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

Judge orders 14 N. Andover school employees to be deposed

Tom Duggan VALLEY PATRIOT REPORTER

valleypatriot.com

The Town of North Andover, The North Andover School Committee and Stephen M. Fortado, the North Andover School Department Business Administrator, are being sued for \$200,000.00 by a former school department employee.

A Complaint filed in U.S. District Court last year by Donna Sovie, former Payroll Coordinator for the North Andover School Department claiming breach of contact, defamation and infliction of emotional distress has been making it's way through the court system and last month a Judge Gorton allowed up to 15 depositions to be taken on the suit. The judge ruled that depositions will be limited to 20 hours.

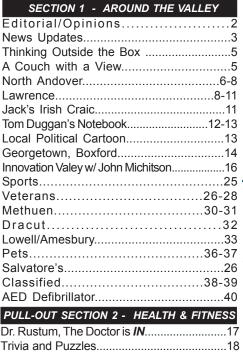
On March 16, 2009 Stephen Fortado, Barbara Whidden, then Chair of the North Andover School Committee and Acting Superintendent Jim Marini all signed certifications to use what's called an "alternative dispute resolution program" as a way of resolving this matter. According to court documents, Sovie's lawyer plans to take the depositions of fourteen witnesses, a majority of whom are employees of the North Andover Public Schools.

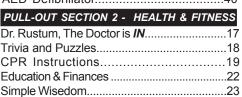
In her Complaint, Sovie alleges that the Town, the School Committee and Fortado breached their employment contract with her when she was fired on April 30, 2007. Her lawsuit further alleges that to justify its breach of contract, town official, including members of the School Committee and business administrator Stephen Fortado solicited employees to make negative comments about her job performance.

Sovie contends that the comments made against her were false and intended to (and did) bring humiliation, ridicule and emotional pain and suffering, the legal documents filed with the court reveled.

The lawsuit also claims that Sovie lost income as well as her ability to continue to earn an income because of harm done to her reputation by officials in the town of North Andover.

Town officials who would only speak to The Valley Patriot off the record said they knew nothing of the lawsuit and were surprised that former Chairman Barbara Whidden did not notify them or the public about the suit. The Town of North Andover, The North Andover School Committee and Stephen M. Fortado are being represented by the Law firm Brody, Hardoon, Perkins & Kesten of Boston.





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Local Cartoonist Dave Sullivan of **Dracut**

IN MEMORY OF A FALLEN VALLEY PATRIOT

IRISH BRESNAHAN

Lonnie Brennan VALLEY PATRIOT HERO REPORTER

"We don't have time, we're running out of time," Retired U.S. Army Captain Agnes "Irish" Bresnahan prophetically whispered as she explained her Vietnamera Agent Orange exposure in an April 2008 Valley Patriot interview.

'There is no cure, no treatment. It just keeps coming and we are dying," she explained referring the many former soldiers who shared her illness.

On March 11, 2009, less than a year after honoring the Valley Patriot as our May 2008 Valley Patriot of the Month, and just two days after providing testimony

for her Agent Orange exposure in Washington, D.C., Capt. Bresnahan passed at George Washington University Hospital.

In our 2008 interview, the frail yet spiritually spunky (then 57-year old) attributed her long illness to state-side Agent Orange exposure during basic training in the 70s at the U.S. Army's Chemical Center and School at Ft. McClellan in Alabama. Over the years. Capt. Bresnahan has been tireless in her efforts to inform Congress and the Veteran's Administration about the plight of state-side Agent Orange exposure, and

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"I gave me life to my country" - Agnes "Irish" Bresnahan



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Tribune owes readers an explanation

Last month, The Eagle~Tribune website reported that a suitcase with a cell phone taped to it was left on the steps of Lawrence District Court with a note that read "Call police, call the Tribune, call Tom Duggan". (Tom Duggan is editor of The Valley Patriot).

The story was picked up by dozens of other news media outlets, repeating on television, radio and on the web that the note left at the scene said "Call police, call the Tribune, call Tom Duggan."

Shortly before 5pm that day, however, The Eagle Tribune changed their story on the web concerning the contents of the note with no explanation and no reference to what they had previously reported. This second version of The Eagle Tribune story claimed that the bomb note read "Call police, call the media".

There was no mention of Tom Duggan's name being previously reported on the bomb note, there was no explanation given nor did they admit that a mistake had been made. It wasn't the first time the Eagle Tribune had incorrectly reported a story about our Valley Patriot editor and refused to come clean about the real facts. But at this point nobody knows for sure if their first story was correct and they purposely removed Duggan's name from the story or, it was incorrect and they just refuse to explain the disparity in their reporting.

As if that wasn't confusing enough for the public, (not to mention the person whose name was reportedly ON A BOMB NOTE) the Tribune actually printed a *third* version of the bomb note story claiming on April 1st that the note read "contact the FBI, the bomb squad and all news channels."

We at The Valley Patriot are well aware that mistakes happen and everyone is human. But three different versions of the same story being published with no correction, no explanation, and no clarification as to why this happened is no longer a mistake. It is a cover up and one that defamed the editor of our newspaper.

Shortly before we went to print, The Valley Patriot was informed by a member of the state police as well as the Lawrence Police department that Valley Patriot editor Tom Duggan's name was NOT left on the bomb note and that The Eagle~Tribune had, at best misrepresented the facts or at worst, simply made up that part of the story.

If it sounds like you've heard this story before you have. Last year when a young man died in a car accident the Eagle published a story blaming Duggan for spreading rumors about that boys death, causing immeasurable pain for their family.

We believe that when a newspaper or media outlet (including this one) gets a major fact in a news story incorrect they should correct the information, explain why it was reported incorrectly and if warranted, an apology be issued.

None of that happened here. In fact, the editors of The Tribune just go on with their day to day operations, pretending as if nothing ever happened, no story was changed and no wrong has occurred.

As of the minute this newspaper went to print, nobody at The Eagle has ever bothered to correct the record or explain exactly why there are now three different versions of this story.

We believe The Eagle Tribune editors owe Tom Duggan and their readers a public explanation about their reporting on this story.

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We respect the anonymity of our sources if requested.

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Corrections; Please contact the editor at valleypatriot@aol.com

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President: Tom Duggan, Jr. **VP/Director:** Ralph Wilbur **Editor:** Dr. Charles Ormsby

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LETTERS

To the Editor:

The fulfillment of a dream is never attained simply through wanting. Patience, hard work, perseverance and, most importantly, the commitment of believers is what turns a dream into reality. For years the staff and trustees of Merrimack Valley Hospice dreamed of building a Hospice House to offer compassionate, comprehensive end-of-life care to patients who cannot remain at home during their final days. Our dream is almost realized, with the construction of a Hospice House on North Avenue in Haverhill nearing completion. We didn't do this alone – our friends across the Merrimack Valley, through gifts large and small, donated nearly \$4.4 million in support of this important project. We're almost there, but not quite. Now, we need your help to reach our \$5 million goal. The Hospice House has been meticulously designed and will include 14 private suites for patients and their families, as well as unique shared spaces that create a tranquil feeling including living rooms and gathering areas, a family kitchen, library,

sanctuary and beautiful gardens. Two of the rooms can be converted to children's rooms complete with a crib and rocker.

In the coming weeks we'll be writing to our friends and neighbors asking for support of this important project. Please give thoughtful consideration to this request and know that donations of all sizes matter and will help. Your contribution will help us bring comfort to a husband with young children who is struggling to care for his ailing wife, a frail, elder hoping to remain by her dying husband's side, or an ill child needing round-the-clock care..

To make a gift today, please call Vicki Kelley at 978-552-4162 or visit www.merrimackvalleyhospice.org. Your gift of any size matters and will make a difference. On behalf of the patients and families that will find comfort in this special house, thank you for your consideration of support. We remain dedicated in our belief and ever grateful to all who join us in achieving this dream.

Joan Stygles Hull RN, MBA, President/CEO

Dracut's "Backroom Deal Bonnie" is at it again

To the editor:•

Bonnie Elie recently announced her intentions to run as a candidate for Dracut School Committee this May. There are three candidates currently campaigning for two seats and Bonnie is by far the worst! As a member of the Dracut School Committee from 1999-2002, Mrs. Elie developed the well-deserved reputation of being the Queen of Backroom Deals!

"Backroom Deal" Bonnie Elie served as a member of the Dracut School Committee from 1999-2002 under the Ancien Regime. During this time, she questioned hardly anything substantial and served largely as a "Yes" person for the former Superintendent of Schools and missed countless school committee meetings. She also played an active role in managing her friend Karen Frederick's campaign for Dracut School Committee. which led to the "sweetheart deal" 6-Year contract of the former Superintendent and resulted in the hiring of two former Dracut School Committee members for administrative positions.

It is hardly surprising that Bonnie sanctioned this behavior since the former Superintendent gave her daughter a teaching position at one of Dracut's elementary schools. What were the results of the policies and practices supported by Bonnie Elie? Low student MCAS test scores, below average student performance on SAT college admission tests, higher student drop-out rates, failure to meet Adequate Yearly Progress in special education, higher in-school and out-of-school suspension rates, poor student attendance, lagging student achievement at colleges, and Commonwealth citations for the

inefficiencies and poor management of the food service department.

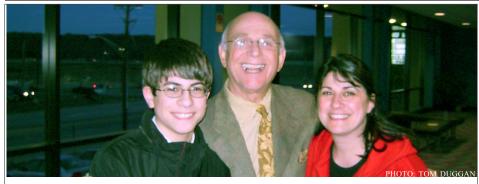
Now, we have to listen as "Backroom Deal" Bonnie tells us how Dracut Schools should be run! Give me a break! Remember the good-ole-days, Bonnie? Those were the days of nepotism, political favoritism, corruption, and back-room deals? Those were the days when former Selectman Warren Shaw called the shots on the Dracut School Committee! Thus, it is hardly surprising that Shaw is promoting 'Backroom Deal' Bonnie's campaign. Those were the days when individuals were made high school principals that had never been classroom teachers. It is no wonder why Dracut is lagging so far behind.

It's going to take time to undo the years of poor management in Dracut Public Schools. Dracut schools have progressed a long way under the current Superintendent, Spencer Mullin. To start with, qualifications and credentials, not political connections, have become the most important criteria for hiring employees.

With Dracut High School due for reaccreditation, our Town cannot afford to take a backwards turn. Dracut High School is in danger of losing its accreditation due to years of neglect. I hope that the voters of Dracut take this into consideration when they vote on Monday, May 4th.

D.J. Deeb

D.J. Deeb is a former member of the Dracut School Committee and currently serves as Vice-Chair of the Greater Lowell Regional Vocational-Technical School Committee.



Gavin MacLeod (m) from "The Love Boat" at last year's Christian Film Festival at the Showcase Cinemas in Lawrence with N. Andover resident Joe Latorre and his mom.

Merrimack Valley Christian Film Festival returns for the 17th consecutive year.

What began at the old Salem Tri Cinemas on route 28 in Salem, NH back in 1993 during Easter Week is back for its 17th consecutive year. For the first time it will be held in theaters # 7 & 8 at the new Showcase Cinema Complex on Rte 114 behind Denny's Restaurant and the New Lawrence High School. The Merrimack Valley Christian Film Festival was originally expected to be a one-time event. However, after 12,000 people viewed the 4 movies shown (all free of charge) at that very first film festival, Tom Saab and his volunteers realized that they had something very special. After the outstanding response, the Merrimack Valley Christian Film Festival became an annual event.

Then in 1996, Mr. Saab was invited to the Central Coast of California to direct a Christian Film Festival in the Salinas area, and Christian Film Festivals of America, Inc., a non-profit corporation was born.

Tom Saab, has now directed 35 Christian Film Festivals. Besides the 16 here in the Merrimack Valley, 4 have been held on the Central Coast of California, 2 in Southern California, 3 in South Carolina, 6 in Orlando, FL, 2 in Syracuse and one each in Memphis, TN, and Rochester, NY. They have now seen approximately 350,000 men, women, teenagers and children attend their festivals.

On Palm Sunday, April 5 through Easter Sunday, April 12, the 17th Annual Merrimack Valley Christian Film Festival will take place. <u>Admission is completely free to all shows at all times.</u>

This year's film festival features a number of outstanding new motion pictures including: *Fireproof*, starring

Kirk Cameron in which he plays a fire fighter in a struggling marriage on the verge of a divorce.

This film was a huge success in different areas of the country this past fall and we are expecting a large turnout for this tremendous movie.

Saving God, starring Ving Rhames, Dean McDermott and Ricardo Chaves is a powerful film about an ex-con turned church pastor [Ving Rhames]. The movie deals with real life situations (i.e. drugs, gangs and violence) and features one of the most emotional endings to a movie ever produced.

Billy: The Early Years of Billy
Graham starring Martin Landau, Armie
Hammar, Jennifer O'Neil and Lindsey
Wagner, is the true story of how Billy
Graham became a Christian and the early
years of his ministry.

The Secrets of Jonathan Sperry starring Gavin MacLeod is an inspirational masterpiece for ages 9 to 90.

Pilgrim's Progress ~ Journey to Heaven is an epic adventure based on the best selling book written by John Bunyan. There will also be children's matinees featuring the brand new short film Beyond the Sky with great special effects, plus 2 brand new VeggieTales films.

For the complete movie schedule, or to download a poster or for other information, please go to www.christianfilmfestival.org or call us at 978-686-4242.

Donations are greatly appreciated to help defray the cost to bring this free film festival into the Merrimack Valley area. Donations can be sent to: Merrimack Valley Christian Film Festival -25 Jackson St., Methuen, MA 01844





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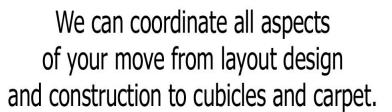






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THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX

Down the rabbit hole and back again

Lessons Learned by a Libertarian in Education La La Land

Dr. Charles Ormsby VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST AND EX-MEMBER
OF THE N. ANDOVER SCHOOL COMMITTEE

If there is a consensus in society about anything, it would probably concern the importance of education. Now that I think about it, I can't remember speaking with anyone who didn't believe that education was very important and that we should do a better job providing educational opportunities for our children.

Since we all share this common goal, why is it that education issues are so controversial and why are education outcomes so abysmal?

As I take you on a tour down the rabbit hole of public education we will be entering a wilderness of mirrors. Nothing is what it first appears to be. Almost everything is upside down or inside out.

You can dismiss the observations that follow. Characterize them as the ravings of a deranged conservative/libertarian if you wish. But if you really care about education – not baby sitting or daycare, but real academic achievement – then take out a notepad and a pencil and learn from someone who descended into the bowels of the education establishment, toured the plantation, and made it back alive.

Let's get some preliminaries out of the

Is everyone in the public education establishment evil? Of course not.

Do they care about education? For the most part, yes. In fact, that is why most of them entered the profession. Is the system rife with waste and inefficiency? Well, yes and no. Talk about a wishywashy answer!

OK, here is the breakdown. IF (and that's a big IF) you accept the basic landscape of laws, regulations and educational dogma that is firmly established as the context for managing our public schools, the answer to this question is mostly no ... at least in the non-urban communities that I am familiar with. There is some waste in all institutions, public and private, but finding and eliminating

that waste, while potentially important and worthwhile, is not the key to fixing education. It's less than 5% of the problem, not the core of the cancer.

But don't forget the big IF. There is immense waste in public education as a direct result of the laws, regulations, and self-serving educational dogma that controls how education dollars are used and how educational services are rendered.

IF you care about improving education outcomes for your children or for society in general, you should care deeply about identifying and correcting these endemic factors. If not, I suggest you stop reading

The first lesson you need to learn is that those who are identified as champions of education rarely are. More often than not, they are champions of the institutions, the employees, or their own narrow self interests, NOT education per se. This is true from the president and governor all the way down to committees of teachers at your local school.

The problem is that the players all along this chain have a conflict of interest. It is "for them," not "for the children."

When the president or governor tells you he is proposing a new education law or additional funding for education, at least ninety percent of the rewards are swallowed up by the special interests and actual education improvements are rarely, if ever, achieved.

Why? Because the special interests are huge campaign contributors, wield enormous power at the ballot box, and they have corralled the support of parents who naively think their interests coincide.

They don't!

But those are not the only reasons. The special interests have also built up enormous influence in Congress and in the various state legislatures and have a huge backlog of existing protective legislation (especially labor laws, including compulsory bargaining) that make doing anything without their consent nearly impossible.

At the local level, school committees too often suspend their own judgment and common sense when faced with proposals from their school administrators or teacher committees. The presumption is that these entities are the "education experts" and they have the children's best interests as their number one priority.

Wrong on both counts. Their first priority, as with most people, is their own self-interest. This largely explains why the hair-brained education fads they come up with are so, well, hair-brained.

All of the failed education "brain storms" of the last 60 years have originated and been championed by "educators." From open classrooms, whole-word reading, and fuzzy math to heterogeneous classrooms, ego-centric grading, and inquiry-based science curricula ... such concepts have all been driven by "the experts."

Amazingly, none of them can pass the common sense smell-test! Let's practice responding to some of these bone-headed suggestions.

Wouldn't it be a great idea to have four or five classes all being taught in the same classroom at the same time so no-one can concentrate? No!

OK then, let's keep the sounds of letters and common letter groupings (e.g., ch, th, ly, ...) a secret and see if our first graders can figure out how to read by just looking at whole words. No!

Well then, we suggest that students be encouraged to use calculators instead of learning the multiplication tables or learning how to perform long division. And just to help them prepare for college math, let's not waste time teaching them fractions. No!!

Can we combine students of all achievement levels in the same class so we can either teach at five different levels all at once or, to lower our stress level considerably, divide the class up into five achievement levels and give each small group 1/5 of our time while the other four groups teach themselves!

You are kidding ... Right? ... You're not? Then, No, No, No!!!

The educators are now getting pretty upset! If they assign the students for each subject into classes based on their achievement, that will bruise their tender egos. So now they want to give out almost all A's and B's so that the students will feel good about themselves (and their parents won't pester them!). Putting 75% on the honor roll would also make everybody feel good, prove that the schools are being super successful, and keep the school committee off their backs!

Here is what you should tell them, "Read our lips, No, No, and Hell No!!!"

Then the educators plead, "Whatever you do, don't set quantitative and measurable academic outcome goals that will hold us accountable."

Tell them, "Yes we will!"

Then you hear, "Please, please don't measure the performance of individual teachers or incentivize better teachers by paying them more, because that will force everyone to work harder."

OK, all together now, "Yes we will!!" "Hey, our morale is really suffering now! We want more pay, shorter hours, smaller classes, more sick days, more personal days, and better benefits ... or ... or ... we'll be really unhappy and we'll work to rule!!"

Are you watching our lips? "Fagetaboutit!"

"OK then, we're going to teach you a lesson you'll never forget! We're going to call NEASC (the New England Association of Schools and Colleges) and we'll convince them to take away our high school accreditation. Ha ha! Now your children will never get into a good college and they'll ... they'll ... they'll ... well, they'll have to go to an Ed School and become teachers."

Too bad we can't respond, "If you do that, we'll call in Donald Trump and he'll tell you, 'You're FIRED!'"

Wouldn't that be nice!

A COUCH WITH A VIEW

Sammy, we hardly knew ye

Ray Shackett

VALLEY PATRIOT ENTERTAINMENT REPORTER

And as entertaining as it came in, it was gone. As of this reading, and as of April 1st (what a fool am I to get so invested!), the much anticipated ABC television series Life On Mars struggles to exhort one last breath of sunshine just in time for the big reveal of what, when, who, why and where?!

Life On Mars, based on the highly rated BBC series, follows the (time) travels of Detective Sam Tyler (Jason O'Mara). When Sam is hit by a car in the present day he mysteriously awakens in 1973. Tyler must follow the clues that will hopefully answer the many questions that develop. Mainly why he is living life "on Mars" during the tumultuous and unpredictable early 70's in the Big Apple. Times are different for our time traveling hero. Forensics has not become an art form that television shows are based upon, women behind the badge are perceived as inferior to their male counterparts (Angie Dickenson is merely a fictional fantasy) and a good, old fashioned backroom suspect beating got the job done without having to answer to

human rights groups and a team of hungry lawyers. Not to mention the Yankees are still way on top. Times are a bit different for our modern day, by the book crime stopper.

With a supporting cast; including Gretchen Mol (Rounders, Sweet and Lowdown), Michael Imperioli (The Sopranos, Goodfellas) and Harvey Keitel (too large of a body of work to pick just two examples!), its exciting music and image tributes to early 70's television crime dramas and reminiscent headlines of the times, Life On Mars had the thespianic (warning: made up word) power punch that promised to outshine, and outlast, the competition. Yet, somehow, we let it slip right through our TV remote triggering fingers. The final show aired April 1st.

Even as I write this piece I am watching downloaded episodes of the critically acclaimed and wildly popular science fiction series Firefly starring the entertaining Nathan Fillion (listen to my interview with him from last month at www.myspace.com/kidcruise) who is in danger of losing his current show Castle with only a few episodes on the books.

Firefly had a short lived, 14 episode run on FOX in 2002 despite being wildly popular with critics and fans. While fans (self-titled Browncoats) attempted to save the show with network letter writing campaigns and fundraisers for "Save Our Show" advertising placements, the series came and went like the flicker of its namesake's tail in the night. Luckily the series lives on through DVD, fan-inspired websites and the 2005 theatrical release of Serenity that continued the adventures of the crew of the space traveling ship The Serenity.

It's an odd phenomenon. Critically acclaimed, adored by fans, hot actors, great writing yet somehow falls short of multiple seasons. The list is long, the club exclusive. Desired television programming that lived fast, died young and left a good looking fan base. Let's take a look a few memorable series we knew and loved for so little time.

Hack (CBS 2002) – David Morse stars as a disgraced Philadelphia police officer trying to put his life back together while driving a cab through Philly's mean streets.

American Dreams (NBC 2002) -Another period piece that focused on the life and times of the Pryor family in the 60's. The show intertwined real news footage and clips from American Bandstand (on which the main character danced) with the shows story based in and around Philadelphia.

It just dawned on me that 2002 was not a good year for shows based in Philly!

Action (FOX 1999) - A behind the scenes look at insider Hollywood starring Jay Mohr as a cut throat movie producer loosely based on Joel Silver.

Freaks and Geeks (NBC 1999) - Set in the 70's (I'm learning that shows that rely on a different time in history are risky investments) Freaks and Geeks follows a group of students dealing with growing up and feeling like the world is always looking for ways to make you feel like a... well... freak or a geek. Judd Apatow directed a couple episodes and the series introduced us to the talents of Seth Rogen, James Franco and Linda Cardellini. This is a personal pick as a lost treasure. Funny, heartwarming and true to life. A related show from some of the same

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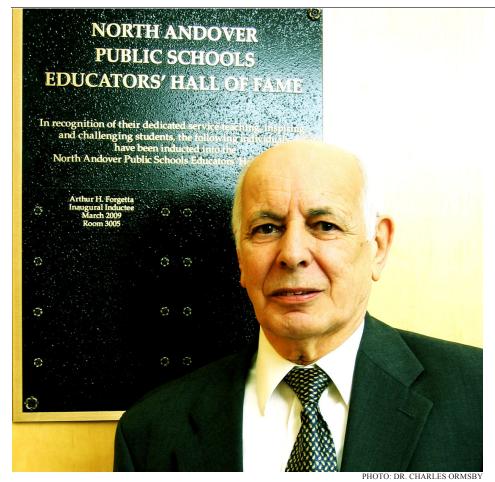
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8 am						*	*
9 am	*	*	*	*	*		
4 pm						*	*
5pm	*	*	*	*	*		
7pm	*	*	*	*			

Schedule subject to change, check website for updates - www.bikramyogamv.com



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Forgetta inducted to Educators' Hall of Fame

Arthur Forgetta was inducted into the North Andover Public School System Educators' Hall of Fame on March 10th 2009. He is the first teacher honored as part of this new program that seeks to recognize retired teachers that have made career contributions to academic excellence in North Andover.

Mr. Forgetta taught mathematics at North Andover from 1959 to 1993 and continues his 50+ year teaching career at the University of Massachusetts at Lowell. Classroom 3005, in the Mathematics Department, is now permanently dedicated in his honor.

Nominations are accepted each year in September for induction into the North Andover Educators' Hall of Fame. Teachers K-12 who have been retired for at least five years, who served the majority of their teaching careers (typically 20 years or more) in North Andover, and who had an exemplary record are eligible. Inquiries regarding the nomination process should be directed to the Superintendent's Office or to any School Committee member."

Senior Events in North Andover

Our renovation project is nearly completed and our office doors will open on April 1st and all programs will be back in the Senior Center on Monday April 6th. Our appreciation is extended to all the departments of the Town who graciously opened their door for our temporary homes. Programs and services were held at the North Andover Town Hall, Stevens Memorial Library and the Joseph Hermann Youth Center. A special Thank you to the North Andover Housing Authority and residents who have allowed use of their community rooms hosting our Meals on Wheels Program, Congregate Meals, Cuddles Program, Walk-In Clinics, Card Program and Mr. Fix It.

St. Michael's Church and Saint Paul's Church allowed us to keep our health programs and bingo programs running during this time. A special Thank You to the Elder Service staff and all our volunteers for their professionalism and dedication to keeping 42 programs and services running during the last four months. We are planning an open house in May during Older American month but if you can't wait please stop by the week of April 6th and we will give you a tour of the renovated Senior Center.

High Tea & Fashion Show: Sunday, June 7, 2009, 1 – 3 p.m. at the Wyndham Hotel in Andover, MA. Tickets are \$20.00 and go on sale April 13, 2009.

Cancer Support Group: Beginning on Wednesdays, April 15, – May 20, 2009, from 12:30 PM – 2:00 PM. Please register by calling 978 688-9560.

<u>Grief Support Group</u> will be starting on Thursday, May 14, 2009 at 12:30-2:00 p.m. and will meet once a week for 6-8 weeks. Watch for more details on these programs in future articles or call the Center at 978-688-9560.

Sketching & Oil Painting: Thursdays, 12:00 PM – 2:00 PM at the Youth Center

located at 33 Johnson Street. Mary Ann Manning, who is an award-winning artist and is geared to all ability levels, teaches this class.

Walking Group: The Senior Center has started a new Walking Group which meets at the indoor gymnasium at the Youth Center located at 33 Johnson Street. This program will be held on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays mornings at 9:00 AM. This is a free class and all ages and ability levels are welcome.

Lecture Series: Join our weekly Lecture Series from 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM at the Town Hall Selectmen's meeting room on Mondays. Each week is a different topic on Health and Social issues, cultural lectures on countries and inspirational speakers.

March 30 – Gertrude Freeman, Boxford – Medical History of the United States. Come early and enjoy coffee and treats.

Mr. Fix It And Company: Located at Fountain Drive on the first and third Monday of every month during our renovation. 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.

Shrine Circus: The Senior Center is planning its' annual trip to the Shrine Circus on Friday, April 24, 2009. The bus will depart at 9:15 a.m. and return at 12:30 p.m. The tickets are free and transportation is \$5.00 per person. Tickets are first come first serve.

Pride of Boston Tour Wednesday, June 10, 2009, \$89.95 includes Boston City Tour, Tour of the State House, Fenway Park and lunch at the Union Oyster House.

Dr. Stupnytskyi, MD is now accepting new patients for his Internal Medicine Practice
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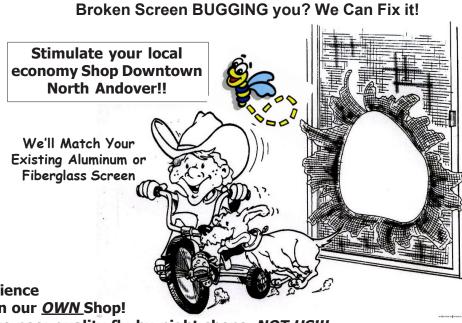




PHOTO:COURTE

Mitzy, a Boston Terrier and her Irish puppy pride taking her morning walk St. Patty's Day on Main Streeet in North Andover with her dog walker Tracey Zysk, owner of Wiggles & Jiggles Pet Care. Mitzy lives with the Peters family in North Andover.

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Gordon 1304



Stewart 1070



Braese 1042



Smith 340

Newcomer Gordon joins Lanen on Board of Selectman

Tom Duggan VALLEY PATRIOT REPORTER

With two seats up for grabs on the North Andover Board of Selectman, voters in town reelected police officer Dan Lanen to the Board with newcomer Bill Gordon.

Lanen topped the ticket with 1,391 votes, beating Gordon,(a first time candidate) by 87 votes. Lanen and Gordon were sworn in the day after the election and took office immediately. Former Selectman Don Stewart was rejected by voters for the third time in as many town elections. Stewart finished third behind Gordon, by 234 votes.

Two newcomers will join the North Andover School Committee; Lorie Burzlaff and Karin Rhoten, bothof whom ran unopposed for the two open seats vacated by Dr. Charles Ormsby and Committee Chair Barbara Whidden.

North Andover United, a school spending advocacy group in town (made up of former TUFF members) endorsed Selectman candidate Dan Braese who placed fourth out of five candidates.

Merrimack College student Mark Svendson who ran a very low key write in campaign for School Committee was seen holding signs on election day at the High School and garnered 100 write in votes in his first try at public office.

City Clerk Joyce Bradshaw said that the turnout was very low and barely exceeded 15% of the registered voters in N. Andover.



Former Miss USA Returns to Valley to Speak at NECC Graduation

The Methuen raised, former Miss USA, Susie Castillo, will be the featured speaker at Northern Essex Community College's commencement ceremony on Saturday, May 16, 2009 at 11 a.m. on the Haverhill campus.

The 28-year-old, who most recently added author and actor to her resume, now calls Los Angeles home. When she was crowned Miss USA in 2003, Castillo, an Endicott College graduate, was the third Latina to hold the coveted title, which she won with a platform that focused on education.

People en Espanol named Castillo one of the "25 Most Beautiful People", which no doubt helped her launch a successful career in entertainment.

Most recently, Castillo accomplished one of her life-long goals, authoring the book, "Confidence is Queen: The Four Keys to Ultimate Beauty through Positive Thinking," published by Penguin Group last July. In the book, she uses a mix of honesty, sincerity, and a sense of humor, to share her secrets to achieving goals and living out one's dreams.

Next up for this Spanish speaking beauty queen of Puerto Rican and Dominican descent is a role in an indie film "The Heartbreaker" to be released this year. Castillo made her feature film debut in Disney's live-action comedy, "Underdog" playing the role of News Reporter "Diana Flores". Castillo has also guest-starred on ABC's "My Wife and Kids" and UPN's "Half and Half". She also has a recurring role as a neighbor in Tyler Perry's "House of Payne".

Castillo is also a "fresh face" for Neutrogena's national television advertising campaign, along with fellow Neutrogena beauties Jennifer Garner, Kelly Preston, Vanessa Hudgens, and Hayden Panettiere.

Until departing for a full-time career in acting, Castillo was seen daily as host of MTV's "TRL" (Total Request Live) from

MTV's Times Square studios in New York City. She has also hosted a number of MTV specials.

Castillo has even shared the stage with Regis Philbin, co-hosting "Live! With Regis and Kelly".

Back home in Los Angeles she supports a number of charities. She is a member of the American Red Cross's celebrity cabinet, and is a supporter of the Hispanic Heritage Foundation, a non-profit organization that helps cultivate young Latino leaders.

An environmentalist since she was a child, Castillo is proud to live a "green" lifestyle. She drives a hybrid car, recycles, eats locally-grown organic foods, conserves water and energy in her home and uses earth-friendly products for everything from clothing to cleaning. Even Castillo's two Chihuahua's, Lupe and Oscar, eat organically.

"Susie Castillo is a wonderful role model for all of our students, especially the 23 percent of whom are Latino," said David Hartleb, President of Northern Essex.

Her message with its focus on the importance of education, achieving and setting goals, and living life to the fullest should resonate with our graduates."

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CASTILLO

North Andover, Northern Essex Community College is a state-assisted college, offering over 70 associate degree and certificate programs as well as hundreds of non credit courses designed for personal enrichment and career growth. Close to 13,000 students ranging from recent high school graduates to workers employed locally attend classes days, evenings, and weekends. Northern Essex is the only state college located in the lower Merrimack Valley Region of Massachusetts.

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Why I would like another term on the Lawrence School Committee

Peter Larocque LAWRENCE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Dear Lawrencians from District E:

First, please allow me to thank you for the humbling privilege that you have bestowed upon me, which is to represent and serve the children, parents and fellow neighbors of the District as your School Committee Member. It's been an exciting two years which is flying by very fast and it seems like just a few months ago that I got sworn in with my colleagues.

When I began the political portion of my life back in 2005, I said then, and I still stand by it today, that the Lawrence School Committee needs to CHANGE HOW it conducts its business. This change has begun to take place with the establishing of several Sub-Committees involving the School Committee Members. The days of sitting back and letting the School Administration do all the work on issues without the input of School Committee Members are slowly coming to an end.

With this in mind we established the Lawrence School Safety Sub-Committee, The Lawrence School Uniform Sub-Committee and most recently, the Same Gender Classroom Task Force (Sub-Committee).

Unfortunately two years is just not long enough to fully see to fruition what I set out to do and receive the desired result. Here is a little list of what we have accomplished;

- 1, September 07, the opening of the New Lawrence High School Campus.
- 2, March 08, Closing schools on election days to keep our children safe.
- 3, September 08, Making Route 114, Winthrop Avenue, Safer for Lawrence High School Students to cross by adding more crosswalks and pedestrian crossing signs.

4, October 08, The First Annual Harvest Festival Fundraiser at the Robert

Frost School was held.

- 5, November 08, First Annual Parent Informational Forum was Successfully held at the South Lawrence East Educational
- 6, November 08, I co-chaired with City Councilor Nicholas Kolofoles, The first Joint Meeting of the City Council Ordinance Committee and the Lawrence School Safety Sub-Committee for the purpose of children Safety walking to and from school.
- 7, November 08, Participated in the Lawrence City Council as a Whole hearing on changing the City Charter.
- 8, January 09, Participated on the Robert Frost Playground Committee and in the Announcement of the purchase and installation this coming spring of the New Playground for the Robert Frost School by the Mayor of Lawrence and His Financial
- 9, March 09, Participated in the First Annual Community Health and Wellness Fair at the Emily G. Wetherbee School sponsored by the Wetherbee PTA.

These accomplishments could not have taken place without the help from parents and teachers and the Mayor of Lawrence and my colleagues on the School Committee, our District City Councilor Mr. David Abdoo, and of coarse the good folks of District E.

Now to the future, and to why I would like your support once again in my reelection to another term. I already mentioned the Sub-Committees that we established and have in place. I would like to see other Sub-Committees put in place centering on Curriculum & Standards, and The Tracking of Financial Invoices.

As we come to the year 2010, a City Charter Review Board will be established by the City Council of Lawrence. With your support I would like to offer the following changes that would strengthen our ability to have oversight on how the Lawrence Public Schools conducts its business.

- 1. The Mayor of Lawrence should not be a member of the School Committee. (I have written in a previous V.P. article, Oct.08, my reasoning behind this).
- 2. (Plan A), The School Committee Members should be elected city-wide atlarge. (City Districts play no part in the Lawrence Public School System.) The Citizens of Lawrence should be able to elect who they believe are the 7 most qualified Citizens to be on their School Committee. Then like the City Council, the School Committee Members should be able to elect their own Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

(Plan B), Elect 6 Members of the School Committee, 1 from each City District. Then Elect 1 Member at-large to make up the 7 Member School Committee.

3. Change the City Charter that places all the maintenance of Public School Buildings under DPW back to the Lawrence School Department. Lawrence Public Schools should have their own Tradesmen, i.e. Electricians, Carpenters, Painters, and Plumbers. DPW alone can no longer handle the work load. Making these changes in the City Charter in my humbled opinion will make the Lawrence Public Schools safer and run more efficiently.

These simple changes will also allow for better oversight by the School Committee in dealing with the Superintendent of Schools.

Future Superintendent of School's contracts will be put together and approved by the School Committee and their respective Legal Council without involvement from the Mayor's office.

Going forward, with your help and support, along with these simple Charter



Lawrence School Committee member Peter Larocque

changes will strengthen the Lawrence Public School System.

The future of Lawrence is exciting because in January of 2010 we will have a new Mayor and in September of 2011 we will open our schools with a new Superintendent. I want to be a part of the team that makes this happen. Our current Superintendent who I have great respect for has done a wonderful job overall, and many of his ground breaking initiatives must be maintained. We cannot afford to go backward! The children of Lawrence are counting on proven, experienced Leadership!

I would consider it once again an honor and privilege to be able to continue to serve you and to make my proposed changes **priority one** so that every child in Lawrence can receive the best education available.

Thank You and God Bless each and every one of you.



Peter Larocque is a member of the Lawrence School Committee. He was elected by the City Council to fill the unexpired term of Amy McGovern in 2006 and then elected in his own

right in 2007. You can email him at peterlarocque@hotmail.com

State designates section of Lawrence as "Growth District"

Tom Duggan VALLEY PATRIOT REPORTER

Lieutenant Governor Tim Murray held a press conference at Sal's Riverwalk on Merrimack Street in Lawrence, last month to announce a \$2 million state grant designating Lawrence as an official "growth district."

Economic Development Director Thomas Schiavone told the Valley Patriot that the \$2 million granted to the city will go towards the roadways and other infrastructure on Merrimack Street in south Lawrence as part of the phase II Riverwalk construction project.

"The 2 million the state committed to us will provide the kickstart that we need to clear the footprint of what will become the phase II Riverwalk project, and be able to build the public infrastructure that we need to support the new development." Schiavone said. "Included in that is; sewer work and drainage work that has to be built to in order to handle the increase in traffic and activity that will inevitably increase as the project goes along. Total it's going to cost 10 million to do all that. Two million is pledged by the state and the rest will be paid by the developer, Sal Lupoli."

Last month The Lawrence Historic Commission cleared the way for a multi-million dollar development at the site which will include a retail mall, office space an a brand new community center that Lupoli will be donating to the City of Lawrence upon its' completion. Lupoli appeared before the commission and detailed the structural flaws and dangerous conditions of the two existing buildings and smokestacks located between the Riverwalk development and the Monarch on the Merrimack Project, also known as the Wood Mill. The \$100 million project is expected to begin immediately and Lupoli says that people can expect to shop at the new mall "by the end of the vear."

Lt. Governor Tim Murray said that the state legislature passed a series of bond bills that made this grant possible. "One of the bond bills [that] was passed with the legislature, was these growth districts. Trying to



Sal Lupoli of Sal's Riverwalk Properties (and Sal's Pizza) with State Senator Sue Tucker, State Representatives Barry Finegold, David Torissi, Greg Bialecki, Secretary of Housing and Economic Development for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Lawrence State Rep. Willie Lantigua, Lawrence Mayor Mchael Sullivan, Joe Bevilacqua from the Merrimack Valley Chamber of Commerce and Massachusetts Lt. Governor Tim Murray pose with this check for \$2M for infrastruture work to be done near the phase II Riverwalk Project

recognize communities where mayors and city councils, planning and economic development people, look at certain areas and try to plan ahead. And say 'how do we zone things properly to give incentives for businesses to come'....There's not a lack of interest of companies that want to grow and expand in Massachusetts. Companies [that are] indigenous and companies that want to come. The challenge we have is, we don't have a sufficient number of pre-permitted, pad ready sites. So, one of the things Sec Bailecki and his team have really worked on with communities, is to try and encourage [them] to develop pad ready, pre-permitted sites and; to help and reward those communities... like you are doing in Lawrence."

Schiavone said that Sal's Riverwalk area of Merrimack Street is only one part of the new growth district and added that he hopes that this is the only the beginning for a number of new projects.

"The growth district is an area of the city of Lawrence that we identified that has a lot of economic development activity. The area includes the Canal District Revitalization, which goes from Rt. 495 down to Broadway out across the river to the gateway area and downtown area. So it's a larger district than just the Sal's Riverwalk area."

To email the Valley Patriot with a newstip, send information via email to valleypatriot@aol.com

Abdoo, Reyes officially enter Lawrence mayors race

Tom Duggan

VALLEY PATRIOT REPORTER

The race to succeed Lawrence Mayor Michael Sullivan in November's municipal elections is starting to heat up. Seven major candidates have already publicly declared their intentions to seek the corner office in Lawrence city hall.

The declared candidates so far are Lawrence District "E" City Councilor Dave Abdoo, former Lawrence City Councilor Israel Reyes, former city councilor Julio Silverio, former mayor Marcos Devers, State Representative Willie Lantigua, Lawrence High School history teacher Pedro Payano and incumbent city councilor Nilka Alvarez.

David Abdoo is in his first term on the Lawrence City Council representing the district with the highest income level and voter turnout in the city. He is the director of Media and Intergovernmental Affairs for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in region one. Abdoo is also the primary press contact for Health and Human Services throughout New England. He is the former policy director for the Secretary for the Executive Office of Transportation and the Governor's office. Abdoo is also a Captain in the Massachusetts Army National Guard, served previously on the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission, The Lawrence Planning Board and is the Chairman of the Salem State College Board of Trustees.

Abdoo has written several guest columns for The Valley Patriot, focusing mostly on fiscal conservatism and his endeavor to plan, research and implement a master plan for the city of Lawrence. Lawrence Police Chief John Romero

endorsed Abdoo the day he made his announcement, making him the immediate front runner in the race according to political pundits and election watchers.

Former Lawrence City Councilor Israel Reyes declared his candidacy for mayor more than two years ago and has already raised more than \$50,000 in his bid to replace Michael Sullivan in the mayor's office. Reyes has out raised all of his opponents combined at such an early stage of the game and has positioned himself to be a considered a serious contender.

Reyes served one term as an At-large (city wide) city councilor, twice ran for state representative unsuccessfully and served previously on the Lawrence Planning Board. Reyes also worked as a business management specialist for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Reyes currently serves as president of Reyes Group, Inc., which is a residential development company. And while David Abdoo enjoys the support of Lawrence Police Chief John Romero, Reyes has the distinction of being supported by Andover State Representative Barry Finegold and former one term Lawrence City Councilor Lenny Degnan of North Andover. Former mayoral candidate Isabel Melendez is managing the Reyes Campaign, which also enjoys support from School Committee member Priscilla Baez, Lawrenc City Councilor Jorge Gonzalez and former Lawrence Personnel Director Frank Bonet.

Reyes has strong union support and has been a staunch advocate for municipal and state workers' unions, many of whom showed up at his official kickoff party last month at the Lawrence Elks Club.



Former Lawrence City Councilor Israel Reyes at his mayoral kickoff party at the Elks with his wife Patricia Sanchez-Reyes and his daughters Brianna (I) and Isabella.

"There's no doubt that this campaign needs to be about the issues," Reyes told the crowd of approximately 200 people. "about our future and not our past. Tonight is just the first step as we outline our plans for Lawrence."

Reyes talked in general terms about education and public safety and challenged his oponants to a series of debates. "... tonight, I propose a series of debates so that every candidate can outline their plans and answer the questions of voters like you. And for the press in attendance tonight, I challenge each of you to host these debates. The voters of Lawrence have the right to an

open and honest debate that discusses the issues we all care about, and our leaders should be ready, willing and able to do just that. So I say, right here, right now, name the time and place and I will be there with all of you to show why I should be the next mayor of Lawrence."

(Editor's note: Both David Abdoo and Israel Reyes have agreed to debate on WCAP radio in Lowell on the Paying Attention Radio Program this month, the date will be posted on the Valley Patriot website www.valleypatriot.com).

Next Month The Valley Patriot will feature mayoral candidates Julia Silverio and Marcos Devers.

Candidates for district city council races start to emerge

Tom Duggan VALLEY PATRIOT REPORTER

The City of Lawrence has a ninemember city council, electing three At-Large (city wide) councilors and six district councilors.

District "A" (Prospect Hill): District "A" has been represented by City Council President Patrick Blanchette for the last ten years. Blanchette barely won reelection two years ago defeating first time candidate, Attorney April Lyskowsky. Blanchette has not yet made his intentions known regarding his district council seat but his nemesis Lyskowsky has.

Lyskowsky, a lifelong resident of Lawrence became a Prospect Hill homeowner in 2003, attended Holy Trinity Grammar School and Saint Mary's High School. Lyskowsky announced her candidacy last week in a press release to the Valley Patriot. "As a single parent working full-time, she earned an Associate's degree from Northern Essex Community College and a Bachelor's degree from UMass Lowell. She continued her education at the Massachusetts School of Law in Andover, where she was elected president of the Student Bar Association as a third year law student, while also continuing to work full-time and raise her son, Justin.

She is currently employed by the City of Lawrence Planning Department as the Real Property Acquisition/ Disposition Specialist.

In this capacity, she is the primary staff person responsible for the disposition of all City-owned, underutilized real properties.

Additionally, she serves as the Chairwoman of the Foreclosure Economic Development and Safety Task Force," the press release stated. With District "E" (Mt. Vernon) City
Councilor David Abdoo vacating his seat
to run for mayor, Attorney Eileen
O'Connor Bernal wasted no time declaring
her intentions to replace him on the
council sending out a press release with
24 hours of Abdoo's announcement.
Bernal is the wife of Leslie Bernal, former
aid to State Senator Sue Tucker (D)
Andover, and a political strategist for
dozens of state political campaigns.

In her own right, Bernal is a lifelong resident of Mount Vernon, and a graduate from St. Patrick School and St. Mary High School in Lawrence. She graduated from Saint Anselm College and received her law degree from Suffolk University School of Law in Boston.

Bernal is an attorney with the North Andover law firm of Smolak & Vaughan. She specializes in real estate law, including residential and commercial transactions, real estate financing, zoning, permitting and title issues. Bernal is a member of the Mt. Vernon Neighborhood Association, is a homeowner on Mount Vernon Street.

District "F" (South Lawrence East)
Councilor Michael Fielding may be in the
fight of his political career in November as
former Tower Hill City Councilor Mark
LaPlante (who now lives in South
Lawrence) has announced his candidacy
for the district seat.

LaPlante is a member of the Colonial Heights Neighborhood Association, a coach for South Lawrence Little League, a Cub Master for Saint Patrick's Cub Scouts, chairman of the Lawrence Redevelopment Authority and a board member of the Community Day Charter School

The Lawrence preliminary elections are in September, the top two candidates in each district race will face off in November.

Dad's Club Breakfast a Success at Community Day Charter Public School's Early Learning Center

Like many other schools, the Community Day Charter School has tried many different ways to encourage parental involvement in the school through its Parents Advisory Board ("PAB".)

At a recent PAB meeting, parent Susan Laplante suggested creating a "Dad's Club Breakfast", modeled after a similar club created in the Boston public school system.

The original Boston club was designed to encourage participation by fathers in schools after studies suggested a direct correlation between participation in schools by fathers and their children's academic success. Although entitled the "Dad's Club Breakfast", the invitation was extended to any male in a given family – father,

grandfather, uncle, friend – who holds a special role within that family. Future events may be planned around lunchtime or late afternoon, to ensure continued participation by as many "Dads" as possible.

"This is the first time I have met many of these dads," stated Pat Teichman, head of the Early Learning Center. "Many asked if the next event would allow them more time in the classroom and some suggested we do this more often!"

The "Dads" were invited to the CDCPS' Early Learning Center, on Friday, February 13, 2009, for breakfast, conversation and games with their child. Since this was the first event of its type for the PAB, the

organizers were unsure of what type of turnout to expect.

Exceeding all expectations, approximately 43 men showed up to celebrate and spend time in the classrooms. For Nick Petrakis, father of first-grader Sara Petrakis, this was an opportunity too good to pass up. "I work nights so it is not often that I have the opportunity to spend time in my daughter's classroom and meet her teachers, as well as fathers of her classmates."

Many "Dads" adopted a whole table of children in each classroom, reading a book or constructing a puzzle with the table's occupants. Parents provided fruit, baked goods, coffee and juice. "Seeing the smile on my son's face when I walked into his



class was priceless" said Rep. William Lantigua, father of first-grader William Lantigua, Jr., "

Events like this make it possible for more father's to be involved."

For more information on the Community Day Public Charter School, visit the school's website at www.cdcps.org

The Merrimack Valley Irish Connection

Jack's Irish Craic

Jack Doyle, County Sligo

"The Wake of a Yank". This was the expression that one of the people at the party said to me when the occasion was over. I've never heard of a wake being held when someone was still alive but this "party" surely lived up to Irish folklore.

Our friend Paul was leaving Ireland, not by his own intentions but at the request of a loved one. The love affair was over, it was time to go.

At the request of a family member the clan was called together for the last time to say goodbye to a family friend, a loved one, a yank that dearly loved everyone, especially his adopted country Ireland and much like the old days in Ireland, this "wake" would be like an old "hoolie" with music, stories, laughter and yes, loads of

The usual musicians were playing their instruments, tin whistle, accordion, guitar and fiddle. The songs were mostly Irish traditional songs but Paul lent his voice to such American standards as, "Yankee Doodle Dandy", "Always", "For it was Mary" "Rock a Bye Your Baby" and "You Made me Love You". It seemed like a festive occasion but looking around the room you could see the tears flowing abundantly. Michael Burnes, the Irish troubadour, sang Irish Ballads as no one else could. He joined in with his 'mouth organ" with perfection. Brandy, beer and wine was served to the guest as the festivities carried on, I don't know if it was served to alleviate the pain of goodbye or just to keep the party going. There were even sympathy cards given to

the host. Cards of goodbye, bon voyage, best of luck, etc., but the song that was sung to Paul by Philomena at the end of the party said it all, "I know I'll never forget you, I've loved you to much for to long". (Jim Reeves made a hit of it many years ago.) Paul had to leave the room because he couldn't hold back the tears. Then it was over and the goodbyes were said. The funeral was about to begin. The person next to me said, "you have just attended "A Wake for a Yank"..... A wake? It seemed like a "hoolie" to me!

D-F-X.....THAT'S RIGHT, THE: "DEFECTS"

A man of my age usually doesn't comprehend the music of the younger generation but I must be honest, D-F-X left a lasting, positive impression on this old man. I was introduced to the band at Teach Murray's in the little village of Gurteen, County Sligo by my partner. As we walked towards the venue you could feel the vibrations from the instruments as the lads played there hearts out on this, their long awaited debut into the live music scene. It was late at night, midnight (early for the standards of the Irish), a mad, psychedelic introduction to the hard rock scene was about to begin for me.

Kelvin Miller on lead guitar, Pat Small on rhythm guitar, Paddy Byrne on bass guitar and J P Evans keeping the band in sync on the drums. Tristin Miller did the vocals in a style that was both harmonious and chilling and kept the audience on their feet applauding for more. I even heard echoes of CCR,

IRISH, page 34

Filmmaker Explores Latinos in US Culture and History

Maria Agui Carter, founder of Iguana Films, will discuss her latest films focusing on Latinos' contributions to US culture and history during a White Fund presentation at Northern Essex Community College in Lawrence on Thursday, April 23, at 12:30 p.m.

Carter's presentation, "Latinos in American Culture – Past, Present, and Future," is free and open to the public. It will be held in the White Fund Room in Northern Essex's Louise Haffner Education Center, 78-82 Amesbury St.

Carter's films focus on characters whose lives defy narrow stereotypical expectations, illustrating and helping to define a cultural identity that is broader, more complex, and more inspiring for the history and future of the Latino presence in America.

A native of Ecuador, Carter grew up in New York and graduated from Harvard University in 1987. In 1989 she joined the staff at Boston's public television station, WGBH. She has produced and directed numerous documentaries for WGBH's long-running Latino series LA PLAZA on subjects ranging from folk healers in the Latino community (The Other Doctors, 1989) to the resurgence of modern tango dancing (Tango: Duel and Dance, 2000).

In 2001 she was appointed an associate fellow at the David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies at Harvard, while producing and directing segments for Roundtable Media for a new series on access to college for underprivileged kids. This three-part series, called College Track, aired in the fall of 2004 on PBS.

Carter writes and lectures at universities and community forums, and has published



articles on subjects ranging from women in the Civil War, to Latinos in film. She is a Writer's Guild/East member, a member of Women in Film and Video New England, on the Executive Board of the Filmmaker's Collaborative, and a founding board member of the Boston Chapter of the National Association of Latino Independent Producers.

The White Fund's purpose is to have a free series of interactive presentations for Lawrence area adults, youth, and children. The audience is encouraged to seek wisdom, cultural enrichment, and intellectual enhancement by attending and participating.

Funded by a generous financial gift from the Honorable Daniel Appleton

LATINOS, page 34

Job Opportunity

DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

The *Division of Grants Administration (DGA)* Development Manager will be responsible for researching, developing, writing, and implementing current grants, new projects, and program or business opportunities as assigned. The Development Manager will also be responsible for the research and development of proposals, research and report on new trends, policies, and workforce development programs and recommend actions and agency responses. Prepares grant applications, annual plans and proposals necessary for new funding resources and existing grants. *Hiring range for this position: Mid – High \$40,000.00*.

For complete job descriptions, check our website:

www.valleyworks.cc

We offer a comprehensive salary, benefits package and team environment. Resume submission deadline for this position is <u>Wednesday April 8, 2009 @ 4:00 p.m.</u> Please request full job description from and send resume with cover letter to: (No phone calls please)

Beverly Stopyra, Human Resources, Division of Grants Administration 439 South Union Street, Bldg. 2, Lawrence, MA 01843 FAX: 978-725-4761, E-Mail: bkstopyra@detma.org

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Job Opportunity

SUMMER YOUTH COUNSELORS (Grant Specific)

MULTIPLE OPENINGS: Positions Immediately Available up through the

end of Summer (August/September 2009)

The *Department of Training & Development/ValleyWorks Career Center (DTD/VWCC)* Summer Youth Counselor's general responsibilities will be: Conduct outreach and recruitment of referrals to the program, determine eligibility, workshop facilitation, program referral, interact with summer youth point of contact, case management of youth and assistance with placement into full time unsubsidized employment and/or training opportunities. Will perform summer monitoring functions to determine program compliance with contract obligations and Federal and State regulations and laws. Candidates must pass a CORI.

regulations and laws. Candidates must pass a CORI. Hiring Range for these positions is: \$35,053.20 - \$42,588.00

For complete job description and qualifications, check our website: www.valleyworks.cc - We offer a comprehensive salary, benefits package and team environment. Resume submission deadline for these positions is Wednesday, April 8, 2009 at 4:00 p.m. Please request full job description from and send resume with cover letter to: (No phone calls please)

Beverly Stopyra, Human Resources, Division of Grants Administration 439 South Union Street, Bldg. 2, Lawrence, MA 01843

FAX: 978-725-4761, E-Mail: bkstopyra@detma.org

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Job Opportunity

GRANTS MANAGER

The *Division of Grants Administration (DGA)* Grants Manager will be responsible for the implementation and management of current grants, new projects, and program or business opportunities as assigned. The Grants Manager will also be responsible for the research and development of RFPs, the procurement of new programming, and oversight of the DGA Individual Training Account system. Additionally, this position must monitor funded programs for compliance and generate reports for funding sources. Assist in analyzing and reporting on new trends, policies, and workforce development programs and recommends actions and agency responses. *Hiring range for this position: Mid – High \$40,000.00*

For complete job descriptions, check our website: www.valleyworks.cc
We offer a comprehensive salary, benefits package and team environment. Resume submission deadline for this position is Wednesday, April 8, 2009 @ 4:00 p.m.
Please request full job description from and send resume with cover letter to: (No phone

Beverly Stopyra, Human Resources, Division of Grants Administration 439 South Union Street, Bldg. 2, Lawrence, MA 01843 FAX: 978-725-4761, E-Mail: bkstopyra@detma.org

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Job Opportunity YOUTH SERVICES COORDINATOR

The *Department of Training & Development/ValleyWorks Career Center (DTD/VWCC)* YOUTH SERVICES COORDINATOR will be responsible for the overall provision of youth career counseling and youth program services provided by the ValleyWorks Career Center Youth Department. This position coordinates all youth services through a variety of state and federal funding, including but not limited to the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), Youthworks, Connecting Activities, Pathways, the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA), and state career center funds. The Coordinator will also assume the primary responsibility for managing the Summer Jobs Program. The Coordinator is responsible for direct supervision of the Youth Department staff, including ensuring the delivery of appropriate services. In addition to the supervisory role, responsibilities will include, but not be limited to, designing and implementing outreach and recruitment strategies, ensuring correct eligibility determination, maximizing customer flow to ensure the system of testing, career counseling, workshop provision, access to training, provision of support services, on-going counseling and case management, and the provision of follow-up services. *Hirring range for this position: Low – Mid \$40,000.00*

For complete job descriptions, check our website: <u>www.valleyworks.cc</u>
_We offer a comprehensive salary, benefits package and team environment. Resume

submission deadline for this position is <u>Wednesday</u>, <u>April 8</u>, <u>2009</u> <u>@ 4:00 p.m.</u> Please request full job description from and send resume with cover letter to: (No phone calls please)

Beverly Stopyra, Human Resources, Division of Grants Administration 439 South Union Street, Bldg. 2, Lawrence, MA 01843 FAX: 978-725-4761, E-Mail: bkstopyra@detma.org

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

TOM DUGGAN'S NOTEBOOK

LAWRENCE - Happy Anniversary Eli and Marsha - Eli's breakfast place on Merrimack Street in Lawrence celebrated their first anniversary last month. Eli recently told The Valley Patriot that he and Marsha were grateful for all the local business they have received in the last year and that Eli

will be naming a breakfast dish after Sal Lupoli as a thank you for all Sal is doing to revitalize the Merrimack Street area. The Lupli omelet will be an egg and cheese omelet with hot sausage and Italian cheese and will be available some time this month.

N. ANDOVER - Voters reject North Andover United, Taxpayers Association

- It is sad to say but, Sandy Gleed's "North Andover United" has become a liberal, school spending advocacy group that endorses the same type of political candidates that Diane Huster and her now defunct TUFF group once championed. Sandy may have started this group with very good intentions, but over the last couple of years she and her group (made up mostly of former TUFF members) have

become more focused on

fitting in with the status quo and building their own network of political insiders than being a fiscal watchdog group for the town. Voters last month rejected Gleed's selectman candidate (Dan Braese), who was clearly the most liberal candidate running. On the other side of the coin, members of the North Andover Taxpayers Association (a shell of it's

former self), supported former selectman Don Stewart (whom voters also rejected).

> North Andover voters clearly sent a message to politicians in town that they want elected officials who are not beholden to any special interest groups and will act independently of any ideological agenda with their selection of newcomer Bill

Gordon. Let's see how independent Mr. Gordon is after being on the Board for a year. We have hope he will be a breath of fresh air and maintain his independence.

HAVERHIL - Boardwalk - Mayor James J. Fiorentini said last month that the construction of the new Merrimack River pedestrian Boardwalk will begin in April. A total of 300 feet of new boardwalk will be installed behind the Tap Restaurant, and the existing 300 foot boardwalk

behind Haverhill Bank will be re-decked. "This \$1,274,174 project is begin funded by the Federal Highway Administration (80%) and Commonwealth of Massachusetts (20%) and is being overseen by the MassHighway with the Haverhill Engineering Department serving as City

liaison to the project. The adjacent city owned parking lot will be open during the construction period, but MassHighway is asking people to observe the closure and not enter the construction area. The Mayor said he anticipated a ground breaking sometime in early April. He also indicated that a firm date will be set shortly for the groundbreaking. The

project is anticipated to be completed by August of 2009.

LAWRENCE - What Joe Parolisi of Lawrence can learn from North Andover's rejection of Don Stewart

Former Lawrence City Councilor Joe Parolisi and former North Andover selectman Don Stewart have much more in common than either of them know. Both politicians lost their elected positions as incumbents running for reelection ... and both of them lost their respective seats because they both had the wacky notion that they didn't need to advertise or campaign very hard to win. The fact is, Dan Lanon was the only selectman candidate this year to

advertise in print media and he topped the ticket. In Lawrence, Parolisi was defeated two years ago by Roger Twomey who advertised heavily in print media and campaigned like a workhorse. Memo to Don and Joe: if the voters don't see any indication that you are willing to work hard when

SEEKING an elected position, they are certainly going to question whether or not you will work hard if you win.

LAWRENCE - Reyes not Dominican

Local newspapers have reported that mayoral candidate Israel Reyes has applied for and received citizenship from the Dominican Republic. Reves, on the other hand, says that he only applied for a Dominican Identification card since he spends so much time in the DR. (his wife is Dominican). The only thing I care about is whether or not he is a US citizen and whether or not he believes that US tax dollars (and government services) are exclusively for U.S. citizens and those who are here legally. This is an issue I believe must be addressed by every candidate for mayor regardless of their answer.

METHUEN-Correction

Last month we ran a story about Methuen Village (see thier ad on se page 18) with a photo and caption incorrectly identifying Will Carpenter of the Merrimack Valley Chamber of Commerce as the Greater Lawrence Chamber of Commerce. Carpenter was very quick to point out that the Chamber hasn't been called the "Greater Lawrence Chamber" in years. We regret the error.

NORTH ANDOVER - Eye Candy in North Andover... and she's SMART too!

Speaking of N. Andover elections, the North Andover school committee is now made up of a majority of women for the first time in recent memory with the election of Karin Rhoton and Laurie Brurzlaff last month. But more importantly (at least to me) is the fact that we now have eye candy on the committee. Sometimes it's hard for me to get motivated to go to a school committee meeting in town, given how much gets swept under the rug in the school department and what a show is put on at those meetings. But now you may see me at every meeting ... well, I do it for the children, of course.

NEWBURYPORT - Essex Heritage Essex Heritage will hold its annual

meeting and networking event on Tuesday, April 28, 2009 from 8:00-10:00 am, at The Firehouse Center for the Arts, in Newburyport. The agenda will include the President's Report, a review of Essex Heritage activities, new initiatives for 2009, and introduction of new

Commissioners. The public is welcome to attend. This event provides a unique opportunity for Essex Heritage trustees, commissioners, members, supporters and partners to network with the public on a wide range of ongoing initiatives in the Essex National Heritage

Area. For more information and to RSVP, please call Essex Heritage at 978-740-0444 or visit www.EssexHeritage.org.

AMESBURY - Merrimack old Home Days - A fundraising event will be held at at Flatbread Company in Amesbury on Tuesday, April 21st from 5-9:30. A portion of all pizza sales will go directly to funding entertainment for Merrimac's 2009 Old Home Day celebration. Gift cards to

Flatbread Company may also be purchased ahead of time. (10% of the purchase price goes directly to Merrimac Old Home Days.) Questions or comments may be directed to either Ellen: (978) 346-9887 or Rebekah: (978)346-8216.

Methuen - The Joy of Color Fine Art and Fine

Crafts Show and Sale - Spring is almost here and once again, the Merrimack Valley area will be celebrating with its annual Spring Art Show. Local artists from Southern New Hampshire and



American Legion donates to Methuen ROTC Ranger Band

Methuen High Band members and ROTC Cadets were presented with a check for \$1500.00 from the members and friends of Methuen American Legion Post 122. Submitted by Kevin Wallace, Sr Vice Commander of the American Legion.





RiverBank is holding Shred Days as a service to our community. Protect yourself from identity theft by disposing of your sensitive documents the fast, easy and secure way. Enter to win a personal shredder Bring them to our mobile shredding truck at one at one of our Shred Days!*

of our Shred Day events. Shred Days 9 am - Noon

Saturday, May 2...... 51 Crystal Ave., Derry, NH

Saturday, May 9 20 Jackson St., Methuen, MA

Saturday, May 16............. 30 Mass. Ave., North Andover

Refreshments will be served.



ANDOVER • LAWRENCE • METHUEN • NORTH ANDOVER • DERRY, NH • SALEM, NH 978-725-7500 · 800-730-9660

*Shred Day Giveaway Official Rules available upon request. This free community service is for individuals only. No businesses, please Member FDIC Member DIF



showcase their talent and artwork. The Arts Institute Group of the Merrimack Valley (AIGMV) is hosting its Spring Members Only Fine Art and Fine Crafts Show and Sale June 3rd -13th, 2009 at the Nevins Memorial Library, 305 Broadway Methuen, MA. The art show is open to the public Monday through Thursday 10 am – 8 pm and Friday and Saturday 10 am -4 pm. and is free of charge, donations appreciated. This event is a scholarship fundraiser that promotes and sponsors high school seniors to further their artistic endeavors. An artist's reception will be held on Thursday, June 4 from 5 - 8 pm at the Nevins Memorial Library. AIGMV welcomes artists to submit their artwork on May 30^{th} from 10 am - 8 pm at the library. New members welcome. A small artist entry fee is required. For more information, please visit www.artsinstitutegroup.org or contact Lynn Vidler at 978-361-5881.

HAVERHILL-Vendor opportunities for

KidsFest 2009 - KidFest Committee looking for volunteers - The Community Support Committee of the Haverhill Chamber of Commerce is looking for individuals willing to join the Committee and help with the planning and organizing KidsFest 2009. If you cannot participate on the committee you can make a donation or sponsor a specific event during KidsFest. There are many ways to be involved. KidFest planning meetings are scheduled every Wednesday morning at 9 a.m. in the Pentucket Bank Community room located on Merrimack St. Please contact the Jen Cantwell at the Haverhill Chamber of Commerce at 978-373-5663 or Catherine Chang, Chang's Tae Kwon Do America 978-556-1616 if you need more information or would like to join the committee. Committee members for this years event include Catherine Chang of Chang's Tae Kwon Do America and Committee Chair; Michael Macdonald of Chang's Tae Kwon Do America; Jane England of England's Micro Creamery; Jessica Todisco of Little Sprouts; Beth Dimitruk of Home Health VNA; Officer Paul Malone Haverhill of the Police Department; Ron Carpenito of Keller Williams Prim Property Team; SSG Brock Clukey of the United States Army; Sheryl Meehan of Merrimack Valley Hospice; Bucky Tardif, Haverhill Resident; Jim Jajuga, President of the Haverhill Chamber; Leanne Eastman, VP/Economic Development for the Haverhill Chamber of Commerce; Jen Cantwell, Program Coordinator for the Haverhill Chamber of Commerce; and Lynda Abate of Haverhill

Haverhill - Draft Haverhill Plan Posted for Review - Mayoral CandidateJohn Michitson of Haverhill is initiating what he calls "The Haverhill Plan," a long range plan to innovatively address our most pressing



News Item: Tribune runs three different versions of bomb threat story (see page 2)

The Valley Patriot is always interested in reader suggestions for local, political cartoons (valleypatriot@aol.com) You can email Dave at Sull93@aol.com.

current and future challenges. It is a work in progress. Michitson is making a draft available for Haverhill citizens and others to help evolve it into "our" plan together, Michitson says. The highlights of and a detailed presentation on The Haverhill Plan are posted at http://www.ivalley.org/ content/the-haverhill-plan. You are invited to please review the highlights and the presentation and blog your comments, including your recommended changes or new ideas. The draft Haverhill Plan will be updated periodically based on public comments and any additional information that comes to light. Michitson says he is also planning on a series of Town Meetings to get your direct feedback. The end game is to complete the Haverhill Plan, win City Council approval and begin implementing the plan when he takes office as your Mayor in 2010. If you prefer to send comments on the plan by email instead of blogging, please forward them to john@michitson.com. If you would prefer a hard copy of the highlights and presentation mailed to you, please do not hesitate to call me at (H)978-373-2231.



STOREFRONT OF THE MONTH: (I to r) Frank O'Connor, Jr., City of Lawrence Economic Development Office, Robert C. Lavoie, Sr., Marion Lavoie and Karen Lavoie.

The Office of Mayor Sullivan is please to announce the winner of the prestigious Lawrence Storefront of the Month award for March 2009 is Bob's Scout Supplies at 513 Andover Street. For years, the Lavoie Family has made great efforts to keep their storefront entrance and sidewalk safe and clean for neighbors and customers. By constantly working to keep the area free of snow, ice and litter, the Lavoies have made their store an inviting place for people to shop. It is this persistent attention to detail that has earned Bob's Scout Supplies this coveted recognition.

Congratulations Valley Patriot!

~for~

Five Years of "MUST READ" news and views

State Senator Sue Tucker





Around town in Georgetown

Lonnie Brennan

VALLEY PATRIOT GEORGETOWN COLUMNIST

A few items not found in the more frequently issued publications:

Georgetown Republican Town Committee Movie Night

Georgetown Republican Town Committee Chairman Evan O'Reilly announced a new event for the committee: movie nights! On Wednesday, April 8th, 2009 at 7:00 P.M., Mr. O'Reilly is inviting all everyone (in town, out of town, Republicans, Independents, and even others) to attend a free showing of "So Goes the Nation" a film about the 2004 Presidential Election.

Georgetown High School Singers Showcased

Georgetown High School Senior Jenny Donovan competed in the Song and Aria Auditions of the National Association of Teachers of Singing Division 1C Regional Competition at the New England Conservatory. Ms. Donovan sang three pieces for the competition, in English, Italian, and German. The all-day ranking event showcased talent from throughout the region. She advanced to the semi-finals, placing in the top 9 singers. Ms. Donovan recently played a starring role in Bye-Bye-Birdie alongside singer/classmate Michelle Prior. Ms. Donovan also recently sung the National Anthem alongside classmate Kelly Gillen at the TD Banknorth Garden for the Division 4 Girls Basketball Final. Upon graduation, Ms. Donovan plans to pursue a degree in music education.

Action Ambulance Courts Erie 4

I attended my first meeting (as a new probationary member) of the Erie 4 Association and was treated to a lively presentation from Action Ambulance. Action is in the process of evaluating several local sites and found a potential match with the Erie 4 Facility. In addition to board executives Dan Brodie, Brad Barrett, and Deb Jackson (and many others in attendance), Fire Chief Al Beardsley and Deputy Chief Rusty Ricker attended the information session. Following the interactive slide presentation, a series of questions were asked from the

Reader takes Georgetown columnist to task

Dear Mr. Brennan,

Although we were not formally introduced at the March 18 Georgetown Republicans Meeting, I am familiar with your work, specifically your most recent article in the Valley Patriot, "Georgetown club owner Wojtkun ordered to return money".

As a long standing member of the Georgetown Club, I found your article factually accurate but slanted in the favor of Mr. Rich. Having read the court judgment, which has been widely distributed by Mr. Guy Ericson to members of the Club, it was quite evident that Mr. Rich's role and behavior was intentionally omitted from the article

I found this interesting while sitting at the meeting of Republicans, as Mr. Rich's nomination papers for selectman were presented, and although he was not in attendance due to health issues, Mr. Ericson and yourself were present. In my opinion there is a conflict of interest as well as a potential for collusion as Mr. Rich pursues a law suit, you report it in a bias manner, and Mr. Ericson distributes it virally to Wojktun's customers, the members of the Club. This is a deliberate attempt to influence the members with the ultimate goal of burying Wojktun, thereby burying our Club.

Republicans stand as pro-business, and the Georgetown Club provides employment and tax income to the Town of Georgetown.

At the conclusion of the meeting, you promoted the Valley Patriot as well as your article, and stated that you were pursing a follow up article regarding additional lawsuits.

I question your motivation behind these articles as a local interest story or whether there is an ulterior motive involved.

The Georgetown Club is a private business enterprise, and for the Vice-Chair of the Georgetown Republican Town Committee to intentionally attempt to denigrate an individual businessman is the antithesis of what Republicans represent.

Sincerely Matt Caulfield 60 Lockwood Lane Boxford, Ma. 01921 978-887-5213 audience. With no questions raised by Chief Beardsley and Deputy Ricker, it appears the region may be on track to benefit from a proposed new local ambulance placement. At press time, negotiations were ongoing.

Georgetown Club Saga Continues

As I reported in the March issue, the Georgetown Club, et. al. were recently ordered to return approximately \$357,000 to neighbor Christopher Rich following a prolonged legal battle. Since that Feb. 12th ruling, quite a lot of activity has occurred: first, the lawyer for Club majority owner Dr. Peter Wojtkun has separated from his law firm of Sherin and Lodgen LLP; also, Dr. Wojtkun issued a lengthy e-mail to club members detailing his interpretation of the judgment and urging members to treat Mr. Rich "as a neighbor, member and owner," but citing potential delays in restitution with additional ongoing court proceedings; Mr. Rich's attorney presented the e-mail to the Court which resulted in an emergency financial attachment served by the Sheriff's office against the Club (Superior Court Civil Action No. 2003-02419).

Selectman Race Showcases Full-Field

Mr. Rich, who serves as an elected official on the Georgetown Planning Board, announced that he has put his hat into the race for Board of Selectmen. He joins a very crowded field for the May election with five candidates running for two seats: Thomas Smith of Pineneedle Road, David Surface of Littles Hill Lane, Christopher Tentindo of Wells Street, and Jack L'Hommedieu of Andover Street. Gary C. Fowler of North Street and Andy Ciano of Acorn Way face each other for the newly created 2-year term seat.



Lawrence "Lonnie" Brennan is a former Georgetown Selectman and is currently Vice-Chair of the Georgetown Republican Town Committee. He can be reached at Lonnie.Brennan@verizon.net.

BOXFORD

State rules complicate Boxford real estate tax assessments

John McCormack

VALLEY PATRIOT BOXFORDCOLUMNIS

Some Boxford property taxes increased over 20% this year though the property was unchanged. State rules played a role.

Boxford's Assessors are regulated by the State Department of Revenue (DOR). Every three years DOR must certify the fairness of the Town's assessments or else Boxford cannot issue tax bills. Legally, DOR can take over the assessor's office, hire consultants to make it work, and bill Boxford through a State Aid deduction. This nearly happened a few years ago. Boxford's Assessors were unwilling to challenge some new DOR rules.

Real estate taxes are simple. (Property assessment) x (tax rate) = (tax due). Assessments are based on full and fair cash value on January 1 preceding the fiscal year unless property is classified under a program such as MGL Ch 61, 61A, or 61B which mandate lower assessments for forest, farm and recreational land.

A building's value is largely its (floor area) x (base rate) x (grade factor) – (depreciation.) Each building style (Ranch, Cape Cod, etc.) has a base rate which is the cost per square foot of a basic building of that style. Grade Factors (numbered 3 through 10, valued 0.75 to 2.40) apply to all styles and adjust for differing quality materials and construction difficulty. Depreciation is the percentage decline in a building's value due to age, wear and tear. This is called Replacement Cost New Less Depreciation (RCNLD). The base rate must contain a fudge factor to mark it up from cost to market value.

Boxford faced some challenges with this year's revaluation. Property values at the lower end had decreased markedly, possibly due to the start of the real estate bubble deflation, while upper end values held steady or increased. Base rates, grade factors, and land values would be adjusted until assessments for properties sold in calendar year 2007 tracked the sale prices. Boxford officials said DOR wanted Boxford to decrease the number of grades used from 10 to 8, force grade 5 to the value 1, and more than double the assessment of surplus land.

Why?

Georgetown's top 40 employee earnings for 2008

Lonnie Brennan

VALLEY PATRIOT GEORGETOWN COLUMNIST

The following list represents the total wages paid to the top 40 Georgetown wage earners for 2008. Payments include any overtime, details, coaching and team/activity pay, and special payments such as housing allowances, etc.

The listing represents wages only, and does not include any reimbursements for travel, subscriptions, healthcare benefits, or other items. You'll note that some of those listed below are required to go far and above the "regular" work day. For example, Georgetown High School Principal Peter Lucia is noted for his tremendous dedication to the town, its children, and its parents, and is perhaps the most active, engaged, and visible public servant in recent memory.

- 1) Superintendant of Schools Carol Jacobs \$175,803.72
- 2) Light Dept. Superintendent Wayne Snow \$114,325.34
- 3) H.S. Principal Peter Lucia \$103,683.66,
- 4) Police Chief James Mulligan \$102,396.57
- 5) Police Master Patrolman Scott Hatch \$100,262.65
- 6) Special Education Director Linda Gross \$98,261.26
- 7) Light Dept. Foreman Dana Nunan \$95,033.98
- 8) Police Sgt. Kevin Defeo \$94,462.85
- 9) Police Lt. David Thomson \$92,299.57
- 10) Town Administrator Stephen Delaney \$91,176.48
- 11) Principal Donna Tanner \$90,943.89
- 12) Police Lt. Donald Cudmore \$89,426.06
- 13) Principal Gail Korpusik \$87,900.11
- 14) Light Dept. Lead Lineworker James Young \$85,207.42
- 15) Police Sgt. David Armstrong \$84,046.53
- 16) Highway Dept. Supt. Peter Durkee \$83,026.50
- 17) School Guidance Director Stephen Umbro \$81,796.26
- 18) Police Officer Dennis Sullivan \$79,020.89
- 19) M.S. Math Teacher Joseph Pittella \$76,788.05
- 20) H.S. History Teacher Richard Hastings \$76,676.90
- 21) H.S. Vice Principal Kerry Robbins \$76,312.52
- 22) Water Dept. Assist. Supt. Robert Dash \$76,096.94
- $23)\,H.S.$ Science Teacher Karen Allbach $\,\$76,\!014.01$
- 24) H.S. English Teacher Dr. Henry Venuti \$75,977.72
- 25) Water Dept. Supt. Glenn Smith \$75,882.01
- 26) 6th Grade Teacher Julie Lamoly \$75,672.28
- 27) Light Dept. Lead Lineworker Kyle Morse \$75,297.85
- 28) Police Officer Derek Jones \$73,841.69
- 29) 8th Grade Teacher Heidi Mongeau \$73,564.16
- 30) H.S. Athletic Director Guy Prescott \$73,439.08
- 31) Police Det. James Rodden \$72,717.32
- 32) Music Dept. Chair David Kaminski \$72,054.90
- 33) H.S. Art Dept. Chair Nora Cannon \$71,636.88
- 34) M.S. Science Teacher Robin Hickey \$71,209.94
- 35) Special Education Coordinator Lyn O'neil \$70,838.36
- 36) Police Master Patrolman Michael Goddu \$70,822.03 37) H.S. Math Teacher Linda Bruynell \$70,731.49
- 38) Perley Teacher Heidi Begin \$70,503.48
- 39) Special Needs Bldg Cord. Sandra Starratt \$70,174.48
- 40) Kindergarten Teacher Diane Spadafore \$70,035.05

 The complete listing is available at

 www.GeorgetownToday.com.

Grade is assessed visually from sample pictures and descriptions that overlap between classes. Recognizing ten grades may be difficult, so make it eight. This resulted in someone reviewing nearly 3,000 photographs of homes and deciding about 700 should be regraded.

Grade 5 must equal 1.00 because grade 5 is "average" and average should equal 1. This could be done by dividing all the grade values by whatever grade 5 value you have and multiplying all the base rates by the same thing. However, in real building assessments some inputs are multiplied by grade but not by base rate. This dissonance may have contributed to an unusually large 25% step from grade 5 to grade 6.

The old grade values increased smoothly in 10% increments; the new values increased choppily at an 18% average. When the revaluation was done, assessments tracked sales pretty well. Boxford has stated "The revised values of the sale properties were then used as a guide to determine the assessed valuation of the remaining town properties." However, five Contemporary homes sold in 2007, one each in grades 4, 5, 7 and two in grade 6. During revaluation the three higher grade contemporaries were downgraded. The large grade 5 to 6 gap may have helped push their assessments near or beyond actual sale prices. The net effect was the building assessment of every Contemporary sold decreased nearly 20% while those in grade 6 and above not sold in 2007 saw 3% to 12% increases. The effect was

BOXFORD, page 34

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INNOVATION VALLEY (ivalley.org)

The Haverhill Plan: addressing our future

John Michitson

INNOVATION VALLEY/PATRIOT COLUMNIST

As you know Seth and I have been writing about innovative approaches to government and economic development on behalf of the cities and towns in the Merrimack Valley for the last three years. As a candidate for Mayor in Haverhill, I'm initiating "The Haverhill Plan," a long range plan to innovatively address our most pressing current and future problems. It is a work in progress, but I want to share the draft with Haverhill citizens and our neighbors across the Merrimack Valley to collaboratively evolve it into "our" plan. I'm very interested in the best practices in other Cities and Towns that may help in Haverhill, in addition to a regional approach to economic development that impacts us all

The highlights of The Haverhill Plan are provided below along with a more detailed presentation that is posted at http://www.ivalley.org/content/the-haverhill-plan. You are invited to please review the highlights and the presentation and blog your comments, including your recommended changes or new ideas. The Haverhill Plan will be updated based on your comments and any additional information that we uncover. I am also planning on a series of Town Meetings to get your direct feedback.

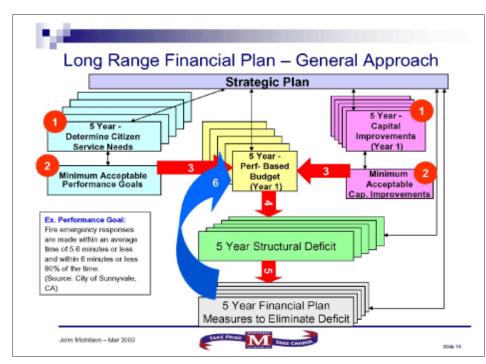
The end game is to complete the Haverhill Plan, win City Council approval and begin implementing the plan when I take office. Of course, as you will soon see, I have already begun to implement many aspects of the plan.

If you prefer to send comments on the plan by email instead of blogging, please forward them to john@michitson.com.

Highlights of The Haverhill Plan Budget and Revenue History

Understanding the underlying fundamentals to help plan for future

- * In FY04, Mayor Guerin reduced the size of City Government by approximately 46 employees to enable the City to survive in the post-Hale era.
- * The number of employees has not changed significantly from FY05 FY09 under Mayor Fiorentini.
- * Starting in FY05, under Mayor Fiorentini, the good economy w/ supportive State Aid increases, one-time revenue (e.g. sold property) and deferred Hale Hospital deficit payments have helped Haverhill's budget to limp along



until recently. This is not an effective long term solution.

- * Employee health insurance and pension costs continue to pose a long term fiscal risk.
- * The Hale Hospital debt ramps up in 2010. It will reach over \$12.5M per year and consume upwards of 5-6% of the annual budget through FY2023.
- * Taxes have been at the proposition 2 1/2 max since FY02.
- * Recurring revenue has not kept pace with budget increases.
- * Majority of tax revenue from new growth is from residential development not commercial.
- * City did not account for future impact of new residential developments on services and schools – leading to larger class sizes.

The Haverhill Plan: Integrated performance-based budgeting and long rang planning

- * **Key challenge:** There is no long term plan to meet the structural budget deficit resulting from the Hale Hospital debt.
 - ${\bf *\ Michitson\ Administration\ response:}$
- * I will formulate a performance-based budget by first defining citizen service needs and the minimum acceptable performance goals with a focus on strong public safety, public works and education.
- * The next step is to determine the cost and refine the plan according to priorities if too expensive. Efficiency and effectiveness to minimize taxes are the goals.
- * I will formulate a five year budget, where the first year is voted on, while the

remaining years provide a perspective for prudent decisions.

- * Then, I will estimate the size of the 5 year structural deficit based on the essential citizen services and performance goals.
- * Finally, I will build a 5 year financial plan that includes measures to generate new recurring revenues, such as luring emerging industries to expand tax base, and measures to reduce cost, such as capital planning and consolidation.
- * **Key challenge:** There is no comprehensive 5-year capital improvement plan that has been submitted to the City Council for action.
 - * Michitson Administration response:
- * Planning has been a cornerstone of my platform since my very first campaign 15 years ago. These are concepts I live by and communities from all over the country have proven them to be successful.
- * The City must have an active and published list of known problems with City-owned property and obligations.
- * Known structural or infrastructure problems such as leaking School roofs, problematic heating systems, street repairs, etc. must be defined today to support future year planning and expected costs.
- * All high-value property that have a limited life expectancy (re: Police Cars, Fire Trucks, Computer Equipment, etc) must be defined and understood as to when this equipment will require replacement or significant refurbishment.

The Haverhill Plan: Leadership in Education

- * **Key challenge:** The school committee's adversarial posture does not build a sense of community for education in Haverhill.
- * Michitson Administration response:
- * A strong and visionary chairman (the Mayor) of the school committee will bring us renewed enthusiasm. The season of adversaries will be over: the time of cooperation and understanding and tolerance will be here.
- * Schools will be at the center of the community.
- * Mentoring and tutoring will be the linchpin in bringing a strong sense of community and enduring success to our schools.
- * We will aggressively identify what is working and what is not in schools and establish measurable goals and accountability.
- * We will create partnerships between our schools and industry to expand our children's horizons about their possibilities.

The Haverhill Plan: Leadership in Economic Development

- * **Key challenge:** Haverhill was not a major player in first round of emerging technology industry growth in Merrimack Valley.
 - * Michitson Administration response:
- * Surrounding communities have already managed to attract the businesses that mean good jobs and tax dollars. It is time for Haverhill to get its fair share. Let us not be discouraged or timid in building a bright economic marketing platform for emerging companies and technologies, as well as our traditional industries.
- * If Haverhill has any hope of a substantive program of economic development we must begin to market ourselves on a regional level by building local, regional and even global partnerships. Businesses small and large should be confident that the community is committed to this.
- * We need an aggressive approach that is willing to communicate, search for and market to industry, making them aware that we are ready willing and able whenever they are.

The Haverhill Plan: Community Vision

- * **Key challenge:** Haverhill needs a strong community vision.
 - * Michitson Administration response:
- * This is an aspect of my plan for Haverhill that will continue to evolve and is in many ways what I need most for you to understand and embrace. Below are some of the elements that will drive my administration and help us all strive for and achieve the best for Haverhill and its residents
- * Haverhill is viewed as a strong, safe and caring community where people and history connect. The good work of past generations "refreshes/breathes fresh life" into Haverhill's community spirit. Haverhill's physical and human resources are prized.
- * Haverhill is seen as rich in opportunity where ideas and "change for the better" flourish: Strong principles and common sense are the cornerstones of every action. Hard work and decency are measures of success.
- * Haverhill is a proud community that respects and values its partnerships: What is best for the community is a common goal of "team" effort.

 Concessions are not seen as weaknesses.
- * This is our Community. This is the essence of "Take Pride, Take Charge." Share the Vision.



Seth Itzkan is president of Planet-TECH Associates, a consulting agency identifying innovations in economic development. Recently, Mr. Itzkan helped The Boston Foundation to

conceptualize and implement its Hub of Innovations tool. You can email him at seth.itzkan@gmail.com



John Michitson was a Haverhill city councilor for 10 years; the last 2 as president. He is a manager and electrical engineer at the MITRE

Corporation in Bedford, Mass. John and his wife, Heidi, are enjoying the childhood of their 7-year-old daughter and 9 year-old son. email: john@michitson.com

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

CALLINGALLRUNNERS

Please join us on Saturday April 18, 2009 for the 1st Annual Dan Ford 5 Mile Road Race and 5K Fun Run/Walk.

Dan is suffering from a rare form of urethra cancer. So far this type of cancer has a 100% fatality rate. Despite this fact Dan's fighting spirit has not been broken. Dan is a competitive person by nature. He was inducted into the Methuen Hall of Fame in 1997 for his athletic accomplishments while at Methuen High from 1984 to 1988. Dan was one of the regions top running backs. He scored 10 touchdowns as a junior and 6 as a senior while being credited with back to back 1,000 yard seasons. The powerful Ford was also a top quarter-miler on the track team. He was the Class B runner up in both his junior and senior years (50.8 seconds). Dan was a powerful force on the hockey team as well. Now Dan is in a competition for his life, and based on his record if anyone can beat it, it's Dan Ford. Although Dan is a fighter, he cannot fight this one alone. Please join us for this 1st annual event. The race begins and ends at the Fireside Restaurant in Methuen,

The race will be followed by an award ceremony and an eventful post race party!

When: Saturday April 18, 2009 (race is set to go off at 10:00 AM)

Where: The race begins & ends at the Fireside Restaurant at 171 Pelham St. in Methuen. -

Registration: \$25.00 per runner, you can print a standard registration form from this site.

Make checks payable to: The Dan Ford Fund. Mail registration form and check to: RE/MAX Prestige - 100 Bridge St. - Pelham, NH 03076 - Attention: Malcolm Fulford. Online registration is also available. - Tee-shirts will be provided for all pre-registered runners

www.danfordsrunforacure.com

THE DOCTOR IS **IN**

What you need to know about cancer pain (1)

Rami Rustum, M.D. VALLEY PATRIOT MEDICAL COLUMNIST

On Treating Cancer Pain (2)

Not everyone with cancer experiences cancer pain, but one of out three people undergoing cancer treatment does. That is the bad news, but the key is to know that cancer pain relief can be achieved in more than 80% of the most painful cases!

Treatment of the pain in cancer cases starts by obtaining a thorough assessment of the patient's pain, the type of cancer, concurrent medical problems, psychosocial status, and environmental factors. The evaluation of the cancer pain includes determination of its location, intensity, and description. Pain intensity can be measured by a standardized written or verbal numerical scale. Other standards of measurement include the radiation of pain, its quality, the onset and temporal pattern, and precipitating and palliating factors. The oncologic as well as medical history also helps to identify sources of pain. In addition, psychosocial and environmental factors can also be a source of distress in patients.

Recently, I learned about a few cancer support groups in different communities in the valley and Salem, N.H.

As I was invited to join a cancer support group in Salem couple of weeks ago, I can attest that the power of such meetings is no less than any powerful medication!!!

Cancer patients need to be reassessed frequently and repeatedly. Pain can increase or change location due to disease progression, cancer-related therapy, concurrent medical conditions, and psychosocial status. These changes can alter the response to analgesic and opioid therapy and require modifications in treatment goals and prognosis.

Pain Management

The World Health Organization (WHO) has established the WHO stepladder approach for the treatment of cancer pain. The ladder starts with nonopioids (acetaminophen and nonsteroidal antiinflammatory drugs [NSAIDs]) followed, as needed, by the addition of mild



Rami R. Rustum, M.D. is the Director of Merrimack Pain Associates at 50 Prospect St. in Lawrence. For any questions or concerns, please email Dr. Rustum at: ramirustum@comcast.net

opioids (eg, codeine). If pain persists, stronger opioids (painkillers) are added and titrated to pain relief. Around-the-clock dosing schedules are used over "ondemand" schedules to minimize the frequent use of medications for breakthrough pain when pain is constant. The use of adjuvant medications and interventional therapies also is recommended when appropriate. This approach to pain management has been said to achieve analgesia in 80% to 90% of cancer patients.

Nonopioid Analgesics

 NSAIDs and acetaminophen are widely used analgesics. Acetaminophen is the least toxic of these drugs but should be limited to 4 g/day to prevent chronic liver toxicity. The main use of NSAIDs for cancer pain is for mild pain in opioid-naïve patients or as co-analgesic therapy of metastatic bone pain and post-operative pain. Caution should be taken in patients at high risk of

gastrointestinal or renal toxicity of NSAIDs, who include the elderly, patients with a history of peptic ulcer disease or renal disease.

Opioids

Opioids are the foundation of drug therapy for cancer pain. Opioids commonly used for mild-to-moderate pain include codeine, hydrocodone, and oxycodone. They are given alone or in combination with an NSAID or acetaminophen.

Opioids frequently used for the relief of severe cancer pain include morphine, oxycodone, hydromorphone, and fentanyl. These agents are comparable in their speed of onset, duration of effect, and side effects. A faster onset and longer duration are achieved by changing the route of administration or formulation. It is not possible to predict how a patient will react to a specific opioid. Individual differences between these drugs can only be recognized by therapeutic trial.

A fast onset is desired in cases of acute severe pain or when the medication is delivered on an as needed basis. The intravenous (IV) route is the fastest (2 min), followed by intramuscular and subcutaneous administration (20-30 min). The preferred route is the least invasive. Most patients can use oral opioids for the management of acute and chronic pain. Morphine and oxycodone are available as both oral, 4-hour immediate-release and 12hour extended-release formulations. At some point during their illness, however, patients will be unable to take oral opioids. In these cases, the opioid can be given by IV or subcutaneous continuous infusion.

Transdermal fentanyl, another option for treatment of pain in cancer patients, is most useful in chronic cancer pain patients who cannot take oral medications or who have shown unmanageable side effects from morphine, oxycodone, or hydromorphone. Buccal fentanyl has been shown to be valuable for immediate-release breakthrough pain in patients using transdermal fentanyl who have adverse effects from other opioids.

More invasive routes, as implantable programmable pain pumps, are reserved for specific cases where systemic analgesics have failed to relieve pain and caused immense toxicity.

Adjuvants

Adjuvant medications have a primary indication different from pain but enhance the analgesic efficacy of opioids and produce analgesia for specific types of pain. Types of pain most often treated with adjuvant therapy include bone metastases, nerve compression, nerve damage, and visceral distention. The agents used to treat these types of pain include NSAIDs, corticosteroids, tricyclic antidepressants, and anticonvulsants.

NSAIDs

As mentioned previously, NSAIDs, such as ibuprofen, can be of use in the treatment of inflammatory pain from bone metastases, soft-tissue infiltration, and recent surgery.

Anticonvulsants

CANCER, page 19

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Next to: T Bones / Pearls Candy

A look back at President Abe Lincoln

- 1. The 200th anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's birth was celebrated with a black-tie event at the site of his assassination. Name that site.
- 2. When Lincoln was shot, he was carried across the street to a private residence, where doctors attempted to heal his wounds. What is the name of the house where Lincoln died?
 - 3. Name Lincoln's assassin.
- 4. Lincoln was born Feb. 12, 1809, the same date as the famed author of the work "The Origin of Species." Name the author of that famed
- 5. Who advanced to the White House following the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, in 1865?
 - 6. Where is Abraham Lincoln buried?
- 7. Let's change our theme. Can you name the five U.S. territories?
- 8. The nation's oldest civil rights organization, referred to by its famed acronym, recently celebrated its 100th anniversary. Name it.
- 9. What do the initials of the civil rights organization in the preceding question stand for?
- 10. What is the purpose of the black-andwhite checker patterns that often are seen on

Answers: 1. Abraham Lincoln was shot at Ford's Theatre in Washington, D.C. 2. Lincoln

died lying in bed at the Petersen House. 3. John Wilkes Booth shot and killed Lincoln. 4. Charles Darwin was born on the same day as Lincoln. 5. Andrew Johnson became our 17th president, in 1865. 6. Lincoln is buried in Oak Ridge Cemetery in Springfield, Ill. 7. The five U.S. territories are American Samoa, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands of the United States. Thanks to Ballwin, Mo., Answer Man-er John Stoeffler for sending this question to us, along with data on the U.S. Mint's commemorative quarters.

8. It's the NAACP. 9. The NAACP is the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. 10. Pittsburgh Answer Man-er Ronald Lindow tells us the checker patterns were intended to prevent taxis from being mistaken as police cars. Our Answer Man-er cites the book "The American Taxi: A Century of Service."

Take "The Answer Man" to work or to school. Challenge your friends for "Bragging Rights." Send your questions and answers to: The Answer Man, Andy Seamans, Horizon House #603, 1300 Army Navy Dr., Arlington, VA 22202. COPYRIGHT 2009 CREATORS SYNDICATE INC.

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Dr. John Armano

SPRING SPRUCE-UP by Gail Grabowski **Newsday Crossword**

ACROSS

- 1 Physicians' org. 4 Jacket parts
- 8 Run after 13 Drinks slowly
- 15 Pager sound 16 Landing piers
- 17 Notion 18 Bargain
- hunter's delight 19 Piece of bacon
- 20 Prepare for a dinner party
- 23 Where Nashville is: Abbr.
- 24 Family room 25 Clean the blackboard
- "Right now!" 30 Winter Olympics ski event
- 34 Shreddedcabbage dish
- 35 Get out of bed 38 Actress Gardner
- 39 Celebrate big-time
- 43 Furthermore 44 Cheek
- cosmetic 45 Fairy-tale
- monster
- 46 Make a goof 48 Refrigerator decoration
- Place onto a scale
- 54 Short snooze Take a chance
- 58 Clear-cut separation
- 63 Wide-mouthed pitchers
- Female choir voice
- impolitely at

- 67 Opera-house
- cheer **68** Do in, as a
- dragon 69 Postpaid
- enclosure: Abbr. 70 Does some
- keyboarding
- 71 Lays down a lawn 72 Slip into

DOWN

- 1 "Don't you wish!"
- 2 Calf-length skirt 3 Highest point
- 4 Not at school 5 Package of paper
- Free-for-all 7 Bit of broccoli
- 8 DJ's assortment

- 9 Chineserestaurant beverage
- 10 Farmland measurement
- 11 Onion covering
- 12 TV sports
- channel 14 Came to the table
- 21 Barnyard clucker 22 Rodeo rope

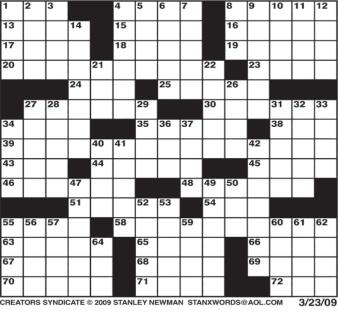
26 Whole lot

- 27 Airborne vehicle 28 Surprise attacks29 Honolulu's
- island **31** Big
- 32 In plain sight 33 Manufactured
- 34 Computer junk-mail
- 36 Rule, for short

- Edited by Stanley Newman www.stanxwords.com
 - 37 List entry 40 "That's correct"

 - 41 Main point 42 Amateur
 - athletes Turn suddenly
 - 49 Pesters 50 Chatter
 - endlessly 52 Windowpane
 - material 53 Phone greeting

 - 55 Money you owe56 Out of kilter
 - 57 Bring in the harvest
 - 59 Somewhat 60 "Goodness
 - gracious!" Furthermore
 - **62** Like an eagle's vision
 - 64 Ship's call for





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Can you save someone's life on a moments notice??

DO YOU KNOW CPR???

1. CALL - Check the victim for unresponsiveness. If there is no response, Call 911 and return to the victim. In most locations the emergency dispatcher can assist you with CPR instructions.



2. BLOW - Tilt the head back and listen for breathing. If not breathing normally, pinch nose and cover the mouth with yours and blow until you see the chest rise. Give 2 breaths. Each breath should take 1 second.



3. PUMP - If the victim is still not breathing normally, coughing or moving, begin chest compressions. Push down on the chest 11/2 to 2 inches 30 times right between the nipples. Pump at the rate of 100/minute, faster than once per second.



PHOTO: TOM DU

Joe Chedid from Joe's Landing Cafe at the Lawrence Municipal Airport in North Andover, practices CPR with an AED device provided by EMT, Brian Mercer.

Are you or your facility prepared for a sudden cardiac arrest??

Over 85% of heart attacks happen at home or in a public place.

See back page

Legislators vist Community Partnerships for Children

On March 20, the Greater Lawrence Community Partnerships for Children met with the area State Representatives and Senators. During the presentation, Mary Ann Fleming explained the Early Reading First (ERF) Grant components and the opportunity that this provides to the center staff and to the parents.

This grant provides language and literacy support, professional development, materials, and parent training. The core literacy program is the preschool Success for All Curiosity Corner that directly links with the Lawrence Public Schools Core Program Success for All. ERF also provides an intervention program for the at risk children which is Breakthrough to Literacy and a parent training program which involves parents learning the dialogic reading

technique through the Read Together Talk Together program. The three centers currently involved in the ERF grant are the YMCA and the YWCA of Lawrence and the YMCA on Haverhill St. in Methuen which has a high proportion of Lawrence children.

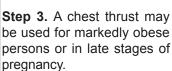
Arlene Willette's children, from her Barefoot Family Child Care were present and read the books Roy G. Biv and Baby Bumblebee which are books from the Breakthrough to Literacy program provided through the Early Learning Opportunities Act grant. Senator Tucker spoke about the value of local collaboration and partnerships. Rep. Torrisi spoke of the difficult task of providing support for vital programs in this difficult times of cutting the budget.

Can you save someone who is choking

Step 1. Determine if the person can speak or cough.If not, proceed to the next step.



Step 2. Perform an abdominal thrust (Heimlich Maneuver) repeatedly until the foreign body is expelled.



If the adult or child becomes unre-sponsive <u>perform CPR</u>.if you see an object in the throat or mouth, remove it.





Heart Attack Warning Signs

Some heart attacks are sudden and intense — the "movie heart attack," where no one doubts what's happening. But most heart attacks start slowly, with mild pain or discomfort. Often people affected aren't sure what's wrong and wait too long before getting help. Here are signs that can mean a heart attack is happening:

* Chest discomfort. Most heart attacks involve discomfort in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes, or that goes away and comes back. It can feel like uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness or pain.

* Discomfort in other areas of the upper body. Symptoms can include pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw or stomach.

Shortness of breath with or without chest discomfort.
 Other signs may include breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea or lightheadedness

As with men, women's most common heart attack symptom is chest pain or discomfort. But women are somewhat more likely than men to experience some of the other common symptoms, particularly shortness of breath, nausea/vomiting, and back or jaw pain. Learn the signs, but remember this: Even if you're not sure it's a heart attack, have it checked out (tell a doctor about your symptoms). Minutes matter! Fast action can save lives — maybe your own. Don't wait more than five minutes to call 9-1-1. Calling 9-1-1 is almost always the fastest way to get lifesaving treatment. Emergency medical services (EMS) staff can begin treatment when they arrive — up to an hour sooner than if someone gets to the hospital by car. EMS staff are also trained to revive someone whose heart has stopped. Patients with chest pain who arrive by ambulance usually receive faster treatment at the hospital, too. It is best to call EMS for rapid transport to the emergency room.

source: American Heart Associaiton

CANCER: from page 17

Anticonvulsants are used primarily for neuropathic pain. Gabapentin is the most widely used in this class. It has been shown to improve pain control in patients already on opioids and may aid in reduction of the opioid dose. Other agents in this class that can be used for the treatment of neuropathic pain include carbamazepine, phenytoin, and valproic acid, which are limited due to their untoward side effects. Pregabalin is similar to gabapentin and has proven efficacy for neuropathic pain.

Corticos teroids

Corticosteroids are helpful with pain due to nerve compression, visceral distention,

increased intracranial pressure, and softtissue infiltration. Short, tapering courses of drugs given in initially high doses are advised to optimize benefits and minimize long-term side effects.

${\bf Nonpharmacologic\ Options}$

Nonpharmacologic interventions such as meditation, hypnosis, music therapy, acupuncture, and massage also can be valuable in the reduction of cancer pain, as well as easing anxiety in cancer patients.

Conclusion

Pain is a common symptom in patients with cancer of all stages, and pain management is an important goal in these

control, a comprehensive pain assessment needs to be performed.

Patients should report any pain to the doctor to be ahead of the game.

Talking with a trained counselor or attending a cancer support group may provide a valuable forum for addressing worries about cancer and pain and help you develop coping strategies. Hearing about techniques that have worked for others in the same situation may help you identify what might work for you. Discussing concerns and getting support may al-so help relieve some of the physical and emo-tional tension that can make pain worse.

References: 1. Pharo GH, Zhou L. Controlling cancer pain with pharmacotherapy. J Am Osteopath Assoc. 2007;107(suppl 7):ES22-ES32. - 2. Caimi P, Cymet TC. As if the cancer wasn't enough! Understanding and treating the pain that comes with cancer. Compr Ther. 2006;32(3):176-181. - 3. Levy MH, Samuel TA. Management of cancer pain. Semin Oncol. 2005; 32(2):179-193. - 4. National Comprehensive Cancer Network. Adult Cancer Pain. Clinical Guidelines in Oncology. Practice 2005(2)[online]. - 5. Mercadante S, Fulfaro F. World Health Organization guidelines for cancer pain: a reappraisal. Ann Oncol. 2005;16(suppl 4):iv132-iv135.



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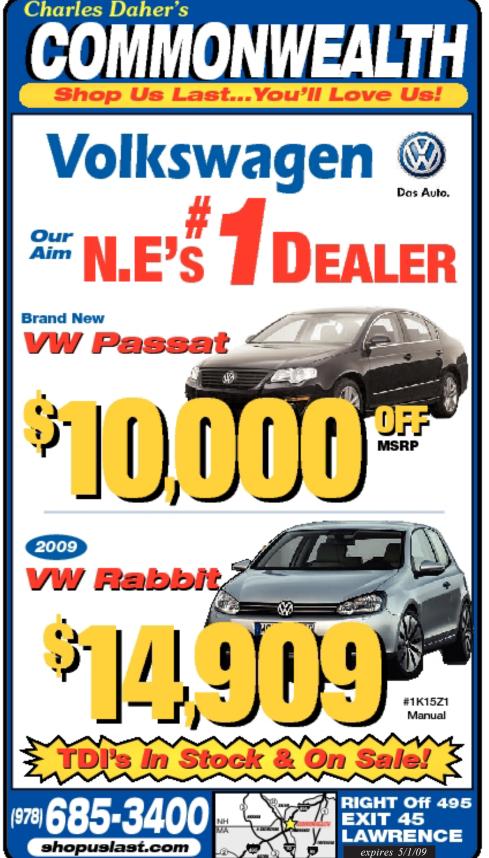


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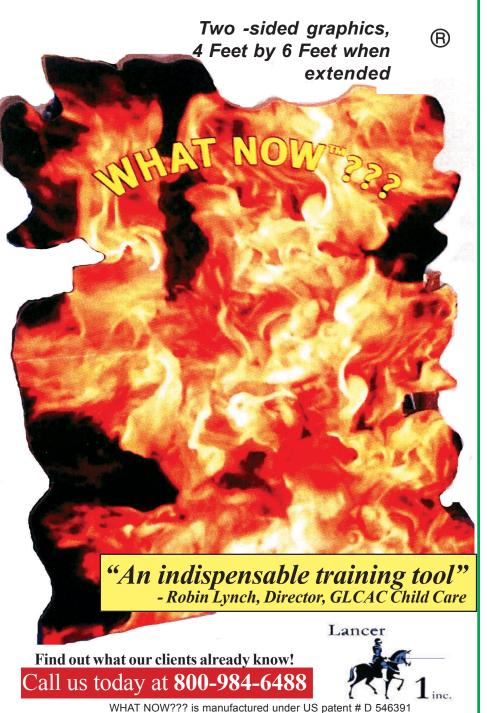
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College education can be the key to a child's or grandchild's future, but the cost of that education can be astronomical. The average annual cost of college is expected to be three to four times current prices — \$6,185 for a public college; \$23,712 for a private college¹ – when today's newborn starts college.² Feeling overwhelmed?

Luckily, now there are more ways than ever to start saving for college. The Uniform Gifts to Minors Act (UGMA), The Uniform Transfers to Minors Act (UTMA) Accounts, and Coverdell Education Savings Accounts (formerly known as Education IRAs) are just some of the traditional ways to fund college. In recent years, tax-advantaged Section 529 plans have become increasingly popular — helping to make saving for college easier than ever.

Section 529 Plans: State-Sponsored Saving Programs

All 529 plans are run by individual states in association with investment management companies. Depending on the plan, parents and other individuals may be able to contribute more than \$250,000 per beneficiary, including earnings, toward the future tuition of a child. All assets, including earnings, under all 529-plan accounts established for the benefit of a particular beneficiary must be aggregated when applying the limit

While new contributions will not be allowed once this limit is reached, earnings, however, will continue to accrue. Maximum contribution limits are adjusted periodically.

Money in the account can be invested in more aggressive investments when the child is younger and moved to cash or more conservative investments as the child nears college age.

Remember there are fees, charges and tax ramifications associated with a 529 plan, and the underlying investment options are subject to market risk and will fluctuate in value.

Many plans require a \$250 minimum to open an account, and accounts can be set up for monthly contributions. Plus anyone can contribute — and the money can be withdrawn to pay for tuition or fees at any accredited post-secondary public or private school in the U.S.

"Over a lifetime, the gap in earnings potential between a high school diploma and a B.A. exceeds \$800,000."

Benefits of 529 Plans

First, the contributor to a 529 plan retains control over it — which means that, unlike with some other college savings vehicles, the child cannot use their college money for other purposes.

Second, although contributions are not federal-income-tax-deductible, assets in a 529 account — including gains or earnings — can be withdrawn federal-income-tax-free for qualified educational expenses such as tuition, fees, room, board and some supplies. Some states offer residents favorable tax benefits for investing in their state plan. Consult your tax advisor about your particular situation. (However, keep in mind there are fees and charges associated with investing in a 529 plan.)

Start Saving Today

According to a 2007 College Board Study, *Education Pays*, people with a bachelor's degree earn more than 60% more than those with only a high school diploma.

Over a lifetime, the gap in earnings potential between a high school diploma and a B.A. exceeds \$800,000. In other words, whatever sacrifices you make for your child's college education in the short term will be more that repaid in the long term

For more information about 529 plans and other products and services that can help you save for college, contact Gregory J. Loosigian, Registered Representative, NYLIFE Securities LLC, member FINRA/SIPC, a Licensed Insurance Agency at 800 south St. Waltham, Ma. 978-273-8377

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- (Footnotes)
- ¹ The College Board, "2007
- -08 College Costs," August 20, 2008
- ² www.finaid.org/savings, FinAid Page, LLC, August 20, 2008

ANOTHER POINT OF VIEW

The Noisy Machinery of Dreams

Mark Palermo

VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

As a college instructor, I am in daily contact with young people. I've seen them come and seen them go for 25 years: high and low achievers, foreign students, hippies, slackers, punks, scholars, jocks, preppies, Goths, gangbangers and science nerds. Nowadays I am witnessing the latest generation of students, called Millennials, and they have distinct characteristics: They are technologically savvy multitaskers. Their style is collaborative and laid back. They know what a Roth IRA is before they are 20. They prefer to communicate by text messaging. And the guys tend to live with their parents until they are 30 and can spend an entire weekend in their pajamas playing

But more than ever, I see Millennials who are caught up in manufactured dreams of mass culture and it concerns me. In America we sell dreams. Whether it's Mary Kay, Coca-cola, Amway, Marlboros, Rocky or Rock and Roll, the marketing of dreams is what we do best. Dreams are the engine of the system. They can propel us to overcome wretchedness, ignorance, poverty and drive us toward the objects of our desires. But dreams can also lie.

We tell the young that there are no limits to what they can become. We point to success stories like Henry Ford, Bill Gates, and Michael Jordan as examples. Even a hundred years ago, the Horatio Alger stories symbolized the promise of America. The narrative sounded right then and it still rings true. And so we disseminate it to the world, and reap the profits.

The problem is that today's Millennials live vicariously through electronics and digitized reality. Their inner world- unlike yesteryear- is formed not so much from human interactions, but by non-contextualized bits from TV, texting, Internet and video. And here lies the crux of the problem.

We insist they can become whatever they want, but we never tell them what is in their way, like poor schooling, environment, parental upbringing, lack of money, social class, weak academic skills, ethnic and racial origin and the negative voices these things can generate in their own heads. It is not that these barriers can't be surmounted-they often are- but in America, we make believe these barriers don't exist. As a result, I've seen young people bounce along on waves of vicarious euphoria for a season, then typically hit the wall and fade into some subterranean service worker realm, dismissing their own potential lives.

Thus broken on the wheel of mass culture and schooling, they typically fall in as production line pyramid builders for the New World Order.

I've seen too many Millennials who are sure that their destiny is to become rich, but don't know how it will happen. Who want to be programmers but don't know their multiplication tables- and don't care to learn them. Who dream of owning a Ferrarri, but don't think to take the steps make it happen. Who believe school is unimportant because Bill Gates dropped out of college.

On the other hand, I have observed foreign students who came here from more elemental cultures where no hyped-up, feverish inner narrative of achievement clouds their way, who gaze into the future with less insulation between themselves and the grim realities of the poor. I've seen girls of 17 with an adult sensibility which women here often don't have until 40, if ever. Young men who come here with only the clothes on their backs not knowing the language, yet who are fiercely ambitious, and at the same time, grounded and realistic.

Choosing a vocation is probably the most important decision a person will make, and judging from the number of bitter, frustrated adults, too many have chosen badly or not at all. And usually not because they were dumb, but because nobody gave them the antidote to the noisy, inefficient, machinery of mass dreams; machinery which produces more heat than light, while grinding away the soul. Listening to discarnate, ephemeral voices hypnotically reaffirming the myth, they ask themselves, "How did I screw up so much? If this is the richest country in the world, if I can be anything I want, why haven't I created another Microsoft? Why aren't I rich?" The slippery downward slope of self-doubt often results in an inner dialogue of oblivion: "What's wrong with me? They must have been right, I never had any talent."

It's not that dreams are a bad thing. On the contrary, to live in America you need to have a dream, especially if you are young. But an active dream is a process of visualization, planning, and action taking. Without the engagement of the will, a dream is merely a mass culture-induced fantasy. And that's all it will ever be. A surprising number of Millennials don't know the difference and it may take them until they are 28 to come around-typically after a bad marriage and a dead end job, which is why it's good to learn-early- that your ship can't come in if it never leaves port.



Mark Palermo is a professor at Northern Essex Community College in Haverhill. You can email him at markpalermo@gmail

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Thomas Connors

Halleluiah!

Come on! Celebrate the Holiness of the Easter Season with a first-time or renewed connection to your Creator and the Faith that comes with it. It can give you a new perspective from which to recognize your place in this world. Especially, if such a conscious celebration is new to you. And when you consider the tough times we're experiencing right now, that just might provide the refuge you need to get through today and make all your tomorrows the kind of days you always dreamed of living!

Wake up! This season has the ability to motivate even those whose religion is other than Christian. Be inspired to worship your Creator, whether it is Allah, Buddha or any other name you call your God. What is important is that you start to realize how valuable Faith and Worship is to Living the WOW!

Take a Chance, will yea! Welcome God wholeheartedly into your life. Then let Him actually help you begin to Live the WOW! each and every day! I Promise you will Never regret it!

Put religion on the table and so many people want to play it real close to the vest. Why? I don't get it!

Think of it. God is available to you 24 hours a day, 365 days a year! He offers you some of the greatest gifts imaginable. All you have to do is call His name and ask. He will be there for you through thick and thin. Open your heart. Let Him in. The Faith and Belief you put in Him makes all your not so good times not quite as bad. And it makes the best of times even better! I know. I have developed over the years an appreciation for both personal and private prayer as well as attendance at church once a week. It gives me the direct connection I need with God and a

real sense of worship as a member of the community. Those two things have helped me get through deaths of two fathers, my Mom and other close friends and relatives. They have helped me cope with huge disappointments and challenges. They have also helped heighten the celebration of amazing accomplishments.

Try praying. It doesn't take a special skill or a college degree. Just find a quiet place, close your eyes and talk to God directly from your heart.

Find a church to attend services. Try visiting the Granite State Baptist Church in Salem, N.H. At American Training's Spring Break last year I had the pleasure of introducing and listening Lead Pastor Anthony Milas. He is dynamic, full of enthusiasm and his genuineness makes a visit to his church worthwhile. He is the reason his is one of the fastest growing churches around. Try it. Think about St. Augustine's in Andover or St. Lucy's in Methuen for a more traditional service if that might be more appealing to you. Or reach out to a synagogue, temple or mosque. You may come away with insight that will excite the days ahead of you and fill you with a new found desire to begin Living the WOW! This time with God's

WHY are we so AFRAID of putting our Creator front and center in our lives? Especially, when we know He is always there when we need Him most.

What are we afraid of? Are we afraid of our vulnerabilities? Are we afraid we are going to expose our weaknesses?

Well, get real! Life, no matter what you do, is never going to be perfect and rosy all the time. There will be hard times for sure. There will be times when you want to throw in the towel and quit. Some days will be much more challenging than others. We all go through it. It's part of life. But, those Living the WOW! know first hand that when you experience

failures or disappointments you don't have to face them alone. With Faith and Belief in God, even the tallest mountains are brought down to size. These people know that, in the end, when it comes down to the nitty gritty, they can count on their God to be there to set their hearts on fire with the determination to conquer all that is before them and ultimately succeed.

Oscar winners take to the stage, in front of millions, to "Thank God" for their superb talent and prized recognition. Baseball players make the sign of the cross stepping into the batter's box. Football players drop to one knee after a miraculous catch in the endzone. And soldiers pray before going into battle.

We see public displays of Thanks to God in Heaven. Yet, much too often, we shy away from even discussing our Beliefs.

Successful people know the extreme value of Faith and Belief in God. They are proud to attribute their success to Him. That doesn't mean they just sit around and wait for miracles. Quite the opposite. They recognize the gifts God has given them and they take determined action to make their success happen. Their Faith gets them over those hurdles that force others to quit. It's that inner confidence and strength of character that keeps them going.

And when they do succeed, usually against all odds, they recognize the role their spiritual side played in those successes.

Getting religion doesn't have to be a foot stopping, hand clapping, shouting Halleluiah type of spiritual revival. It's so much more if you are willing to open your heart and let it be.

Getting religion can actually be a very quiet, contemplative moment in your day that rejuvenates and motivates you to



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

take your unique place in the world in which you live. It is an opportunity to get closer to a spiritual well-being that is just as important as great health and a positive attitude. Faith and Belief in God will give you the strength to go the distance when you need that extra push and peace of mind to contemplate all the wonder that surrounds you.

Despite these turbulent times and not knowing what the future will bring, Living the WOW!, in ALL aspects of your Life, is more important than ever before. All you have to do is start looking toward the Heavens!

Now, *that's* a **WOW!**

You can reach Tom at Tom@AmericanTrainingInc.com or by writing to him at Tom Connors, American Training, 102 Glenn Street, Lawrence, MA 01843}© 2009

SIMPLE WISDOM

I don't want "she meant well" on my tombstone

Gail Van Kleek
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

My mother taught me how to shave my legs, although she clearly wasn't good at it. . I'd seen her so often with bits of bloody toilet paper sticking to her legs that I thought it was part of the process. That's why I was somewhat amazed when my younger sister Chris asked me to teach

I remember showing Chris how to lather up her legs and to put the brand new double sided razor blade into the silver colored handle. I must have forgotten the part about keeping it steady by tightening the little knob, because when she came into my room a few minutes later, her eyes were wide and there was a two inch piece of flesh dangling from the blade. It was a long time before she asked me to teach her anything else.

My mother in law once told me I'd have less leg hair to shave as I grew older. Lately I've noticed she may have been right because the hair fairy doesn't seem to be visiting as often. A while ago a friend gave me a new razor as a gift, the kind that makes it nearly impossible to cut my legs. The bloody bits of toilet paper are something I've left behind.•

There are other things I've left behind as well. I've left behind the part of me that wants so badly to be accepted, that I pretend to be someone I am not. It took years for me to realize that no one could ever really love me for myself if I wasn't actually being myself. Once I understood that it was easier to leave the pretending behind.

There is another part of me I'd like to leave behind. It's the part of me that assumes I know what's best for others, the part of me that's so anxious to rush in and rescue them that I fail to realize how capable they are of caring for themselves. It's the part of me that forgets that one of the greatest gifts we can give to others is to support them; to believe in them and to look for their innate strength and wisdom and courage. I want to stop rushing in with my lifesaving techniques...unless of course I'm asked. I don't know about the rest of you, but I don't want "She Meant Well" on my tombstone.

WHAT WE FOCUS ON IS TRULY WHAT WE SEE



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





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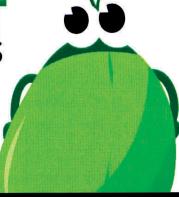
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"He's a cocky, arrogant, selfish, greedy, self obsessed little baby." If you have ever heard or said a phrase like this, then you might be a Boston sports fan. Such phrases were also said by many about two individuals who currently play in New England.

While this was not said until the later part of their career, many had hate and doubt. Hate from the fans who had felt cheated and doubt from the fans who were getting a player who has been said to have "character issues". These two individuals are Randy Moss and Stephon Marbury.

In his collegiate career Randy had run into some legal troubles, which some believed was the reason it dropped him in the draft (he was taken 21st overall by Minnesota). Moss said to his disbelievers, "Teams that pass on me will regret it when they see what kind of player I am and what kind of guy I really am." And nothing has ever been truer. Since being drafted, he has been with three teams: The Minnesota Vikings, The Oakland Raiders and The New England Patriots.

During his rookie season with Minnesota, the "troubled" Moss went on to win NFL Offensive Rookie of the Year and was voted to the Pro-Bowl. Randy finished his rookie season with 69 catches for 1,313 yards and 17 TD's. Not to mention that in 2003 he averaged 100 yards and a touchdown in 12 consecutive games. Moss finished the season with 111 receptions, 1,632 yards and 17 touchdowns. Since being in the league, Randy Moss has been one of the most dominating receivers in the game. Then, in 2005, he was traded to the black hole of football , The Oakland Raiders! Plagued by some injuries and having the worst statistical year of his career, he ended up with only 42 receptions, 543 yards and catching only 3 touchdowns.

Well, what can you expect when you have $quarter backs\ like\ Aaron\ Brooks\ and\ Andrew$ Walter throwing him the ball. Randy finally had enough. Now, was the real problem a character issue or an organization issue?

Then by some miracle Randy Moss's prayers were answered when the Oakland Raider's traded him to the New England Patriots for a 4th round pick (110 overall). After he was traded, Moss said in a phone press conference "Ya'll are going to see some stuff, that you haven't seen before." A lot of his critics doubted whether Randy could do it any more, saying, "He's lost a step or two" or "He will tear your locker room apart." One of the greatest wide receivers paired with one of the greatest quarterbacks of all time in Tom Brady together the two did things that had never been done, just like Randy had predicted.

The team was the first in NFL history to go 16-0 in a regular season. Furthermore, Brady broke the all time pass touchdown record with 50. Randy also caught his 23rd TD pass in the same game which put him ahead of Jerry Rice for most receiving TD's in a season. The media portrayed him a nuisance; the public proclaimed him a man of bad character. In the end, what Randy Moss has done is closed his ears to the public and opened his eyes to the world. Randy has settled in nicely in New England and is finally home sweet home.

Now to the "troubled" Stephon Marbury, who was in a similar situation like Randy Moss. He was the 4th overall pick in the 1996 NBA Draft by the Milwaukee Bucks. Then he was traded to the Minnesota Timberwolves, for the draft rights to Ray Allen. His first season with the Timberwolves he averaged 15.8 PPG, 7.8 APG, and made the 1997 All-Rookie Team. Marbury along with fellow teammate Kevin Garnett led the Timberwolves to the playoffs in 1997 and 1998.

Stephon's relationship with management started to sour after personal arguments with the coach about Stephon's role in the offense. Shortly after that, Stephon was traded to the New Jersey Nets. He averaged 23.4, 22.2, and 23.9 PPG in his three seasons with Minnesota. Marbury was then traded to the Phoenix Suns for Jason Kidd. During his time with the Suns, he averaged over 20 PPG all three seasons he was there.

On January 5, 2004 Marbury along with Penny Hardaway, and Cezary Trybanski were traded to the New York Knicks. At the time this was a dream come true for Stephon as he grew up in New York, and was a lifelong Knicks fan. During the 05-06 season Marbury had a very heated rivalry with Head Coach Larry Brown. It had gotten to a point where the two were forced into a counseling session (which was leaked). Brown had been heard saying; "let's start by brainstorming how we can unload this guy without having to eat his inflated contract?"

Starbury replied with; "yeah, that'd be fine with me. How 'bout for starters, coach, you pay back some of the money you stole from the team this year. They paying you \$10 million to finish with the worst record in the league?"

Stephon's popularity was starting to decline in the eyes of sports nation. Although it would appear a lot of these problems were started by Stephon, the real fact of the matter is it takes two to tango. Just because we see one side of the reporting doesn't mean we know what happens behind closed doors. Like Moss with the Raiders, Marbury had his worst years while he spent his time with the Knicks. Marbury also had issues with Isiah Thomas.

Thomas tried to take Marbury out of the starting lineup and Stephon left the team. Finally it reached a point where fans were chanting "fire Isiah" and booing the team, especially Marbury (the New York Native.) After Isiah was fired, and head coach Mike D'Antoni took over and signed Chris Duhon. Duhon was an inevitable replacement for Marbury. They competed in training camp and surprise, Duhon got the job! Marbury was then placed on the inactive list in order to avoid "embarrassing" him .Wow, isn't D'Antoni a compassionate guy? Later on D'Antoni did offer Marbury 35 minutes of a playing time in a game, however Stephon refused. Then finally on February 24,2009 The Knicks and Marbury agreed on a buyout. Marbury cleared waivers and on February 27,2009 Stephon Marbury became a Boston Celtic, a team with 17 championships. The view of Stephon Marbury in New York is much like that of Randy Moss in Oakland. They were discussed as disloyal, conceited, and selfish

My defense for Marbury is that all his troubles have been caused because the guy just wants to play. Its like trying to take the ball away from a pitcher in the middle of a no hitter. I am not saying they were victims in their situations.

They were just extremely determined, competitive, and motivated players that were in a bad place where they were given no room to be themselves.

Finally Stephon has a new chance, a new team, and a shot at something that looked so distant before...A Championship.



*Chris Papoulias is a Dracut resident, avid New England sports fan and former co-host of Front Row, a sports talk show on Dracut and Lowell

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New England, a tale of two cities. Tony Conigliaro's story isn't happy, but necessary to appreciate the game fully

Tom Hannon VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

tragic (adj): tragic, extremely mournful, melancholy, or pathetic

Tony Conigliaro owned Boston. Had it in the palms of his powerful, home run hitting hands. He was young, talented, handsome, and destroying American League pitching, in an era when the pitcher normally dominated. He had grizzled, veteran baseball people scurrying for the record books as they wondered, with some degree of fright, what he might do to those books when he was through pillaging the league.

When he hit his 100th career home run, "Tony C" was 22 years old. There was no telling how much greater he was going to be. Before we continue, I want you to stop and think about that for a moment. Tony Conigliaro had slugged 100 big league home runs by the time he was just 22 years old. Let that sink in for a moment.

In 1967, it was all there for Tony C: talent, an adoring fan base, and a rejuvenated Red Sox team that was rising from the ashes of a ninth-place finish in '66. When August was halfway done, the Red Sox were making a move — to within three games of first place.

Then a pitch exploded into his eye, and Tony Conigliaro's life turned as dark as his vision.

Even the casual baseball fan has probably heard of Tony C. I'm not purporting to be the first to tell you of how Conigliaro was hit in the face by a pitch and was never the same again.



I also don't mean to bring anyone down, but part of what makes baseball such a great game is its tragic figures. You can't, as they say, make an omelet without breaking some eggs. Life is drama, and baseball is a part of life. It would be disingenuous to only remember the happy endings, when the sad ones do their part in helping to shape our sense of the game's impact on our consciousness.

30. A heart attack, a stroke, and comatose by age 37. Dead by age 45.

Not a happy ending, not even close. In fact, it's tragic. But so were some of Shakespeare's greatest plays.

Tom Hannon is the owner of www.thebaseballpage.com, you can read stories like this everyday on The Baseball Page. History, Debate, Commentary and



BJ's Wholesale donates to Haverhill Police All-Star celebrity flag football game

Danielle Salvetti, Community Relations Specialist for BJ's Wholesale Club (middle) presents a donation check for \$495.00 to Haverhill Chief DeNaro (I) and Officer Cooper in support of the Haverhill Police All-Stars Celebrity Flag Football Game. The Haverhill Police All-Stars will play in a Celebrity Flag Football game against past and present members of the New England Patriots on June 26 at the Haverhill Stadium at 7:00PM. This event is sponsored by the Haverhill Police Relief Association. For more information and tickets, please contact 978-373-4116.



Boxing match a big hit in Andover

The Lawrence Exchange Club held their 19th annual Charity fight night last month at the Andover Wyndham. The event was also sponsored by WCAP radio who broadcasted the event live on 980WCAP radio.



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In memory of Irish Bresnahan; From Page 1

the long-term effect of toxins. She has served as a rallying beacon for many, reaching out and creating a network between hundreds of former military men and women who are suffering long-term disabilities due to chemical exposure.

During the past year, the Valley Patriot has followed the plight of Capt. Bresnahan. Reviewed countless e-mails, documents, and testimony from her and others, and have been honored that she chose to include The Valley Patriot in her information network.

Capt. Bresnahan was the beloved daughter of the late John C. Bresnahan and Agnes Scanlan Bresnahan. Born in Methuen, MA, raised in neighboring Lawrence in a family of 12 children, four brothers, seven sisters, Irish had attended Presentation of Mary Academy in Methuen, Massachusetts and graduated from Trinity College in Burlington, Vermont on the ROTC program in 1972. She studied at the University of Texas in the post-graduate program.

Irish trained with the U.S. Army at Fort McClellan in Alabama and proudly served her country stateside and in Germany from 1971 until 1977. She earned The Army Commendation Medal four times, twice with the First Oak Leaf Cluster; she also received The National Defense Medal twice. After retiring from the military, she worked at the IRS as a computer systems analyst until 2005. She was a staunch advocate for veterans' rights. She was a member of the Vietnam



Veterans of America, the Disabled Veterans of America, the United Female Veterans of America, and the American Legion, among other veterans' groups.

In 1971, "Irish" was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant in the U.S. Army, and began Boot-camp training at Ft. McClellan in Alabama. Fort McClellan was home of the Women's Army Corps School, and the U.S. Army's Chemical Center and School. In addition to the Chemical School, Fort McClellan hosted the U.S. Army's Combat **Developments Command Chemical** Biological-Radiological Agency.

It was here, she claims, that her life took an unexpected and unwarranted turn.

"Training exercises involved exposure to various gases which we were told were quote/unquote not in a quantity to inflict permanent harm. We thought it was tear gas" she had told the Valley Patriot. Following an extreme skin reaction after exposure, Capt. Bresnahan said she began a downward spiral of medical problems. She was later transferred to Camp Richie in Maryland and from there received her diagnosis at Walter Reed Medical Hospital in D.C. and began a long road back to stability.

Irish is survived by her mother, Agnes J. Bresnahan of Lawrence, Pamela Sullivan of Windham, John and Leslie Bresnahan of North Andover, Michael Bresnahan of York, Maine, Kathleen and Al Augevich of Haverhill, Patricia and Charles Gately of Wareham, Mary Bresnahan of Methuen, Claire Bresnahan of Houston, Texas, James Bresnahan of Pacifica, California, Thomas and Janice Bresnahan of Haverhill, Theresa Bresnahan of Lawrence, Margaret and Ernesto Hernandez of Houston, Texas, Maureen Bresnahan of Lawrence, many nieces and nephews, one great nephew, and many, many friends.

She was predeceased by her father, John C. Bresnahan, a former Massachusetts state representative.

In our 2008 interview, Capt. Bresnahan explained "Agent Orange doesn't care where you were exposed. It's an equal opportunity poison. You could be here or in Vietnam or anywhere," she said "People think the baby boomers are going



to drain Social Security. We're not. Because we'll be lucky to make it to 60 or 62. You try to get the word out," she explained.

"Everybody has to fight on their own. I have so much documentation through my medical records...what I tell the people is to use my case. Here's my heart break. How old do I look?" she queried. "It's caught up with me and it's killing me...I gave my life to my country," she said.

We at the Valley Patriot, pause to honor and thank Capt. Bresnahan and her service and post-service to the veterans of our Country.

We will miss you "Irish."



Lonnie Brennan is a former selectman in Georgetown, and the Republican candidate for state rep. in 2008. You can email him at lonnie@ thechocolate cellar.com.

Valley Patriot Hero accompanies President Obama at Arlington National Cemetery

Patrick Dickson

ARLINGTON, Va. - President Barack Obama made an unannounced visit to Arlington National Cemetery on Wednesday, laying a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier to commemorate National Medal of Honor Day.

Four Medal of Honor recipients joined Obama in placing the wreath as a crowd of some 800 visitors looked on, thrilled to be in the presence of the new president.

Rebecca Medley and Rustin Albrecht were in town with a group of eighthgraders from West Side Union School District of Lancaster, Calif.

"Amazing," Albrecht said. "We didn't expect it. We had a wreath-laying ceremony set, and they canceled the school one, so we could come and see

this. There was no way that these kids could ever expect anything like this."

After the solemn ceremony, Obama walked a greeting line of 35 of the living 98 Medal of Honor recipients, stopping to chat with each.

Last in line was the 6-foot, 7-inch Army Lt. Gen. (Ret.) Robert Foley, awarded the Medal of Honor for his heroics in Vietnam. Foley must have said something about playing some one-on-one with the President, who laughed and replied, "You can take me inside, no doubt about it!"

After the ceremony, the 35 heroes walked down the hill to a podium where they presented "Above and Beyond Citizen Honors" to three people selected by a panel of Medal of Honor recipients:

HUDNER, page 34



President Obama stands with Medal of Honor recipients (from left) Capt. Thomas J. Hudner, Jr., (who was honored as The Valley Patriot of the Month in May of 2007). Lt. John W. Finn, Col. Robert L. Howard and Col. Joe M. Jackson during the playing of Taps at Wednesday's National Medal of Honor Day wreath-laying at Arlington National Cemetery.

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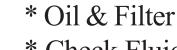
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CARING FOR OUR VETERANS

To be a Patriot!

John Lenotte

VALLEY PATRIOT VETERAN COLUMNIST

Every year in Massachusetts, we celebrate Patriot's Day.

And as I have to explain to people I meet from other areas of the country, it is not all about Tom Brady and company. And yes, the Boston Marathon is a major event. But that is not what the holiday is all about.

It is about the fateful day, April 19, 1775 on Lexington Green, when the local militia of 70 Minutemen faced the British troops under Major Pitcairn. Shots were fired and history was made. Eight minutemen lie dead. The British then marched on to Concord. There another group of minutemen stood their ground at the North Bridge. Again, shots were fired. The British troops retreated to Boston, having lost 200 men as the minutemen

waged what we would call a guerilla action, following them along the way. This would lead to what we now know as the American Revolution. And lest we forget "The midnight ride of Paul Revere" that stuck in the minds of school children for generations.

And over the years, we have lost over a million men and women fighting for our country, our independence, our way of life. And millions more have worn the uniform of our nation, sacrificing much along the way. We see that here each month in this paper's "Veteran of the Month". We see it in the reports coming back from Iraq and Afghanistan. And in the faces of our families, friends and neighbors who have loved ones currently serving and away from home. Even as we begin to leave Iraq, we still have troops in many parts of the world. And the war on terror is far from over. We need to

remember that they still need our support. For all gave some but some gave all.

Following up on my article last month about the American Legion celebrating 90 years of service to God and Country, Essex County was very proactive in promoting and joining what was then a new group. This is evidenced by early posts in the county, as they were numbered based on their application being received as representing Massachusetts. Examples: Post 3, Gloucester; Post 4, Haverhill; Post 6, Lynn; Post 8, Andover; Post 12, Beverly; Post 15, Lawrence. Not bad, 6 of the first 15 were from our area.

And we have had 4 Department (state) of Massachusetts Commanders from Essex County: William McGinnis of Lawrence (1926), Jeremiah J. Twoomey of Lawrence (1934), Chester J. Grant of Gloucester (1940) and George W. Grader

of Marblehead (1950). And 4 Essex County Commanders from Post 4, Haverhill. Edward Perkins (1931), Don Turcotte (1981), John Lenotte (2006) and Arthur (Archie) Wilson (2007).

The American Legion, like most organizations, is in need of members. If you have served on active duty at any time since August 2, 1990 and are still active or have an honorable discharge, you are eligible to join. Other war time veterans are also eligible, see our website at www.masslegion.org. Come, join our



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

VETERANS BENEFITS

Education, job training available for veterans

Susan Piazza VALLEY PATRIOT VETERAN COLLIMNIST

EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS

One of the most widely used benefits offered through the government and one with the potential to be life changing is that of its educational benefits. Originally called the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, the GI Bill of Rights, signed into law by President FDR, gave hope for a new life to the millions of service members discharged after World War II. (For a full history of this bill, one definitely worth reading, check out: http:// www.gibill.va.gov/GI_Bill_Info/ history.htm. These benefits have grown and changed over the years culminating in programs for those who are in the military as well as for those who have completed their military service and are veterans. If you are a veteran, National Guardsman, Selected Reservist, or dependent of a veteran, you may be eligible to receive a monthly educational benefit check. Programs are offered for college/university courses of study, workstudy, apprenticeships, as well as on-thejob training. As usual, there are various eligibility requirements for each of these programs and exceptions to each. This article is meant as an overview.

MONTGOMERY GI BILL-Active Duty -MGIB-AD

Revised in 1984, Mississippi Congressman Gillespie V. "Sonny" Montgomery is credited with changing and updating the GI Bill. Bearing his name, the Montgomery GI Bill (Commonly known as Chapter 30) may apply to you if you entered active duty after July 1, 1985. This bill provides up to 36 months of benefits. Generally this benefit expires 10 years after the service member's discharge from service. This expiration can be extended through

disability, upgraded discharge or reentering active duty.

These benefits are not limited to standard college/university curriculum, but can also be used for flight training, apprenticeships, on-the-job training, and correspondence courses. Active duty personnel may contribute additional monies to increase their monthly payments. However, these additions must be made while on active duty. Check out: http://www.gibill.va.gov/pamphlets/CH30/ CH30 Pamphlet General.htm

MONTGOMERY GI BILL - Selected Reserve - MGIB-SR (Commonly known as Chapter 1606) This program may apply to you if you were a member of the Selected Reserve with a six-year period of obligation after 1 October 1990. Classified as Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps or Coast Guard Reserve or Army or Air National Guard, this plan offers similar course allowances as offered under the MGIB-AD. However, it is the reserve service that decides who is eligible for this program, the VA does not make decisions about ones eligibility. And, MGIB-SR does not require service in the active duty Armed Forces in order to qualify for benefits. One may increase ones benefits by contributing to the program. Check out: http:// www.gibill.va.gov/pamphlets/CH1606/ CH1606 Pamphlet General.htm

RESERVE EDUCATIONAL ASISTANCE PROGRAM-REAP

(Commonly known as **Chapter 1607**) This Department of Defense program was designed to provide educational benefits to those with reserve status who were called up and ordered into active duty after 9/11 as a result of war or national emergency.

One must have served a minimum of 90 days continuous active duty to be eligible for this benefit. As with MGIB-SR, a reservist may contribute additional funds to receive added benefits. However, one

must be part of a Ready Reserve (Selected Reserve, Individual Ready Reserve, or Inactive National Guard) to contribute. Check out: http://www.gibill.va.gov/ GI Bill Info/benefits.htm#REAP

VETERANSEDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM - VEAP To be eligible for this benefit one must have

contributed to this program. Contributions are matched two for one by the government. You will need to fill out Form 22-1990 "Application for Educational Benefits". Those on active duty as well as those discharged from service can use this benefit. Check with the VA regarding eligibility dates as entitlement dates differ between the government's web site and the government's Federal Benefits booklet. Contact: http://www.gibill.va.gov/ pamphlets/CH32/

CH32 Pamphlet General.htm. or 888-442-**4551** for further information.

SURVIVORS' and DEPENDENTS' **EDUCATIONALASSISTANCE** PROGRAM (Commonly known as 38 U.S.C. Chapter 35) This benefit can be transferred to one's spouse or child. It applies to a child or spouse of a serviceconnected deceased veteran, 100-percent permanently disabled veteran, a service member MIA or captured by a hostile while on active duty, a service member forcibly detained by a foreign power or government while on active duty, or a service member hospitalized or receiving outpatient treatment for a serviceconnected permanent disability. This program allows up to 45 months of educational benefits of the type offered by MGIB-AD. Check out: http:// www.gibill.va.gov/pamphlets/CH35/ CH35_Pamphlet_General.htm

POST 9/11. Those on active duty or those discharged from active duty on or after 9/11 are entitled to receive enhanced benefits. As with many of these educational benefits one's discharge must be honorable. One must have served at least 90 days on or after 9/11 or one must have served a minimum of 30 days and have been released with a service-connected disability. The effective training date for this program is 1 August 2009. Check out the website for the payment schedule for: tuition, housing allowance, stipends for book and supplies and other payments one may be entitled to.

The governments web site http://

benefits.htm informs its readers that there are so many significant differences between the Montgomery GI Bill's benefits and those that Post 9/11 service members are entitled to that the website offers an option which allows e-mail alerts to be sent to those needing this information.

ON THE JOB TRAINING: On-the-job/ apprenticeship training (OJT) is training you receive while actually performing a job and earning wages. OJT can also benefit employers. Employers may be entitled to receive VA compensation for training a veteran/employee.

APPRENTICESHIPS: If you decide not to attend college, you may still receive your VA benefits through your employer through apprenticeship training. For the purpose of GI Bill benefits, apprenticeship training is defined as on-the-ob training coupled with 144 hours minimum per year of related technical instruction. You receive the GI Bill benefit while you work full time and earning wages. Apprenticeships are usually two to five years in length and can be for occupations such as electrician, roofer, plumber, etc.

To determine if you are eligible for the above types of training call the VA at (888) 442-4551. They will also be able to provide you with the paperwork necessary to file for these benefits.

The VA will also explain what steps your employer will need to perform in order for you to be approved for this program. Not all programs or curriculum are approved so you must confirm with the VA that your particular training choice is authorized.

WORK-STUDY: This program allows one to earn money while earning a degree or certificate. The VA selects students based on various factors so it is incumbent upon the individual to check with the VA directly as to eligibility.

For ADDITIONAL INFORMATION call 1-888-GI-BILL-1 (1-888-442-4551) or check out the governments web site at: http://www.gibill.va.gov or at: http:// www.gibill.va.gov/GI Bill Info/ benefits.htm



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 five years. You can email Susan at WithMara@aol.com

www.gibill.va.gov/GI_Bill_Info/

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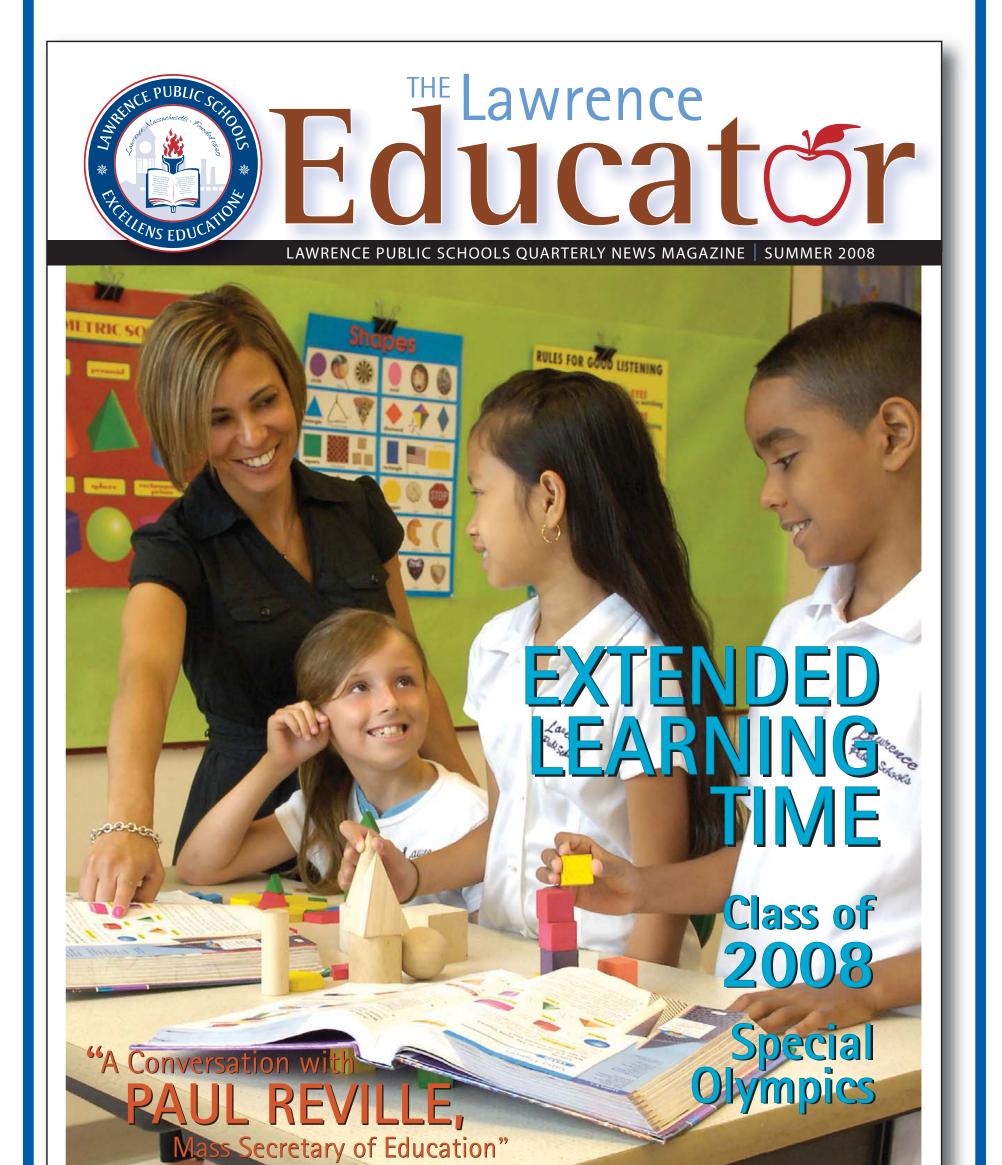
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RONNIE'S RANTS

Ranting about the Valley

Ronnie Ford VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

East end city councilor Joe Leone is ready for battle. Joe, not exactly an inexperienced politico, says he is ready to take on the pixyish Pat Uliano. Leone's knowledge and experience in the east end in Methuen goes back many years and is legendary. A big question in this fight is who is going to support whom amongst the battle-hardened activists in that area? The decision to support one or the other might prove the end all for whomever. Regardless, this is going to be a good

When will the school committee in Lawrence wake up? Every day the Lawrence High School is blasted across the front page of the paper. The students acting up, the principal does not do her job, the safety officers not around to see things, the Lawrence Police department not being notified of wrong doing; who is in charge? The kids? The citizens of Lawrence pay big bucks to the superintendent Wilfredo Laboy, while these people run amuck. Who hires these incompetents? The buck stops with you Mr. Laboy. Do your job, and the school board monitor him. That is your job! Oh, to have Amy McGovern again!

Sad, sad day when they tore down the Assumption Church, school, convent, rectory, and school yard on Lawrence St. in Lawrence. When I went by and saw the buildings reduced to rubble, there was a lump in my throat. I thought about the German people who scraped pennies together to build a Catholic church where the priests spoke German. I remember the many baptisms, first Holy Communions, weddings, funerals, May processions, Forty hours devotions, held during my time of attending Mass there. Back when the Mass was said in Latin, at the time of the reading of the gospel, the pastor Father Raymond Stangle, would read it in German, then in English. He did that with his sermons too. Father's associate pastor was Father Dominic Berra, who spoke not a word of German; they were a popular pair of priests. As kids, we would refer to them as Casey Stangle, and Yogi

Berra, well know baseball players of that era. Who could forget the wonderful Dominican nuns who taught there? The care and devotion to us was wonderful. We were unique in the fact that we had just four classrooms that housed eight grades, nestled in the basement under the church. We had two grades in each classroom. Believe it or not, our tuition was \$.25 cents a week; and what an education we received! We knew our religion backwards and forwards, not like the children of today. They are at such a disadvantage not being able to answer simple questions regarding their faith. The buildings were all wooden, and I remember the "white stuff" that was asbestos wrapped around all the pillars in the school. It is a wonder that we were not poisoned, and it is God's blessing that there was never a fire in the school. We would have been incinerated. The buildings are history, but we still have our memories of that once vibrant parish. The Assumption has gone the way of the Immaculate Conception, St. Lawrence's, Holy Trinity, St. Anne's, Sts. Peter and Paul, St. Francis, and Sacred Heart. Sad!

Good News! The sixth annual reunion of the Assumption, Tarbox, Hood, Lawlor, St Rita's schools, the Downey Flake, and Lawlor's Drug store and the neighborhood, will be held on Monday June 15, 09. It will be held at the same place Jackson's Restaurant on 110 in Methuen. A fantastic buffet will be served, all for \$5.00. How can you beat that? So reserve the date and come on down for a lot of fun and giggles.

Spring has sprung! Thank goodness! What a terrible winter we had weather wise. I hope that soon we will be able to open our windows and let the fresh air permeate the houses; and more importantly shut the heat off. Hopefully,



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

rthomas@andoverattorneys.com

Healing garden coming to Methuen

Jayan Landry CEO/TRAUMA INTERVENTION PROGRAM

The Trauma Intervention Program of Merrimack Valley, Inc. (TIP) is a group of 28 specially trained citizen volunteers who are called by police officers, fire fighters and hospital personnel to provide emotional and practical support to child and adult victims of traumatic events in the first few hours following a tragedy.

After 16 years of providing support to over 16,000 citizens we have been inspired to create a community healing garden in our community.

The seeds for the dream were created while I supported Brenda Waller, a TIP volunteer as she battled breast cancer. After her chemotherapy treatments at Massachusetts General Hospital, we would go to the Hospitals' Ulfelder Healing Garden and dream about creating a healing garden for our Merrimack Valley Community to benefit police, fire, emergency, citizens, and victims.

Sadly, Brenda lost her ten year battle with breast cancer in Nov. 2006, but since then, our TIP Team, including Brenda's daughter, TIP volunteer, Lindsay Waller and Dennis Larocque helped us raise \$20,000 during fundraising walks in Brenda's honor for our TIP healing garden.

As the founder and director of TIP, I took my dream to all 4 communities we serve, and during a conversation with Methuen City Councilor Debbie Quinn of Methuen, she assisted and attended the first meeting with Mayor Manzi last year.

Matt Kraunelis and Karen Sawyer took it from there and we are actively working on a legal document between the City of Methuen and the TIP program to have permission to work within the framework of the Schruender conservation land to create the Trauma Intervention Program Healing Garden and Brenda Waller Way at Schruender Park.

Clean up day will be May 2nd and all are invited to attend.

We have been blessed with numerous offers from many talented people for labor, plants, flowers, and garden design.

The belief that plants and gardens are beneficial for patients in healthcare environments is more than one thousand years old, and appears prominently in Asian and Western cultures (Ulrich and Parsons, 1992).

Several studies of nonpatient groups (such as university students) as well as patients have consistently shown that simply looking at environments dominated by greenery, flowers, or water — as compared to built scenes lacking nature (rooms, buildings, towns) — is significantly more effective in promoting recovery or restoration from stress. (See Ulrich, 1999, for a survey of studies.) There is considerable evidence that restorative effects of nature scenes are manifested within only three to five minutes as a combination of psychological/emotional and physiological changes.

The therapeutic value of a quiet, meditative environment for individuals affected by a trauma or illness is widely recognized," says Bruce Chabner, MD, clinical director of the Cancer Center at MGH. Among many health related benefits, recent studies show patients who view nature require less pain medication than those viewing concrete.

Hospitals in New England are catching up with the West Coast by incorporating Healing Gardens. Last week, Linsday and myself flew to Los Angeles to visit hospital and freestanding gardens to gather ideas.

Our design team will work with nature to offer healing to all citizens in our community.

The opportunity to create a TIP healing garden in honor of Brenda Waller will offer the community a valuable resource and an important complement to the excellent on scene TIP service our team provides.

TIP is a non profit Massachusetts 501c3 based in Methuen. To donate to the healing garden or for more information, visit the TIP website at www.traumaintervention.org. Or contact us at TIP, 167 East Street, Methuen, MA 01844, 978.975.8471. Fax 978.975.4321.



Jayan Marie Landry APRNCEO/ Executive Director/ CoFounder Trauma Intervention Program of Merrimack Valley, Inc.

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Methuen resident and Valley Patriot hero, Don Pearce welcomed home by Methuen mayor Bill Manzi last month at the VFW in front of a crowd of friends and supporters.

Mayor Manzi welcomes home March '09 Valley Patriot of the Month, Don Pearce

Methuen Mayor William M. Manzi, III, City Council Chairwoman Deborah R. Quinn and City Veterans Services Officer Thomas Hargreaves recently attended a welcome home event at the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 8349 (26 River Street, Methuen), for Sgt. Donald "Eric" Pearce Jr. Sgt. Pearce is a member of the United States Army and is in the Signal Battalion. He returned to Methuen after having five tours of duty in an active war zone, three of which were in Iraq.

Sgt. Pearce was doing the 21st century version of the work his grandfather, Sgt. Warren R Pearce Sr., did over sixty years ago. The elder Pearce served in the 145th Armored Signal Battalion in WW II. The Patriot Guard Riders attended the event and formed a flag line to honor Sgt. Pearce. Pearce's father, Donald, is the area Ride

Mayor Manzi welcomed Sgt. Pearce home and presented him with an official Mayoral Citation in honor of his service and bravery.

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FROM THE DESK OF METHUEN MAYOR WILLIAM MANZI

Methuen to post live webcasts of Council, city meetings for first time ever

Mayor William M. Manzi and the City of and Zoning Board meetings. Simply visit Methuen Information Technology Department are pleased to further the cause of open government with several new features at the Official Website of the City of Methuen, www.cityofmethuen.net.

The award-winning website now features live webcasts of City Council, Community Development Board, School Committee, Zoning Board and Historic District Commission meetings. The monthly program schedule is listed at www.cityofmethuen.net and on our Methuen Government Channel, Comcast 8 and Verizon FiOS 32.

"The convenience of live webcasting allows Methuen residents and those outside of the city to view these important meetings from the comfort of their home or office computers," Manzi said. "Local television broadcasts of meetings will continue on Comcast 8 and Verizon FiOS 32."

In addition to live webcasting, the City of Methuen now offers On-Demand webcasts of City Council, Community Development Board, School Committee

www.cityofmethuen.net and click the On-Demand Webcasts link on the home page. This feature provides citizens the opportunity to view or review recent meetings that they may have missed.

In the coming months, Mayor Manzi will premiere his own live webcast featuring discussion and interviews with City of Methuen staff and other government officials. "I am very exited about hosting my own webcast," Manzi said. "With webcasting, important city information will be conveyed to residents in a fast and efficient way."

All of these current and future options have been implemented in-house by the City of Methuen IT Department and are designed to increase access to local government in a convenient and userfriendly manner.

Citizens are encouraged to visit www.cityofmethuen.net to take advantage of these exciting additions. For more information, contact the Mayor's Office at 978-983-8505.



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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

APRIL FARMTOWN LOWDOWN Play ball & Serves Up

With April now upon us, it is time to dust off those cleats, tighten up that bat and sport those gloves. It is baseball time. The 2009 baseball and softball recreation season kicks off in mid-April. All softball games will be played at Monahan Field on 499 Pleasant St.

Baseball games by will be played in various baseball fields with the majority transpiring at Hovey Field on 264 Aiken Avenue. For more information log onto www.dracutbaseball.com

Spring Sports Schedule

Here is a rundown of the dates and locations for the month of April for <u>Dracut High School</u> baseball and softball teams.

Monday, April 13 at Malden at 3:30pm Wednesday, April 15 vs. Andover at 3:30pm Friday, April 17 at Billerica at 3:30pm Wednesday, April 22 vs. Chelmsford at 2:00pm

Friday, April 24 at Central Catholic time TBD Monday, April 27 at Haverhill at 3:30pm. Wednesday, April 29 vs. Lowell at 3:30pm. Girls Varsity Softball

Monday, April 6 vs. Tewksbury at 3:30pm (HOME)

Wednesday, April 8 at Central Catholic High School-3: 30pm

Saturday, April 11 at Acton-Boxborough at 11:00AM

Monday, April 13 at Methuen at 3:30pm Friday, April 17 vs. Notre Dame Academy (Tyngsboro) at 3:30pm (HOME) Saturday, April 18 vs. Everett at 11:00am (HOME) Tuesday, April 21 vs. Central Catholic at 1 1:00 a m (HOME)
Friday, April 24th vs. St. Mary's at 1:00 p m (HOME)
Monday, April 27th at Andover High School-3:30pm

3:30pm Wednesday, April 29th at Lawrence at 4:00pm

*All home games are played at the baseball just behind Dracut High School on 1540 Lakeview Avenue.

Scholarship Foundation Flourish

Congratulations to the Dracut Annual Scholarship Foundation. This year at the 26th annual Dracut Scholarship Foundation Telethon, the foundation lowered its annual goal graduating Dracut High seniors. It was decreased from the original \$100,000 goal to \$90,000 to accommodate a struggling economy. However, during a recession the community comes together and shows unparalleled generosity. This year, the final total raised for the telethon was \$114,124

Cheer the Cheerleaders

The 2008-09 Dracut High Winter Cheerleading team won the Division II Massachusetts State Championship on March 8th at New Bedford High School. The team then went on to compete at the University of New Hampshire and placed 3rd in the New England Regional Championship on March 21st.



<u>A True</u> <u>Grappler</u>

Junior Matt

Dehney recently placed 3rd in the New England High School Wrestling Tournament on March 7th at Hartford, Connecticut. Matt actually lost his first match but then sought

retribution by defeating some of the top wrestlers in New England to get back into the bracket. He competed in the 152pound range. Congratulations Matt!

April Calendar Month

This month, the <u>Dracut American</u> Legion post 315 will be presenting its annual calendar fundraiser. Money raised will be used to support any one organization, which seeks support from the legion. Some of the organizations that the legion supports include Dracut Old Home Day by providing military hardware for display. Others include Dracut Pop Warner, Dracut Scholarship Foundation, Dracut Food Pantry, Operation Comfort Warriors, Dracut Police Safety Program ("Officer Phil") Sun Santa Fund and the Dracut Memorial Day Parade. Operation <u>Comfort Warriors</u> provides assistance to American troops overseas. Tickets are \$5.00 each and are available at the post or call 978 452-8800. The legion is located on 574 Broadway Rd.

Memorial Day Parade

That special time of the year to honor and celebrate our veteran heroes is right around the corner. This year's <u>Dracut Memorial Day Parade</u> kicks off at 11:00AM at the Greenmont Avenue. It

then proceeds down Pleasant St. to Lakeview Ave to the high school monument where the Memorial Day ceremonies take place. The parade is expected to end at approximately 1:00pm with the ceremonies to begin afterwards.

These ceremonies include the reading of the <u>Dracut American Legion</u> members who have passed away in the last year. There will also be a guest speaker, a gun salute and the <u>Dracut High School</u> band performing the National Anthem. Finally, the ceremonies will include the placing of the wreath by the <u>American Legion</u> <u>Women's Auxiliary</u>. After the ceremonies, people are invited to the Dracut American Legion Post 315 (574 Broadway Rd.) for lunch. All of the festivities are open to the public. This year, Memorial Day falls on Monday, May 25th.

Ever dream of being a sportscaster?

The Young Sportscasters of America club (YSA) is currently seeking to assemble a news team for the internet. This news team would consist of kids between the ages of 8-18. If you possess an interest in TV broadcasting, this is your golden opportunity. The YSA is holding open auditions every Sunday at noon at 81 Speen Street in Natick. To find out more about auditions, email info@youngbroadcasters.com or call (508) 651-4972.

The YSA is also working on creating a new website called YSA360TV that will feature programming in other genres including weather, sports and entertainment in addition to news



George Papoulias is a Dracut resident and graduate of Rivier College with a B.A. in Communications. He is a producer at WCAP 980 AM in Lowell, MA for Merrimack Valley Afternoons, Paying Attention with Tommy

Duggan, Lowell Devils Hockey, the J-Team with John Molori and Riverhawk Radio with Bob Ellis

Thank you to the voters of Dracut

D.J. Deeb
GR. LOWELL REG. VOC. TECH COMMITTEE

Recently I announced that I will not seek re-election as one of Dracut's representatives on the Greater Lowell Regional Vo-Tech School Committee. It has been a privilege to serve the taxpayers and students of Dracut for the past 12 years as a member of the Gr. Lowell Voc-Tech School Committee. Some of my proudest accomplishments over this time include:

- * Televising School Com. Meetings.
- * Revising school policy to include a "Public Participation" Section for community input at meetings.
- * Fighting reckless spending which directs funds away from the classroom and reducing classroom sizes.
- * Increasing school safety by proposing and supporting the installation of video security cameras and the hiring of additional security personnel.
- * Supporting Grant-Funded reinstatement of the Summer School Program to help students improve their academic standing and prepare for the MCAS Tests.
- * Expanding computer and technology access for students, including the use of Greater Lowell's web-page. (Over 350+ computers now wired for Internet access).

- * Expanding Community Outreach Projects (Dracut Police, Dracut Senior Center, etc.)
- * Supporting integration of Telecommunications Technology with current technical course offerings.
- * Implementing annual evaluations of the Superintendent in compliance with Education Reform and to ensure accountability.
- * Co-Sponsoring a 50% Senior Citizen Discount on Adult Course Offerings.
- * Instituting grant-funded energy efficient lighting and heating, Saving Dracut taxpayers significant sums of money.
- * Increasing student MCAS scores/ Graduation Rates significantly
- * Increasing student college/job placement rates to almost 95%

I could not have accomplished all of these things without the support and dedication of my colleagues, past and present, on the Greater Lowell Vo-Tech School Committee and Superintendent Jim Cassin. These are the greatest and most dedicated people one could ask to work with. I will miss working with all of them. My proudest vote was that to appoint Jim Cassin as Superintendent of Greater Lowell. Having said that, Lowell, Dracut,



DEEB, page 34

From the desk of: Congressman Niki Tsongas

Tsongas testifies before House subcommittee for veterans' mental health legislation

WASHINGTON, DC - On March 3rd, Congressman Niki Tsongas testified before the House Veterans Affairs Health Subcommittee in support of two bills she introduced earlier this year to improve mental health care for veterans.

The first bill, H.R. 784 would require the VA to report vacancies in mental health professional positions at VA facilities on a quarterly basis. The second, H.R. 785 would create a pilot program to train counselors at higher education facilities to recognize the signs of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

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.

During her testimony, Tsongas explained the need for the legislation to Subcommittee members whose approval the bills must garner. A favorable recommendation by the subcommittee would clear the way for the bill to be considered by the full House Veterans Affairs committee, and later the full House of Representatives, and is an essential step in the legislation becoming law. Below is a copy of Tsongas' testimony as prepared for delivery.

Statement of Congresswoman Tsongas before the House Veterans Affairs Health Subcommittee Chairman Michaud, Ranking Member Brown, members of the subcommittee, thank you for giving me this opportunity to testify.

I have introduced two bills, H.R. 784 and H.R. 785, to improve the quality and accessibility of mental health services for our veterans.

Almost 1 million (945,423) Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom veterans have left active duty and become eligible for VA healthcare since 2002.

400,304 (42%) of these veterans have obtained VA care and approximately 44% of that number are facing mental disorders (178,483). The three most common diagnoses are PTSD (92,998), depressive disorders (63,009), and neurotic disorders (50,569). These rates are two to three times that of the general population.

My first bill, H.R. 784, simply requires the VA to report vacancies in mental health professional positions at VA facilities on a quarterly basis.

With the significant influx of OEF and OIF veterans facing mental health wounds, as well as the already existing veterans populations from earlier generations receiving care at the VA, it is incumbent upon us to make sure that we have the necessary staffing to provide care

This bill will help this Congress perform our oversight role and it will help the VA use its limited resources to effectively care for our veterans.

My second bill, H.R. 785 will help veterans seeking to improve their lives

through education. The 110th Congress passed the most sweeping modernization of the Montgomery GI bill since the program's creation after World War II. The purpose of the modernization is to give veterans of Afghanistan and Iraq access to the education and job training tools that they will need to achieve the American dream they risked so much to defend.

As I stated earlier, approximately 44% of Afghanistan and Iraq veterans who have sought treatment at the VA have demonstrated signs of mental health wounds, including PTSD.

Studies have shown that PTSD can have a negative impact on an individual's ability to focus and ability to learn.

Returning from a war, separating from service and then beginning school can place significant strains on the mental health of a veteran.

It is critical that we provide our veterans with the assistance they need to manage and recover from these wounds so that they can take advantage of the opportunities available to them.

To that end, I have introduced H.R. 785. My bill directs the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a pilot program to provide outreach and training to certain college and university mental health centers so that they can more effectively identify and respond to the mental health needs of veterans of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom.

My legislation would not break the continuum of care provided by the VA.

The purpose of this bill is to provide college counselors and other staff who come in close contact with student-veterans at their schools with the tools to recognize symptoms of combat related mental health wounds; the ability to appropriately assist a student-veteran in need; and an understanding of how to effectively refer that student-veteran to the VA for care.

I believe my legislation will actually augment the VA's continuum of care and bring in veterans who may be hesitant or apprehensive about seeking care from the VA.

The intention of both H.R. 784 and H.R. 785 is to ensure that we have adequate services to address the mental health needs of our veterans and that we give our veterans the opportunity to build full lives once they take off the uniform.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before the subcommittee. I look forward to working with you Chairman Michaud, Congressman Brown and the other members of this subcommittee to improve these bills and to improve the quality and accessibility of the care we provide to our veterans.

Thank you.



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

Phat Cats Bistro to host Monday evening dinner to benefit Our Neighbors' Table

Paul Eastman and Christina Johnson, chefs and owners of Phat Cats Bistro, 65A Market Street in Amesbury, will be donating 25% of their Monday evening food service to Our Neighbors' Table during the months of April and May.

Eastman and Johnson say they have been thinking about ways they could actively make a difference in their community, particularly during these difficult economic times. "We have been extremely impressed with the wonderful work Our Neighbors' Table is doing in the community. Since we are open for business six days a week we have little personal time to volunteer at Our Neighbors' Table and feel we can best help by donating a portion of the proceeds from our food service one day a week to this worthy organization. Since food is our passion and business focus, it just seems like a natural fit."

Rosemary Werner, Executive Director of Our Neighbors' table says she is thrilled to be receiving such generous support from Phat Cats Bistro. She indicates a representative from Our Neighbors' Table will be on hand each Monday evening to answer any questions about ONT programs and how members of the community can become involved by volunteering their time or donating to the organization.

Phat Cats Bistro has been offering casually upscale and moderately priced dining in Amesbury for the past 1½ years. All menu and special order items are hand crafted in house by chefs Paul and Christina and their staff. Business hours are 11:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday for lunch and 5:00 – 9:00 p.m. Sunday, Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday and 5:00 – 10:00 Friday and Saturday for dinner.

For more information, visit www.phat catsbistro.com and www.ourneighbors table.com or contact: Paul Eastman, Phat Cats Bistro, 978.388.2777, or Rosemary Werner, Our Neighbors' Table 978.388.1907, ourneighborstable @verizon.net

COUCH: from page 5

people to look out for is *Undeclared*. Check it out on DVD. These are just a sliver of examples. The networks do this to us all the time. Good luck getting attached to that exciting new show you've been hearing so much about and can't wait to get into. Chances are it will come and go like the latest fashion. A trick to get you though it in one piece? Think of them not as television series but as miniseries that are meant to be short and sweet.

Then rent the series on DVD and watch it over and over while reciting "Why!? How!?" Good luck and happy viewing.



Ray Shackett is the cohost of Merrimack Magazine Afternoon Edition and host of Living For The Weekend on 980 WCAP. For

questions, comments or suggestions, email Ray at ray@980wcap.com

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DEEB: From page 32

Tyngsboro, and Dunstable are very fortunate to have representatives on the Greater Lowell Regional School Committee that are so committed to ensuring that our children receive the best possible education and the interests of the taxpayers are well-represented.

The teachers, administrators, and support staff at Greater Lowell are the best of the best and they truly care about the well-being and success of our students.

When I was first elected to the committee, less than 10% of our students were eligible for high school diplomas because of low reading and math scores. Together we have raised the bar and our students are now achieving an MCAS passage rate of 100% and competing with their peers at the academic high schools in the District.

Keep in mind that most of our students attend Greater Lowell to obtain a technical or trade education. Half of their learning time is spent in technical and trade areas. Also, more of our students are taking and passing the SATs than ever before. Finally, the budget is fiscally sound and it appears that we are in very good shape for the upcoming fiscal year. Not many school districts can brag about this.

Now, it is time for me to move on. I will miss working with Superintendent Cassin

and my colleagues on the Committee, but I want to focus on my career as an educator at Reading Memorial High School and as a college instructor at Bunker Hill Community College and UMass Lowell. Teaching is my passion and I want to continue to make a positive difference as an educator. It is time for someone else to step up to the plate and take charge.

I will still be involved actively in the Town. I plan to continue to write editorials and will probably soon begin appearing on local access cable television programs to discuss important issues. Also, I was recently appointed to the Committee on Government Rules and Regulations by Town Moderator Gary McCarthy.

I look forward to making a positive difference on this committee.

Thank you again, Dracut, for the opportunity to serve as your representative ar Greater Lowell these past 12 years.



D.J. Deeb is the Vice-Chairperson of the Gr. Lowell Regional Voc-Tech School Committee, (Dracut). You can email him at DJDEEB@yahoo.com

LATINOS: From Page 11

White, the White Fund Lecture Series has provided cultural conversation featuring well-known lecturers in fields such as history, literature, travel, the arts, and politics. The White Fund collaborates with Northern Essex on this series.

For additional information or to receive a calendar of upcoming events in the White Fund Enlightenment Series, call 978-738-7403.

For directions to NECC's Lawrence Extension Campus, located at 78-82 Amesbury Street, visit the college's website www.necc.mass.edu and click-on maps and directions at the top of the home page. Parking is available behind the building. Additional parking is available at the Buckley Garage which is across the street from the campus. Parking is free to those attending NECC events.



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HUDNER: FROM PAGE 27

* David Bryan, a 20-year Air Force veteran from Kansas City, Mo., who pulled a motorist from a burning vehicle on I-70;

* Jeremy Hernandez, a youth worker who pulled 50 kids out of a school bus that had been on the I-35 bridge in Minneapolis that collapsed in 2007; and

* Rick Rescorla, posthumously, for evacuating 2,700 people from the South Tower at the World Trade Center, against the advice of the authorities, after a plane hit the North Tower. Told more were still inside, Rescorla went back in and was never seen again. His son and daughter accepted the award.

Like the Medal of Honor recipients who recognized him, Hrnandez denied that he was a hero, saying that anyone would do the same. "I feel like anybody would have really did it, if they were in my position, you know? 'Cause, I grew up with the kids, and to go home without any of them, and to see their parents," Hernandez began to grin, "... I don't think they would have approved of that."



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BOXFORD: From Page 14

statistically significant and may indicate disproportionate assessment.

Surplus land is lot area in excess of the minimum required. DOR suggested Boxford use the same value as in other towns. Under the new assessments, a home with 7 acres of wetlands protected by a conservation restriction (what we used to call a swamp) pays over \$800 per year taxes on the swamp. The requested owner contribution is over \$900 for some land exclusively used for National Grid power transmission and Maritimes & Northeast 30-inch high pressure gas pipeline easements.

The statistics don't support any particular value; it is very sensitive to other data changes, but there was a real sale of surplus land in 2007 for a reasonable amount, and a few reasonable data changes produce a surplus acreage value near its old assessment.

Surplus acreage assessments matter little to most Boxford taxpayers; the median holding is less than a tenth of an acre. The increase shifts taxation from houses and people who use services to trees and swamps which do not.

The largest holders have classified land under Chapter 61, 61A, or 61B. Perhaps the increase will nudge others into these programs. The increased assessments increase the penalties for withdrawing from a program. Also, Boxford may get a right of first refusal to purchase the property at a price chosen by an

appraiser. All of this is part of what government calls "smart growth." It's also another involuntary transfer of property rights from private owners to government.

The State rules had other complications beyond this article's scope.

In summary, while the State rules may reflect someone's idea of best practices, they were accompanied by unintended consequences. The rules stuff Boxford in the same box with other towns which may not be appropriate given the wide range of housing types and lot areas in this rural town

Assessments can be abated if the property is assessed above its full and fair value or is disproportionately assessed relative to similar properties. This is often more important because Boxford assessments average about 95% of full and fair value.

The first thing an assessor suggests when considering abatement is to check comparable properties of the same style. This is useful if a comparable property was sold during the sample year and thus provides a market value check. It is useless for surplus land since sales never meet the State's arm's length requirement for consideration. It is also useless if all comparable properties were disproportionately assessed.

The next chance to file for abatement is after the fiscal year 2010 tax rate is set and before the first bill using that rate is due, generally in January.

IRISH: From Page 11

(Clearance Clearwater Revival)....remember them?

I couldn't remember the names of the songs that were played but it really didn't matter as the band kept everyone on their feet dancing. You could hardly hear anyone talking because of the loud

vibrations and electronic devices that

aided in the sound of the band, but that didn't matter either because the crowed was their to hear their music, music unlike mine in my day, but I guess a refreshing sound to the people that were in attendance. You could tell everyone was enjoying the sounds by the body language and the crying for more and more. They loved it, my partner loved it and for sure, I loved it. It was awesome.

Each musician played a solo on their instruments, a few of them also did vocals while playing. They were excellent and well versed in their craft. For me, I'm partial to one of the musicians, Pat Small. I've seen him practicing on his guitar and bass guitar. Someday he'll he a big name

on the music scene. He just keeps getting better and better.

When I came to Ireland, hard rock was the farthest thing associated with music from my mind. Bagpipes, tin whistles, accordions and Irish tenors were all that I would even consider to be real Irish, but, believe it or not, D-F-X has educated me and made me a believer, a believer that even a "radical" sound could be popular in a country that is so serene and beautiful.

If by chance any of the many clubs and pubs in our reading area or even a promoter that would want to bring D-F-X to the States for their "Big" break, they can be contacted through my email address. jj_doyle123@msn.com

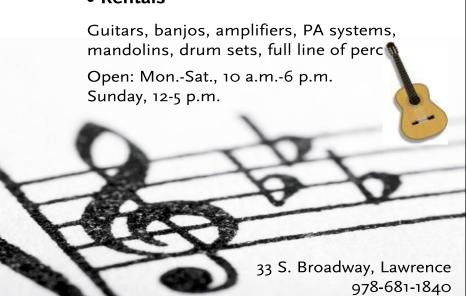
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The benefits to adopting an adult pet

Chris Arnott LOWELL HUMANE SOCIETY

Whether it is a cute fluffy kitten or a puppy with those great big watery puppy dog eyes, we all know how irresistible young animals can be. However, as fun as it may seem to get your new pet as a baby there are a lot of benefits to adopting an adult animal!

As cute as those baby animals are, you never quite know what you will end up with. When you adopt an adult cat you avoid those crazy "preteen" years of kittens climbing drapes and treating your stairwell as a NASCAR track! Adopt an adult dog and you don't have to worry about chewed up shoes during teething and you skip puddles from potty training puppies!

Without meeting the parents of your new pet, you can never be absolutely

sure of how big an animal will get, or what they will look like when all grown up. Dogs and cats are practically full grown at a year and you will know their coat length and general size.

When you adopt an adult animal, their personality has already formed and it shines through! There are no big surprises as far as temperament is concerned.

Your adoption counselor at the Lowell Humane Society can help you choose that snuggle bug lap cat you've been looking for or the playful dog who has already learned leash manners. Many times animals from the shelter have even been through training classes!

Most importantly, adults are less likely to be adopted than younger animals in the shelter. Consider the fact that kittens and puppies are just that for only a few short months before turning into adults. Kittens and puppies are also always adopted quickly while some adult animals spend months in a shelter before finding a home, leading to kennel stress and depression.

When deciding on a pet, think about how your life plans will affect the life of the animal. Is it fair to adopt a kitten that may live to 20 years if you are planning to travel across the country in 10? Is that cute puppy going to be able to join you in your college dorm room?

The average lifespan of an indoor cat with proper health care is 13-19 years old! Think of the wonderful years you could give a cat of 9 years before they cross the rainbow bridge!

Depending on the breed of dog, you may be able to give a 5 year old shelter dog 10 more years of love!

Visit The Lowell Humane Society to meet some of the wonderful animals available for adoption. Be sure to ask a staff member about the Dorothy Fund,

which matches single cats 3 yrs and up with their equally wise human counterparts at a discounted adoption

We also match adult cats 3 years or more in pairs with individuals and families interested in giving adult cats a second chance, these also get a discounted adoption rate!

TRIVIA TIME!

How young can a cat have kittens? Visit www.lowellhumanesociety.org for the answers to this months questions!

Chris Arnott is the Community Outreach Coordinator at The Lowell Humane Society. Did you know you know your scout, school or other group can get a FREE behind the scenes tour of the shelter?

Contact Chris for details on tours and other opportunities at (978) 452-7781 or chris@lowellhumanesociety.org.

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Come to the Lowell Humane Society and take us HOME!

Snoopy is a handsome young American Staffordshire Terrier Mix. He is a sweet boy who responds great to training. Snoopy has great leash skills and is the perfect companion for daily walks! Won't you come meet him?

Snowball is a sweet girl looking for a family to call her own. She loves to snuggle and is looking forward to a home where she can get lots of attention. Snowball needs a home where she will be the only pet, as she likes to have all the attention.



Stevie is a beautiful young Australian Rainbow Lory. He will do best in a home with parrot experience. Stevie is great at mimicking sounds and is quite vocal! He loves raisins and nectar.

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PLUM GROVE NEWSLET

To All of you,

Thank you for your help and interest in the 2 labs, Coco and Cookie, that needed a home. I wrote to the e-mail address to let them know that I had some people who could help out, but I did not get any response. The e-mail came to me from a friend, so I do not know directly who the people are that generated the request.

I often get requests for help in finding homes for dogs from friends and acquaintances who do not want to go through a shelter or rescue group. If anyone would like to be contacted regarding any of these dogs, let me know and I will put you on a list. There is currently a Wheaton Terrier who is looking for a new home. I am waiting for "bio" on this dog. The man who owns him lost his wife and is finding it difficult to keep and manage the dog. That is all I know about him/her at the present time.

On another note, I have finalized the dates for the upcoming canine massage certification program and the one day pet owners massage workshops, Also, Dani has put together several educational lectures to be presented by our animal care providers and experts over the next several weeks. Below are Dani's workshops for February and the March dates for canine massage workshops.

#Holistic medicine and VOM

Learn about holistic equine veterinary care and Veterinary Osteopathic Manipulation (VOM) with Regina Downey, DVM. Open to the public. The session costs \$15.00, Clip Clop Club members only have to pay \$10.00.

#Conformation and Gait Analysis, with

Open to the public. The session costs \$10.00, Clip Clop Club members only have to pay \$5.00.

There is a **massage certification program** for canines. It will run for three consecutive weekends, Sat and Sun from 9am - 3pm.

The class sizes are limited to 8 person/ dog teams so register early to reserve the workshop that best fits your schedule. Feel free to print out the attached flyers and post them for others to see. For more information on Dani's programs, go to www.plumgroveequestrian.com

Cindy Plum Grove Therapeutic Massage Cindy Douphinette, RN, LMT, APP, Cert Animal Massage Therapist 180 Center St Groveland, MA 01834 978-857-7286 PlumGroveTM@aol.com

PUPPY LOVE! with Kate Whitney

Dog proofing your home, keep your puppy safe

Kate Whitney VALLEY PATRIOT PUPPY COLUMNIST

I can't even begin to express how happy I am that it is *finally* April!

If we had one more month of that bitter cold and those snow storms, I was seriously thinking about packing up my dogs and moving down South! But it's those 50 degree days, that pop up sometimes amidst the 30 degree days and the days when the snow has just melted and you can hear the birds chirping for the first time, that keep me here in New England.

Not far away are the days when taking your dogs for a walk will be pleasurable. Gone will be the days of bundling up before heading out and having to defrost for a bit once you get home. I'm sure most of you can tell that I am having serious Spring Fever! I am so ready for the warm weather...bring it on!

According to the Red Cross, April is National Pet First Aid Awareness Month. I thought that in celebration of Spring and "Spring Cleaning" I would write this month about dog proofing your home. There are some things that I think would be beneficial for you to know. In an attempt to open up our homes for Spring, many of us clean both inside and outside

our homes. From cleaning products inside, to fertilizers and mulch outside, many things can be very harmful to our pets. I hope that you take some time and make sure that you are not using anything that could be seriously dangerous for your pets. The first thing

I want to talk about is what not to give your dog for food. Spring and Summer mean parties and BBQ's so make sure you are on the lookout when you have guests over. Some people don't realize there are things dogs should not eat. So be aware of your guests, and make sure they don't feed your dog anything that's listed below. There are certain things that we humans eat all the time, but are awful and sometimes deadly for dogs to eat. Some of these things may seem obvious, others may surprise you. Some foods you should NEVER give your pet (and make sure they don't accidentally eat it either): chocolate, onions, garlic, mushrooms, grapes, raisins, macadamia nuts, baby food, bones from fish and poultry, cat food, fat trimmings, milk and other dairy products, raw eggs, raw fish. Always make sure that you never leave food unattended on the counter, you never know what your dog might get into.

Be aware of chemical hazards like pool chemicals, antifreeze, paint thinners, and lead from paint chips and dust. Cleaning products can also prove to be very dangerous for your pets. If ingested, death can occur. Most cleaning products are not only bad for animals, but they are bad for the environment. So, do something good for the Earth and for your pets, and replace your cleaning products with natural ones like baking soda and

Before you plant your Spring plants or bring a beautiful bouquet of flowers home, read this section carefully! Here is a partial list of the many toxic plants: Azalea, Daffodil, Hydrangea, Rhododendron, Lilies, and Poinsettia.

Go online and view a full list just to be sure you aren't planting something that is harmful to your four-legged friend. Also, talk to your vet about what mulches and fertilizers you should not use.

Many kinds are hazardous to dogs, and always make sure it has dried before you allow your dog to walk in an area that was just treated.



Boxford resident Kate Whitney, Dash and Honey all want you to know how important it is to adopt a shelter dog. For more information you can email One Tail at a Time at onetail@comcast.net

Keeping your dog healthy this Spring and Summer also means keeping them up to date on their heartworm prevention and their flea and tick prevention. These things only work if they are given at precisely the right time each and every month. So don't skip a dosage, keep up to date and keep your dog protected.

We all hope that our dogs will never ingest anything that is life threatening, but in case they do, here is some helpful information. Make sure your vet's info is posted in your home and in your cell phone. ASPCA poison control has an emergency vet available 24/7. That number is 888-426-4435. FYI: There is a \$60 consultation fee for each call. Another suggestion (one that is new to me and I am in the process of finding out more about) is to take a pet CPR class and purchase a pet first-aid kit. I am really interested in this....we take CPR classes

so we can save humans, why not take one geared for saving pets?

As always, please talk to your vet about taking the right precautions.

When we bring a dog into our home, we vow to keep that dog safe. Knowing what things are harmful to our pets will allow us to keep that promise and make sure our dogs live a great life, free from anything that might be dangerous. #Now with all of that said, let's light up the BBQ, break out the Sox jerseys, and enjoy!

Happy Spring!



Kate Whitney is a Boxford resident and owner of the Swingrite corporation. 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



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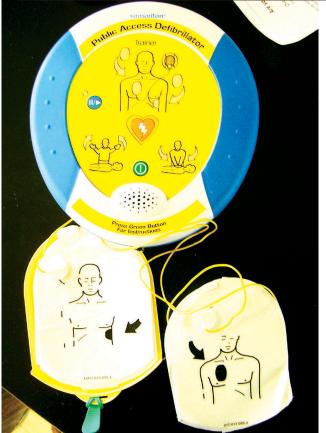
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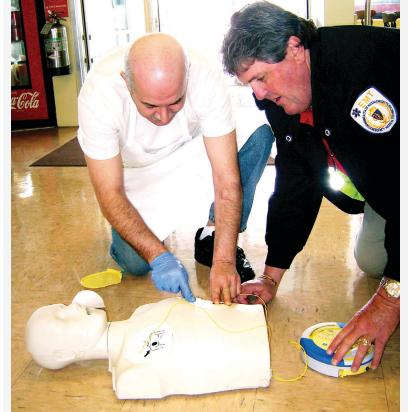
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Joe Chedid from Joe's Landing Cafe at the Lawrence Municipal Airport in North Andover gets instructions on how to use the AED device from EMT, Brian Mercer.

"Every year over 330,000 people die from a Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) or Heart Attack."

Hello, my name is Brian Mercer, I am a former navy marine corpsman, 20 year Mass E.M.T. and a American Heart Assoc CPR/ First Aid instructor. I can't tell you how frustrating it has been as an EMT to respond to a cardiac emergency and arrive and see how unprepared people were for such a critical emergency. I have a solution that can help. First of all there are two ways a heart stops:

- * "Plumbing" which is clogged arteries (Heart Attack)
- * "Electrical" Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) The heart enters a chaotic rhythm typically ventricular fibrillation (vf) where the heart is not pumping blood to the vital organs causing the victim to collapse and become unconscious with no spontaneous breathing or pulse.

The only way a victim can survive is by applying Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) or by shocking the heart with a Defibrillator (AED) to get it back to normal rhythm

National response time for EMS is 8 to 12 minutes, however, if you wait for them your chances of survival could be less than **5 %.** If early defibrillation and CPR are administered in under 4 minutes your chances increase by over 60%. This is a life saving benefit for a pulseless, non responsive victim.

Every minute CPR /AED is delayed the victim's chances decrease by 10%

My company was created to establish a "heart safe environment "by making defibrillators more widely available for public access. My goal is to train people on how to use a defibrillator and how to perform CPR. By having a defibrillator on your premises, you can dramatically increase the victim's chance of survival. It is an affordable easy to operate, hands on device that uses voice and visual commands to guide you through these critical steps. I have teamed up with **Heartsine**, **Inc** who in my professional opinion has the best automated external defibrillator on the market.

Feel free to visit their website **heartsine.com** for an on line demonstration. I would like the opportunity to schedule an appointment with you and give you hands on demo. There is no obligation and I promise that when I leave your facility you will be able to use a defibrillator and know how to perform CPR. If nothing else you will have gained the knowledge and skill to save a life.

Please join my campaign, "Help us at EMS, to help you", by becoming a heart safe facility. It is essential that the general public be a critical part of "The Chain of Survival". By doing this, we can and will save lives.

Call us TODAY to discuss how you or your company can save a life.

Sincerely,

Brian K Mercer

President

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