set for

DADS, page 33

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RONNIE’S RANTS

Random thoughts for the Merrimack Valley

Ronnie Ford  
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

The Lawrence political cauldron is boiling like a Hawaiian volcano! The mayoralty contest looks like it’s going to receive John Romaro into its competition. Romero, the Chief of Police in Lawrence and a very well met individual is being urged mightily to run for the chief executive position. The chief would surely have strong support not only amongst the Hispanic community, but the population in general.

This brings us to Patrick Blanchette, the City of Lawrence Council President, and well liked member of the governing body. Patrick’s family is very well liked and jammed packed with political savvy. This could be a real interesting one, and probably be the plot for my first book! However, some sources say Patrick won’t even run.

Enter the name David Abdoo and also at his side Israel Reyes, both are hard campaigners. With Israel Reyes, if you go to the newsroom, you bump into him. This should be a good year for political fireworks!

I talked to Senator Steve Baddour about the rumor circulating that he is

supporting a certain candidate FOR Representative in Methuen. His answer, ” I only support the people of Methuen”. I guess that says it all. So for those candidates looking for support from the senator, forget it!

Speaking of Methuen, the name of Debbie Quinn has been bandied around running for mayor. Besides having a nice way about her persona, she makes every political get together in the Merrimack Valley south, as well as having the nicest legs in Northeast Massachusetts. I personally think she is going to stay out of that fight. Mayor Manzi has a well-oiled machine ready to go like the Minutemen of old. As my friend Mr. B always says about some people like Joe Carroll, when Manzi is in shorts, he looks as though he had rickets when he was a kid. But, his political adroitness is second to none.

Raising havoc on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Reich, was the job of a lot of brave people and excellent equipment, from 1941 to 1945. One of these sons of American ingenuity and engineering was the B-17 bomber. On a trip to the Condon Airport, I visited the “Aluminum Overcoat” a sister to the heroic “Memphis Belle”. It is a beautiful ship which is jam packed with 50 caliber

machine guns, twins and singles, which tore the hell out of the ME 109s, and the likes of not only Mersheschmit Foke Wolf, and others. Buried within this flying demise of the German Military, was also the guts, sweat, tears, and blood. Shivers all over were produced as I looked at the silver colored aircraft. It was breathtaking. Thanks to the airport manager Mike Miller and his staff for this museum like atmosphere at the No. Andover airport. Also my thanks to Joe Shaded for a great breakfast and lunch served daily at this great stop. Thanks also to the Airport Board of Directors.


Cpl. Brian McCabe, USMC, a combat veteran of Nam and Huey City, holder of the Purple Heart, and all around patriot, has a mission. Brian’s latest project is securing sweat suits for the Alzheimer’s ward of the VA Hospital at Bedford. Brian was talking to a woman at Big Lots. During the course of the conversation, the woman mentioned her husband is being treated for the disease and the clothing is difficult to maneuver. Sweats would be much easier to manipulate. Immediately, the ball was in McCabe’s court and he put out the word that he needs sweats any size, pants and pullover shirts, for these forgotten

Veterans. If anyone can help please call Ronnie at 978-686-3365. We need them!!

WOW! I don’t believe it! The Lawrence School Committee finally stood up like real people with brains and stood tall. At least three of them did. They actually voted down a ballooning salary of the superintendent of schools. Not only that, but the school board also voted not to increase the price of lunches for the students. Maybe they are catching on with taking care of the ones who need it and pruning the top-heavy administration. (Keep it up, your guts are showing)!

May the good Lord take a liking to you and do something nice for someone today. And we wish you enough.

Ronnie can be reached at [radiotalk@comcast.net](mailto:radiotalk@comcast.net)



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](mailto:Radiotalk@comcast.net)

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## From the Desk of: Methuen Mayor Bill Manzi

### Methuen/Dracut sewer project set to begin

The work on the Methuen Dracut Sewer project is set to begin shortly. Dracut has awarded the sewer project to Bridges LLC, with a tentative start date within the first two weeks of September. I will post more information on my blog as it becomes available. (billmanzi.com)

Methuen has concluded a major agreement on sewer infrastructure with the Town of Dracut that will bring enormous benefit to Methuen, as well as Dracut. In summary the highlights of this agreement are as follows.

1) Dracut will construct infrastructure to carry Dracut wastewater to the Greater Lawrence Sanitary District through Methuen at a cost of \$7.6 million dollars. Dracut will then turn over ownership of that infrastructure to Methuen.

2) Dracut will construct, as part of the above mentioned infrastructure, a new pump station in Dracut that will handle flows from Methuen.

3) Dracut will pay Methuen \$1.2 million dollars which will fund identification and removal of infiltration and inflow in this area. This "I&I" work will help to reduce stress on our system

and will reduce our flows to the Greater Lawrence Sanitary District, thereby saving our sewer ratepayers by reducing our bill at the Sanitary District.

4) Dracut agrees to fund repairs to the Burnham Road and Bolduc Street pump stations on a percentage basis, commensurate with their flows through those stations. These repairs obviously would have to be funded, absent this agreement, 100 percent by Methuen ratepayers.

5) Dracut, in a separate contract, has agreed to join the Greater Lawrence Sanitary District and pay an entrance fee of \$1.52 million dollars to the District. As a 40 percent owner of the facility Methuen derives a direct financial benefit from this capital charge to Dracut.

6) Dracut's flows to the Greater Lawrence Sanitary District will not require a plant upgrade, as the GLSD has existing capacity. These flows will be paid for by Dracut, and help to reduce Methuen's bill to the GLSD by spreading the plant expenses between a larger group of flows. It is another direct and tangible benefit to Methuen.

7) 40 Methuen homes, currently without sewer service, will now have sewer availability with no capital cost

charged. Another major benefit to Methuen residents.

Those who have made the ridiculous charge that there is no benefit to Methuen from this agreement certainly must be looking at a different contract than the one I negotiated with Dracut. I have made available a pdf with some more detail on my blog. This agreement is in the best interest of the City of Methuen, and provides Dracut with needed additional capacity to serve their citizens.

### Veteran Homestead Mobile Medical Unit coming to Methuen Local Veterans Will Receive Free Medical Service

Methuen Mayor Bill Manzi, in conjunction with the City of Methuen Veterans Services Office will be sponsoring a day-long medical clinic for veterans who are unable to access medical care because of transportation or homelessness. The Veteran Homestead Mobile Medical Unit will be set up in the parking area of the American Legion at 200 Broadway from 10-3 on September 8th. Routine health care, physicals, blood screenings, EKG's and other medical services will be offered. "I am very pleased that Methuen veterans will be able to receive these much needed medical services," Manzi said. "No one should go without health care,



PHOTO: TOM DUGGAN

least of all those who have served our country in the military." The van is operated by Veteran Hospice Homestead, a non-profit that provides homes for elderly veterans. They last visited Methuen in 2005. For further information, please contact the Methuen Veterans Services office at 978-983-8585.

### Francis T. Roberge Bridge Dedication, September 18, 2008

Mayor William M. Manzi III cordially invites you to attend the dedication of the Francis T. Roberge Memorial Bridge.



Methuen State Representative Linda Dean Campbell will be holding constituent hours every Friday from 10:30am - 11:30am at the Methuen Senior Activity Center, 77 Lowell St., Methuen, MA. No appointment necessary. Representative Campbell can be reached at home at 978-989-0722 or in her office at 617-722-2810.



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# Manzi Continued

Please join us in paying tribute to a loving friend and colleague. Thursday, September 18, 2008, 10am at the Spicket Falls Bridge. Parking at Mills Falls Apartments, 51 Osgood St., Methuen, MA. Information: Mayor's Office: 978-983-8505. For more details on the Bridge Dedication visit [billmanzi.com](http://billmanzi.com).

## Real Estate Tax Mailing Schedule Change

Effective July 1, 2008, the schedule for Real Estate and Personal Property bill mailings have changed. Please see the city of Methuen website for more information.

## Veterans Tax Rebate Information

Even though April 15 has passed, there is still time for Veterans to submit a 2007 form for an economic stimulus payment. In order to receive the payment, a 2007 tax return has to be on file showing earned income exceeding \$3000. Free tax help is available by calling Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) at 800-906-9887. Elders may contact the AARP at 888-227-7669. More Info: Methuen Veterans Services Office, 978-983-8585. Link to Details on Economic Stimulus Payments for Veterans

## City Assessor Data Collection Street List

The Methuen Department of Assessing is conducting the State Mandated 10-year

Measure and List. Officials from the City Assessor's office are circulating throughout the city, going to homes and collecting this necessary data. The following streets are currently being covered. Link to Current Assessing Data Collection Street List

## Trash and Recycling Collection

For all Methuen Residents who receive municipal trash and recycling collection services, please be advised that trash and recycling must be placed curbside by 7am on your collection day.

Trash should be placed separate from recyclables at the curb. The city will NOT pick up any materials put out after 7am, and the proper disposal of these materials will be the responsibility of the residents. Thank you for your cooperation. Methuen Dept. of Public Works, 978-983-8545.

## Special Assistance Registration Form

The Methuen Health Department and Emergency Management Department have developed a Special Assistance Registration Form to be completed by those citizens with special needs requiring help during emergency situations.

Please go to [billmanzi.com](http://billmanzi.com) and print, fill out and submit the form to the Methuen Health Department at the



PHOTO: TOM DUGGAN

Methuen City Councilor Jennifer Kannan and State Representative Linda Dean Campbell serve ice cream at the Senior Center with Councilor Jean Pappalardo (leaning off camera). Campbell took time away from her campaign for reelection to help out Councilor Kannan who sponsored the Ice Cream Social for the seniors of Methuen.

address provided. Link to Special Assistance Registration Form

## State Rep. Campbell Constituent Hours

Methuen State Representative Linda Dean Campbell holds constituent hours on Fridays from 10:30am - 11:30am at the Methuen Senior Activity Center, 77 Lowell St., Methuen, MA. No

appointment necessary. State Representative Campbell can be reached at home at 978-989-0722 or in her office at 617-722-2060. Thank you.



Bill Manzi is in his second, two year term as the Mayor of Methuen. You can read his blog at [billmanzi.com](http://billmanzi.com) or email him at [billmanzi1@comcast.net](mailto:manzi1@comcast.net)

# LAROCQUE: from page 9

Something else that we should mention is the health benefit that our children would receive from walking to and from school on a daily basis. Childhood obesity is an epidemic according to the United States Acting Surgeon General Rear Admiral Steven K. Galson, M.D., M.P.H., in a speech he delivered during his visit to Lawrence on June 30, 2008. Walking is a healthy exercise that could provide the help needed in fighting obesity for some of our students.

So in conclusion, if in the future the City of Lawrence decided to eliminate providing transportation to students who are not protected by law, it could do so only after providing the safety measures previously discussed. This would take an all out commitment from every citizen of Lawrence along with its city officials, elected or employed, including the Lawrence Police Department enforcing

the Law of the roads. This effort must include all parents or guardians, voicing their opinion on this topic. So please let us all give this some thought before we rush and use our erasers in preparing our future budgets. This is a decision that involves the entire city and must be debated and discussed openly and honestly at future City Budget Forums conducted by the Mayor of the City and the Budget and Finance Director. This is not a decision to be left up to POLITICIANS. God Bless [peterlarocque@hotmail.com](mailto:peterlarocque@hotmail.com)



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](mailto:peterlarocque@hotmail.com)

# PLEASE VOTE Sept 16th

If you don't vote, we don't want to hear you whining about how bad things are!

Valley Patriot editors

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# Are You Prepared For Your Parents’ Senior Years?

**Greg Loosigian**  
NEW YORK LIFE INSURANCE

Many people face their parents’ retirement and aging without a second thought, assuming that Mom and Dad are in good financial shape and ready for the golden years. Making this assumption can be a serious mistake. You and your folks may think they are adequately prepared for retirement, but how far down the road have they looked?

With average life expectancy increasing, it’s not uncommon for people to live 10-20 years (if not longer) after retiring. A great deal can happen in that time, and life’s events don’t always work out as planned. Culprits such as inflation and illness can wipe out a nest egg and undermine the financial independence of even the best-prepared retiree.

**Inflation and Illness Can Turn a Nest Egg into a Goose Egg**

Inflation can seriously erode money’s purchasing power over time. Even with an average inflation rate of 4%, retirees at age 60 with an income of \$2,500/month will have the purchasing power of

\$1,388/month by the time they’re 75 years old. In other words, the standard of living will be virtually halved in just 15 years. Many retirees today have found themselves searching for part-time jobs in order to keep up with the rising cost of living. But no one can work forever. And major illness can wipe out—in mere months—a nest egg that took years to build.

When retirees’ savings are depleted, it adversely affects the next generation, too—usually at the worst possible time. Frequently, adult children of senior citizens are working to provide for their own households and futures. Too often, they become saddled with the cost of supporting their parents while still trying to meet their own household expenses. It’s a tough balancing act to try to sustain.

**Plan in Advance**

Start with a meeting of the generations to discuss everyone’s plans, wishes, and concerns. Here are some topics to tackle and questions to ask:

\* Will your parents’ retirement funds be adequate? Inflation and longer life

expectancies may make retirement costlier than they’ve anticipated.

\* What supplemental funds are available?

\* Who will manage their finances if they cannot? Discuss long-term financial plans, the location of records, and the possibility of establishing a contingent power of attorney to step in and help during an emergency.

\* What are their estate plans?

\* When and how will they distribute their property, especially if they become incapacitated?

\* Are there any charitable endeavors or causes they wish to contribute to?

\* Do they have updated wills and an executor who knows their wishes?

\* Are their insurance programs adequate? Without adequate coverage, a single illness could wipe out an otherwise ideal retirement plan. (Some children cost-share their parents’ premiums for Medicare Supplement or Long-Term Care

insurance, for example. They see it as a wise investment in their parents’ future.)

\* What about life insurance?

\* Do they have special requests, such as living wills, trusts, lifetime gifts, etc.?

\* Where would they want to live, if incapacitated? (Discuss nursing home and home health care options.)

Generally, parents and children feel uncomfortable discussing these matters. It’s important to do this in a way that puts both generations at ease. One solution is to work with a group of professionals—such as an attorney, tax advisor and insurance agent. These individuals are familiar with retirement and estate conservation issues, and can help facilitate communication while providing specific expertise.

For more information on insurance and other products that can be used to help you and your parents prepare for the future, please contact Gregory J. Loosigian, Financial Services Professional, New York Life Insurance Company, at 781-398-9823. - G01 00334073CV

# How many wives is too many?

**John Stossel**  
GUEST COLUMNIST

"Texas authorities on Tuesday indicted the leader of a polygamous sect ... on charges of felony sexual assault on a minor, the first criminal charges to stem from a massive raid on the group's West Texas compound," The Los Angeles Times reported last week (<http://tinyurl.com/6oenlz>).

The Associated Press and other media used similar words: "indicted polygamist sect leader Warren Jeffs ... charges of felony sexual assault of a child" (<http://tinyurl.com/6bwyo>).

Straightforward reporting? In my "20/20" special "Sex in America" (<http://tinyurl.com/6zyxb6>), polygamy activist Mark Henkel said no, it's an ignorant distortion.

"The media kept saying, 'Polygamist leader, polygamist leader,'" Henkel told me. "But the case actually involved incest and arranged marriage of a girl with her 19-year-old cousin. There wasn't anything [that] had to do with polygamy. [Jeffs] wasn't called an incest leader. He wasn't

called an underage-marriage leader. He was called a polygamist leader."

Henkel and his website, TruthBearer, ([www.truthbearer.org](http://www.truthbearer.org)), campaign against the media and others who lump criminals like Jeffs with all polygamy.

Henkel won't reveal his own family situation. In Maine, where he lives, even purporting to have more than one wife is against the law. Henkel complains that American laws are hypocritical.

"Someone like a Hugh Hefner will have a successful television show with three live-in girlfriends! And that's all OK, and he's making great money, and that's all fine and great entertainment. But suddenly, if that man was to marry them, then suddenly he's a criminal. That's insane!"

Many people, when they hear the word "polygamy," think of fundamentalist Mormons living in cults, but the truth is that there's lots of polygamy in America that has nothing to do with that. First of all, polygamy was banned by the mainstream Mormon Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in 1890 and is grounds for excommunication. For my

"20/20" special, we interviewed Jewish and evangelical Christian polygamists. Henkel's website is subtitled "Organization for Christian Polygamy." He estimates that there are 100,000 polygamists in America.

Ten years ago, University of Georgia Professor Patricia Dixon thought polygamy exploited women.

Then she embarked on a study of it.

"I was transformed by the experience."

She spent years living with different polygamous communities. She was surprised to find that polygamy was not about men exploiting women.

"It's female-centered. The women are the ones who are benefiting. ..."

Wouldn't most people say it's about the men getting more sex with more women?

"It's not about another notch on your belt or anything like that. It really is the women who really promote this idea."

Plural marriage is common around the world. In the United States most get married in religious ceremonies but keep quiet about it because what they do is illegal.

The families we met wonder why what they do is illegal. Clearly it's wrong if an older man arranges marriages of young kids, but when adults choose to live this kind of life, why is that evil?


"Because we need marriage for the good of society. I think if we were to see this across the range of society the effect would be negative," Peter Sprigg of the

Family Research Council ([www.frc.org](http://www.frc.org)) told me. He added, "Slavery and polygamy were the twin relics of barbarism. Those are barbaric societies that we've tried to move beyond."

Plenty of religious leaders agree with Sprigg, but Mark Henkel isn't buying it. "If they're saying that's immoral, they're calling the greatest heroes in the Bible ... immoral! ... Saying that Abraham, with his three wives, was immoral. Jacob had four wives. David had seven known named wives before Bathsheba."

Prince Ben-Israel, who has four wives, calls plural marriage a civil-rights issue. "Who is this government that's in somebody's bedroom? ... It was illegal for me to marry a white woman at one time. ... It was illegal for me to vote at one time. And if I had accepted somebody else's definition of what was right and wrong, I would still be riding in the back of the bus.

"We're not saying this is for everybody. Everybody don't like football and basketball or tennis. But those who do oughta be free to do this."



 John Stossel is co-anchor of ABC News' "20/20" and the author of "Myth, Lies, and Downright Stupidity," which is now out in paperback. To find out more about John Stossel and read features by other Creators Syndicate writers and cartoonists, visit the Creators Syndicate Web page at [www.creators.com](http://www.creators.com). COPYRIGHT 2008 BY JFS PRODUCTIONS, INC.

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THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

*“Just because you do not take an interest in politics doesn’t mean politics won’t take an interest in you!”*

*-Pericles (430 B.C.)*



# DADS : From Page 28

his birthday. I pick John up along with three neighborhood kids and take a LOUD three-minute ride home where I hear elementary school jokes.

Joke #1 from my son John:

Q: Why did the spider log on to his computer? A: To find his Web site

Joke # 2 from my fourth grade neighbor Jared:

Q: How did Michael Jackson get cow manure on his shoes? A: He did a moooooooon walk.

Being home for seven years, and having no exposure to office humor, these jokes are actually funny to me.

3:00 - 4:00 p.m. - I separate my two boys so John can do his homework, putting David in one room with a coloring book and John in the kitchen to do his homework in quiet - He does his spelling test and math homework.

4:00-5:00 p.m.- John has three friends come over and they watch Pokemon and trade cards, I play with David.

5:00-6:00 p.m. - Wife Susan comes home, asks "what's for supper," I either cook something quick or we order out or have something actually planned for supper or she whips up something quick, (She

somehow can make a full course meal in seconds, not sure how this is possible). The kids help clean up putting the plates in the dishwasher, nothing breaks.

6:00-8:00 p.m. - We play a game, watch a video or John finishes up any homework left undone.

8:00 p.m. - Kids go to bed. My wife puts John to bed, I put David to bed. David and I play the "I spy flashlight game" a game he made up where in the dark we point a flashlight to parts of any kids book and tells me what he sees and I have to try to find it with the flash light. He loves it, and would probably play it 'til midnight if I let him.

Before he goes to bed he says "Daddy...I will make YOU a deal. You don't have to get me the construction crane I wanted today, you can get me any thing you want from that store for my birthday." I'm relieved; I probably just saved \$89.00. But he's such a good kid I will probably get it for him anyhow.



Peter Baylies lives in North Andover and is the author of the *At-Home Dad Handbook*, provides free resources for stay-at-home dads at [athomedad.com](http://athomedad.com). E-mail: [athomedad@aol.com](mailto:athomedad@aol.com) for more information.

# EXTENDED LEARNING: From Page 13

represents a significant positive impact in the community.

Summer school, as well as extended learning throughout the school year, is offered so that students may have a second opportunity to succeed. While not insignificant, the cost of supporting students with extended learning programs during the school year and in the summer pales in comparison to the burden associated with students continuing to fail. Not only is it a wise investment in this sense, but it is also our moral imperative to provide these opportunities for every student.

Our mission in the Lawrence Public Schools is to create a college going culture for all students. This means implementing a rigorous curriculum that prepares students

with cognitive skills to succeed in today's economy and society—not just providing basic reading and computation skills. This means providing students with limited English proficiency and students with learning challenges the resources and the opportunity to master academic content the same as every other student—not lowering our expectations and taking a path of least resistance.

This also means creating a college going culture for every single student—not just those who run the race quickly.



Dr. Wilfredo T. Laboy is in his 9th year as the Superintendent of the Lawrence Public Schools. He may be contacted at [wlaboy@lawrence.k12.ma.us](mailto:wlaboy@lawrence.k12.ma.us)

# UMASS: From Page 8

partnership that has developed between the partners, including the city of Lawrence and UMass Lowell," said June Black, regional coordinator for U.S. Rep. Niki Tsongas, who represents the Fifth Congressional District, including Lawrence and Lowell.

The research and training conducted in Lawrence will be used as a national model for worker safety programs elsewhere around the country.

"As mayor, I am supportive of the Proteccion en Construccion project with our partners at UMass Lowell. This project is the first of its kind in the nation; I know we will have great success," said Lawrence Mayor Michael J. Sullivan.

"Latino workers are the fastest growing percentage of construction workers," said Michael Gagliardi, business manager for Laborers Local 175. "It is our hope the research we conduct will become a national model to ensure Latino workers are safe in the workplace."

UMass Lowell, with a national reputation in science, engineering and technology, is committed to educating students for lifelong success in a diverse world and conducting research and outreach activities that sustain the economic, environmental and social health. UML offers its 11,000 students more than 120 degree choices, internships, five-year combined bachelor's to master's programs and doctoral studies in the colleges of Arts and Sciences, Engineering and Management, the School of Health and Environment, and the Graduate School of Education. [www.uml.edu](http://www.uml.edu).

# Energy: From Page 3

Americans are among the most innovative people in the world. With encouragement and freedom we will find long term, inexpensive, and safe alternatives to our oil-based economy. We need Congress to do its job without hindering the citizens from doing theirs.

Richard Baker is the Republican nominee for Congress from the Massachusetts 6<sup>th</sup> Congressional District. He is the Director of Intellectual Property Licensing at 3Com Corporation in

Marlborough. Rich is an inventor of Ethernet and Web technologies with 15 US patents to his name. He has served on the Pentucket Regional School Committee. A talented problem-solver, Mr. Baker has years of solid experience building teams in the corporate arena where he created and organized numerous successful and profitable legal, engineering, and technical groups.

Rich Baker lives in West Newbury with his wife and his son.

# LOWELL: From Page 20

Poor attendance results in poor revenue for all involved. Consequently, the city of Lowell has been subsidizing the arena's operation with up to \$1.5 million per year, a condition that cannot continue. There is growing sentiment that the city should cut its losses immediately by finding a way to transfer the arena to UMass Lowell. Such a move, however, would be short-sighted and would deprive the city of one of its most valuable assets.

Remember, none of the original plans for the arena involved a professional hockey franchise. While seeing "Lowell" on the AHL schedule evokes civic pride, it also eats up 40 prime dates of arena availability that could otherwise be used for concerts, trade shows and other events.

If the hockey games were well attended, the resulting revenue might offset the loss of other activities, but hockey attendance has always been abysmal. A

fair evaluation of the arena's viability can only be made after the professional hockey team departs which will presumably occur in 2010 when its lease expires. With the AHL era over, the region's hockey fans will gravitate to the very competitive Hockey East games played by the UMass Lowell River Hawks and the arena's management team will finally have a chance to bring in the kind of money making events that were originally contemplated for the arena. Only after that occurs will the city be able to accurately assess the arena's profitability and make a reasoned decision about its future.



Richard P. Howe Jr. is the creator of [www.richardhowe.com](http://www.richardhowe.com), a blog that provides commentary on politics in Lowell. He also serves as Register of Deeds of the Northern District of Middlesex County. You can email him at [lowelldeeds@comcast.net](mailto:lowelldeeds@comcast.net)

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8	7	9	5	6	4	1	3	2
3	1	6	2	9	7	4	5	8
7	9	4	6	8	5	3	2	1
2	8	3	1	7	9	6	4	5
5	6	1	4	3	2	8	7	9

Puzzle by websudoku.com

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R	O	U	T	E	C	O	V	E	B	A	N	E
M	A	R	I	A	O	N	I	T	C	U	T	E
S	T	A	R	S	T	U	D	D	E	D	N	I
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V	A	C	A	N	T	S	A	L	S	A		
A	L	O	T	T	O	O	L	C	U	T	U	P
M	O	O	N	L	I	G	H	T	S	O	N	A
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- Ensures the accuracy of department files and materials; maintains highly confidential department files for the Police Chief and the Deputy Police Chief.
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**Appointing Authority: Michael J. Sullivan, Mayor**

Posting Date: 9-8-08      Deadline: 9-19-08

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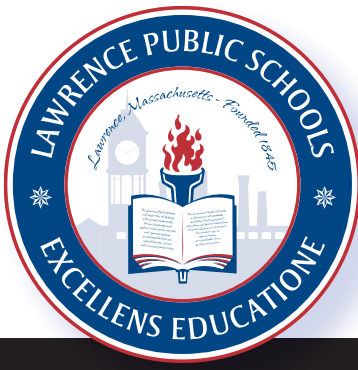


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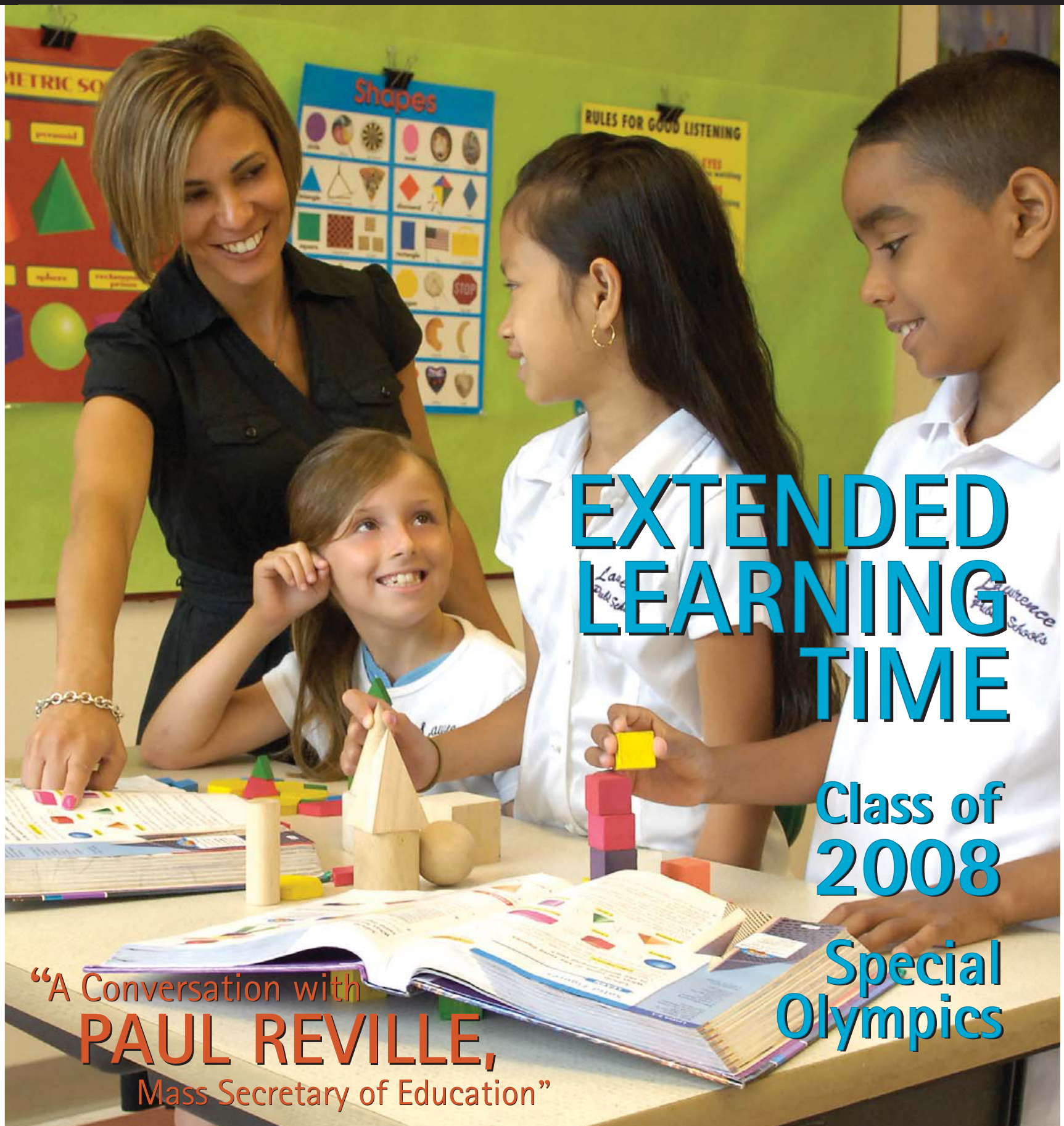
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